



Overcoming Loneliness

YANA Workshop | March 1, 2025

Why Are We Talking About Loneliness?

- Loneliness is common—**1 in 3** young people experience it.
- It can affect **mental health**, school performance, and relationships.
- Feeling **lonely** ≠ **being alone**. You can feel lonely even in a crowd.
- But loneliness **can be overcome** with the right steps.



What Loneliness Feels Like



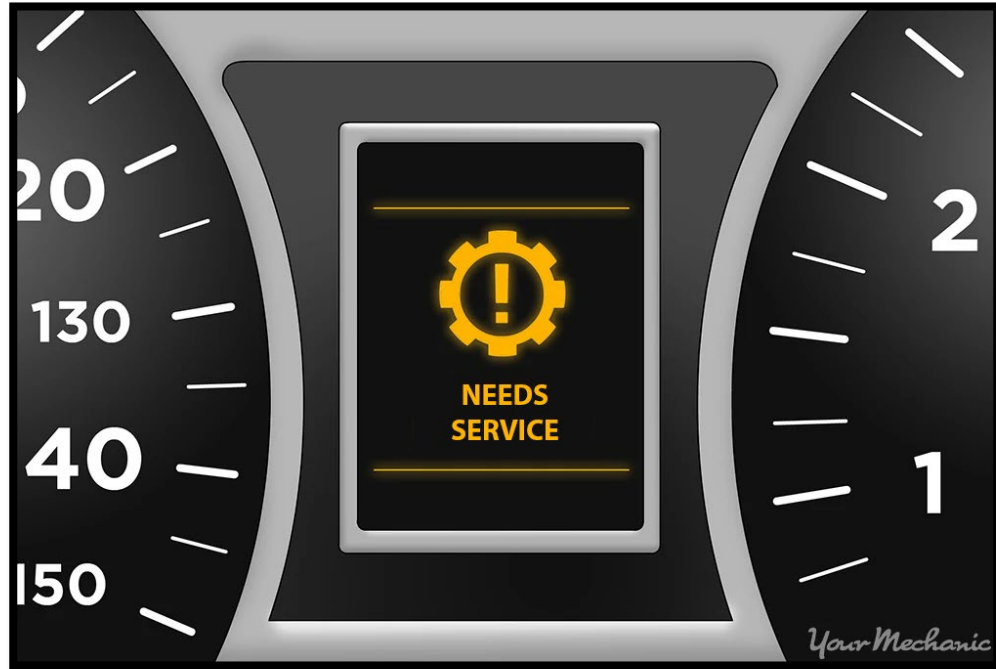
Why We Feel Lonely



- **Transitions:** Moving, changing schools, family changes
- **Social Media vs. Real Connection:** Online life $\neq$ real support
- **Mental Health Struggles:** Anxiety, depression, low self-esteem
- **Fear of Rejection:** Avoiding connection due to past hurt



The Impact of Loneliness



- Increases stress and anxiety
- Can lead to depression
- Affects sleep and focus
- May increase thoughts of self-harm

Key message: *Loneliness doesn't mean something is wrong with you—it's a signal that you need connection.*



The Impact of Loneliness



Life's Challenges & Growing Stronger



Biosphere 2 | Scientific research facility located in Oracle, Arizona designed to emulate Earth's environment (Biosphere 1) that was perhaps best known for two missions conducted in the early 1990s in which crews of 8 were sealed inside the enclosure to study survivability. The driving force for these studies was to assess whether humans were capable of building and living in **self-sustaining colonies** in outer space.

Life's Challenges & Growing Stronger



Many of the trees were healthy but fell over under their own weight ... *Why?*

They had *weak roots*. What they lacked was *wind* to make them stronger!

Life's Challenges & Growing Stronger

Fragile



Anti-fragile



Resilient



(growing stronger *because* of
struggles, stress & strain)



Life's Challenges & Growing Stronger



“Be the flame that seeks the wind”



Strategies to Overcome Loneliness



*The first key strategy is
to remember...*

**“Loneliness is a feeling,
not a forever”**



Strategies to Overcome Loneliness

- **Recognize It** – Understand that loneliness is a feeling, not a fact.
- **Reach Out** – Talk to a friend, family member, or teacher.
- **Get Involved** – Join a club, sports team, or volunteer group.
- **Limit Comparison** – Social media shows highlights, not real life.
- **Help Others** – Acts of kindness create connection.
- **Talk to Someone** – It's okay to ask for help.



Building Meaningful Connections

- **Quality over quantity:** One true friend is better than 100 online likes.
- **Be present:** Put down your phone when with others.
- **Find your people:** Seek those who share your values and interests.
- **Practice self-compassion:** Be kind to yourself as you build connections



When You Need Help, Reach Out

- **You are not alone.**
- Talking to someone can **change everything.**
- **Help is available:**

**Teen Link: Call, Text,
or Chat 866-833-6546**

- 6-10pm, answered by other teens

**Crisis Text Line:
Text “HEAL” to 741741**

- Mande AYUDA para Español

**Adults who can help –
parents, aunts/uncles,
coaches, faith leaders...**

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:

- Press 1 for veteran services
- Oprima 2 para Español
- Press 3 for the Trevor Project
- Press 4 for Native and Strong in Washington

988
**SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE**



Let's Reflect...

- What's one way you can connect more this week?
- Who makes you feel seen and valued? How can you help that relationship grow even stronger?
- Write down one way to reach out when feeling lonely.



Here Are Some Resources From Today

Slide deck from today's presentation



<http://bit.ly/43iIjan>

“My Connection” Toolkit

My Connection Toolkit

Use this toolkit when you're feeling lonely or disconnected. Fill in the sections below with ideas, names, and actions that can help you feel more connected. Keep this with you as a reminder that you are not alone!

Quick Actions
List simple things you can do right now to feel better (e.g., listen to music, take a walk, text a friend).

People I Can Talk To
Write down names and contacts of friends, family, or mentors who you can reach out to.



<https://bit.ly/41BV5v9>

Reach out to me anytime at dpeters@everettsd.org



REMEMBER: Loneliness is a feeling, not a forever

Thank you!