

SANE

We're people like you.

SANE

We're people like you

Peer Group Chat

Date: 25/05/23

Title: Misconception of Connection

Description: Despite a perceived increase of connecting within a technological world, loneliness and isolation are still a constant presence within our lives. There can be different experiences and definitions of loneliness for everyone, such as being surrounded by people but still feeling alone. Let's come together to share our experiences of loneliness, isolation, and connection.

Amber22 (PSW)	Welcome! @melmelmelmel456 :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hello @melmelmelmel456. We'll get started soon :)
Amber22 (PSW)	Hello! @Emergence :)
Emergence	Hi
Amber22 (PSW)	We will be getting started shortly!
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi @Emergence! :)
Amber22 (PSW)	Hey! @Shaz51 :)
Shaz51	hello @TideisTurning (PSW) , @Amber22 (PSW)

SANE

We're people like you.

tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Hi @emergence, @melmelmel and @shaz
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi @Shaz51 :) Great to see you here, as always!
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Sorry, I can't tag for some reason
Shaz51	ohh @tyme xx
Shaz51	hello @tyme (PSW/ Moderator), now it is working
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi everyone. First, we'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands we are all joining this event from. We pay deep respect to the Elders of those Countries, past and present, and we further extend that respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people joining this group tonight. Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about The Misconception of Connection
melmelmel456	My phone alerted me an hour ago of the event and so I logged in and then realised I was early and just left it. Sorry I missed your Welcomes until now. Thank you :)

SANE

We're people like you.

TideisTurning (PSW)	<p>Tonight, Peer Support Workers @TideisTurning and @amber22 will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of The Misconception of Connection. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both, isolation and loneliness can have a profound effect, and connection is something we all need.</p> <p>We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing. Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature as we talk about struggles with experiences of isolation and loneliness and forming or sustaining connections.</p> <p>@Tyme who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety. If you're having any technical difficulties, please see our FAQ (https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs) or message @Tyme</p> <p>We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn more together about The Misconception of Connection.</p>
Amber22 (PSW)	Glad that you're here with us! @melmelmelmel456
Amber22 (PSW)	Welcome! Bookish :)
Amber22 (PSW)	And welcome @Captain24 !
Shaz51	heyyyyy @bookish
Captain24	Hi @Amber22 (PSW)
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi @bookish & @Captain24. Welcome!
Captain24	Hey @TideisTurning (PSW)
The Hams	Evening
TideisTurning (PSW)	<p>Within this group tonight we'll be talking about:</p> <p>Our experiences of isolation & loneliness + different definitions of isolation, loneliness and connection</p> <p>The impact of technology on our sense of connection</p> <p>What meaningful connection might look like & how we could improve it</p>

SANE

We're people like you.

Amber22 (PSW)	Welcome! @The Hams @Meggle :)
Meggle	hi
Amber22 (PSW)	Welcome! George :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	Welcome everyone! We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for people to log on and join. In the meantime, feel free to introduce yourselves. I'm @TideisTurning
Meggle	Hi a fun fact about me is that I am really enjoying growing things from seed right now
Amber22 (PSW)	Welcome @Jacques :)
Jacques	hello ladies, gentlemen and gender neutral peoples
Amber22 (PSW)	Ooo that is so cool! I saw some of your pics on forums, love it! @Meggle
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi @Meggle, @George, @Jacques & @The Hams :)
Meggle	I had been putting up progress pics weekly but I didn't take them last week
The Hams	Howdy forumites
Meggle	Hi everyone
Jacques	hey @The Hams
TideisTurning (PSW)	Let's get started! Q1: Often, loneliness and isolation can be thought of as two sides of the same coin. But, what's the difference between loneliness and isolation?
Jacques	hi @Meggle
The Hams	Anyone want ratatouille?
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Hi Jacques, Hams, Shaz, George
The Hams	G'day Jacques good to see you m8
Jacques	hi @tyme (PSW/ Moderator)
Amber22 (PSW)	Hey! @7cough9 :)
7cough9	Good evening fellow strangers

SANE

We're people like you.

