

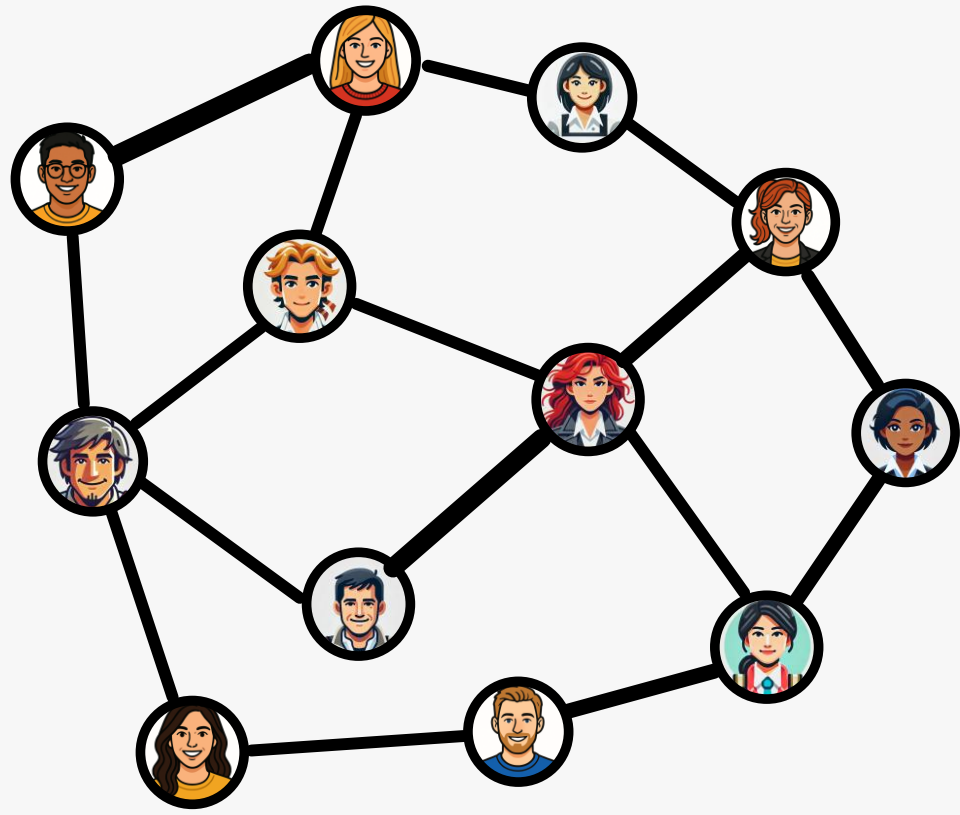
INITIATIVE

GEM EINSAMKEIT

Loneliness and social connection

Introduction, theory and ways out

Christian Langkamp



Member of
GILC
GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON
LONELINESS AND CONNECTION

