

TACKLING LONELINESS RESOURCE PACK



RESOURCES TO HELP YOU LEARN
ABOUT LONELINESS AND TACKLE IT.

DEAR READER

WE AT YOUTH FOCUS NW STAND IN SOLIDARITY WITH ALL OUR YOUNG PEOPLE, WHATEVER THEIR BACKGROUND AND WHEREVER THEY COME FROM. WE ARE COMMITTED TO TACKLING LONELINESS AND ENCOURAGING ALL YOUNG PEOPLE TO THRIVE.



THIS RESOURCE PACK AIMS TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND LONELINESS, THE CAUSES, EFFECTS AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO TACKLE IT.

Resources to help
combat, challenge and
learn more about
loneliness.

TACKLING LONELINESS



LISTEN

Listen to podcasts, radio shows and other audio books. These podcasts aim to help you feel less lonely and also tackle loneliness.



READ

There is so much out there to read! Whether it be stories about cared for young people, those facing mental health challenges or about how to help combat some of these issues.



WATCH

There is wide variety of documentaries, TV shows and films challenging and exploring loneliness. Giving a space and platform for conversation around isolation and mental well-being.



UNDERSTANDING LONELINESS

On the surface loneliness may seem like a simple concept, but in reality the root causes can often be complex and effect our mental wellbeing.



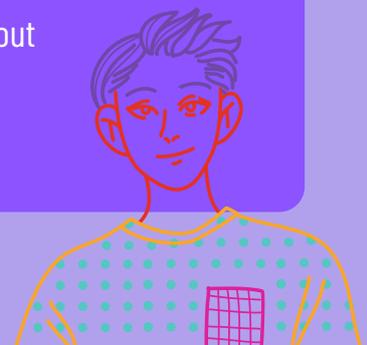
HOW TO COMBAT LONELINESS

A few ideas on how we can combat loneliness in ourselves and others.



CONTINUE

- Raise awareness about loneliness in our society today.
- Know when to reach out
- Continue



KEYWORDS/ PHRASES AND MEANINGS

Mental Health- A person's condition with regard to their psychological and emotional well-being.

Foster Care- Temporary custody or guardianship for young people whose parents are unable to look after them.

Adoption- A process through which a person — the adoptive parent — assumes permanent legal responsibility for a child

Anxiety- A feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something with an uncertain outcome.

Depression- A mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest. Also called major depressive disorder or clinical depression, it affects how you feel, think and behave and can lead to a variety of emotional and physical problems

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT/ JOURNAL/ DISCUSS WITH THOSE AROUND YOU.

HAVE YOU FELT LONELY BEFORE IN YOUR LIFE? WAS THERE A REASON?

HOW OFTEN DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE PEOPLE YOU SURROUND YOURSELF WITH?

WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU FACED BECAUSE OF YOUR BACKGROUND?

WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT MAKE YOU FEEL LESS LONELY?

HOW DOES YOUR MENTAL HEALTH EFFECT YOUR DAILY LIFE?



LISTEN

PODCAST!

THE SOCIALLY AWKWARD PODCAST



A funny podcast for teens full of interviews that will surely remind them that they are not the only ones walking around this planet feeling weird or like you are alone in life and your problems.

PODCAST!

'DEAR HANK AND JOHN

The "Hank" and "John" in this case are, of course, Hank Green and John Green, brothers, authors, and YouTubers. (You may have heard about one of John's little novels, *The Fault in Our Stars*.) On their podcast, they answer questions like how to quit a job, how to find time to do little things, and can bees feel happiness and sadness.



PODCAST!

MENTAL MUSIC

This is a podcast made for and by teens, focusing on mental health. Episodes focus on topics like insomnia, how sound affects everyday life, and social media and mental health.



PODCAST!

TED TALKS DAILY

Every teen has probably dipped into a TED Talk or two. The podcast maintains what's enjoyable about them: they're short, easily digestible nuggets of interesting information. Have a look at the ones about loneliness or mental health especially!



ALTHOUGH THEY HAVEN'T PUBLISHED FOR A WHILE IT IS STILL WELL WORTH A LISTEN TOO!

