



TALKTOABLOKE
COUNSELLING FOR MEN BY MEN

Actually, I think I am lonely

To me, loneliness is one of the greatest dangers to men. When we look through the recommendations for things like anxiety, depression, and stress, the common theme is to spend more time with friends and family. So how do we as men do something about it when we are lonely?

WHAT TO DO?

1: Acknowledge it. As a first step we need to call it out and to be able to say it out loud. This is not to wallow in it but instead to highlight it as something that we need to address and fast.

2: Trek back in history. For some, the thought of contacting people, joining a club, or attending a mens group is pretty scary. The answer is going to be different for everyone so start small and safe. One option is to look back on who you used to be close with. Past colleagues, past team members, neighbours, school friends are a good list to begin with. For many, the school friend connection still remains a strong option. LinkedIn, Social Media, School "Old Boys" groups.

3: Set a goal. I have found that it is a small group who can adhere to the classic... *I am going to catch up with friends twice per month and family weekly etc.* Set more immediate goals such as I am going to contact Dave in the next 2 days and I am going to call my sister tonight after dinner. Note how you feel during and after these events, this will help make the next time a bit easier for you.

4: Get in a group. There is evidence to support our need to be in a group with other men. This tendency seems more prevalent in men than women. So how do we make this happen? Sporting clubs, volunteer groups for things that interest you (in Australia the Rural Fire Service is one example), cards nights and footy games are all options to look out for in your area.

5: Get busy. I don't mean at work... what I am referring to is to get busy on busting out of loneliness. We work hard in our workplace, in our families, our gyms or wherever we put our energy. We need to put energy into this now, the return on investment is there in terms of health, longevity and happiness.

Don't do it alone! Regards

Evan