

# **BETTER TOGETHER**

## **Discovering Joy in Company**

INITIATIVE



## **Finding ways out of Loneliness**

## **A guide for foreigners in Germany**

## Preface

"Loneliness can hurt.

However, it is also a wake-up call to take action.

The primary goal of this brochure is to inspire courage and provide concrete ideas and suggestions.

Even though being alone is important for ourselves, many joys are at their best when shared in good company.

And so, our motto is - **Better Together - Discovering Joy in Company**

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**Initiative GemEinsamkeit**

**This document is currently still a draft / request for comments. Furthermore, it is intended as a template to provide other providers, cities, and municipalities with a starting point to add or integrate their regional and local offerings.**

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## **Summary**

### **What is loneliness?**

Loneliness is a feeling that can cause pain and is meant to motivate us to take action. Just as we look for food when we are hungry or search for a gas station when the car's fuel light comes on, we need to consider how to meet our social needs.

### **How do I deal with it?**

It is important to recognize the feeling for what it is and to think about what options are available to meet this need in the short, medium, and long term.

### **What can I do?**

A fulfilling social life is a journey and a long-term project. It always begins with the first step—both towards oneself and towards others. Some possible steps are described in this brochure.

## What is Loneliness ?

**Loneliness is the perceived gap between desired and actual social relationships. It is a feeling that, in chronic form, can be painful and significantly diminish quality of life.**

(Based on Luhmann 2022 and Peplau/Perlman)

It can be further divided into different types:

### Social Loneliness

Social loneliness is characterized by the absence of social contacts and the feeling of not being integrated into society.

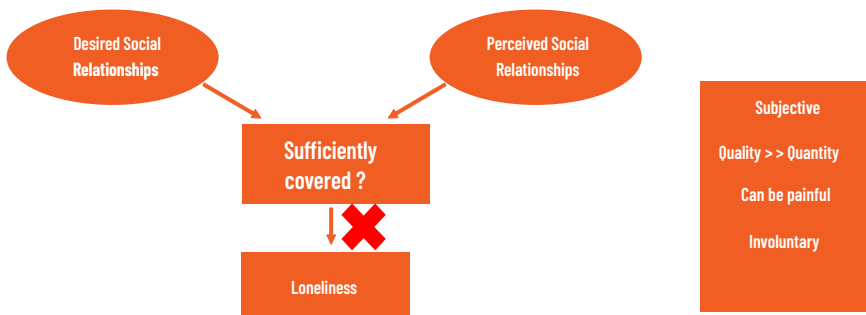
### Emotional Loneliness

Emotional loneliness is defined by the absence of high-quality relationships—friends and family who truly understand you and with whom you share a close bond.

### Existential Loneliness

Existential loneliness is the feeling of no longer being relevant or important to society and close contacts—"dead without being deceased."

In addition, there are **Cultural** and **Physical Loneliness**. (More detailed definitions and explanations can be found in Luhmann 2022 - KNE)



## What Loneliness is not ?

### Social Isolation

Social isolation is an objective measure in sociology and characterizes the number and duration of social contacts that occur within a month.(Characteristics: Objective, quantity, no statement about intention or emotion)

### Being Alone

Being alone is the voluntary and pleasant state of being without company, often to pursue activities such as reading or relaxing.  
(Characteristics: Subjective, pleasant, voluntary)

## How frequent is loneliness in Germany ?

After the high numbers in 2020 (28%) due to the pandemic, the values have largely returned to pre-pandemic average levels of 10-15%, depending on the respective demographic groups.

The significant difference is the increase among 18-29-year-olds from 6.4% to 12.8% over the period 2013-2021.

