

THE EPIDEMIC OF LONELINESS!

*Loneliness is not lack of company; loneliness is lack of purpose ... Guillermo Maldonado
All the lonely people...Where do they all come from? ... The Beatles*

WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ Loneliness is not just being alone; it is a state of mind where people feel isolated, unwanted, empty, unimportant, anxious, and depressed
- ❖ Living alone has increased over the years; single person households are the second most common type of household
- ❖ Loneliness is subjective: even though you may have friends, you can feel disconnected
- ❖ Loneliness has reached epidemic proportions; an AARP survey found that more than 42 million Americans over the age of 45 have chronic loneliness
- ❖ Another survey from The Economist and the Kaiser Family Foundation found that 22% of American adults often feel or always feel lonely, lack companionship, or feel isolated
- ❖ A recent Cigna study of 20,000 adults found:
 - ❖ Nearly half felt like they were alone
 - ❖ Only a little more than 50% had meaningful daily interactions with others
 - ❖ 50% said that they felt isolated from others and sometimes or always had relationships that were not meaningful
 - ❖ 20% said that they rarely or never feel close to people
 - ❖ 18% felt like they had no one to talk to
- ❖ Loneliness has been shown to lead to alcoholism, depression, poor sleep, weight gain, anxiety, and schizophrenia
- ❖ Social isolation can also lead to chronic inflammation, heart disease, stroke, cancer, cognitive decline, high blood pressure, and a higher risk for death
- ❖ People who are not lonely have regular interactions with others, are usually employed, get along well with co-workers, and have a purpose in their lives
- ❖ In adolescents, loneliness is linked to antisocial behavior including hostility, delinquency, and violent acting-out including school shootings

WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ Find a purpose so that you can feel fulfilled and that your life has some meaning
- ❖ Silence your critical, internal voice that prevents you from being outgoing
- ❖ Consider getting an emotional support animal; cats, dogs, and even horses can be very effective in decreasing loneliness and depression
- ❖ Get regular sleep as studies have shown that it decreases loneliness
- ❖ Push yourself to actively spend good quality time with family and friends
- ❖ Take care of your health by exercising, eating well, and not overconsuming alcohol
- ❖ Volunteer for community service where you can meet other people
- ❖ Seek professional help; a therapeutic relationship can help overcome your loneliness

WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com

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