

# I have nobody to turn to

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**Loneliness is a feeling of sadness or distress about being by yourself or feeling disconnected from the world around you. It may be felt more over a long period of time. It is also possible to feel lonely, even when surrounded by people. Isolation is being separated from other people and your environment. Sometimes this occurs through decisions we make ourselves, or because of circumstance e.g. doing a job that requires travel or relocation.**

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## Loneliness and isolation

Many people feel lonely at some stage in their lives, even when other people are around. Loneliness and isolation can happen for a number of reasons such as:

- living alone
- limited social networks
- lack of close family ties
- losing a loved one or friend
- being bullied
- relocating for work
- going through a divorce or breakup
- being introverted so having trouble meeting new people
- existing mental health issues
- fear of rejection
- inability to participate in activities due to access issues, mobility, illness, transport
- retirement from work, home relocation, starting out in a new role or community
- lack of purpose or meaning in life
- language or cultural barriers, or reduced connection with your culture of origin
- geographic isolation.

## Loneliness and mental health

Everyone feels lonely from time to time, but long periods of loneliness or social isolation can have a negative impact on your physical, mental and social health. Some signs include:

- **physical symptoms** — aches and pains, headaches, illness or worsening of medical conditions
- **mental health conditions** — increased risk of depression, anxiety, paranoia or panic attacks
- **low energy** — tiredness or lack of motivation
- **sleep problems** — difficulty getting to sleep, waking frequently or sleeping too much
- **diet problems** — loss of appetite, sudden weight gain or loss
- **substance use** — increased consumption of alcohol, smoking, medications, drugs
- **negative feelings** — feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness or thoughts about suicide.



**If you are feeling overwhelmed  
by loneliness, help is available.  
Contact Lifeline on 13 11 14**

## What helps?

Loneliness and isolation can have a big impact upon your life and it is important to get help as loneliness can be overcome. Some helpful suggestions include:

- **Connecting with family and friends** — Reconnecting with old friends, or making new ones, spending time with loved ones or catching up via email or over the phone. Any time spent with others will can prevent and reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness.
- **Leave the house** — Being stuck behind four walls isn't helpful. Pop to the shops to grab some bread and milk, go for a walk, sit on the beach.
- **Volunteer** — Meeting new people, getting out of the house, learning new skills or helping others may all be ways to increase your feelings of being involved.
- **Exercise** — Going for a walk or joining a gym will have a positive impact upon your mood in general.
- **Get support** — If loneliness and isolation are becoming overwhelming call Lifeline on 13 11 14, speak to your GP or contact one of the support services listed below.

## Where to go to for support?

Loneliness and isolation can become very overwhelming but help is available and it can be overcome. Try some of the tips in this factsheet, talk to your GP or consider contacting one of the support services below. Your GP can refer you to local health professionals based on your needs or visit the Lifeline Service Seeker Directory at [lifeline.serviceseeker.com.au](http://lifeline.serviceseeker.com.au) to search for local services and centres in your area.

- **Contact Lifeline:** 13 11 14 (available 24/7) or Online Crisis Support Chat (available nightly at [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au))
- **Mensline Australia:** 1300 78 99 78 (24hrs)
- **Kids Helpline:** 1800 55 1800
- **Australian Psychological Society (APS)**  
Find a Psychologist: [www.findapsychologist.org.au](http://www.findapsychologist.org.au)
- **Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA)** Find a Therapist: [www.pacfa.org.au](http://www.pacfa.org.au)
- **Australian Counselling Association (ACA)**  
Find a Counsellor: [www.theaca.net.au](http://www.theaca.net.au)

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## Loneliness can impact upon your health:

- physical health
- mental health
- low energy
- sleep problems
- diet problems
- substance use
- negative thoughts.

If you are feeling overwhelmed by loneliness, help is available. Contact Lifeline on 13 11 14

## Tips to help overcome loneliness and isolation?

- connect with family and friends
- leave the house, even if it's only for 5 minutes
- volunteer — giving back helps you to feel good
- exercise — go for a walk or even to the gym.



**Phone 13 11 14 | [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)**

Call Lifeline on 13 11 14 (available 24/7) if you are feeling suicidal or in crisis or visit [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au) to connect online with our Crisis Support Chat (available nightly), find a range of other useful factsheets and to find local services in your area.

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