Loneliness is the leprosy of the West – not only anymore

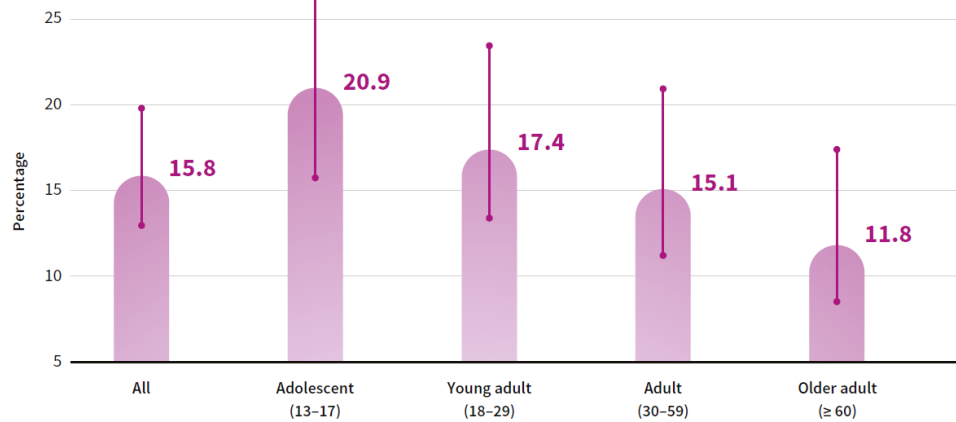
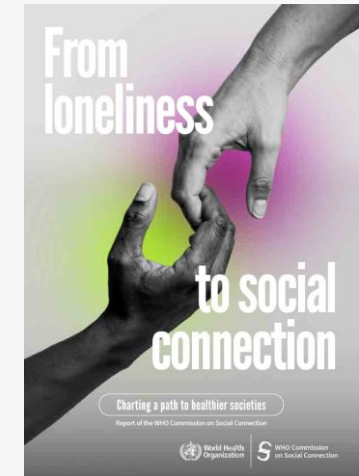


Fig. 2.

Global prevalence (%) of loneliness by age group, 2014–2023 (with 95% uncertainty intervals)

