



PHRAME

Public Health Round-up on Actions, Measures and Evidence

An Initiative by SD Gupta School of Public Health, IIMR University

Look around, Think, Share, Connect

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Loneliness is much more than being alone, it is the perception – the negative experience arising out of physical, mental or social isolation.

Loneliness is increasingly being recognized as a public health concern globally. But do we know enough? Let us unravel some corners of an unfathomed territory and look at a few dimensions of this elusive but highly personal experience.

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Message



I am very happy to note that the next issue of PHRAME is being released. The theme this time of Loneliness is very thoughtfully chosen and highlights the need to focus on this complex public health challenge.

There is evidence that loneliness is a serious public health problem of a global scale and seriously impacts physical, mental and social dimensions of health and mortality. It is worrisome that the awareness of the negative health effects and management of the condition among the general population is minimal. Currently there is limited funding in the area and a need for a multisectoral approach in research and management further complicates the progress in this area. We are also venturing into an era of unprecedented technological advancements and globalization which warrants exploring

the dynamics of modernization at an individual, family and societal levels. Social isolation and strategies to improve social connection also needs to be studied in greater detail as researchers globally focus on the drivers, policies and interventions to combat loneliness.

At IIHMR University, we constantly strive to achieve academic excellence, create and disseminate new knowledge, particularly in priority areas of public health and health management. This is reflected in the academic rigour of our flagship MBA and MPH programs. PHRAME represents one of the dimensions of our commitment to disseminate new knowledge and evidence in emerging as well as neglected areas of public health importance and also symbolizes our efforts to popularize public health. PHRAME has ensured an interesting mix of well-referenced scientific articles, creative essays, themed poems as well as crossword and interesting facts which makes a holistic reading.

My compliments to the entire team of PHRAME for their consistent efforts in crafting this insightful issue. I am sure that the readers will find this issue of PHRAME to be very engaging and informative, and it will enhance our understanding on this important public health problem.

Dr. P R Sodani

President

IIHMR University

Purple Hues

amidst the Greys of Loneliness...

Purple hues are back and bring along another important avenue to delve upon – Loneliness. Loneliness has emerged as a public health problem. Purple Hues look at some of the dimensions of Loneliness to bring interesting and updated perspectives.

There is so much to do for you - with friends, family and colleagues around, you are full of energy giving your best at work, home and society. You sail through the vibrance of life and look forward every day to scale new heights. And then there are times when this exuberance is eclipsed; a strange void seems to engulf the energy as the colours give way to the Greys – pace dwindles to a standstill, charm settles to the mundane, and suddenly there is hardly anything to look forward to. An empty unending hollow feel swallows you, the senses diminish, and it becomes a routine – Loneliness has become the new norm!

Loneliness, often described as a painful feeling of being alone and disconnected from others, has recently been recognized as an important public health problem. In 2018, the UK was one of the first countries to take note of Loneliness as an issue requiring serious intervention at National level. Tracey Crouch was the world's first minister of Loneliness. Since then, many countries have followed by appointing public representatives to focus and address the growing challenge. The World Health Organization declared Loneliness as a public health threat in November 2023. The adverse health risks arising out of the condition were likened to be equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes per day. There have been many studies including systematic reviews and meta-analyses which state that social isolation or loneliness can lead to an overall 26 % increase in mortality amongst older adults and more specifically 50% increased risk of developing dementia and 30% increased risk of coronary artery disease or strokes.

This edition of PHRAME takes a closer look at loneliness as we bring an interesting perspective on the condition from leading experts. The duality of loneliness leading to morbid suffering and ingenious creativity is exemplified by many historical life-stories and we dedicate the public health hall of fame this time to the life and creative genius of Vincent van Gogh. There are not to be missed thoughtful essays and creative contributions from our vibrant and professional students and the summary of cutting edge updates and publications on the area are showcased in looking glass. As usual the logPhrame will serve to diffuse loneliness from your minds by keeping your teasing your brains on the subject!

Happy reading.

May the Purple hues steal the greys and infuse the pink of health in your lives!