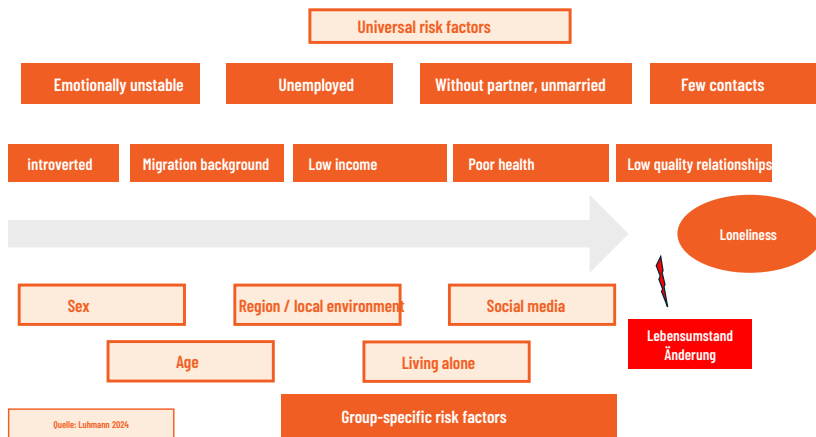


## Where can I find out more ?

The Kompetenznetz Einsamkeit (KNE) - the network of competency for loneliness is the equivalent of the Campaign to End Loneliness mandated by the German Government to accompany the implementation of the strategy against loneliness in Germany.



## Which groups are impacted ?



There is rarely a single definitive reason why people experience loneliness. Intuitively, it seems that each risk factor makes connecting with others and maintaining a fulfilling social life a bit more difficult—often gradually over time.

### **A significant change in life circumstances then triggers a shift in perception.**

These are often events such as moving to a new city for a job change, the separation from or death of a partner, a serious illness, the addition of a new family member, a family member requiring care, unemployment, or retirement.

### **Question:**

**Are any of these risk factors present in my life?**

**Was I subject to any major changes in my life circumstances recently?**

## **How do I recognize if I am lonely? What type of loneliness is affecting me the most? Which aspects of loneliness concern me in particular?**

- 1.) In my daily life, I interact with people I generally like (+)
- 2.) I generally have enough available time to nurture my social contacts (+)
- 3.) I miss the feeling and joy of socializing (-)
- 4.) There are people I care for and help (+)
- 5.) There are people who understand me and my feelings well (+)
- 6.) My interests and ideas are not shared by others (-)
- 7.) I hardly have anyone to support me with minor questions or daily activities (-)
- 8.) I generally have enough energy to meet my family and friends (+)
- 9.) There are people around me with whom I can create things, who challenge me in my passions (+)
- 10.) I participate in local social life, in clubs, the community, or the neighborhood (+)
- 11.) I am in a romantic relationship where I feel comfortable and seen (+)
- 12.) I sometimes feel surrounded by strangers with whom I cannot connect (-)
- 13.) There are people who challenge and support me in my personal development (+)
- 14.) I feel isolated or ignored by my surroundings (-)
- 15.) There are people who like me and show it, for example, through a hug or other gestures (+)
- 16.) When push comes to shove, I know someone will support me (+)
- 17.) I believe my life and activities have meaning (+)
- 18.) Despite my need for human connection, it is also important to me that my independence and privacy are respected (-)
- 19.) My social circle shares my values and cultural background (+)



**If answering these questions feels overwhelming or burdensome for you, please stop and turn to a professional support option such as Telefonseelsorge or Virtual Support Talks.**

## Is this a problem now ?

Loneliness is, to a certain extent, a natural part of human experience and development. Like hunger, it serves as a signal emotion that prompts a helpful response.

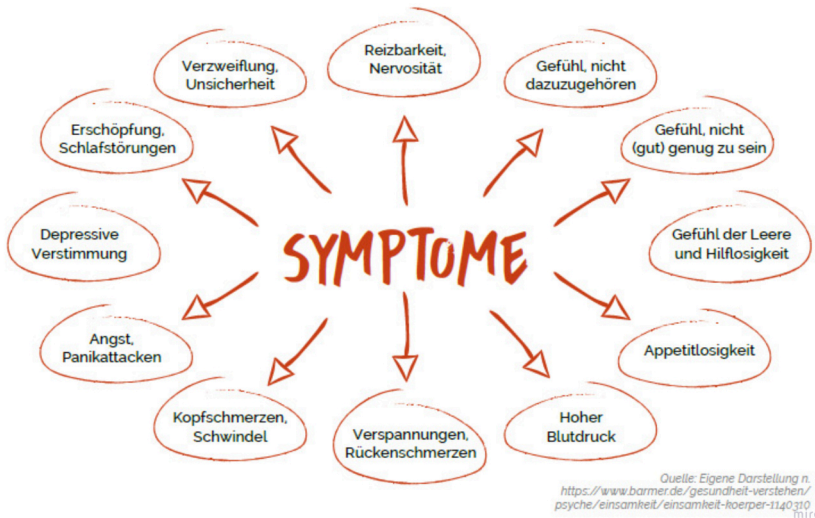
Loneliness becomes problematic only when it persists for a long time and changes us to the point where a self-reinforcing downward spiral occurs:

- when everyday social interactions are perceived as threatening,
- when we fundamentally question whether others value or care for us—or even could,
- when we no longer notice positive signals or ignore their significance for us.

Additionally, loneliness drains our energy, making it harder to try again. Overcoming the inner resistance to make another attempt becomes increasingly difficult. In such cases, professional support from psychologists, counselors, and social workers can be a first step. They can help identify and reduce these thought and behavior patterns to a point where we can reconnect with others.



## Which consequences does loneliness have for our health ?



Put simply, loneliness is not good for us. Studies have shown that chronic loneliness affects us more severely than smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Wounds heal more slowly, serious illnesses linger, hospital stays are prolonged, and life expectancy is shortened. In broad terms, chronic loneliness creates a state of ongoing stress that negatively impacts our immune system—details can be found in KNE - Bücker 2022 (German) or „Loneliness“ by Caccioppo.

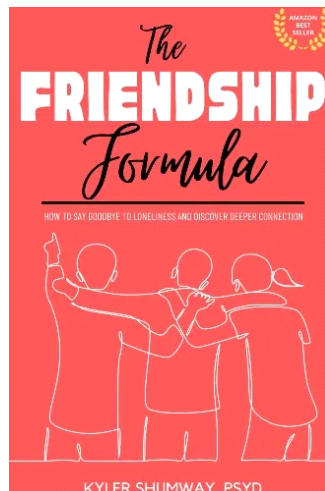
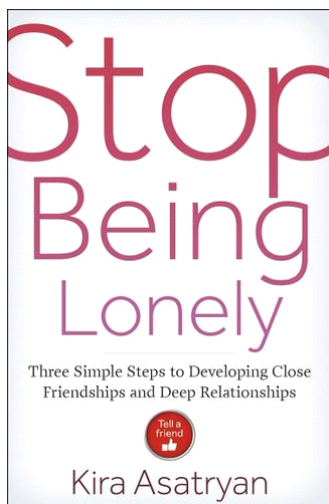
The good news is that this applies in full to only a small minority. On the flip side, a strong social network acts as a protective factor, making everything in life easier and better—much like healthy nutrition, regular exercise, and good sleep.

Efforts to enhance our social integration are therefore always beneficial—for both our mental and physical health.

## I want to address my felt loneliness, how do I start ?

We are not fans of lengthy workbooks or detailed instructions, but a certain degree of self-reflection can be very helpful. Specifically, you should take some time to clarify the following questions for yourself:

- What are my interests? What books do I enjoy reading? What activities do I like to engage in?
- After which activities, conversations, or encounters do I feel good or have fun? What exactly brings me joy in these experiences?
- What am I good at? How can I help others with my skills?
- What did I enjoy doing as a child, and would I like to try it again if given the opportunity?
- With which people, in which places, or within which circles have I found or currently find joy?
- How much openness and risk am I willing to take on—especially in the beginning?



## Two Challenges

### Time and Energy

To build and maintain a social network, two key resources are needed: time and energy. However, in our busy world, both are often in short supply.

The statement “I don’t have time (for you)—I’m busy” is acceptable occasionally, but when repeated, it becomes an unmistakable signal that the relationship holds little significance. If something is important, time can be made!

