

Overview

Some useful, but by no means fully comprehensive list of reports for stimulating thinking around loneliness, connection and well-being. As of 2019, there is very little written or researched about loneliness in the workplace. We can learn lessons from the research around loneliness for old people to identify what is now needed and can be helpful in the workplace.

Reports (listed, most recent at the top)

October 2018, **An overview of reviews: the effectiveness of interventions to address loneliness at all stages of the life-course.** By the What Works Centre for Well Being. Available at: <https://whatworkswellbeing.org/product/tackling-loneliness-full-review/>

Our View: Head to the briefing document, not the full review. It gives the headlines from the review of 364 reviews (UK and world) so it establishes what we know about loneliness and effective ways to tackle it. It reveals big gaps in the current evidence base that can be addressed by the national strategy on loneliness. Consider... what is the workplace version of each of the interventions?

2018. **Loneliness and Social Connections.** By AARP Research and GfK Custom Research, Inc. Available at: <https://connect2affect.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/AARP-740C-Loneliness-Report-v3-with-LOGO-TAG.pdf>

Our View: A study of loneliness amongst 45+ year olds in US. Not workplace related, but useful to identify that those who are chronically lonely are more likely to gravitate towards solo activities.

2018. **Who feels lonely?** The results of the world's largest loneliness study. By the BBC Claudia Hammond. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/2yzhfv4DvqVp5nZyxBD8G23/who-feels-lonely-the-results-of-the-world-s-largest-loneliness-study>

Our View: A survey of 55,000 people which highlights who feels lonely and what helps them feel less lonely. This is a large scale survey, and yet at the same time the reporting on it seems to lack depth. The idea of doing an activity to distract you or just talking to anyone may be a great start, but it doesn't help us identify ways of fundamentally changing how we work in our communities.

Dec 2017. **A call to action: Combatting loneliness one conversation at a time.** By Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness.

Available at: https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/rb_dec17_jocox_commission_finalreport.pdf

Our View: A report that pulls together data from multiple sources to build a call to action. It highlights the need for consistency around measurement and the roles that everyone can play to make a difference around this issue.

September 2017. **Making the economic case for investing in actions to prevent and/or tackle loneliness: a systematic review.** By David McDaid, Annette Bauer and A-La Park; Personal Social Services Research Unit; London School of Economics and Political Science. Available at: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/business-and-consultancy/consulting/assets/documents/making-the-economic-case-for-investing-in-actions-to-prevent-and-or-tackle-loneliness-a-systematic-review.pdf>

Our View: An academic paper looking at the economic return of investing in interventions to minimise loneliness. However, as the main interventions have typically been towards older people, such as befriending, there is the need to extrapolate and adapt from this when creating interventions within the workplace.

2016. **The way we are now 2016.** By Relate. Available at: <https://www.relate.org.uk/policy-campaigns/our-campaigns/way-we-are-now-2016>

Our View: With data from a survey of over 5,000 people this is one of the largest studies of relationships in the UK. The study covers not just couple relationships but also friendships, our family and workplace relationships. Some good stats and an infographic.

July 2014. **The Future of Loneliness.** Facing the challenge of loneliness for older people in the UK 2014 to 2030. By The Future Foundation, commissioned by Friends of the Elderly. Available at: https://www.fote.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/2014_03-FOTE-Future-of-loneliness-Report-low-res-without-crops.pdf

Our View: A comprehensive review and picture of loneliness for older people from which we can learn a few things to adapt for organisations. Section 4 is about how membership of organisations minimises loneliness; we need to go beyond 'chequebook membership' towards active membership.

May 2014. **The Evidence. Employee engagement and well-being.** By Engage for Success.

Available at: <https://engageforsuccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/wellbeing-and-engagement-04June2014-Final.pdf>

Our View: A combination of evidence and practical advice to support both performance and well-being within the workplace. This contextualises the importance of relationships within a wider well-being approach, recognising positive relationships as one of six aspects of psychological well-being.

2010, **The Lonely Society?** By the Mental Health Foundation.

Available at: https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/the_lonely_society_report.pdf

Our View: An in-depth and lengthy read on loneliness which asks are we getting lonelier, who is affected and what can we do about it. It combines academic sourcing with personalised stories and examples of interventions in society. A great read that makes the links between loneliness and our health. Relies heavily on sources from the book *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection*.

Measuring your impact on loneliness in later life. By the Campaign to End Loneliness.

Available at: <https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/wp-content/uploads/Loneliness-Measurement-Guidance1.pdf>

Our View: Whilst this report mentions loneliness in later life, it is helpful for developing thinking around how we can measure loneliness in our workplace communities. It summarises and critiques 4 ways of measuring connection and loneliness and poses questions to help you identify which approach is right for your community.

Books

2009. **Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection.** John T. Cacioppo and William Patrick.

2013. **Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other.** Sherry Turkle.

Excerpt available at: https://www.smmp.com/info/discernment_2017/alone_together.pdf

Government Data

Community Life Survey: Focus on Loneliness 2017-18, Department for Digital, Culture, Sport and Media.

Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/771482/Community_Life_Survey_Focus_on_Loneliness_201718.pdf

Our View: Data collected from households between August 2017 and March 2018 around statements of loneliness. It helps us understand the ages impacted by loneliness, but it does not touch on the role of the workplace in minimising loneliness. 6% of adults say they often/ always feel lonely, and the highest adult group is women 25-34.

The Office of National Statistics

1. Measures of National Well-being Dashboard includes a metric on relationships. Positive relationships have one of the biggest impacts on our quality of life and happiness. This domain includes satisfaction with personal relationships and feelings of loneliness. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/measuresofnationalwellbeingdashboard/2018-09-26>
2. Personal and economic well-being in the UK: April 2019. Estimates looking across personal well-being and economic well-being in the UK. Part of a new series on people and prosperity introduced in February 2019. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/personalandeconomicwellbeingintheuk/april2019>