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Perspective

LONELINESS: A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

“Social connection is at the core of well-being and yet, bafflingly and alarmingly, social disconnection is on the rise, with approximately 16% of the population (one in six) experiencing loneliness. The health and societal impact of social disconnection is a public health emergency awaiting immediate attention. This review focuses primarily on loneliness and tries to delve into the aspects of social disconnect, causes of loneliness and strategies to combat loneliness”

Dr. Saurabh Mehrotra¹; Ms. Tamanna Singh²



Introduction

Human beings are a social species that require safe and secure social relationships to thrive and survive. The famous Greek philosopher Aristotle had remarked, “Man is by nature a social animal”. The importance of

social connection has been recognized for millennia and the World Health Organization incorporated it as an integral part of the definition of health. WHO defined health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease

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or infirmity”. Social connection is at the core of well-being and yet, bafflingly and alarmingly, social disconnection is on the rise, with approximately 16% of the population (one in six) experiencing loneliness. Loneliness affects all age groups but is most common amongst adolescents and young adults (20.9% among 13-17 years old and 17.4% among 18-29-year-old). It is more common in low-income countries, where one in four report loneliness. The health and societal impact of social disconnection is a public health emergency awaiting immediate attention. This review focuses primarily on loneliness.

Social Connection

Social connection is an umbrella term to describe how people relate to and interact with each other in three dimensions: structural, functional and quality. These



dimensions are seen in face to face as well as in online interactions. The structural dimension is about the number and variety of relationships, along with the frequency, duration and modes of interaction. The functional dimension refers to the support which is perceived and received in relationships, whereas the quality dimension is about the nature of the relationships and interactions, which can be positive, negative or neutral.

An individual's social connectedness is based on the interplay between these dimensions. The US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has identified social connection as one of the priority social determinants of health.

A. Benefits of Social Connections

Social connections are a valuable resource in life, creating moments of positivity and fun, supporting us

through good and bad times, and exposing us to new ideas and people. Healthy connections offer a happier, prosperous and longer life. “Resonant relationships are like emotional vitamins, sustaining us through tough times and nourishing us daily” (Daniel Goldman).

“Resonant relationships are like emotional vitamins, sustaining us through tough times and nourishing us daily”

The benefits of social connections are being recognized in all aspects of health and life and are recognized as one of the vital ingredients of happiness. Research suggests that strong social connection increases the odds of survival by 50%. Social connections developing in childhood are a key to later well-being, and predictors of physical health, economic success and flourishing in life. It is a more important predictor of happiness than academic achievement.

There is also a huge impact on physical health, with lesser chances of hypertension, cardiovascular disease, improved immune and endocrine function. They improve quality of life and longevity.

B. Benefit to Communities

Social connection benefits individuals as well as communities. The benefits to communities include better health outcomes, more resilience and ability to face hazards, lower levels of violence in the community and higher levels of economic prosperity.

How Social Connection Influences Health

Social connection influences health through three major pathways: biology, psychology and behaviour. The role of social connections on biology emerges in early life and continues through the lifespan, contributing to risk and protection from disease. Social connection influences health through specific biological pathways, including cardiovascular and neuroendocrine dysregulation, immunity and gut-microbiome interactions. Regulation of these systems is critical for good health. There is also evidence that isolation is linked to inflammation, which has been implicated as a risk factor in many chronic diseases.

Social connections influence psychological processes. Adults around the world rate their social relationships, particularly with family and close friends, as the most important source of purpose, meaning and motivation in life. This leads to higher self-regulation in pursuing goals, including health goals.

Social connection is also linked to a number of health-related behaviours, including lifestyle behaviours (diet, exercise, sleep) and better treatment adherence which ultimately influences health and longevity.