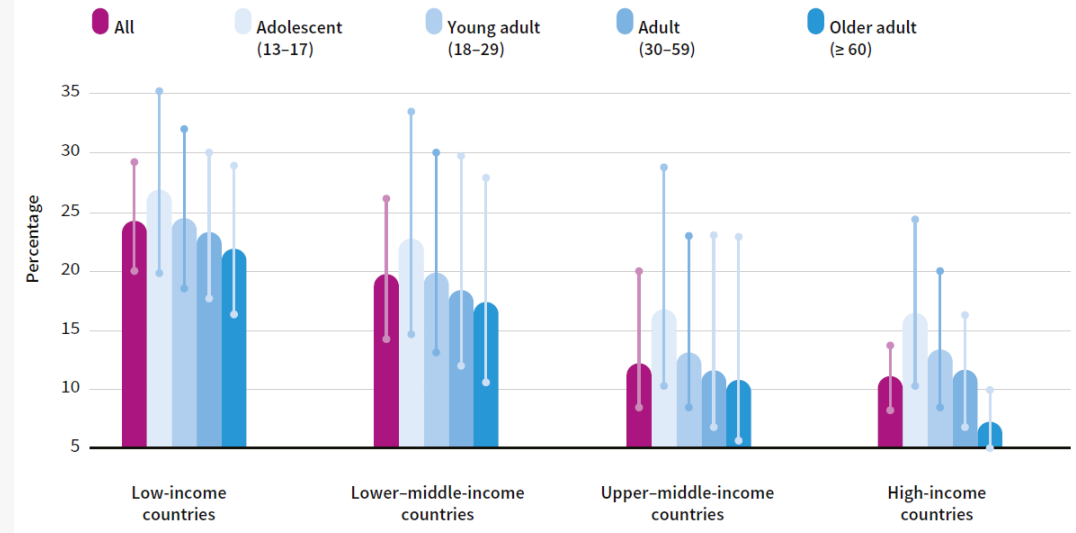
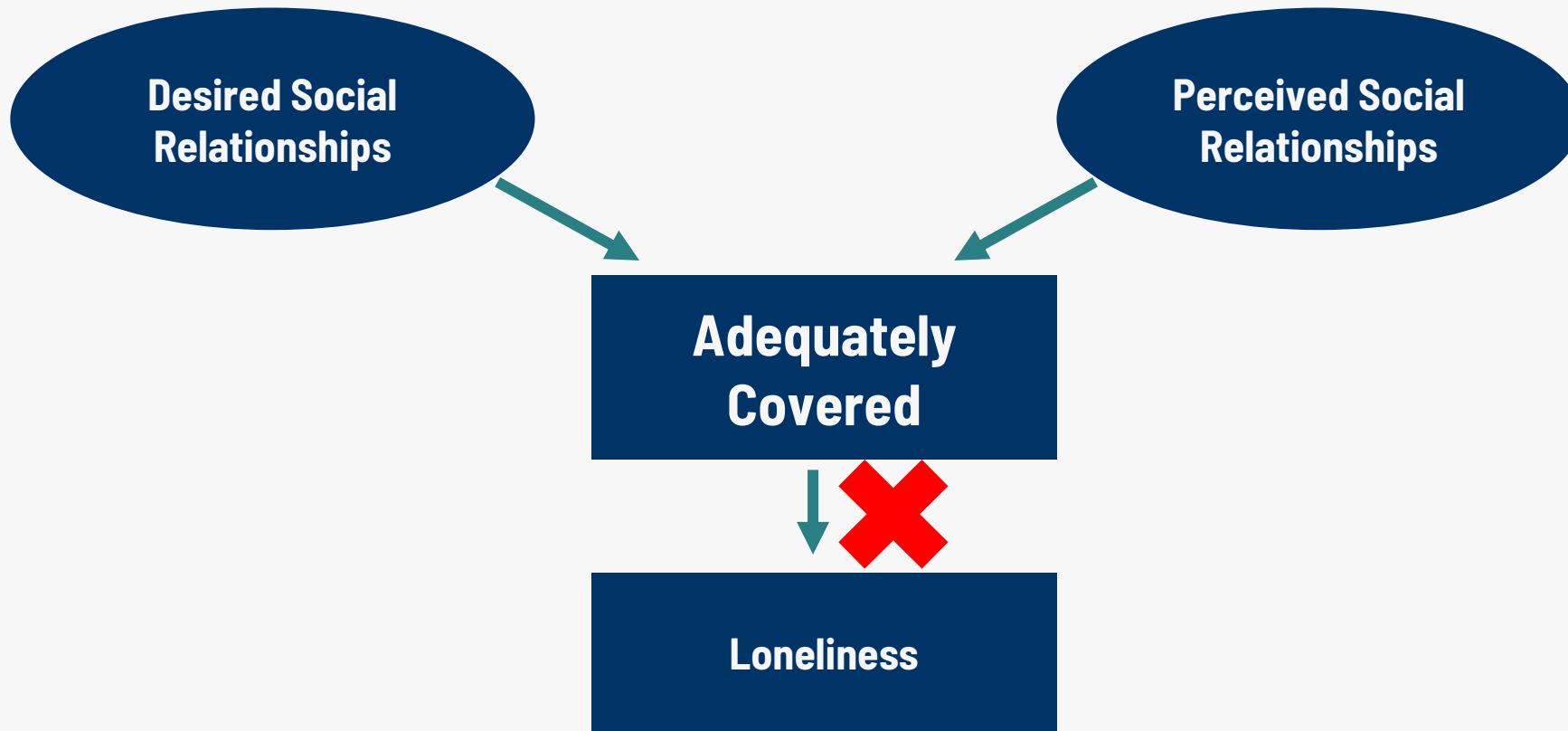


Fig. 5.

Global prevalence (%) of loneliness by World Bank country income group, 2014–2023 (with 95% uncertainty intervals)

What is loneliness



Subjective
Quality > Quantity
Can be painful
Involuntary

Analogous to hunger/thirst: energy needs relative to consumed food
Enough or not enough – in the latter case, signal to seek food

Luhmann / Peplau / Perlmann

Differences

Loneliness

Social Isolation

Being Alone (Solitude)

Subjective

Quality > Quantity

Can be painful

Involuntary

Objective / Observable

Quantity: Lack of contacts

Not one-sidedly emotional

Voluntary

**Pleasant (free thinking,
relaxation, etc.)**

Forms

Causes/Direction of Loneliness

Social Loneliness

- Few contacts
- Not integrated into society
- No circles of friends

Emotional Loneliness

- No close friends
- Not understood

Existential Loneliness

- No significance for society
- No significance for close individuals
- "Dying without being dead"

Cultural Loneliness

Physical Loneliness (Touch absence)

Temporal Dimension of Loneliness

Temporary Loneliness

- Event (weeks, maybe a month)
- Temporary separation from core people (travel, work)

Situational loneliness

- After an event (up to 1 year)
- Change in life circumstances
- Death / separation from partner/friends
- Job loss / retirement
- Moving, etc.