LISTEN AND THINK



Pick one of these podcast episodes or choose your own and listen to it, perhaps make notes, draw or just think about what they are saying.

**HOW HAS IT
CHANGED YOUR
WAY OF THINKING?**

**HOW DID IT
MAKE YOU
FEEL?**

**DID YOU RELATE TO
ANYTHING THAT
WAS SAID IN THE
PODCAST?**

**WHAT ARE THREE
THINGS THAT YOU
HAVE LEARNT THAT
YOU DIDN'T KNOW
BEFORE?**

READ



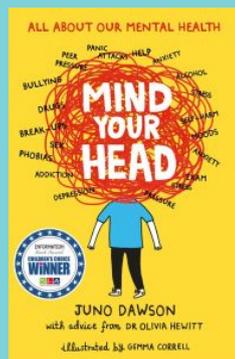
Non-fiction

Fiction

Mind Your Head

BY JUNO DAWSON

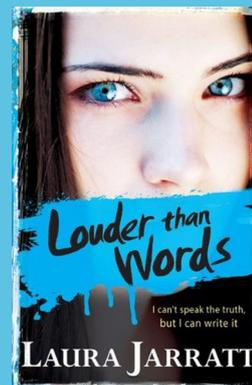
This book looks at taking care of mental health just as much as we do physical health. In addition to Juno's own funny stories, it features real-life mental health tales from young people around the world. Comic illustrations from Gemma Correll increase the fun factor, and practical information from clinical psychologist Dr. Olivia Hewitt helps to cover a wide range of mental health issues faced by teens whether short-term or long-term.



Louder Than Words

BY LAURA JARRATT

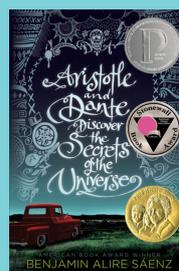
Afi, a girl with selective mutism, hasn't spoken a word in over eight years. Her big brother, Silas, adores her, and includes her in every little detail of his popular and intelligent life. After Silas introduces her to a possible new friend, Rafi suddenly desires to learn to speak again – but she can't find the right words to say. This isolated and unique story highlights true loneliness and what it feels like to try and break out of it



It's All Absolutely Fine: Life is complicated, so I've drawn it instead

BY RUBY ELLIOT

Ruby's illustrations show what it's like to suffer from all kinds of mental health issues: anxiety, bipolar disorder, self-harm, eating disorders, and depression. We all know that mental health needs to be talked about more, and I really do think that humour – visual humour especially – can be a great way to do it. Mental Health is lonely, and this book talks all about it.



Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe

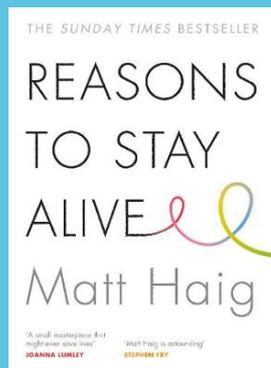
BY BENJAMIN ALIRE SÁENZ

Two lonesome teens, Aristotle and Dante, spark an unusual friendship in this incredible read. While the plot of this story surrounds the big and universal question of "Who am I?" But, it also embraces the loneliness that comes with being human. It's beautifully written, and it will immerse you in a world you won't want to leave.

Reasons to Stay Alive

BY MATT HAIG

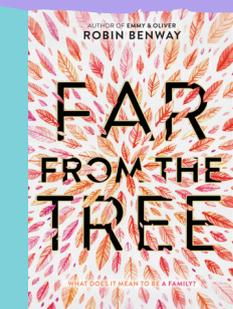
What does it mean to feel truly alive? Aged 24, Matt Haig's world caved in. He could see no way to go on living. This is the true story of how he came through crisis, triumphed over an illness that almost destroyed him and learned to live again. A moving, funny and joyous exploration of how to live better, love better and feel more alive, *Reasons to Stay Alive* is more than a memoir. It is a book about making the most of your time on earth.



Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine

BY GAIL HONEYMAN

This book champions everyday courage and the importance of friendship in a world where people are increasingly isolated. Challenging the stigmas that exist around loneliness in contemporary society, it is a gentle reminder of those we too easily overlook and how a life can be changed by small acts of kindness.



FAR FROM THE TREE

BY ROBIN BENWAY

Being the middle child has its ups and downs. But for Grace, an only child who was adopted at birth, discovering that she is a middle child is a different ride altogether. After putting her own baby up for adoption, she goes looking for her biological family. A book that addresses issues such important topics as adoption, teen pregnancy, and foster care.



The Guardian

BY JOYCE SWEENEY

A shorter novel about a thirteen-year-old boy named Hunter who has been shifted from foster home to foster home for most of his life. There are three foster sisters in his current home, which was pretty good until their foster father, Mike, died. Now foster mom Stephanie has changed, and she's forcing the kids – including five-year-old Drew – to get jobs.

Articles, blogs etc

There are articles and blogs published daily about sexism and what is going in the world. Be sure to have a read and follow blog posts and people that you like. Perhaps if you are not a fan of reading you could listen to a book in an Audio form!

When finding books have a look at independent bookshops, secondhand shops, libraries or ask your friends if you could borrow a copy!



WATCH

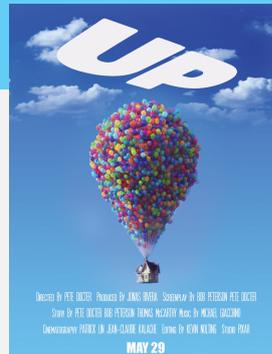
WHEN WATCHING THINK ABOUT FOLLOWING, WRITE/ TALK/ DISCUSS THEM

HOW HAS YOUR
THINKING CHANGED?

IS THERE SOMETHING YOU'RE GOING
TO CHANGE IN YOUR OWN LIFE?

WHAT MESSAGE WAS
THE FILM SENDING?

WHY DO YOU THINK THE MESSAGE
WAS SO IMPORTANT?



WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

8-year-old Max is a lonely young boy who's parents have gotten divorced. He has an active imagination that leads him onto to all sorts of adventures. We learn why he has such a wild imagination: he has to. He has no one else to play with, so he has to make up someone, because he is lonely he misbehaves and is an angry child but through meeting the wild things, he learns so much.

THE MARTIAN

is a striking reminder that there's nowhere worse to be alone than on another planet or in a spaceship far from our home Earth. It can also be looked at in a different way, how loneliness can effect a person and what being alone for so long does to someone. It provides an imaginative exercise that forces viewers into thinking about loneliness,

UP

As a boy, Carl Fredricksen wanted to explore South America and find the forbidden Paradise Falls. About 64 years later he gets to begin his journey along with Boy Scout Russell by lifting his house with thousands of balloons. On their journey, they make many new friends including a talking dog, and figure out that someone has evil plans. Carl soon realizes that this evildoer is his childhood idol.

PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER

In the story, Charlie experiences being lonely in different aspects of his life. The first one that he feels this in is his family or when he knew all the answers he kept quiet because he doesn't want to get bullied by others as no one would defend him. This film explores what life is like as a teenager struggling with loneliness.

UNDERSTANDING LONELINESS

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU FIND OUT ABOUT LONELINESS IN THE UK? HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED IT?

WHY LONELINESS MATTERS

LONELINESS IS A FEELING THAT MOST PEOPLE WILL EXPERIENCE AT SOME POINT IN THEIR LIVES. HOWEVER, WHEN PEOPLE FEEL LONELY MOST OR ALL OF THE TIME, IT CAN HAVE A SERIOUS IMPACT ON AN INDIVIDUAL'S WELL-BEING, AND THEIR ABILITY TO FUNCTION IN THEIR DAILY LIFE. AS LONELINESS HAS BEEN LINKED TO POOR PHYSICAL HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, AND POOR PERSONAL WELL-BEING, WITH POTENTIALLY HARMFUL EFFECTS ON COMMUNITIES,

THE BBC RECENTLY CONDUCTED A STUDY ON LONELINESS, AND FOUND THAT 40% OF 16-24 YEAR OLDS OFTEN OR VERY OFTEN FELT LONELY.