Social Disconnection

This refers to the absence or deficit of social connection. It may result from a low standing in one of the three dimensions that make up social connections-structure, function and quality. Social disconnection can take many forms, such as social isolation, loneliness, lack of social support, low social capital and social negativity.



i. Social Isolation

This is defined by an objective lack of roles, relationships or interactions with others. It is characterized by restricted social network and infrequent social interactions. It reflects a deficit in the structural dimensions of social connections. Here the persons social connections are considered inadequate.

ii. Loneliness

It is a subjective experience, which refers to a negative “emotional state” arising from a discrepancy between ones desired and actual experience of social

connection. It is linked to the structural, functional and quality dimensions of social connection. Loneliness differs from being alone- the objective absence of other people- and from solitude- the voluntary state of being alone. Loneliness is considered to be involuntary and undesired. It can be transient, a temporary response to life events or chronic, persisting over a long time, defined as two years or more.

It can be further classified as social loneliness, arising from lack of social connections and a feeling of not belonging to a group or community, emotional loneliness marked by an absence of close intimate relationships that provide emotional support and connection (romantic relationship, close friend) and existential loneliness, referring to a deeper sense of isolation and meaninglessness, a feeling that one is alone in this universe.

Loneliness also has a ripple effect on communities, influencing social cohesion and overall well-being. When people feel isolated, their sense of connection to others diminishes, leading to a cascade of negative outcomes in various aspects of life.

The impact of loneliness varies across different ethnic groups as well, due to a number of factors, including



culture, age, and gender. Other personal factors like personality traits, life experiences, and mental health conditions can influence how loneliness is experienced.

Scale of the Problem

Social networks are getting smaller, and levels of social participation are declining. The average time spent alone increased from 285-minutes/day in 2003 to 333-minutes/day in 2020. The amount of time people engaged with friends socially in-person has decreased to 20minutes/day in 2020, down from 60 minutes/day in 2003. This may be distinct from whether individuals

report they are lonely. The decline in time spent with friends is maximum in the 15–24-year age group, declining by over 70% in the past two decades. Irrespective of loneliness, the number of friends/confidants has declined in the past decades.

An estimated 15.8% of the world's population was lonely between 2014 and 2023. The prevalence of loneliness decreases with age. Adolescents (13–17 years old) are estimated to have the highest prevalence, at 20.9%, followed by young adults (18–29 years) at 17.4%, adults (30–59 years old) at 15.1%, and older adults (≥ 60 years old) at 11.8%. Older adults (60 years and above) have lower rates of loneliness, but this may be different for people above 80 years of age. The estimated rate of loneliness in females and males was 16.1% and 15.4%, a very slight difference.

Loneliness Across Age span

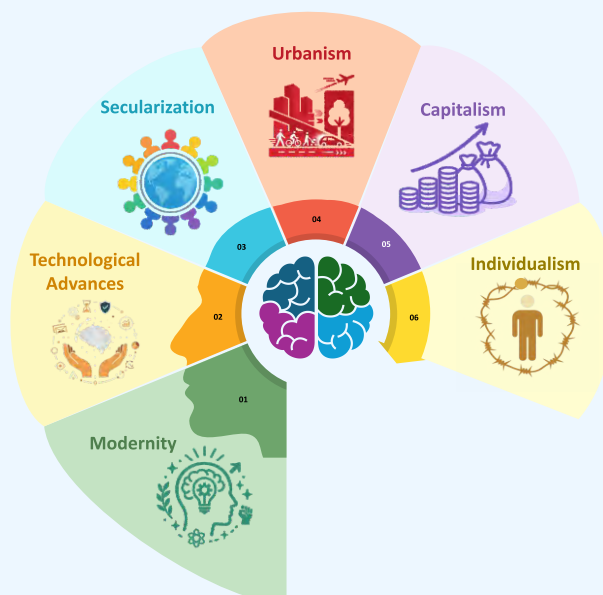
The need to affiliate with others is a fundamental aspect of human life, with loneliness being experienced by individuals across all age groups. However, the sources of loneliness vary depending on the different stage of life. The early sources of loneliness often revolve around peer friendships. In early childhood, forming and maintaining friendships is largely influenced by proximity and shared activities. However, as children grow, the quality of friendships becomes more important. By late childhood, children begin to seek friendships characterized by validation, understanding, self-disclosure, and empathy. By adolescence, concerns about social standing and acceptance within the peer group come into play. Adolescents not only want to be liked by close friends but also seek acceptance from the larger peer group. Factors such as lack of friends, poor friendship quality and peer rejection contribute to loneliness in adolescence. As adolescents transition into young adulthood, the focus shifts somewhat from social status to a continued desire for intimate friendships.