Chronic Loneliness

- No longer attributable to a single event
- Reinforced by shame, social fears, and self-exclusion

Risk factors for loneliness

Universal risk factors

Emotionally unstable

Unemployed

Without partner / unmarried

Few contacts

Introverted

Migration background

Low income

Poor health

Poor relationships

Outside Control

Within Control

Loneliness

Gender

Region

Social media

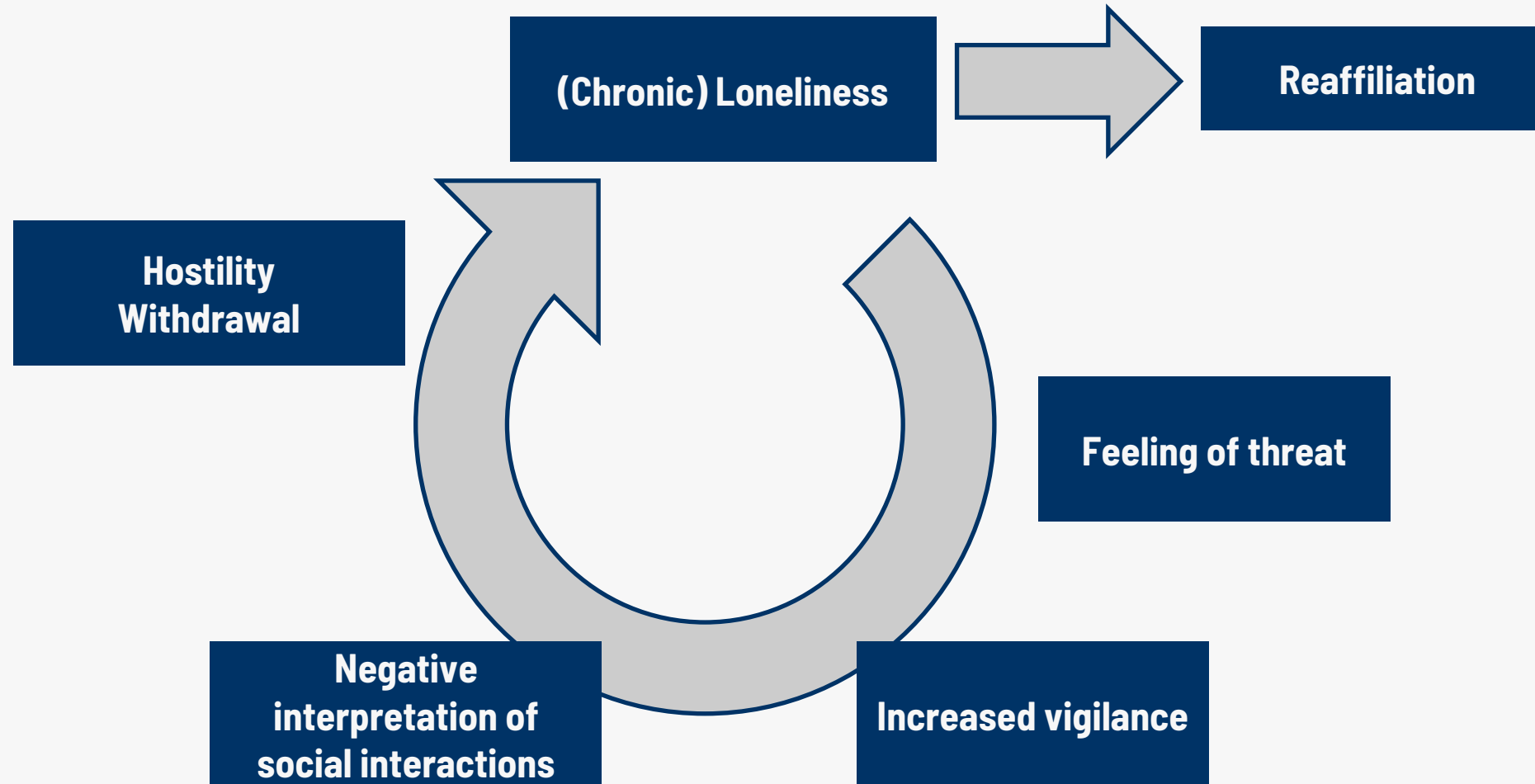
Age

Living alone

Life Circumstance Change

Group-Specific Risk Factors

Psychological Consequences

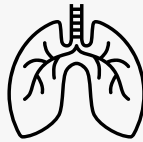
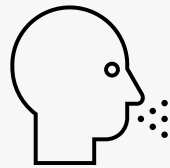


Health Consequences

Chronic Loneliness Increases the Risk for the Following

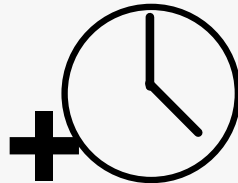
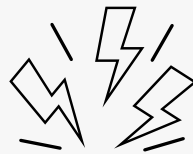
