



Lesson 3: How can we help ourselves and others to combat loneliness?



Tiana has 4000 followers on Instagram, is getting popular on TikTok and also has a Facebook account with 500 friends too. She gets a lot of likes and shares on everything she posts. 'It's weird,' she thinks. 'Even knowing how popular I am, I still feel lonelier than ever.'

Discuss: Does being popular on social media mean you have lots of genuine friends in real life?



What does loneliness mean? Why do you think Tiana feels lonely?

CLUES: *isolation real human contact
illusion sadness façade*

Learning outcomes:

Identify and articulate a range of emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.

Describe the characteristics of mental and emotional health and strategies for managing these.

Describe a broad range of strategies — cognitive and practical — for promoting emotional wellbeing, for avoiding negative thinking and for ways of managing mental health concerns.

Loneliness:

A sadness felt because a person has no friends or company.

Social isolation: Social isolation is a state of complete or near-complete lack of contact between an individual and society



How can we help ourselves and others to combat loneliness?



What is Loneliness?

Most people experience loneliness at some point in their lives. Loneliness is not simply about being alone; it is the feeling that your social or emotional needs are not being met.

You can feel lonely in a crowded room, at a party, or even when surrounded by friends and family. Equally, some people spend a lot of time on their own and do not feel lonely at all.

People experience loneliness in different ways. Some may feel they lack close emotional support, whilst others feel disconnected from friendship groups or struggle to find a sense of purpose and belonging.

Why Does It Matter?

1. Research shows that long-term loneliness can affect both physical and mental health. It has been linked to:
2. Increased stress and anxiety
3. Low mood and depression
4. Poor sleep
5. Reduced confidence and self-esteem
6. Difficulties concentrating and learning
7. The important thing to remember is that loneliness is a normal human experience, not a weakness or failure.

Why do you think someone can feel lonely even when they are surrounded by other people?

How can we help ourselves and others to combat loneliness?



Why Might More People Feel Lonely Today?

Many people believe loneliness has become more common because modern life is changing. Social media allows us to connect instantly with others, but it can sometimes replace meaningful face-to-face interaction. Busy lifestyles, increased pressure at school and work, changing family structures and mental health difficulties can also make it harder for people to build strong relationships.

What Can Help?

There is no single solution to loneliness, but there are things that can make a positive difference:

1. Spending time with friends and family
2. Joining clubs, sports teams or activities
3. Volunteering and helping others
4. Getting involved in school or community events
5. Talking to someone you trust
6. Looking after your physical and mental wellbeing

Sometimes the hardest step is simply reaching out to someone else.

Key Message

Loneliness is common, but it doesn't have to be permanent. Building connections, taking opportunities to get involved and asking for support when needed can make a huge difference.

Final Question

What advice would you give to a friend who told you they were feeling lonely?

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Why is it so important that we try to combat the epidemic of loneliness in the modern world? Make notes as you watch the clips, we'll go through the answers together afterwards.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n3Xv_g3g-mA



What problems can loneliness cause?	Why do we need to combat loneliness?	How can we combat loneliness?

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Let's share some of our ideas from the clip now, and any others you may have thought of yourself from your own experience or knowledge.

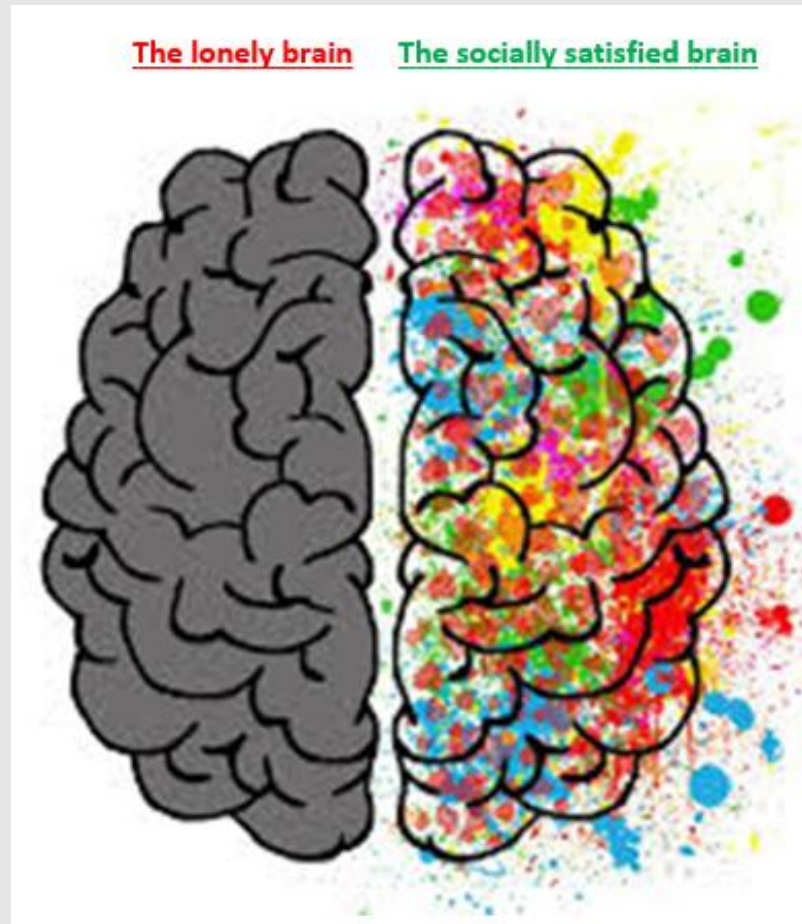


What problems can loneliness cause?	Why do we need to combat loneliness?	How can we combat loneliness?
Social pain and hurt.	It's in our biology that we need to be round other people.	We need to firstly recognise that we are lonely
Feeling of isolation.	Your thoughts about the world change, which in turn changes your actions and feelings.	Check if we are concentrating too much on the negative
It makes you age quicker, it's as deadly as smoking.	It can end in depression if we don't	We need to risk being open and vulnerable again
It makes cancer deadlier and immune systems weaker	You pay more attention to others, but understand them less, it makes you distrustful	Try to reach out and get professional help
It can advance Alzheimer's disease.	Nothing can substitute our need for connection with each other.	Connect with a friend you haven't spoken to for a while or try a new event or sport

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How can we improve our mental health by turning lonely brains into socially satisfied brains?



Using your information from today and your own ideas, write a symptom of the lonely brain on one side and one idea of how we can work towards having a socially satisfied brain on the other.

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Need Support? You're Not Alone

If anything in today's lesson has affected you, or you want to talk to someone, there is help available.



Mental Health & Low Mood

YoungMinds – <https://www.youngminds.org.uk>

Kooth – <https://www.kooth.com>

Mind – <https://www.mind.org.uk>

Talk to Someone

Your Tutor or Head of Year – We're here to help.

Wellbeing Team and School Nurse

Report a Concern on Satchel

Safeguarding Team with the Purple lanyards

Healthy Lifestyle

NHS Every Mind Matters – <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters>

Change4Life – <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life>

Apps That Can Help

Calm – For mindfulness and sleep.

Headspace – Meditation and stress relief.

Clear Fear – Manage anxiety (designed for young people).

MeeTwo – Anonymously talk to other teens, moderated by experts.

Eating Concerns

Beat Eating Disorders –

<https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk>

NHS Live Well – Eating Disorders –

<https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/eating-disorders/>