Romantic relationships also emerge as an increasingly important source of loneliness, particularly during adolescence and young adulthood. Over this period, romantic experiences become more common, and the quality of romantic relationships grows in importance. Young individuals move from desiring a romantic partner to seeking a committed and high-quality relationship. In adulthood, marital status continues to influence loneliness, but marital quality becomes a more significant factor in determining levels of loneliness than simply being married. In older age, new risk factors for loneliness emerge, such as the loss of a partner, decreased social activity due to physical

limitations, and the increasing frailty of a spouse. These factors contribute to substantial changes in social experiences, increasing the likelihood of both social disconnection and reconnection opportunities.

Causes of Loneliness

Understand the drivers of loneliness is very important for developing effective strategies and dealing with it. Social isolation and loneliness are a byproduct of modernity, characterized by rapid disruptive technological advances, secularization, individualism, capitalism and urbanism. The industrial revolution has led to a number of people living away from home in urban areas. The family system has crumbled and rise of digital technologies has captured our imagination, dramatically changing the way we interact. Social media has reduced our face-to-face interactions and monopolized our attention. Quality of relationships suffers because of, “phubbing” or “technoference”—ignoring an in-person conversation by using a mobile phone. Research now suggests a correlation between hours of social media use and levels of social isolation and feeling low. Higher the social media use, more the isolation and levels of sadness.



Technology of course is for our benefit. Social media can also be an effective tool for connection and support for a number of people. It is for us to fathom whether we want to enhance our relationships or substitute them for online content. The greatest concern associated with digital technology is its use by children and adolescents, and its adverse effects on mental health and well-being.

Impact of Social Disconnection/Loneliness

“Over four decades of research has produced robust evidence that lacking social connection- and in particular, scoring high on measures of social isolation- is associated with significantly increased risk of early death from all causes” (2020 consensus study report, National academy of sciences, engineering and medicine).

This statement is humbling and puts in perspective the consequences of social disconnection. The effects of social disconnection on mortality are comparable and, in many cases, higher than the established risk factors including lifestyle (smoking, alcohol, physical inactivity), and traditional clinical risk factors (Hypertension, cholesterol levels, body mass index). This emphasizes the need to have urgent mechanisms in place to tackle social disconnection.

The global number of deaths due to loneliness alone is estimated to be 871000 per year during the period from 2104-2019. It is a global emergency killing 100 people every hour. Loneliness and social isolation increase the risk of premature death by 26% and 29% respectively, and is as harmful as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. There is a 29% increase in the risk of coronary artery disease and a 32% increase in the risk of stroke. The American Heart Association in a 2022 statement concluded that, “social isolation and loneliness are common and appear to be independent risk factors for worse cardiovascular and brain health; however, consistency of the association varies by outcome”.

People who are less socially connected may have increased susceptibility and weaker immune responses when they are exposed to infectious diseases. Social disconnection is known to generate a weaker antibody response to the flu vaccine. There is a risk of reduced immunity and proneness to viruses and respiratory infections.

Robust evidence links social disconnection to increased risk and severity of mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, psychosis, suicidal ideation and self-harm.

“Social isolation is arguably the strongest and most reliable predictor of suicidal ideation, attempts, and lethal suicidal behaviour among samples varying in age, nationality and clinical severity” 2010 study, “the interpersonal theory of suicide”

Substantial evidence also links social isolation and loneliness with accelerated cognitive decline and increased dementia in older adults. In older adults it has been related to cognitive decline and the risk of dementia is increased by 23-58%.

The impact of social disconnection goes beyond health,

to social and economic development with billions of dollars spent every year in additional healthcare spending.

