



Loneliness

The Consequences of Feeling Lonely

Solitude vs. Loneliness

- Solitude, or time spent alone, is not experienced as negative
- Solitude is often seen as restorative
- Can include opportunities to relax, create, or reflect
 - Not to avoid others

One Definition

- **Loneliness**, distressing experience that occurs when a person's social relationships are perceived by that person to be less in quantity, and especially in quality, than desired. The experience of loneliness is highly subjective; an individual can be alone without feeling lonely and can feel lonely even when with other people.

www.Britannica.com

Understanding Loneliness

- Feeling a lack of companionship
- Feeling left out
- Feeling there is no one to turn to for support
- Not Feeling 'in touch' or 'in tune' with those around you
- Not Feeling outgoing and friendly

Why is Loneliness on the Rise?

- More people choosing to live alone
- Delaying marriage / end of relationship
- Delaying children or choosing not to have kids
- Death of significant other
- Geography – moving away from family / support network
- Technology / social media

Social Isolation and Loneliness in Canada

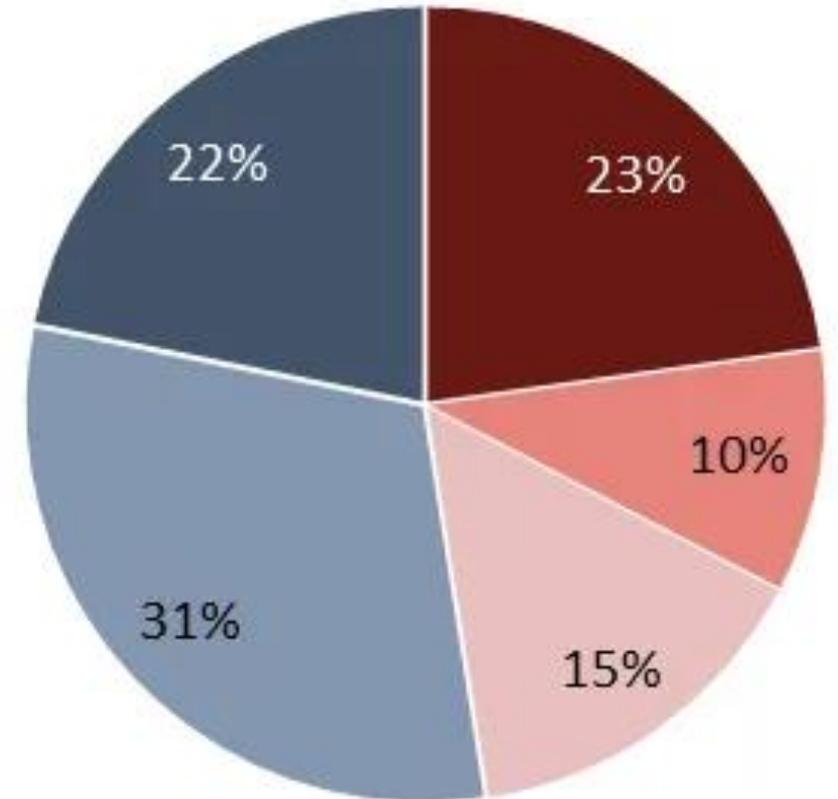
- 6 in 10 Canadians (62%) say they would like to spend more time with family and friends.
- Only 14% of Canadians describe their current state of their social lives as 'very good'
- 1 in 5 Canadians (18%) have no one they can count on in a crisis

Who are the lonely?

- The Desolate – 23%
- Lonely not isolated – 10%
- Isolated not lonely -15%
- Moderately connected -31%
- Cherished -22%

Index on Loneliness and Social Isolation (ILSI)

