

## Causes of Loneliness

Loneliness may begin with...

- a death
- a broken relationship or romance
- a move of home
- a change at work
- an accident or illness
- leaving school or other change

It may be prolonged by...

- lack of trust
- fear of rejection
- fear of being alone
- lack of transport
- poverty
- low self-esteem
- self blame
- expecting too much

## Reactions to Loneliness

Some reactions may be...

- crying a lot
- sleeping a lot
- over eating
- getting drunk or taking drugs
- withdrawing from usual activities and routines
- spending a lot of time being inactive (e.g watching TV, playing computer games)

Some distractions may be...

- browsing the shops
- going for a trip
- taking a walk
- getting out of the house
- going to the library
- joining a sports team or group
- learning a new activity or hobby (e.g. dancing, craft)

Learn to enjoy your own company by identifying with the good things about yourself.

## Your Needs May Be Met By...

Talking it over with

- someone you share your problems with
- someone you work with
- someone who challenges you

Seeking support in a group

- in your family
- in a neighbourhood group
- in a social club, religious group, sport or recreation group

Inviting others

- to a social occasion
- to a meal
- to help you personally

In developing those contacts

- identify how you have been supported
- say thank you for support from others
- ask for what you need
- try to be reasonable

Listening

- everyone needs to listen and to be listened to

Respecting

- the views and belongings of others

Asserting yourself

- express your own needs, values and feelings without dominating others

## Involvement Reduces Loneliness

There are lonely people in your neighbourhood who may appreciate your friendship:

- new arrivals
- unemployed
- women at home
- teenagers
- disabled
- bereaved

What to do

- telephone someone
- visit someone
- write a letter

Start by making some small gesture to someone else.

Relationships take time to build

For further assistance contact:

- Citizens Advice Bureau  
0800 FOR CAB (0800 367 222)
- Mental Health Education and Resource Centre  
0800 424 399
- Mental Health Foundation  
03 366 6936

Also see the Personal Help Services section in the front of the White Pages.

## Pamphlets Available in This Series

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### Understanding ...

Anger  
Conflict  
Decision Making  
Self-Esteem

## Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora

Community Health Information Centre  
Te Mana Ora | Community & Public Health

160 Bealey Avenue, Christchurch  
18 Woollcombe Street, Timaru  
Elizabeth Street, Ashburton  
3 Tarapuhi Street, Greymouth

[www.cph.co.nz](http://www.cph.co.nz)

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# Understanding

White Pages