



How to connect in a crisis

Description



Lockdown loneliness has attracted a crowd of helpers – including churches, charities and a Government secretary.

The [Methodist Church](#) is alerting members to the fact that while their buildings may be closed, many congregations offer phone pastoral care and an online worship experience. The Methodist Church also offers [worship sheets](#) to use at home.

Listening to a radio station or podcast can help if our homes feel too quiet

Examples of online help include – [Methodist Central Hall](#) via YouTube, [Thornton Methodist Church, Lancashire](#) offering phone calls, social media presence and service materials and [Wesley's Chapel](#) live streaming services.

Mental health support group [Mind](#) have published a list of practical ways to connect with people during the Coronavirus crisis. They recommend keeping in touch digitally with video chats, phone calls, messages or texts.

Mind suggest putting extra pictures up of those we care about can be a reminder of the people in our lives. Listening to a chatty radio station or podcast can help if our homes feel too quiet. Connecting with others in similar situations can also be achieved through online peer support communities like [Elefriends](#), where people can share their experiences and hear from others.

The Government have launched a campaign to tackle loneliness and social isolation. Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden announced loneliness as a 'priority category' of a £750 million charity-funding package. The aim of [#Let'sTalkLoneliness](#) is to get people talking openly about this issue. Useful tips and advice are shared, such as – joining a club or group online, and volunteering to support others in a similar position.

‘We can help ensure more people are staying socially connected’

This campaign has been welcomed by Deborah Alsina, Chief Executive of [Independent Age](#) and Chair of the [Campaign to End Loneliness](#). ‘Even before Covid-19, millions of people were experiencing loneliness,’ she said. ‘The lockdown, while necessary, has exacerbated this problem, particularly for older people.’

Three out of four over-65s feel contact with family or friends has been significantly limited, said an Independent Age survey. ‘Loneliness cannot be considered a second-tier issue during this crisis,’ Deborah added. ‘By working together, we can help ensure more people are staying physically distant, but socially connected during the lockdown.’ (Photo: Independent Age)

New links: Since we published this story, we have been made aware that two of the links featured no longer work – to the online peer support community Elefriends and to the campaign to tackle loneliness and social isolation, #Let'sTalkLoneliness. On further investigation, we found Elefriends has simply been rebranded as [Side By Side](#), and continues to offer a space to connect with others over shared

experiences. Side By Side describe themselves as an online community where you can 'listen, share and be heard'. In addition, #Let'sTalkLoneliness continues to be a key part of the [Marmalade Trust](#). Marmalade Trust claim to be the UK's leading loneliness charity for all ages and the only charity in the world specifically dedicated to raising awareness of loneliness. Please make use of the resources these agencies have to offer.

Category

1. News & reviews

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