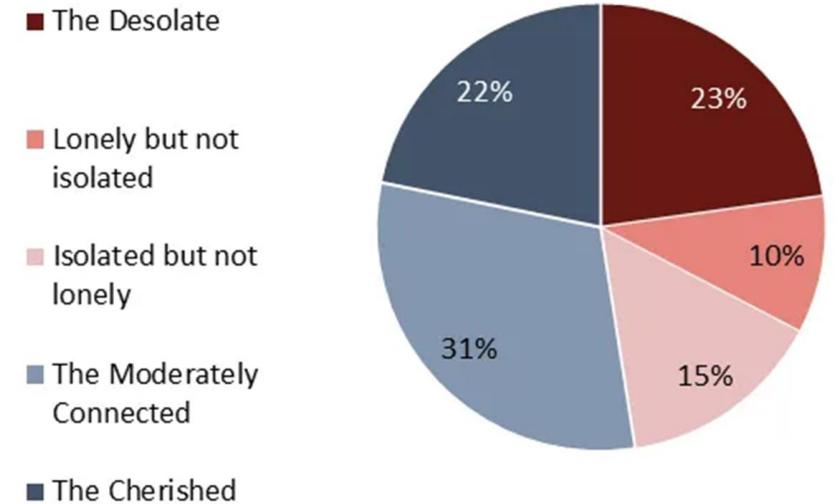
- The Desolate
- Lonely but not isolated
- Isolated but not lonely
- The Moderately Connected
- The Cherished



Cherished – 22%

- Higher than average household incomes
- Most likely to be married (75%)
- Most likely to have children
- Least likely to live alone.

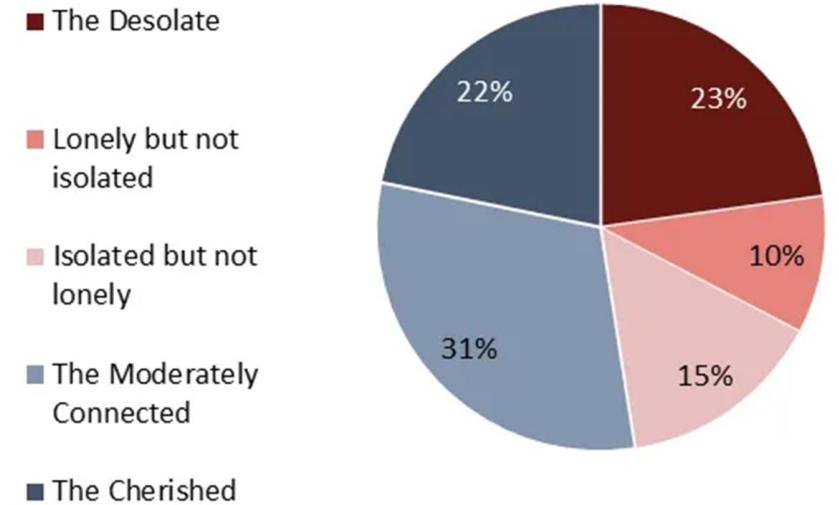
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Moderately Connected - 31%

- Characterized by its proximity to the image of the 'average Canadian'
- Income levels, education, age, household composition and marriage status are all remarkably similar to the national average

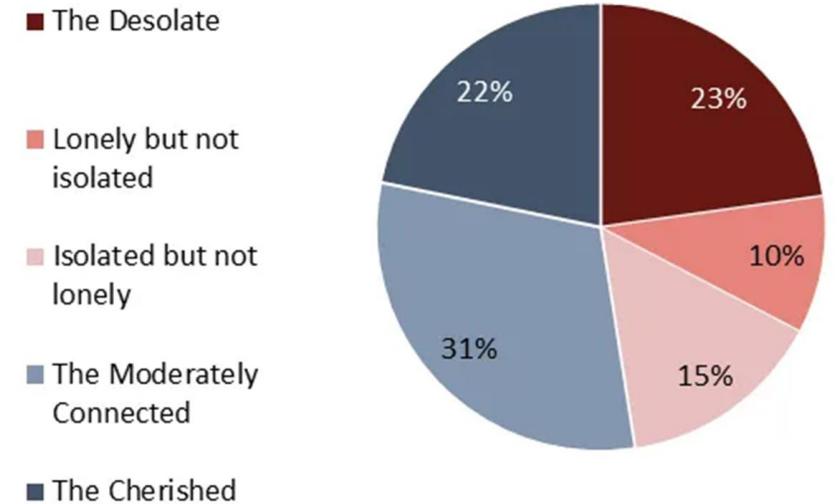
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Isolated but NOT lonely 15%

- Lower than average income AND education levels
- Almost half (48%) over the age of 55
- 6 in 10 (62%) married, children have left home
- Almost half (48%) have children over the age of 18