Captain24	Hi @tyme (PSW/ Moderator)
Meggle	Isolation there are no people around. Loneliness is more complicated. You can experience loneliness with a ton of people around
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Hey Cough9 and Captain!
melmelmel456	I think you can be lonely even when surrounded by people that you just don't connect with and isolation is when you have no one around you and you feel lonely also.
Jacques	loneliness for me is a short term isolation is more long term. they are also different, loneliness is a mindset. isolation is what you actually are.
Amber22 (PSW)	Isolation is when you are physically alone to me, but loneliness could mean that you're in a room full of people but still feel lonely. They are very different if you think about it, even though people might get them confused or think they are the same
Amber22 (PSW)	I like that... isolation is what you actually are but loneliness can be a mindset @Jacques
The Hams	Loneliness is what you feel. Isolation is a state. You can feel lonely in a group of people. Because you can't connect to them for example. Isolation is where you are on your own. I don't think Isolation is a feeling. But loneliness is. Sometimes I want Isolation but I never want loneliness
Meggle	Just so you know I don't like this new orange box
TideisTurning (PSW)	Oooh. That's a really well thought out distinction @Jacques!
Amber22 (PSW)	What orange box? @Meggle
Shaz51	Isolation is when you are physically alone to me, but loneliness could mean that you're in a room full of people but still feel lonely , very true @Amber22 (PSW)
Meggle	in the typing box
Amber22 (PSW)	Connecting and loneliness do go hand in hand! @The Hams

SANE

We're people like you.

7cough9	Q1 isolation is a factual circumstance : limited exposure to people and to shared activities, particularly ones with opportunities for unstructured personal contacts. Loneliness is an internal interpretation of your circumstances, being distressed by how you are excluded or otherwise undervalued, or some other deficit in personal needs you expect to get filled by others.
melmelmel456	Can you explain how loneliness is a mindset? I am curious about that.
Emergence	I think of isolation in terms of not being in the 'in group' - ostracism
Captain24	I find I isolate myself a lot, especially in dark times. So that I can be alone as I don't want others around. Sometimes I do feel lonely when isolated. But I often feel lonely especially in a room full of people.
Amber22 (PSW)	Oh I don't see the orange box on my side! @Meggle
TideisTurning (PSW)	Mmm. I'm seeing the idea of being lonely when technically surrounded by people as a bit of a common theme among a few of you. I feel like it's definitely!
Emergence	It's all blue for me
Emergence	And white
Meggle	ok'
Amber22 (PSW)	I get that, I tend to isolate myself too in hard times, which can in turn make me feel very lonely @Captain24
chibam	Hi all! :)
Amber22 (PSW)	Welcome! @chibam
Shaz51	I have felt alone in a crowd
Jacques	hi @chibam
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi @chibam :)
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	For me, I'm physically isolated, but I do not feel lonely. Conversely, I can be around heaps of people and still feel lonely....
chibam	Q1: Probably just echoing others here, but isolation = literal absence of human contact; loneliness = absence of meaningful/enriching human contact. (To summarize)
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Agreed Chibam

SANE

We're people like you.

TideisTurning (PSW)	Love the way you've articulated that @chibam!
melmelmel456	Yes, Absence of meaningful and enriching human contact. Totally agree.
chibam	Thanks!
Amber22 (PSW)	@melmelmel456 Maybe as isolation can often be the physical, loneliness can be the mindset of loneliness (potentially)?
TideisTurning (PSW)	Q2: Loneliness and isolation come in many forms. What do loneliness & isolation look like for you?
melmelmel456	I enjoy deep conversations and especially like emotionally connecting and engaging conversation. This is difficult when you're around people who often avoid their feelings so they cannot sit comfortably with yours either. That is lonely for me.
Amber22 (PSW)	Feeling isolated can be when I am not physically with other people, yet loneliness can take many forms for me. It can be a lot more emotional and can make me feel alone even when I am surrounded by other people, or even when I am getting support from other people
chibam	Q2: Being trapped in a loveless environment with passively hostile people, with no avenues/opportunities to meet and be transplanted into a proper family of kindred spirits.
melmelmel456	Isolation, whilst I usually always have my parents around, I am socially isolated except for online.
Emergence	Loneliness for me is wanting to be in the company of others but not being able to
chibam	Same, @melmelmel456
Amber22 (PSW)	Definitely agree! Sometimes the surface level connection can still make one feel lonely @melmelmel456
Jacques	I have been isolated since I left high school in 2000, I have no friends to socialise with and I only leave my house to pay bills and get food, otherwise I am completely isolated from society. the internet is my only contact with the outside world. for 23 years I have lived this way, at times I have felt lonely but I remind myself how much I have been hurt in the past and the loneliness goes away.