STRATEGIES TO COMBAT LONELINESS

We need a world where people understand the importance of relationships, just like the air we breathe and the food we eat. This paves way for a healthier and happier world, a common goal for all of us. We need to look out for each other, respect each other and create opportunities to uplift each other. This is reflected in the philosophy of Ubuntu, an African origin value system which translates into. “I am because we are”. It emphasizes interconnectedness, community and the belief that a person's well-being and happiness is realised through their relationship with others.

Loneliness often whispers lies, “no one cares”, “you are unlovable”

The problem of loneliness needs to be addressed at multiple levels. These include-

- Advocacy and campaigns
- Governmental policies
- Community strategies
- Mobilizing the health sector
- Psychological strategies

a) Advocacy and Campaigns

Advocacy involves work to influence policies, practices and social norms to reduce loneliness, and/or social isolation and/or foster greater social connection. Advocacy creates changes at the systemic level by persuading decision-makers, raising public awareness and mobilising resources. The key elements include policy influence, campaigns and networks. Campaigns such as neighbour day in Australia and loneliness awareness week is gaining traction in countries as opportunities to connect people and the society with Governments.

b) Government Policies

As of 2024, only eight WHO member states had a policy, strategy, action plan, law or advisory that directly addresses social connection. All are high income countries. There is a urgent need to frame policies to tackle loneliness. The governments can immediately focus on providing social infrastructure, encourage community programs to promote social connection, and develop a strategic plan to ensure the social connectedness and skills training is incorporated both in school and healthcare policies.

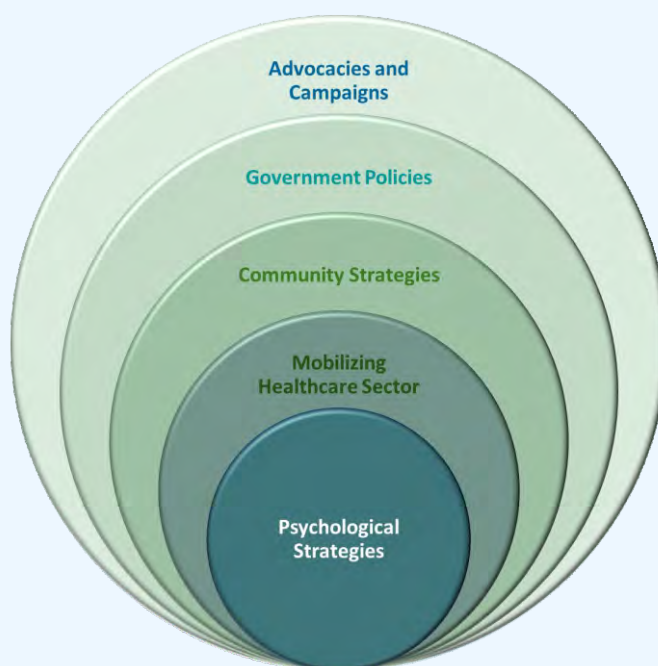
c) *Community Strategies*

Community strategies are extremely important in managing loneliness. Societies that are collectivist rather than individualist have a reduced sense of loneliness.

Many factors that enhance social connection are environmental. The main way to increase opportunities for social connection is by strengthening social infrastructure. Social infrastructure refers to the programs (volunteer organizations, sports groups, religious groups), policies (like public transportation, housing and education), and physical elements of a

d) *Mobilizing the Health Sector*

Social connection is an individual protective factor for several major health conditions and the health sector; notably public health must be involved in this. This includes educating the health care professionals as well as the public about the benefits of social connection. Public health organizations should promote both individual best practices and advance community solutions. Social connection should be established as a priority health indicator and social determinant of health, with the goal of improving health and well-being through programs, education, research.



Strategies to Combat Loneliness

community (libraries, parks, green spaces, playgrounds) that support the development of social connection. It helps communities by providing opportunities to foster social connection among residents, local leaders and community serving organizations.