The core question, then, is: **“When do you have—or could you create—time and energy for other people?”** Perhaps also consider: “In which places might you have this time and energy?” And finally, “Do you have enough mental energy in those moments to provide a minimum level of attention and interaction with the other person?”

### Need for Privacy

A distinct cultural trait—stated neutrally—of the Western world is our greatly exaggerated need for privacy. What we often fail to recognize is the societal cost this need imposes on us.

**Hospitality**—one of the highest customs and virtues in ancient cultures as well as in Asian and Middle Eastern societies—essentially means inviting a stranger into our home and sharing our lives with them. Aristotle and Cicero taught us that friendship is only possible through active cohabitation and shared living, which inherently requires a willingness to forgo privacy.

Even today, there are inspiring individuals like Henning Scherf (former Mayor of Bremen) who give up personal comfort to share their lives with others by living in a senior shared housing arrangement. In doing so, they gain the joy of community and improve their quality of life.

**Our strong need for privacy is a significant obstacle to building community and reducing loneliness in Germany.**

## Clarification of personal circumstances and environment

Before we begin, let's take a moment to briefly consider the following five aspects that can influence our search for social connections. While none of these factors outright prevent building or maintaining relationships, they can pose significant challenges:

1. Mobility - What does public transportation offer? What is my range of movement—what can I reach within 30 minutes from my front door?
2. Financial Resources - What can I afford? Where in my city can I find information about affordable or free social activities?
3. Health - To what extent does my health limit my ability to move around? What can I do to ensure that health-related limitations don't also become social ones?
4. Language Barriers - Can I communicate fluently with most people around me? If not, during which activities (e.g., sports, cultural events with speakers of my language) does this not pose a limitation?
5. Cultural Environment - Are there people around me who understand (or are willing to understand) my cultural background? How important is this to me?

Reflecting on these aspects can help identify potential obstacles and find ways to navigate them more effectively. In particular language and cultural understanding of my surrounding are important to reflect upon. As a foreigner, these can be also at odds, as not being surrounded by people understanding my language and culture forces me to engage with German and learn it much more than being in a cosmopolitan environment.

**Which of these challenges apply to me? Do I perhaps have ways or ideas to influence them or change the conditions?**

# What can I do ?

The following section offers concrete suggestions for activities.

The recommended mindset when reading the upcoming pages is to ask yourself this question:

**Which two of all these activities and ideas do I want to try out and pursue in the coming month?**

This should be enough for a start—the key is simply to take this initial step and approach it in a concrete way.

## Take care of your sport and health—together with others.

“Wer rastet, der rostet” (He who rests, rusts)—this saying has stuck with many of us since primary school gym class. While some love physical activity, others may have drifted away from sports due to negative experiences in their youth or lack of time as adults.

However, sports are beneficial and even necessary for our health, especially as we age. From ancient Roman wisdom to modern scientific research, the positive effects of physical activity on mental health are well-documented. Our bodies, designed for the physical demands of hunting and gathering, are simply not built for a life spent between an office chair and a couch.

If we’re going to sweat, struggle, and complain about sore muscles, why not kill two birds with one stone and do it in the company of others? It doesn’t matter what we choose to do—what’s important is raising our heart rate for a while and surrounding ourselves with people who are “suffering” alongside us. This shared experience fosters connection and motivates us to push harder than we might on our own. Here are some suggestions to get started:

- Walking and hiking groups (check city notice boards or platforms like Meetup.com).
- ParkRun for a faster-paced option: <https://www.parkrun.com.de/>.
- Rehabilitation and exercise programs offered by health insurance providers.
- Fitness studios with group classes like CrossFit—when visiting for the first time, observe how much people interact with each other.
- Sports clubs with broad offerings and beginner courses—introductory sessions are great for meeting new people who are also looking to connect.

**Online Tip: Check out [www.bewegungslandkarte.de](http://www.bewegungslandkarte.de), a comprehensive map of all German sports clubs and physical activity offerings.**

## Learn something new - with others

“Wer rastet, der rostet” (He who rests, rusts) applies just as much to our minds as to our bodies. Learning in a group not only stimulates our intellect but also strengthens connections with others. The shared process of gaining knowledge provides engaging conversation topics and opportunities for collaboration—whether through sharing notes or helping each other with “homework,” just like in school.