Cardiovascular
(Valtora et al. 2016)

Upper Respiratory Illness
(Cohen 2021)



Stroke
(Hawkey et al. 2016)

Pain Symptoms
(Loeffler & Steptoe 2021)



Diabetes 2
(Lukaeschek et al. 2017)

Mortality
(Holt-Lunstad et al. 2015)



KNE Expertise 10/2022

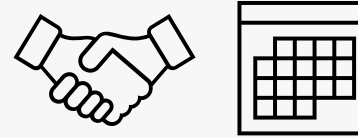
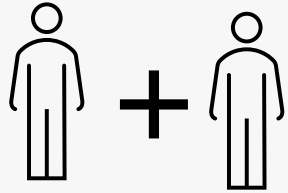
**DIE GESUNDHEITLICHEN,
PSYCHOLOGISCHEN UND
GESELLSCHAFTLICHEN
FOLGEN VON EINSAMKEIT**

Dr. Susanne Bucker

www.kompetenznetz-einsamkeit.de

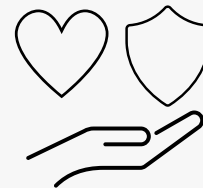
What helps against loneliness

Maintaining Existing Social Contacts



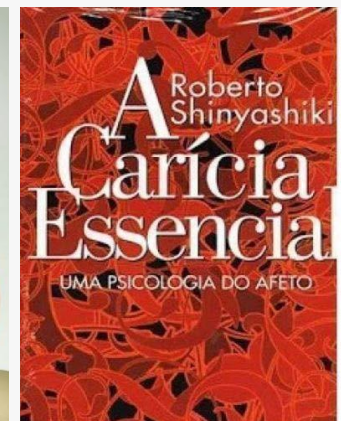
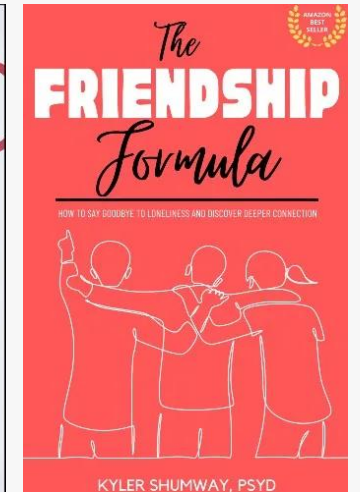
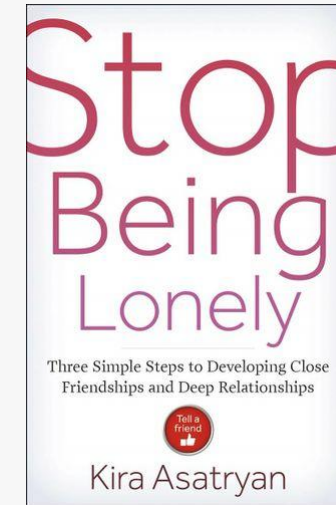
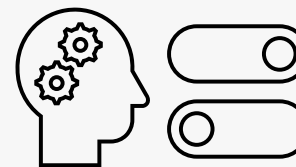
Building New Social Contacts