THESE ARE JUST SOME EXAMPLES, THERE ARE MANY MANY MORE.

GOVERNMENT STEPS

THE UK GOVERNMENT APPOINTED ITS FIRST-EVER "MINISTER FOR LONELINESS" IN 2018, WHICH LED TO AN 84-PAGE NATIONAL "STRATEGY FOR TACKLING LONELINESS."

YOU CAN READ THE REPORT [HERE](#)

WHAT CAN CAUSE LONELINESS #1

LONELINESS DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN BEING ALONE. IT'S THE FEELING OF ALONENESS EVEN IN THE PRESENCE OF OTHERS. LONELINESS IS A PERCEIVED, INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE. THERE'S A SENSE OF DETACHMENT, ALIENATION, AND ISOLATION.

CAUSES OF LONELINESS #2

THE FEELING OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM OTHERS, SUCH AS PEERS, FAMILY OR A COMMUNITY. THIS CARRIES WITH IT FEELINGS OF LOW SELF-ESTEEM, DEVALUATION OR A SENSE OF ABSENCE OF ACCEPTANCE.

FEELING LEFT OUT CAN HAVE A REAL EFFECT ON FEELING LONELY.

CAUSE OF LONELINESS #3

THE LOSS OF SOMETHING, FOR EXAMPLE A LOVED ONE OR SOMEONE TO WHICH ONE HAS A STRONG ATTACHMENT - A DEATH, OR BREAKUP IN A RELATIONSHIP, LOSS OF A JOB, LEAVING A COMMUNITY SUCH AS HIGH SCHOOL, COLLEGE OR A JOB.

LOOKING AFTER YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Talking about your feelings can help you stay in good mental health and deal with times when you feel lonely or upset.

Ask for help, nobody is superhuman, we all need help at some point in our lives. Keep in touch with those around you, call them, message them or agree to meet up with them.

https://youtu.be/n3Xv_g3g-mA

This video explains the history of loneliness, the importance of it for our ancestors and what that means for us now. Click [HERE](#)

LGBTQ +, BIPOC and disabled girls talked about the dual discrimination of being harassed both for their ethnicity or sexual orientation, as well as their gender.



MENTAL HEALTH

A PERSON'S EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

HAVE A LOOK ONLINE, WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO TO TACKLE LONELINESS IN THE UK

SO WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

Mental health problems affect about 1 in 10 children and young people. They include depression, anxiety and conduct disorder, and are often a direct response to what is happening in their lives. Everyone has 'mental health,' whether that be good or bad depends on the person. We all have mental health, just as we all have physical health. Being mentally healthy means that we feel good about ourselves, we can make and keep positive relationships with others, we feel able to manage our feelings rather than feeling overwhelmed by them and we feel hopeful and positive about the future to name just a few.

HOW TO COMBAT LONELINESS



GRAB A PEN AND SOME PAPER AND GET READY TO CHALLENGE YOURSELF AND DIG DEEP INTO YOUR OWN BRAIN.

TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHY YOU ARE LONELY.

IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT LONELINESS IS A PERSONAL FEELING. NOT EVERYONE WHO LOSES SOMEONE FEELS LONELY. HOW CAN OTHER PEOPLE HELP YOU?

SPREAD KINDNESS

EXTEND YOURSELF BY GIVING TO OTHERS. REACHING OUT TO OTHERS IS KEY. THIS MAY BE HELPING OTHERS IN NEED, BECOMING A VOLUNTEER IN PROVIDING SERVICES IN YOUR COMMUNITY, OR JOINING A COMMUNITY ORGANISATION SUCH AS YOUR YOUTH COUNCIL!

THIS COULD BE PAINTING, SEWING OR TAKING UP A NEW HOBBY SUCH AS THEATRE!

THERE ARE LOTS OF COMMUNITIES ONLINE AND IN PERSON DEDICATED TO CREATIVE ARTS

TRY CREATIVE ARTS!

