



CONNECTION

Loneliness: Small Steps Toward Connection

A low-pressure plan for moving from isolation toward meaningful contact without demanding instant closeness.

Loneliness is not always solved by more people. Aim for small doses of genuine contact, shared activity, and repeated connection.

When loneliness makes you want to withdraw

- 1 Name the need**
Ask: "Am I needing company, understanding, affection, belonging, fun, or simply another human nearby?" The answer helps you choose the right kind of contact.
- 2 Lower the bar**
Choose a 5–15 minute connection step: send one text, sit in a public space, call someone briefly, attend one class, or reply to a message you have been avoiding.
- 3 Use repeated contact**
Belonging often grows through seeing the same people repeatedly. Pick one recurring place or activity rather than relying only on one-time events.
- 4 Make a specific invitation**
Instead of "We should hang out," try "Want to get coffee Saturday around 11?" Specific invitations are easier to answer.
- 5 Notice the after-story**
After reaching out, watch for thoughts like "They were only being polite." Treat those thoughts as interpretations, not proof.

A text you can borrow

"Hey, I've been a little more isolated than I want to be. Would you be up for coffee, a walk, or a quick call sometime this week?"

Use this as a flexible guide, not a rule. If a skill increases distress or does not fit your situation, stop and choose a different approach. Bring questions or observations to therapy.

This handout is educational and is not a substitute for individualized mental health care, medical care, or emergency services. If you are in immediate danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department. In the U.S., call or text 988 for crisis support.