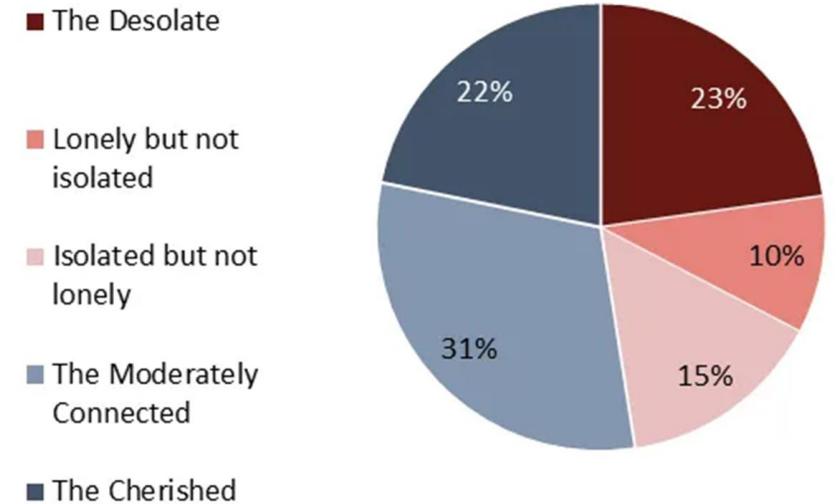
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Lonely not isolated– 10%

- Smallest and youngest group
- More than 4 in 10 (43%) under 35
- Just 1 in 4 (24%) are 55 or older
- Income levels at national average but highest education
- Fewer than 6 in 10 (57%) are married or in common-law relationship, the lowest number except for the Desolate (48%)

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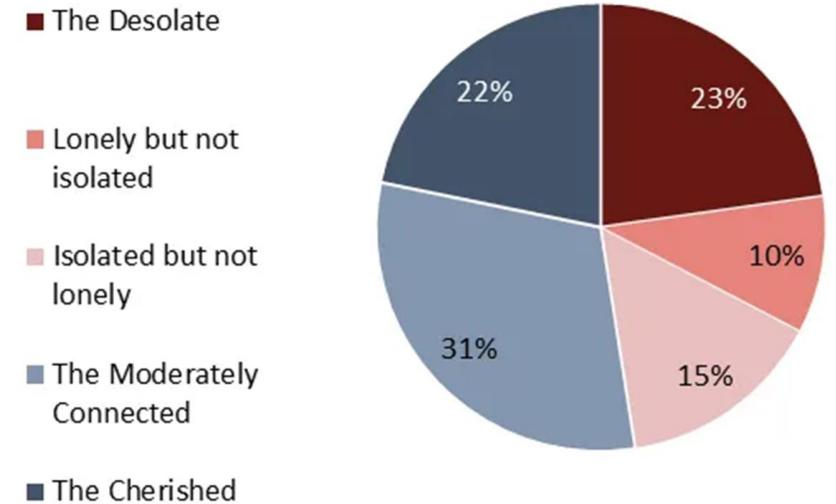


The Desolate – 23%

- Lower income – less than \$50,000
- 48% have a high school education or less
- Twice as likely as the Cherished to be single and live alone
- Many minority groups more likely to be in this category.

In an additional recent study (Oct 2020), Angus Reid published results of a Isolation, Loneliness and COVID-19 survey. You can read the results here: <https://angusreid.org/isolation-and-loneliness-covid19/>

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Key Signs of Loneliness

- Lack of concentration / focus
- Decrease energy levels
- Insomnia / interrupted sleep
- Decrease in appetite
- Feelings of self-doubt / hopelessness
- Body aches and pains
- Feelings of anxiousness / restlessness
- Increase in substance use (misuse)
- Increase in desire to binge-watch
- Cravings for physical warmth, such as hot drinks, baths, cozy clothes, etc

How Loneliness Can Affect Your Health



Heart problems



Depression



Higher stress



Decreased memory



Drug abuse risk



Brain changes

Tips for Beating Loneliness

- Be aware and name your loneliness
- Gain Perspective
- Make relationships a priority

If you're willing to take a chance:

- Volunteer for a good cause
- Take up a new hobby

Self-Care

- Prioritize sleep
- Practice relaxation
- Exercise
- Enjoy Nature
- Cultivate gratitude

Ideas for accessing Resources

- <https://thelonelinessproject.org/>
- <https://www.qtinebuddy.com/>
- [Seniors Can!](#)
- Loneliness and Social Connection
– [heretohelp.bc.ca](#)



Thank You