“Social prescribing” and connector services covers interventions designed to improve health and well-being by referral of individual to non-clinical services and activities by a health care professional or community worker. The individuals include those who are lonely or socially isolated. The prescribed activities may include participation in community activities, specific referrals for exercise, gardening, nature or art groups.

e) *Psychological Strategies*

- **Self-help:** Dealing with loneliness can be challenging. It often comes with shame, hopelessness and emotional fatigue. It can be eased with patience, compassion and small, steady steps. Loneliness is the mind's way of saying, “I need connection”. Self-help strategies help individuals understand loneliness and the sort of connections they are looking for. They then guide how social relationships can be nurtured. They look at rebuilding relationships with self through self-care activities (reading, exercise, hobbies, meditation and journaling), as well as building relationships with the community through participation in community events, volunteering, joining clubs. Another area of focus is noticing the inner thoughts and naming and challenging them.

- **Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) for loneliness:** This therapeutic approach is grounded in the understanding that our thoughts, feelings and behaviours are interconnected. Hence by changing how we think about ourselves and others around us—especially concerning social situations—we can start making strides towards feeling less lonely. CBT tackles loneliness by challenging negative thoughts, and techniques of behavioural activation. A maladaptive thought pattern could be, “people don't like me”. CBT helps challenge negative thoughts, examine evidence for the thoughts and look at plausible realistic alternative thoughts. Behavioural activation techniques utilize behavioural engagement as a method to promote social interaction. This involves setting small but achievable goals for increasing social activities and gradually stepping outside one's comfort zone. It requires setting aside specific time and duration each day for social interaction.

- **Social Skills Training:** It's a type of educational program for improving friendships, communication and interpersonal skills. It includes interventions such as role play and training in making conversations. It is often delivered in groups. For young people it can be included in the school curriculum as part of social emotional learning. It is the process through which individuals acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are needed to develop healthy identities, achieve personal and collective goals, manage emotions, feel and express empathy for others, initiate and maintain supportive relationships, and improved decision taking skills. Internet or computer training including digital communication such as email and social media, often targeted at older people increases the ability and confidence of individuals to connect with others and develop online social networks. Development of skills for leisure and hobbies such as gardening, art or physical exercises encourages individuals to spend time interacting and learning from others in a shared activity.

- **Connection Prescription:** It is recommended that an individual have a quality relationship with friends and family. S/he is recommended to connect with them daily or on a weekly basis. For this an individual can make use of Face-Face interaction or through various digital methods. This often helps an individual to feel close to another person. It's also essential to have group interaction. Such interactions give a sense of belonging to a group. Thus, a person must try and engage in a group activity weekly or bi monthly. To encourage a

strong sense of community. These activities help an individual obtain their health goals.

- **Third Places:** Ray Oldenburg, a sociologist introduced the concept of ‘Third Places’. These are settings outside an individual's work and home environment. These settings offer a sense of community. These are informal settings that offer opportunity to an individual to connect. These places act as societal glue binding people together. For children these places can be parks, sports centres, cultural centres for extracurricular activities. They help them understand and develop a sense of community, at the same time also teaching them methods to navigate through a shared community space. It leads to them developing a sense of self and consciousness in the world. A new concept of “Third Lives” has come up, which refers to life outside of home and workplace. It aims at engaging self through a noble commitment to volunteering, or talking to new people, or the steady building of regular social outings.

- **Social Engagement Facilitation:** Social support interventions provide emotional or practical help to individuals through programs such as befriending services, peer support, home visiting teams and mentorship programs.

- **Non-human companionship** is an emerging field of social connection interventions. This can be in the form of pets, “relational agents” (software agents that build relationships with users through conversation), or “social robots” (relational agents with human or animal-like features). Non-human companionship can generate feelings of being cared for and can provide emotional support that can help people at risk for loneliness. This is an ongoing area of research.

Conclusion :

Loneliness is a growing public health crisis affecting individuals across all age groups, especially adolescents and young adults. Rooted in declining social connections and fuelled by modern lifestyles, digital technology, and changing societal structures, loneliness impacts physical, mental, and emotional well-being. It increases the risk of premature death, heart disease, stroke, depression, and dementia. Addressing loneliness requires multi-level strategies, including government policies, community engagement, healthcare mobilization, and psychological support. Promoting social connection, strengthening social infrastructure, and educating individuals on relationship-building are essential. Recognizing social connection as vital to human health is key to fostering happier, healthier, and more resilient societies.