Germany offers a wide range of formal and informal learning opportunities through public and private providers, covering diverse topics:

- Adult education centers (Volkshochschulen) and evening academies: Courses in languages, history, psychology, computer skills, and more.
- Music schools: For learning instruments or joining group music classes.
- Local language meetups and intercultural exchanges: Great for practicing languages in a relaxed setting.
- Distance learning with local study groups: Combine flexible learning with face-to-face interaction.
- Senior studies and general education programs (Studium Generale): Tailored for lifelong learners.
- Local science events: Such as Science Slam or Nerd Nite/Night, offering engaging and interactive presentations.

An exciting aspect to consider is whether these institutions encourage informal gatherings, like regular meetups or Stammtische. Some groups or participants (depending on the course and timing) may also head to a nearby café or pub after classes, adding an extra layer of social connection.

**Online Tip: Visit <https://www.volkshochschule.de/kursfinder.php> for a nationwide search of suitable continuing education courses.**

## Revive Past Relationships

“There are no new old friends” is a phrase often thrown around. While it’s not entirely wrong, it’s also not entirely right. Many of us, particularly in the time before smartphones and the internet, had a fairly active social life during school and early adulthood. We played together, copied each other’s homework, pulled pranks, and shared adventures. Of course, there were also experiences of exclusion, bullying before it had a name, and possibly even physical altercations.

However, what connects us with former classmates from kindergarten, primary school, and secondary school is a shared history of memories and, often, similar values or preferences—for example, supporting the same football team or enjoying the same music.

The question is - where you ever here before ? Or do you have people you know from your past communities living in Germany.

Revisiting these connections may surprise you and bring a renewed sense of belonging and camaraderie. Sometimes, old friendships can grow in unexpected and fulfilling ways when given another chance.

- StayFriends is the classic platform for reconnecting with old classmates, and while Facebook may no longer be as popular, you might still find some of your former schoolmates there.
- Organize a Class Reunion: Depending on how dispersed and organized your classmates are, you could even consider including a neighboring class to make the event more lively and engaging.
- Reconnect Through Personal Gestures: For individual contacts, such as old holiday acquaintances, sending a spontaneous postcard can be a delightful surprise and a thoughtful way to rekindle a connection.

**Online Tip: Stayfriends, Facebook, Xing, DasTelefonbuch.de, Google**  
**Most people can be found again**

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## Do something in your neighbourhood

Building social connections often starts close to home—with your neighborhood. Neighbors share similar challenges and concerns, can meet spontaneously, and are readily available for quick, uncomplicated assistance. There are plenty of opportunities to connect within your community:

**Local Festivities:** Events like town fairs (Schützenfest, Dorffest), street festivals, and block parties are great starting points. Community and Neighborhood Associations (These often organize activities such as neighborhood support groups, visiting services, and cultural events, offering excellent opportunities to engage.), local information sources (Check municipal publications like the community newsletter (Ortsblatt) or notice boards near the town hall for upcoming events.), cafés and pubs (Your local café or neighborhood pub can be great spots for casual encounters and conversations).

Practical Steps to Get Started:

- Sign up on [Nebenan.de](https://nebenan.de) or join neighborhood Facebook groups.
- Read the local town newsletter (Stadtblatt).
- Look for an existing neighborhood meetup (Stammtisch) or start one yourself by distributing flyers to your neighbors.
- Host a gathering like a dinner party or a Saturday cake meet-up for your neighbors. Initiatives like Cook and Connect, Running Dinner, Timeleft (App), Meet5, or simply reaching out directly can make this easy.
- Volunteer or participate in organizing your street, neighborhood, or town festival.

**Online Tip: [Nebenan.de](https://nebenan.de), Local association, Townhall notice board, Facebookgroups**

## Join a „Verein“, an association

Germany is a "country of associations," with clubs and organizations on every corner dedicated to all kinds of social, cultural, athletic, societal, political, and other purposes. They might be called sports clubs (Sportverein), marksmen's clubs (Schützenverein), but also include churches, political parties, and labor unions. However, it's important not to join solely for the social aspect but also to identify with the purpose of the association, ensuring long-term commitment.