SANE

We're people like you.

melmelmel456	I find it frustrating that I am often the one who reaches out to people and when I asked How Are You, I really want to and I am prepared to sit there with someone and their feelings but so many people just go I'm fine or I'm okay and brush over it.
Captain24	Isolation for me is removing myself from others. Spending most of my time at home alone not answering the phone or door. If I'm out I sit to the side on my own and not engage with others. Loneliness for me is a feeling that there is no one around to be there for me or understand my struggles.
Jacques	from time to time I run into people I went to school with when they ask what I have been up to the look of pity and shock is unsettling, they can't get away from me fast enough.
Amber22 (PSW)	Aww sending hugs @Jacques
chibam	I'm in much the same boat, @Jacques ; except for the loneliness going away. Yes, I've been hurt, but I just can't see the point of going on if there isn't a meaningful connection at the end of the ordeal.
Amber22 (PSW)	Meaningful connection is so important @chibam
Jacques	I think I will be isolated for the rest of my life, I don't know if I will ever be able to integrate back into society, it has changed so much and I don't belong in it anymore.
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	I hear you @melmel... you want to support people but they aren't really ready?
7cough9	Q2 I experience isolation by default for being unemployed and mostly friendless - the exceptions being support professionals who I think of as being 'prosthetic friends'. The most costly cases of that isolation have been situations like losing housing and being aware I have no one to lean on to couch surf if my sister was not back in town. My loneliness is also a constant background noise but mostly acceptable, and only becomes distressing when I am trying to offer something that seems meaningful, like volunteer work for a festival, and find that no one I meet there thinks to ask my name or remember it.
Jacques	I get that @chibam I often wonder why I suffer for so long. and if there is any point to it.
Amber22 (PSW)	You belong anywhere that you are @Jacques <3

SANE

We're people like you.

melmelmel456	I haven't really had a in person friendship group since high school. I had trauma happen that was to do with a group of people. Since then I have found it hard to connect with people and people that want to talk on deeper things. Last year I had an online friendship group but then stuff happened and I was outed of that. It very much triggered my trauma again. It can be hard to connect with people when trust is hard also. But I think I finally figured out that I must be Autistic and I am missing the mark on social norms.
Meggle	I have to go run an errand, I will look for the transcript of this chat down the track. Sorry to bail
Shaz51	Loneliness and isolation --- I have no friends , no one visit
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	@Jacques, you certainly fit into SANE's community :) And you certainly belong
Jacques	thank you @Amber22 (PSW) and @tyme (PSW/ Moderator)
Amber22 (PSW)	That's okay! Have a lovely night :) @Meggle
chibam	@Jacques Same. I've never even owned a smartphone, for example, and I doubt I'd properly know how to use one even if I did get one. It's getting increasingly impossible to function in society without them these days.
Shaz51	ohh yes my brother @Jacques hugs
TideisTurning (PSW)	I'm so sorry to hear @Jacques. That's an awful feeling to have. I've been there though and something I've learnt is that while I may not feel like I belong everywhere, there are certain special people who make me feel like I belong. Our wonderful @Jynx (Moderator) has been one of those for me here at Sane, for example <3
Jacques	hugs back my awesome friend @Shaz51 that is so sweet @TideisTurning (PSW) it is good to find people we can trust and depend on.
Shaz51	I agree @TideisTurning (PSW), @Jynx (Moderator) is soo really good and you are too xxx
TideisTurning (PSW)	Q3: Sometimes we can be in a room full of people, but still feel lonely. Who makes you feel less lonely? What is it about them that lessens the feeling of loneliness for you?

SANE

We're people like you.