Strengthening Social Support



Improving Social Skills

Changing Cognitive Patterns



Exercise

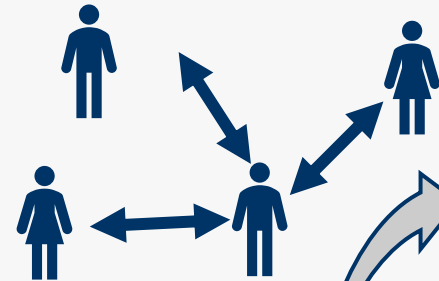
What works well in my personal relationships ?

And how can I still improve ?

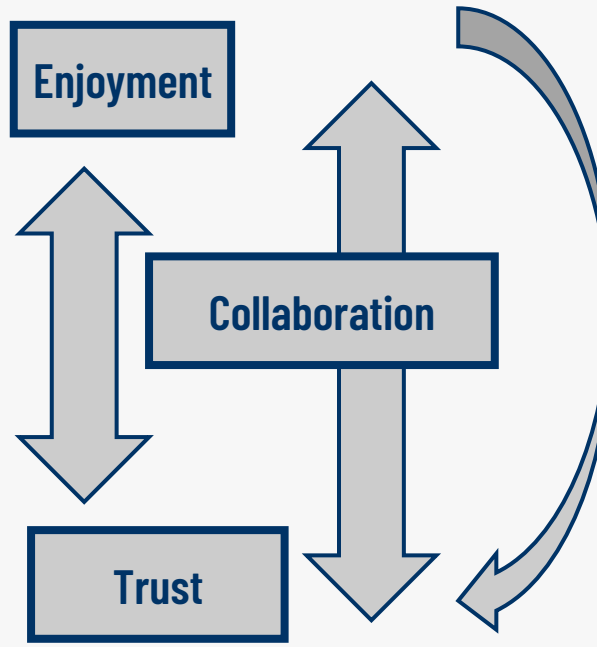
What works well in our department & company?

And how do we still need to improve together?

And how do the two aspects interact?