- Attend at least three events to get a sense of the people and community. How do they interact? Have they also formed social bonds beyond the club's purpose?
- There is no obligation to stay if it doesn't feel right. Club life is a long-term investment of time, so it's fine to test the waters for a while.
- If you play an instrument reasonably well, orchestras, big bands, and other musical groups are great options. Alternatively, there's always the traditional choir, available in various styles.
- If you have faith or at least sympathize with a particular belief system, medium-sized religious communities are excellent for forming connections. In a Christian context, the Alpha Course (Alphakurs) is a powerful way to not only deepen faith but also build lasting interpersonal relationships.

**Online Tip: DasOertliche.de, „Vereinsregister“ (List of associations), [www.alphakurs.de](http://www.alphakurs.de)**

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## **Support others—directly in your community or through volunteer work.**

Helping others is probably the ultimate way to reduce your own loneliness—on every level. You meet new people, and the act of helping tends to attract “good” people. Often, these are the more authentic, people-oriented individuals who participate in such activities. They are often people with richer and more interesting life stories, who can be inspiring.

Helping and supporting others can take many forms and happen in a variety of contexts. It's often best to start by looking at your immediate surroundings and simply being more helpful. It requires time and energy, but it brings meaning and joy, giving energy back in return. What you cannot expect is gratitude and recognition—not always, not immediately, and sometimes not at all. What you do gain is the certainty of having done the right thing and likely having done the best thing to meet the kind of people you want to spend time with.

Beyond that, the German volunteer landscape is very well organized. Almost every German city has a volunteer coordinator, marketplaces for opportunities, and more. Most churches have socially oriented activities. Reduced social budgets translate into a wide range of human needs where time and energy can be invested.

- Start small—here and there—without committing at the beginning.
- Try out various opportunities and organizations. How do they feel? The activity, the people, the target group?
- Set a time frame, for example, 6 or 12 months, during which you explore different options. After that, aim to make a longer-term commitment to an activity or organization.

**Online Tip:** <https://www.aktion-mensch.de/was-du-tun-kannst/ehrenamt/engagement-plattform>

## **Deepen existing relationships with colleagues, classmates, and other acquaintances.**

Building entirely new friendships is often not easy. And while we at the GemEinsamkeit initiative promote actions like the "Talk to a Stranger Week" ([www.talktoastrangerweek.de](http://www.talktoastrangerweek.de)), striking up conversations with complete strangers tends to be easier for people who already have an existing social network. Such a network provides a sense of self-confidence, making rejection in these situations less painful or worrisome.

At the beginning of building a social network, it is often easier to spend more social time in a convivial context with people you already know. If you've been lonely for a while and, due to unemployment or similar issues, your social network has dwindled, this may not be an option. However, if superficial connections in a fundamentally interactive environment have not been deepened due to—let's call it a mix of laziness, reluctance, or lack of time—this is the simplest approach to make initial progress.

If you are still in an educational setting (school, university, training, etc.), your peers and classmates are natural candidates for deeper connections. If there are fundamental problems or if it simply doesn't work out, a heartfelt piece of advice is to talk to your general practitioner. Through a referral to a short-term therapy (behavioral therapy), you can explore whether your own behavioral or thought patterns might unintentionally undermine well-meant attempts to connect.

This doesn't mean you're "crazy"—it's a straightforward purpose of psychologists, their "bread and butter" work, so to speak. You can think of it like this: if you lack technical knowledge, you might briefly ask a mechanic or gas station attendant to check under the hood, inspect the oil and coolant levels, and refill if necessary. It's a practical step, and there's no shame in it.

**Online Tip: None**

**Offline Tip: Talk to your GP**

## Selfreflections

These were some suggestions, many of which may not fit your current life situation. The exciting question is: which two ideas could you imagine trying out in the coming month? And if those two don't work out, which two could you try in the following month?