Jacques	Q3 I can't answer because I don't socialise or have any friends or family IRL. sorry.
melmelmel456	My cat or time with an animal usually helps me. My cat knows when I am down and need a cuddle and purr
TideisTurning (PSW)	Aww @Jacques. If you can imagine it, what might it look like?
Amber22 (PSW)	My mum makes me feel less lonely. She always knows when I need a hug even when I don't say it. My dog also helps me a lot, especially when I am feeling down
chibam	Q3: Nobody real. I had a girlfriend once who was fictional, but I always felt her by my side when I had to trudge through social functions. People would ask me about what we'd been up to, and when I told them about her antics, I could almost feel her warmth radiating upon me from by my side. She was with me, and for brief moments, I didn't feel alone at those things. I really really miss her.
Amber22 (PSW)	Aw so cute!! @melmelmel456
Shaz51	@Jacques you are not alone my brother , mr shaz is the same and me supporting my partner I am in the same boat
Jacques	I guess if I had a friend it would help me feel less lonely to have someone who cares and who listens. never judges and someone I could trust not to hurt me.
Jacques	I know @Shaz51 and I so so appreciate your friendship. I'm more talking away from internet friends and knowing people outside of the internet. I have no one face to face.
Shaz51	this is why I find the Sane Forum soo good xx
Captain24	When I'm in a room full of people I'm too scared to talk to anyone and that doesn't help with the loneliness. I don't know that much can change that.
melmelmel456	If I had someone who made me feel less lonely, I think the qualities would be they show interest in me as a person, they are compassionate and understanding, non-judgemental and they also share about themselves too.
TideisTurning (PSW)	That's a tough one @Captain24! I often feel that way too if I'm on my own!
Jacques	I agree @Shaz51 it is literally my lifeline, yourself and so many others here are all I have in this world.

SANE

We're people like you.

chibam	@Jacques @Shaz51 IMHO, internet relationships simply aren't enough for a person to sustain themselves on. We need real-life evidence that there are good people there for us. I don't think many of us were born to live out our lives stuck behind a screen.
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Hugs Shaz and Jacques
melmelmel456	I recently watched a video by Dr Ramani on Youtube and she said something about that people want 3 things: Helped, Hugged or Heard.
7cough9	Q3 I think that the thoughts that make loneliness distressing can be countered by thoughts and actions. If I imagine that I am at the mercy of society and strangers, people around me carelessly or intentionally depriving me of warmth or understanding, I reverse that by choosing to take some control and take action - such as finding another person who appears uncomfortable and trying to give them some attention. Can be just small talk, but usually seeking out something we have in common.
Shaz51	me too , @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) , @Jacques , @Amber22 (PSW) , I have no friends
tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	Very true Chibam.
Amber22 (PSW)	I'd like to think we are all SANE community friends <3
TideisTurning (PSW)	Oh my goodness @Melmelmel456 I love that!
melmelmel456	I think many people go straight to Helped without realising that people may want to feel heard first ie validated. So the trick is that we need to get better at asking for what we need but also asking people what they need in that moment.
Jacques	you might be right @chibam we are social creatures. that is so true @melmelmel456 nurtured
TideisTurning (PSW)	Q4: How has technology impacted your sense of connection with others?
Shaz51	very true @melmelmel456

SANE

We're people like you.

tyme (PSW/ Moderator)	I love that @mel: Helped, Hugged or Heard.
7cough9	@melmelmel456 cats can offer uncomplicated warmth, but I feel frustrated when they dismiss me (no pets of my own, just greet cats in front yards on the neighbourhood)
melmelmel456	You're right @chibam, the internet cannot replicate attunement and interoception like a human in front of you does. That is - coregulation.
The Hams	What was the original question posed? Sorry I needed to go for a bit
melmelmel456	@7cough9 yes cats are very ill love you on my own terms not yours so cats can be tricky
melmelmel456	If I didn't have the internet I would be completely cut off from any social interaction
Jacques	technology in my opinion has made us more isolated than ever, a lot of people now exclusively socialise through the internet with family and friends, programs like Facebook, twitter, TikTok, etc have created a disconnect which I believe will have long term consequences in the future. the internet is not a substitution for social interaction. I have been involved in technology since 1991 it has changed so much in that time. it had good intentions but lacked the understanding of the impact it would truly have
Amber22 (PSW)	Technology has helped me to feel more connected with people, whether that is over the phone, texting, or even just connecting via forums like SANE forums or social media platforms. It can make me feel a lot less lonely
Captain24	I've only found internet connection in the last 11 months. If it wasn't for the connections I've made on SANE I don't know where I'd be now.
Amber22 (PSW)	That's lovely, I'm so glad you're on the forums Captain24
Captain24	Thanks @Amber22 (PSW)
chibam	Q4: Short answer: it's completely ruined it. Because I was reasonably handy with computers way back when, everyone just decided that I was meant to be trapped behind a computer for the rest of my life, and so that's the direction they all tried to push me in. No support whatsoever to find better relationships or a career doing more practical activities. I honestly wish the computer had never been invented.
Shaz51	Ohhh the Sane forum have made a big difference over the last 8 years xoxo