Resources:

- 1) Our epidemic of loneliness and isolation: the US surgeon General's advisory on the healing effects of social connection and community. 2023
- 2) From loneliness to social connection: charting a path to healthier societies. Report of the WHO commission on social connection. 2025
- 3) CBT for loneliness: a clear guide to finding connection. Published by counselling centre group. 2024
- 4) The great good place. Ray Oldenburg. 1989
- 5) National academy of sciences, engineering and medicine. 2020. Social isolation and loneliness in older adults: opportunities for the healthcare system. Washington, DC: the national academies press
- 6) Kimberly A. van Orden, Tracy K. Witte et al. The interpersonal theory of suicide. Psychol Rev. 2010. April; 117(2):575-600
- 7) Effects of objective and perceived social isolation on cardiovascular and brain health: A scientific statement from the American Heart Association. J Am Heart Assoc. 2022 Aug 16; 11(16)
- 8) Social connection as a critical factor for physical and mental health: evidence, trends, challenges and future implications. Julianne Holt-Lunstad. World Psychiatry 2024;23:312-332



Dr Saurabh Mehrotra, is a Psychiatrist and currently works as the Director and Head – Mental Health at the Division of Mental Health Institute of Neurosciences, at Medanta -the Medicity hospital at Gurugram. Dr. Saurabh's areas of interest include Positive, Promotive and Preventive health(particularly from the Psychological

perspective), Psychotherapeutic techniques, Stress and Anger management, Crisis Intervention, Counselling for Substance Abuse, New age Addictions (Internet, Mobile phones, Video games), Eating disorders, Neurobiology and Genetics of Psychiatric disorders and Disorders of Children and Adolescents.

Dr Saurabh Mehrotra

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Ms Tamanna Singh serves as a Clinical Psychologist at Medanta -the Medicity Hospital at Gurugram. She is a licensed clinical psychologist with expertise in treating a broad spectrum of mental health conditions, including Substance Use Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Obsessive-Compulsive

Disorder (OCD), and Personality Disorders.

Ms. Tamanna focusses on fostering a safe, supportive, and non-judgmental therapeutic space, where clients can openly explore their thoughts and feelings, develop effective coping strategies, and work toward long-term emotional well-being so that the treatment plan can be thoughtfully tailored to the individual's needs, aiming to promote meaningful and lasting change.

Ms Tamanna Singh

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Interesting Facts Related to Loneliness

Point Nemo is termed as the Oceanic Pole of inaccessibility and is a vast area tucked far away from any landmass in the South Pacific Ocean and is considered the loneliest place on earth. 'Middle of nowhere' lies 3000 miles away from New Zealand and 2000 miles from Antarctica and is a preferred place for dumping of ocean debris.



Michael Collins is often dubbed as the loneliest human ever. While Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin landed on the Moon, Collins in his Apollo 11 command module circled the moon 30 times. Later he would say to media "I don't think loneliness really comes into the equation, except it seemed to in the minds of the press at the time." The Guinness World Record awards the most isolated human being title to Alfred M. Worden during the Apollo 15 mission to the moon in 1971. Worden, the command module pilot, was 2,234.69 miles from the nearest living human during the mission.

It is debatable as to whether the Man of the Hole should have been the loneliest man on Earth. Belonging to the tribe of the Tanaru Indigenous people, he lived in the Amazon rainforest all alone since all his tribe members were killed by Brazilian settlers in the 1970s. He shunned human contact and lived in self constructed straw huts. He was called the man of hole because he used to leave behind a deep hole for unknown reasons while leaving his old home. He used to hunt, collect honey / fruits and also probably planted maize for sustenance. He died a natural death in isolation in 2022 at a probable age of 60.



The anechoic test chamber at Orfield Laboratories in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA is designated as the quietest place on Earth. On 19 November 2021, the ambient sound level inside the room was measured at -24.9 decibels. It is so quite and devoid of any sound that you can hear your heart beating and even the sound of your eyelids close while blinking!