Beyond that, simply try to go through life a little more mindfully and attentively:

- Where do people smile and laugh with each other?
- How is the interaction at the supermarket checkout, on the train, bus, or at the station?
- In which places, like cafés, bakeries, or pubs, do I feel comfortable, and where do I sense openness from others?

Which activities give me the best opportunities to make contact? Few of these interactions will lead to the long-lasting friendships we need in the long run. But each of them can potentially be a starting point—or at the very least, a moment of positivity, a small impulse that can brighten and enrich our day.

## Online Tip: None

## Tips that don't cost that much

When the budget is a bit tight, it's often the funds for social and recreational activities—so important for connecting with others—that take a hit. However, there are many organizations and initiatives offering free or low-cost options.

- **Mehrgenerationenhaus** (Multi-Generational House): Despite its slightly misleading name (it's not a mixed-age or student housing project), a Mehrgenerationenhaus functions as a combined community and cultural center. These venues often host a variety of interesting events, many of which are specifically designed to help people connect.
- **Youth and Senior Centers:** With a more targeted approach, these centers organize age-appropriate activities.
- **Churches and Faith Communities:** Almost all religious communities have a social mission. Open gatherings, senior coffee afternoons, and post-service chats are often financed and supported by the congregation.
- **Sports and Wellness:** Apps like Meet5, Gemeinsamerleben, and Meetup often feature hiking, running, and other sports groups. Exceptionally well-organized are Park Runs, which often include a shared coffee afterwards.

**Online Tip: Website of the Town, local church communities, <https://www.mehrgenerationenhaeuser.de/>**

## Apps and Online opportunities for connection

Which apps and online platforms are available for meeting people? Here, we focus on those that facilitate group activities, connecting you with suitable groups to establish contacts.

- **Meet5.de:** A German platform with a user base typically aged 40-80. It organizes weekly meetups and spontaneous or planned gatherings within local neighborhoods.
- **Nebenan.de:** A classic German platform for neighborhood interactions. It features neighborly help, a marketplace for local businesses, online flea markets, and neighborhood events.
- **GemeinsamErleben.com:** A German platform for group activities in your area, such as walks, visits to Christmas markets, or regular meetups (Stammtisch).
- **Meetup.com:** An international platform often targeting those aged 25-50. It hosts interest-based groups (e.g., board games, photography, IT disciplines, language meetups) as well as social gatherings (e.g., international meetups, hiking, newcomer meetups).
- **Couchsurfing:** An international platform for ages 20-80, open to everyone. The common denominator is a love for travel and other cultures. It has a somewhat "alternative" vibe—hosting strangers for three days based solely on their profile isn't for everyone. Regular meetups take place in every major city.
- **Internations:** An international platform targeting globally-minded individuals aged 30-60, primarily working professionals. It's open and focused on networking and socializing.

### Online Tip: The various websites

## Offers for acutely lonely people

The Kompetenznetzwerk Einsamkeit has not only published excellent studies and organized central events but also compiled a list of support services for those experiencing acute loneliness. However not all of these offer foreign language services. Indeed, most do not. Here are a few additional pointers.

**Telefonseelsorge Deutschland e.V.** is available to anyone. They offer a listening ear to those seeking advice during problems and crises at any stage of life. Phone: 0800-111 0 111, 0800-111 0 222, or 116 123 Email and chat: online. [telefonseelsorge.de](https://www.telefonseelsorge.de) For english speaking it is best to email in advance and then get contacted.

**Krisenchat.de:** Offers free counseling for children, adolescents, and young adults under 25 years via chat in Ukrainian and Russian, but not (regularly) in english. Same procedure - email in english and hope to get passed to someone suitable

**Redezeit für dich:** Trained volunteer listeners take time to talk: English (not native) speakers available <https://www.virtualsupporttalks.de/de/ich-suche-redezeit>

**International Helpline Berlin:** 030 44 010607 has english speakers, but very few resources. Likewise the **UK** based **Samaritans** might also be of help.

