

EPISODE 116: THE EPIDEMIC OF LONELINESS**1. IF YOU FEEL LONELY, YOU ARE NOT ALONE**

- Definition: “feeling of lacking or losing companionship.”
- Communication Guys motto “We help you connect with your world.”
- INC MAG: surveyed 3000 CEOs and over 50% self-reported feeling isolated and lonely.
- Prime Minister England appointed a Minister of Loneliness.
- Cigna President and CEO, David Cordani: reports that Loneliness is an epidemic across the US that needs to be addressed. “Across the country almost one out of every two adults- no matter race or gender- say they sometimes or always feel alone (46%) or left out (47%)
- Loneliest: today’s young adults, 18-22.
- Least lonely: oldest adults, 72 and up.
- Technology creates isolation in young; solution for elderly.
- Former US Surgeon General, Vivek Murthy reported HBR: “a growing health epidemic.” Social isolation = reduction in lifespan; equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

2. LONELINESS IS ABOUT QUALITY NOT QUANTITY

- Difference between being alone and loneliness.
- All have a need for connection.
- People connect in different ways, different frequencies, and different depths.

3. WE ARE ALL MASTERS OF “DISCONNECTION”

- Staying disconnected is a life strategy for some people. They don’t want people to have ACCESS to their authentic self. “You can see my persona, you cannot know my person.”
- Four techniques that keep people at arm’s lengths.
 - THE SKIMMERS: surface conversation only. They can brilliantly fill an entire evening with conversation that is light and lively, while rarely touching on anything that is personally meaningful or important to them.
 - THE ARTFUL DODGERS: artfully avoid/evade candid conversations. Any questions or topics that might penetrate their carefully constructed veneer are seamlessly avoided.
 - THE AREA 51ers: Access is forbidden. Will intentionally not allow someone to get to know them.
 - THE FACEBOOK CONVERSATIONALIST: “couldn’t be better,” my life is all good/awesome, 24/7 spectacular!
- Two Questions to Consider:
 - When was the last time you let someone have a genuine, authentic conversation with you?
 - When was the last time you had one with yourself?

4. HOW TO MANAGE LONELINESS

- Ask yourself: “Am I knowable? Do I unwittingly have a deflector shield up?”
- Create a space, place, setting conducive to conversation.
- Dare to share: take the initiative. Look for places where you might find natural comradery, natural connections, and natural conversations.
- See advice from an expert.

5. HOW TO HELP OTHERS MANAGE THEIR LONELINESS

- Reach out to others rather than waiting for them to reach out to us.
- Create moments of human connection in your world for the sake of others. It has a strange rebound effect.
- Choose to give others the gift of: interest, inquiry, invitation into your group and conversation. Be inclusive.

Are there other communication-related topics you'd like to hear the Communication Guys address? Let us know on our [Facebook page](#).