SANE

We're people like you.

TideisTurning (PSW)	To answer your question @The Hams, our questions are usually pinned to the top of the discussion for ease :)
melmelmel456	Technology has helped me to connect with likeminded people and connect with people through interest topics like fb groups. It has also helped me to attend online courses like here in WA we have something called WA Recovery College and they offer online and in person things like self-compassion through poetry, values based relationships, connecting to inner child. So it gives me access to again likeminded individuals.
TideisTurning (PSW)	I'm hearing there's a fair few pros and cons to technology. Would definitely agree with that!
melmelmel456	A con would be that it can be addictive staying on your phone and that we have SO much going on in just on little device it can overload our brains too
7cough9	Q4 Having a blog on Quora where I could share my experiences and ideas made me feel a bit less of a weirdo, particularly when I got upvotes and shares. Whatsapp had been a critical tool in my interactions with a peer mentor I access through NDIS support worker funding. On the other hand vid tools like Zoom have typically made me feel even more remote since the imperfect representation of body language and competing feeds in text chat seems to make communication worse.
TideisTurning (PSW)	Q5: What barriers might there be to connecting with others? How might we be able to navigate these?
The Hams	I think tech has been both positive and negative - maybe more so negative on balance. Problem is in our society its very impersonal. Maybe this is a city thing. in the country people seem a bit more genuine and willing to interact. I've made it my goal to have good interactions with strangers. Why not? barristas, uber drivers whatever.... it doesn't need to be much. People are very lonely these days and it is because we are an impersonal society. The online world is providing something that the real world lacks. I don't think its all roses and positivity though. Far from it actually. It's a hard question
The Hams	in terms of barriers - cultural, linguistic, psychological, age.... quite a lot actually.
The Hams	sometimes there are things tech does that overcomes those barriers

SANE

We're people like you.

Amber22 (PSW)	<p>Sometimes I find it difficult to connect with others on a surface level, which can leave me feeling a bit more alone. But I guess connecting with others on a surface level can lead to more deep and meaningful connections in the future, so having more patience with this could be a good way to navigate it. Also being open to connecting with others in different circumstances (like online) can be really good when meeting others. For example; I find that I share more on the forums than I do with some people in my life!</p>
melmelmel456	<p>Physical health barriers can make socialising in person far more tiring. Trauma is a big barrier. Location can be a barrier if you are in an area that doesn't have much for socialising other than going to the pub, so if you're a non-drinker that can be hard. Trust - lack of it can be a barrier. There are lots more but that's off the topic of my head.</p>
Jacques	<p>Q5 for me would be lack of money, social skills and trust issues. for me it is very expensive to have friends, in my teenage years I had to limit access to friends because I didn't have the money to do all the social things people do, I'm very awkward in social situations and struggle with social anxiety. as I have said before I have been hurt by people I thought where friends, so i just don't trust anyone anymore, if I have no friends I can't get hurt. my mantra in life has been "no ambitions, no disappointments"</p>
The Hams	<p>for example I have no friends who follow cycling. I found a hashtag on twitter that was about it all - it's pretty cool being able to connect with other cycling fans in Aus. #couchpeloton if you are interested. I'm sure there communities with similar interests too. I mean sane forums is another example too I think</p>
Captain24	<p>My biggest barrier is myself. My fear of people seeing through me and seeing that I'm not really worth connecting with. My fear of actually communicating with others and zero social skills. I don't know how to overcome it.</p>

SANE

We're people like you.

