

Participant Guide

# Combatting Loneliness in a Virtual World

## Agenda

- The Loneliness Epidemic
- Challenges of Virtual Work
- Myths and Misconceptions
- Types of Loneliness
- Indicators of Loneliness
- Measuring Loneliness
- Strategies to Combat Loneliness
- Benefits of Combatting Loneliness
- Review & Takeaways



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## The Loneliness Epidemic

- 20% of global employees report experiencing loneliness
- 47% of people report being lonely working onsite
- People 35 years old and younger report being more lonely
- Loneliness impacts engagement



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## Challenges of Working Virtually

- Lack of spontaneous connection
- Feeling disconnected from teams
- Amplified feelings of isolation



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## Myths & Misconceptions

- Loneliness can be solved with in-person work
- Teams will solve loneliness
- Lonely employees are socially needier
- Loneliness is a person problem



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## Types of Loneliness

Loneliness is subjective

- Social loneliness
- Emotional loneliness
- Existential loneliness
- Structural loneliness
- Situational loneliness



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## 10 Indicators of Loneliness

1. Sloppy work
2. Lack of learning or development
3. Change in routine
4. Stops offering input
5. Skips or resents meetings
6. Only talks work
7. Limited interaction with coworkers
8. Apathetic attitude
9. Unkempt appearance
10. Excessive working



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## Self-Assessment Work Loneliness

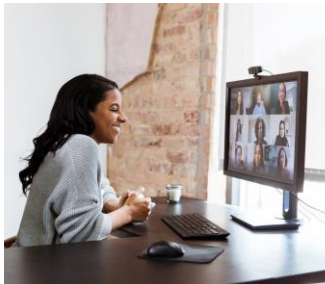
Statement	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
People in my organization understand who I really am.	5	4	3	2	1
I feel lonely while working.	1	2	3	4	5
There are enough people at work who would "have my back" if I needed support.	5	4	3	2	1
I feel left out by others in this organization.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel satisfied with my work relationships.	5	4	3	2	1

## Self-Assessment Loneliness Score

Score Range	Loneliness Level
<b>5 – 10</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>11 – 14</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>15 – 25</b>	<b>High</b>

## Work Strategies Combat Loneliness at Work

- Create daily routine, incorporate social engagement
- Use virtual tools
- Cultivate online communities



See page 7 in this guide for a detailed summary of strategies: Work, Home and Personal



## Reviews & Takeaways

- Loneliness is directly related to engagement
- Loneliness affects interpersonal relationships
- Loneliness impacts mental health
- Know the clear signs and indicators
- Improve social connections & activities
- Practice Self-Care



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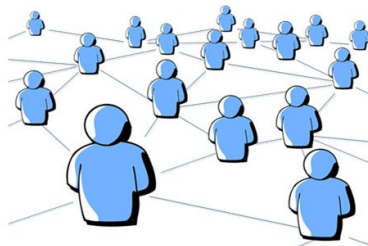
## Action Plan

*Identify **ONE** action step you will take to combat loneliness and feel happier.*



## Resources

- Vantage Circle: [Workplace Loneliness](#)
- HBR: [We're Still Lonely at Work](#)
- HMS: [Improving Employee Health](#)
- APA: [Loneliness](#)
- Psychology Today: [10 Signs of Lonely Worker](#)
- National Library of Medicine: [Impact of Loneliness on Aging](#)



## Observe, Chat, Connect

Helping colleagues when they aren't quite themselves

- **Observe.** Notice when behavior has changed
- **Chat.** Ask how they are
- **Connect.** Guide them to help



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mental health  
and employee  
wellbeing  
solution



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Available 24/7, call **800.344.4222** or  
visit [employees.concernhealth.com](https://employees.concernhealth.com)

To learn more about services free to you  
and your eligible family members, check  
your company's benefits site or reach out  
to your Human Resources department.

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## Questions? Comments?

**Thank you!**

Please complete the Survey Monkey  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/3VHDNPS>

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## Strategies to Combat Loneliness

### WORK Strategies

- Create daily routine, incorporate social engagement
- Virtual coffee breaks
- Schedule on-line working sessions with other colleagues
- Use virtual tools: Slack, Teams, Zoom
- Cultivate online communities
- Virtual coffee breaks at specific time with others
- Peer groups based on different interests

### Personal Strategies

- Build into your schedule time to connect with colleagues, check in, chat, create virtual water cooler conversations
- Use tools like Slack, Teams, Zoom, Chat to connect visually with co-workers; interest-based Chat Channels - cooking, books
- Cultivate relationships in LinkedIn, Facebook, Alignable, and other groups to forge friendships

### Quick Wins (Small, Daily Practices)

- Send a friendly message to a colleague you haven't spoken to in a while
- Use voice memos instead of texts to create warmer communication
- Call someone and have an actual, spontaneous conversation

### HOME Strategies

- Take a class: pottery, painting, writing, yoga, cycling
- Host or attend local gatherings
- Invite neighbor over for coffee
- Participate in local community events
- Join a Meet-Up group or Eventbrite event
- Nurture relationships outside of work
- Reconnect with friends or colleagues
- Volunteer at local charitable events
- Get involved at your spiritual center

### Personal Strategies

- Nurture "live" relationships with neighbors, family, friends, spiritual center community, meet-up groups.
- Use time you would have spent commuting engaging in more social activities, such as breakfast socials, after-work networking events
- Focus on your physical, emotional, and cognitive health: engage in hobbies, interests; journal, meditate, pamper yourself
- Practice Self-Care: get a massage, go on a retreat, cook healthy meals, exercise regularly, do things that make you smile

### Quick Wins (Small, Daily Practices)

- Say hello to a neighbor when walking your dog
- Join a fitness class instead of working out alone
- Drop into a coffee shop
- Take yourself out on a date
- Re-engage in your community

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