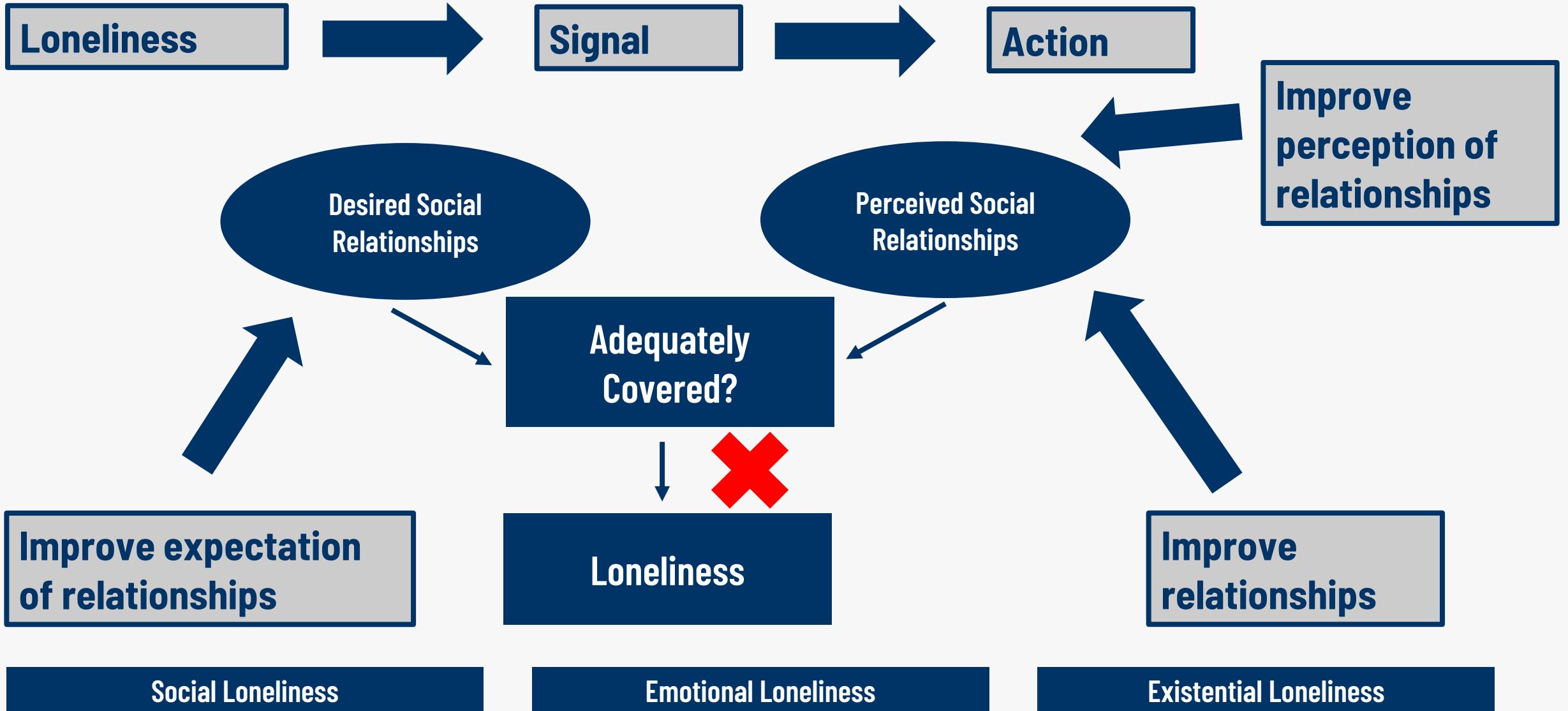


Individual relationship



Community quality

What to do about loneliness



Network against loneliness

Lots of actors – not always clear whom to ask best for help and guidance

International and regional sociability



LONELINESS IN EUROPE
United in Combatting Loneliness

Regional networks



Nordrhein-Westfalen
gegen Einsamkeit.

agathe
älter werden in
der Gemeinschaft

National organisations

Foundation for
Social Connection

GENWELL
PROJECT
HUMAN CONNECTION MOVEMENT

Campaign to
EndLoneliness

KOMPETENZNETZ
EINSAMKEIT



LANDESINITIATIVE

Neue Nachbarschaften
- engagiert zusammen leben
in Rheinland-Pfalz!