chibam	Q5: I think the biggest one is social stigmata that deter people from introducing kindred spirits to one another. I keep asking myself: "What if one of my cousins/aunts/uncles/therapists/etc. knew a girl who was a perfect match for me? My soulmate? Could I count on them to set the two of us up together?" And I strongly suspect that the answer to that question is: "No," because all those people don't like me, and presumably wouldn't like my soulmate, either. So they don't want us to find support, connection, or happiness. They want us to feel isolated and persecuted, because that presumably makes us easier to bully around.
TideisTurning (PSW)	It's a really vulnerable thing to be open and let people see you @Captain24. It's brave being yourself
Shaz51	ohhhhhhhh @TideisTurning (PSW) I am sorry but I have to say my husband
chibam	Instead of condemning the weirdos to isolation, why can't it be the norm to bring them together, so that we can all live in our own crazy little worlds with the people we're meant to be with?
7cough9	Q5 I quickly judge people based on perceived ' red flags ' in behaviours – such as 'lets make the conversation about me' – and thus not worth engaging with. but by default I am also insecure and dismissive, expecting most to see me as a problem more than a solution.
melmelmelmel456	For me personally trauma, physical health issues, being neurodiverse. I think from trauma and life experiences I feel very deeply and so many people are happy with surface level conversation. Small talk is really boring to me :lf605:
Shaz51	my mr shaz is a barrier @TideisTurning (PSW), @Amber22 (PSW)
Jacques	I get that @Shaz51 I feel my mum has lost a lot of friends and family because of me and not being able to have people at the house because of me. I feel so guilty about it.
TideisTurning (PSW)	Q6: What does meaningful connection look like for you? Is this different to other's perceptions, and if so, how?
Shaz51	@Jacques you don't need to feel guilty my brother, I feel your mother and I are comfortable and happy in the situation that we are in as we are supporting our loved ones xoxo

SANE

We're people like you.

Captain24	Meaningful connection would be just being able to be completely yourself with others. Not having to mask.
TideisTurning (PSW)	Yes @Captain24! I feel like that's really important :)
Amber22 (PSW)	Meaningful connection and connection can be very different - connection can often just be surface level for me, whereas meaningful connection brings me a sense of purpose from the relationship. It runs a bit deeper than a normal connection. I feel like this meaningful connection would be my mum for me, as she supports me when I really need it, and knows when I need help without me voicing it. Meaningful connection might feel like the other person understands you more than others sometimes.
Amber22 (PSW)	Love it! @Captain24
Jacques	hmm, wow, that sums it up perfectly @Captain24 , I will second that, it is so hard not to have a mask on to help others feel comfortable around me.
Amber22 (PSW)	Someone that doesn't drain my social battery makes me feel like I have a deeper connection with them
chibam	Q6: You have to feel like you would want to live in the same world as this person, if they had the power to be who they wanted to be; and vice-versa. You have to feel that their character is an asset to yourself and humanity. Ideally, enjoying their company shouldn't be much dependant upon your imagination; upon you pretending/fooling yourself that they are really deep down somebody who they really aren't.
Jacques	OMG @Amber22 (PSW) can we post pictures here? I have the perfect one for a social battery?
Amber22 (PSW)	I'm not sure if you can - but if there isn't a way then feel free to post it on the forums!! @Jacques I would love to see it
Shaz51	very True @Captain24
chibam	Q6: And one of the big things that really concerns me with the global discussion about loneliness is the unwillingness to talk about intimacy; particularly within the heterosexual community. Because the meaningfulness of a connection is largely tied to the depth of its intimacy.
Jacques	ok sweet @Amber22 (PSW)

SANE

We're people like you.