For **Arabic and Turkish** there is **Mutes.de** (Muslimisches Seelsorge Telefon) 030-443-509-821. They also have limited resources but are available in emergencies.

**Online Tip:** <https://kompetenznetz-einsamkeit.de/angebote/angebote-fuer-betroffene>

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## **A little request at the end**

We hope the content of this booklet has been helpful to you and that you find a few more ideas to try out in the coming year. We also want to help other people, and for that, we need your assistance in three ways:

### **1. Spread the Word:**

If you feel ready, talk to others about loneliness and share the materials that have helped you—conversations, links, this booklet, or anything else.

### **2. Provide Feedback:**

Let us know what has been particularly helpful to you. What effective methods have you found in your environment that we might not be aware of? In which places were you best able to reduce your loneliness and establish connections? We maintain a map of such welcoming places and would love to hear more tips. <https://initiative-gemeinsamkeit.de/kontaktgelegenheiten/>

### **3. Share Your Thoughts:**

For written feedback or anything else, feel free to email us at:

Initiative GemEinsamkeit  
Gaisbergstr. 43, 69115 Heidelberg  
[hallo@initiative-gemeinsamkeit.de](mailto:hallo@initiative-gemeinsamkeit.de)

**Online Tip: [www.initiative-gemeinsamkeit.de](http://www.initiative-gemeinsamkeit.de)**

## About us

The Initiative GemEinsamkeit is a small NGO with the aim of creating a knowledge and networking platform for practical, applied work on loneliness. Globally and in Germany, there are already numerous projects that have helped lonely people and fostered sociability and high-quality friendships. Through building our network and ongoing discussions with our partners, we aim to:

1. Collect promising, ready-to-use approaches.
2. Discuss them in suitable online and in-person formats.
3. Provide professional support for their implementation in pilot projects and gather feedback.
4. Aggregate these approaches into a comprehensible, publicly accessible, and continuously evolving collection (Open Educational Resource).
5. Distribute finalized ready-to-use approaches within our network.

We do not conduct our own scientific research, as scientific research and societal analysis are already comprehensively and excellently carried out by the European research network "Loneliness in Europe" and the Kompetenznetzwerk Einsamkeit mandated by the Federal Government / BMFSJ through 2026 . Our role is to support the third and final step: integrating analytical results with practical experiences and "packaging" them into ready-to-use guidelines. In this way, we aim to contribute to addressing loneliness in Germany.

We currently finance our activities through thank-you donations from institutions that use our templates free of charge, speaking fees for online or in-person presentations on workplace loneliness and private contributions of the team. Otherwise, we strive to operate with a minimal footprint.

If you or your company have the opportunity to make a direct, unrestricted donation, we recommend recipients such as the telephone hotlines like krisenchat or Mutes or any of the new initiatives addressing youth loneliness in response to the latest statistics published in 2024.

## Material current and in preparation

### Current Leaflets / mostly in German

1. Wege finden aus der Einsamkeit (Betroffene, German)  
Advice for lonely people
2. Wege zeigen aus der Einsamkeit (Helfen im Privatumfeld, German)  
Advice how to assist lonely people in one's own private surrounding
3. Wege gestalten aus der Einsamkeit (Helfen im Ehrenamt, German)  
Advice how to assist lonely people in various forms of charitable work
4. Finding ways out of Loneliness (Non-German speaking in Germany, English)

### In Preparation or under Discussion / Concept phase

1. Evaluation und Evidenzbewertung (German, sufficient material on Evaluation of evidence of measures has been published in English by Campaign to End Loneliness and Foundation for Social Connection)
2. Recipe book for social connection - collection of ideas - under development - draft under development online (Rezeptbuch)
3. Toolbox (quite literally) for social connection - draft under development online (Werkzeugkoffer)
4. Kleine Freundschaftslehre (we do not need to write a small primer for making friends, because it has been written - the friendship formula by Shumway)
5. Wege Finden - Additional advice collections for focus groups whose special situation could not be adequately covered in the general leaflet „Wege Finden“ (Lonely parents, the very old, LGBTQ, Youth, migrants and refugees)