**Mehr
Generationen
Haus**
Wir leben Zukunft vor

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TALK TO **THAT** ONE

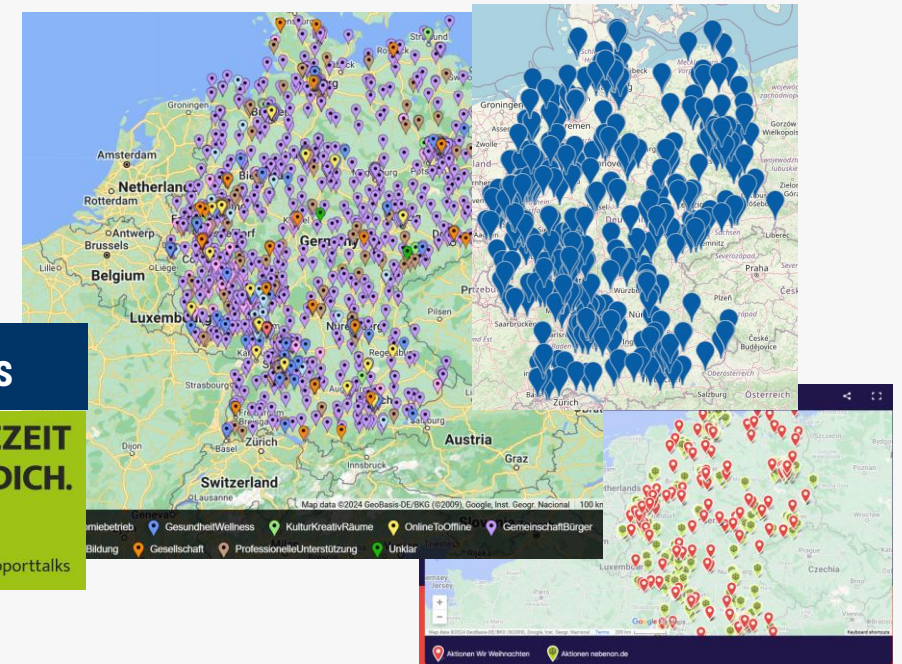
Contact opportunities

Lots of offers – and lots of actors – not always easy to find or point to the right one

International and regional sociability



Local offers

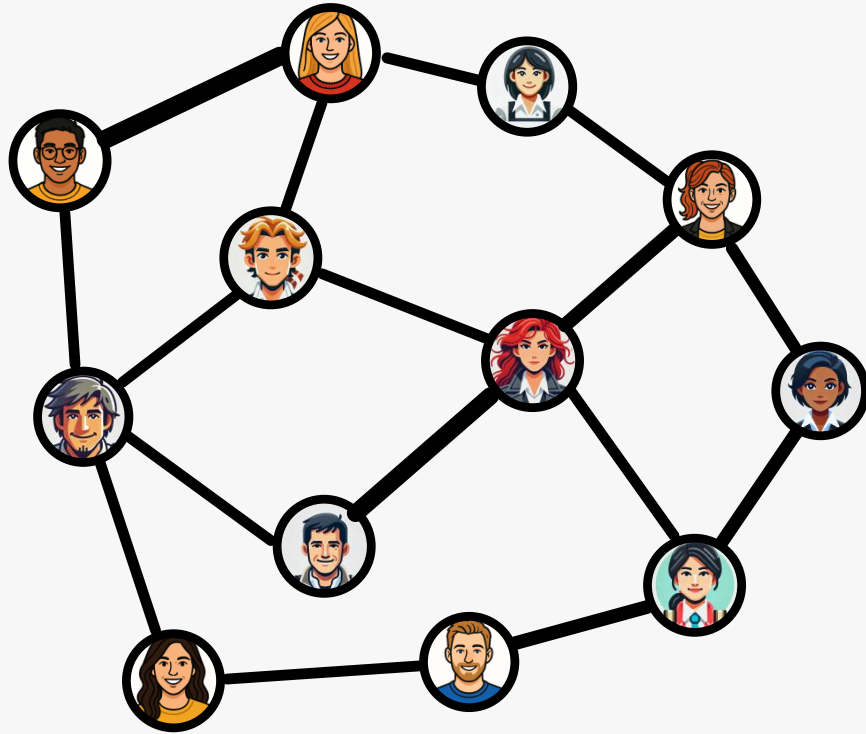


Analogue and Digital Support offers



REDEZEIT FÜR DICH.
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**Thank you for
your attention**

& great that you were here

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