Jacques	I will post it in icememery
chibam	I'm not saying that every meaningful connection needs to be sexual; but the need for sexual intimacy is an important area of the conversation the nobody seems to want to have.
7cough9	The deepest meaningful connections I had were from friends who invested time and sensitive acceptance in me, with persistence and consistency that erased my doubts about them and about myself. More common but still satisfying connections came from roles such as volunteer work where people showed respect and gave me credit, or where I was part of a shared activity and we were co-operating as equals with shared struggles and setbacks.
Amber22 (PSW)	Sounds great :) @Jacques
Shaz51	sounds wonderful @Jacques
The Hams	chibam I agree - so much I could say about it
melmelmel456	For me I think to have meaningful connection I need to have emotional safety, that if I express how I am feeling the person will not dismiss or ignore. They will turn towards me and help me feel heard and even hugged and helped. But I think mostly Heard because feeling like someone actually listened and the had empathy for what I was feeling. and they also open up and share with me too and I can help them feel heard, hugged or helped depending on what they need. So I think reciprocation is an important part of meaningful connection for me. Acceptance I think is an important aspect of a meaningful connection for me too. Trust - trust that I can confide in them and them me without what was shared going further.
Jacques	https://saneforums.org/t5/Social-Spaces/The-Ice-Memery/m-p/1299698#M334217 @Amber22 (PSW) when the photo comes through
melmelmel456	There are different types of intimacy @chibam I agree people don't talk about it. Like emotional intimacy - feeling emotionally connected
Amber22 (PSW)	That is such a good one!!! @Jacques
melmelmel456	Yes persistence and consistency are important! I agree @7cough9
TideisTurning (PSW)	Q7: How might you be able to increase your sense of connection in future?

SANE

We're people like you.

Captain24	Change who I am!
The Hams	this is a very deep chat - I appreciate it a lot
Amber22 (PSW)	I'm glad you like it! It's a good one for sure @The Hams
chibam	@melmelmel456 Yes, there are all different kinds, and they are all important. I was just pointing out that, IMHO, there is a distinct void in the overall conversation, where I believe that much more meaningful discussion is needed.
melmelmel456	completely agree @chibam
Jacques	I guess for me it would be nice to be normal and have friends, it looks like a lot of fun and it would help with my mental health. I'm hoping one day I can be with my partner, and I can start fresh. maybe build a life and a little bit of happiness. to be free.
melmelmel456	Q7 I need to make the effort to catch up with people in person. To get there i need to get to a healthier space physically and mentally.
7cough9	At a minimum connections demand having a go, taking a chance on some community or activity you might not be immediately confident about. The internet offers multiple chances to try things out, even if it is just the social equivalent of a stationary exercise bike.
chibam	If there's anything more I can do, I'm at a loss for what it might be. I think all I can do is wait and hope that the government or some organization (e.g. the mental health system) might develop a system for identifying particular identities and uniting people with compatible values and aspirations.
The Hams	a good start is to start as you mean to go - to quote my grandmother - in other words, do what you want to happen to you
The Hams	so for this context - start being good to people
The Hams	so much connection can be had in being good
Amber22 (PSW)	For me it would be being more open to others
Amber22 (PSW)	Love that! @The Hams

SANE

We're people like you.

7cough9	At a minimum connections demand having a go, taking a chance on some community or activity you might not be immediately confident about. The internet offers multiple chances to try things out, even if it is just the social equivalent of a stationary exercise bike.
chibam	@The Hams There's wisdom in that. But it can be so hard when the people you end up with sap all the goodwill from you.
Captain24	If I can't change who I am then I don't know how to gain connections
The Hams	true that - I think the trick there is to make sure the goodwill you are showing is not taxing on you
The Hams	or put another way - know your limits
7cough9	More important is being able to treat others as valuable and /or special, even if you have to fake it until you make it.
melmelmel456	What parts of yourself do you feel you need to change? @Captain24
Captain24	Most of myself @melmelmel456 . If I was a good person I would already have some connections.
chibam	@The Hams I'm afraid I might have very low limits. lol.
melmelmel456	I think you can be a good person and not have people. I think that many times we probably try to connect with the wrong people. Maybe we didn't have boundaries or we didn't identify potential red flags or maybe we even ignored them. @Captain24
Amber22 (PSW)	You have some great connections on the forums, you are a really good person @Captain24
The Hams	I have tested my limits @chibam to see where they are - still doing it everyday. I find that its harder to do if its fake.
melmelmel456	Maybe we don't let people in also because we are scared to get hurt and so we don't have anyone because of that - not a reflection of us as a person.
chibam	A lot of good people just aren't appreciated in their own time @Captain24 . Just look at Van Gogh

SANE

We're people like you.