WHILE YOU MAY FIND YOURSELF ALONE AT TIMES, WHEN WE DO SOMETHING CREATIVE WE MAY BE ABLE TO DISTRACT OURSELVES FROM THE PAINFUL FEELINGS OF LONELINESS AND IMPROVE OUR MOOD. THE ARTS ARE NOT ONLY DISTRACTIONS, BUT ALSO HAVE HEALING PROPERTIES IN THEMSELVES.

JOIN A GROUP WITH OTHERS WHO ARE EXPERIENCING LONELINESS. THE PROCESS OF TALKING ABOUT YOUR OWN STORY AND HEARING THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHERS IS OFTEN REALLY HELPFUL IN NOT FEELING SO ALONE.

PRACTICE MINDFUL AWARENESS

MANY PEOPLE WHO ARE LONELY EXPERIENCE THEIR SITUATION AS "THE WAY LIFE IS." IF YOU SEE THIS AS YOUR FATE, IT MAY WELL LEAD TO A LACK OF MOTIVATION TO CHANGE THINGS - A SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY. REMEMBER THAT THOUGHTS ARE NOT FACTS.



REACH OUT

NOT ALL TYPES OF LONELINESS CAN BE FIXED INTERNALLY, SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO REACH OUT FOR HELP, WHETHER THAT BE THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU OR PROFESSIONAL HELP IF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DETERIORATES, YOUR GP OR LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE SHOULD BE ABLE TO SUPPORT YOU.

YOU ARE NEVER ALONE, WE AT YFNW WILL ALWAYS DO OUR BEST TO SUPPORT YOU.



CONTINUE

CHECK IN
WITH THOSE
AROUND YOU



FEELING LONELY IS HARD AND SOMETIMES INEVITABLE. BUT WE HAVE TO KEEP SUPPORTING EACH OTHER TO STAY MENTALLY HEALTHY AND KNOW WHEN TO REACH OUT FOR HELP.

THE FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS.

TO LISTEN UP. TO SPEAK UP

HOW TO CONTINUE THE WORK?

Have a conversation with your youth council, what can you do to challenge loneliness in your local area?

ASK YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL WHAT THEY ARE DOING TO TACKLE LONELINESS.

CHECK, DOES YOUR SCHOOL PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR MENTAL HEALTH?

RUN A SESSION WITH YOUR YOUTH COUNCIL OR SCHOOL ABOUT LONELINESS, CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE OR MENTAL HEALTH

CHECK IN WITH THOSE AROUND YOU AND DIRECT THEM TO HELPFUL SERVICES OR SITES. LOOK AFTER YOUR OWN MENTAL WELLBEING

SHARE, SHARE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT. YOU COULD WRITE A BLOG, FILM A VIDEO OR DISCUSS WITH FRIENDS.

CONTINUE



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?



BECOME

BECOME IS A CHARITY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE OR YOUNG CARE LEAVERS.

In care or a care leaver? Looking for help and advice? Call them on 0800 023 2033 between 10am and 5pm, Monday to Friday



Main website link [HERE](#) with information, fact sheets and more

EMERGENCY HELPLINE

If you feel at risk of harming yourself or others, please call 999 or Samaritans on 116 123.

Open 24/7. Samaritans is a listening service, offering a caller the opportunity to share how they are feeling.

MIND

Mind operates as an initial space to discuss mental health, thereupon Mind can signpost relevant services for an individual.-

Phone number- 0300 123 3393

Open 9:00am-6:00pm Monday to Friday.

Link to website [HERE](#)



SHORT FILM ABOUT YOUTH LONELINESS

A powerful, five-minute short highlighting the effects of social isolation. The film explores the pivotal role social media plays and the increasing pressures young people are under trying to meet what many feel are society's impossible demands.

Link to short film [HERE](#)

ANXIETY UK

Anxiety UK offers tailored support for those with anxiety **03444 775 774**

Open 9:00am-10:00pm Monday to Friday, and 10:00am-8:00pm Saturday and Sunday.

CONTINUE

- Reach out, ask for help and support others.
- Continue