TideisTurning (PSW)	Q8: Have you learned anything helpful from others' experiences here tonight that you might be able to apply in your own life? If yes, what did you learn?
The Hams	To keep being genuine but to know my limits and to remember that you never know what the next person is going through. Seek to be the change you want to see, be the exception to the rules around you - your own unique trope. Keep living.
Amber22 (PSW)	That is great! @The Hams
TideisTurning (PSW)	My biggest takeaway I think is from @melmelmelmel456: "people want 3 things: Helped, Hugged or Heard"
chibam	Q: I learned that there's an awful lot of eerie similarity to my own predicament out there. Not sure how practical that knowledge is. Maybe in the future we all might form a union and work for change together?
TideisTurning (PSW)	Yes @The Hams! Love this!
Jacques	I have learned tonight that I'm not alone in my feelings and being socially awkward.
melmelmelmel456	We all connected in some form here in this chat and knowing we are not alone in feeling lonely can be comforting in a sense.
The Hams	exactly ^
TideisTurning (PSW)	Q9: Tonight's topic may have brought up some heavy feelings as we talked about struggles with experiences of isolation and loneliness and forming or sustaining connections. Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do?
Shaz51	I have learned tonight that I'm not alone in my feelings -- same here @Amber22 (PSW) , @TideisTurning (PSW) , @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) , I have lost close friends
Amber22 (PSW)	A big cup of tea for me :)
Jacques	I'm going to listen to some meditation music, spend some time with my partner and self sooth with my Bulgarian worry beads.

SANE

We're people like you.

The Hams	cheers all. shower, tea and youtube then cycling for me. have a good night!
chibam	I'm gonna call it a night. Haven't been sleeping well lately, and I can barely keep my eyes open.
Shaz51	a shower and a BIG cuppa for me @Amber22 (PSW)
Amber22 (PSW)	I hope you get a better sleep tonight! @chibam
Jacques	night all, thank you moderators for another great topic. hugs to all.
melmelmel456	I have a self-compassion through poetry webinar online next so that will be my self-care. Thanks for having me here tonight and for letting me join in. It was nice to chat with you all.
Amber22 (PSW)	A cuppa sounds great right about now! @Shaz51
chibam	Me too, @Amber22 (PSW) . :)
Amber22 (PSW)	Next week we will be discussing sleep in our Peer Group Chat... I will tag you tomorrow!! You might like it :) @chibam
7cough9	Bye
TideisTurning (PSW)	<p>Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at:</p> <p>1 Connected, but alone: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7Xr3AsBEK4</p> <p>2 A conversation about how there can be different kinds of loneliness, and the impacts loneliness, isolation and connection can have https://brenebrown.com/podcast/dr-vivek-murthy-and-brene-on-loneliness-and-connection/</p> <p>3 Loneliness Toolkit: https://toolkit.lifeline.org.au/topics/loneliness/what-you-can-do-right-now-for-loneliness</p> <p>4 Connected, but alone: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7Xr3AsBEK4</p> <p>5 How friendship affects your brain https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YmVpwXH4jhA</p>
Amber22 (PSW)	Thank you for joining everyone :)
chibam	That's a coincidence, @Amber22 (PSW)
Shaz51	thank you @Amber22 (PSW) , @TideisTurning (PSW) , @tyme (PSW/ Moderator) for tonight xx

SANE

We're people like you.

TideisTurning (PSW)	<p>Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion. You are more than welcome to continue the discussion over on the SANE Forums if you would like here - https://saneforums.org/t5/Social-Spaces/Peer-Group-Chat-The-Misconception-of-Connection-Thursday-25th/m-p/1297473#M333296 Keep an eye out for the next Peer Group Chat discussion about Sleepy-Time & Sweet Dreams: Getting a Good Sleep.</p> <p>If you'd like to be informed about future Peer Group Chats, you can sign up to our mailing list here https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat. You can also ask questions for us to discuss in future peer chats.</p>
chibam	<p>Lived Experience Australia recently said in a newsletter that there'd be an upcoming podcast about loneliness on https://psychmatters.ranzcp.org/ I've been waiting for it, but it seems to be a while coming.</p>
Amber22 (PSW)	<p>Thank you for sharing! @chibam</p>