Looking Glass



1. Loneliness across time and space

Luhmann, M., Buecker, S. & Rüsberg, M. Loneliness across time and space. Nat Rev Psychol 2, 9–23 (2023).
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s44159-022-00124-1>

This review focuses on differences in the prevalence of loneliness across historical time and geographical space and discuss macro level factors that account for these differences.

- It employs meta-analysis technique to synthesize findings from multiple sources and highlights the presence of mixed evidence for change in loneliness over time particularly before pandemic.
- Study also reveals that loneliness does not remain static over time. Significant fluctuations are observed, with certain periods marked by increased loneliness, often coinciding with broader societal changes, such as economic downturns or shifts in social norms. The study also identifies periods of decline in loneliness, possibly linked to increased social cohesion or public health interventions.
- The study reveals substantial differences in loneliness across geography and are linked to cultural values such as individualism and sociodemographic factors.
- Macro-level factors such as values, family, social network structures, technology and living conditions might effect level of loneliness across time and space.
- Some of plausible reasons stated by author in the study are influence of macro-level factors on social relationships, strength, and direction of their effect and sometimes long timescales it takes to show its effect in loneliness.
- The study emphasizes the importance of addressing loneliness through public policy. It identifies factors contributing to loneliness and provides valuable insights for designing targeted interventions. It challenges the notion that loneliness is a stable, unchanging phenomenon and instead suggests that it is shaped by a complex interplay of historical, cultural, and individual factors.
- The review highlights the need for more comprehensive research on the macro-level factors affecting loneliness and suggests directions for future studies by inclusion of individuals from care homes and others which are underrepresented in the previous study, routine collection of multilevel data on the social network and repeatedly collection of data for systematic investigations for understanding of causal relationship between macro level factors and loneliness.

2. A Brief Resilience-Enhancing Intervention and Loneliness in At-Risk Young Adults A Secondary Analysis of a Randomized Clinical Trial

DeTore NR, Burke A, Nyer M, Holt DJ. A Brief Resilience-Enhancing Intervention and Loneliness in At-Risk Young Adults: A Secondary Analysis of a Randomized Clinical Trial. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2024;7(2):e2354728.

doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.54728

The article focuses on assessing the effectiveness of a brief resilience-enhancing intervention in reducing loneliness among young adults at-risk.

- The study is a secondary analysis of data from a randomized clinical trial. Participants were young adults identified as at-risk due to factors like socioeconomic status or existing mental health issues.
- Intervention designed is a Resilience Training (RT) program of 4 sessions for young adults (aged 18-25 years), primarily college students, with mild risk factors for developing a psychiatric disorder. Intervention focuses on teaching evidence-based skills such as mindfulness, self-compassion and mentalization through group discussions and experimental exercises.
- Participants were randomly assigned to receive RT or to a waitlist from July 2018 to February 2020. They completed well-validated UCLA Loneliness Scale⁶ and other scales⁵ before and after the intervention period. Study used Aa mixed-model analysis of variance was used to analyse the effect of RT on loneliness scores over time.
- The study finds that resilience training program is associated with reduction in loneliness among participants and may be easily scalable for reducing loneliness.
- Limitation of the study is the lack of an active control group and follow up assessments.

3. Connecting through nature: A systematic review of the effectiveness of nature-based social prescribing practices to combat loneliness

Lavelle Sachs, A., Lit, J., Kolster, A., HOWARTH, MICHELLE., Hill, N., & Opacin, N. (2024). Connecting through nature: A systematic review of the effectiveness of nature-based social prescribing practices to combat loneliness. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 248(2024), 1-11. Article 105071. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2024.105071>

This paper examines the effectiveness of nature-based interventions for reducing loneliness.

- The paper uses a systematic review of published literature to explore the efficacy of nature-based interventions in reducing loneliness. Selection criteria followed PICOS framework and 38 studies encompassing both qualitative and quantitative research were reviewed after their assessment from Mixed Method Appraisal Tool. Data extraction involved assessing the type of intervention, duration, participant demographics, and outcomes related to loneliness and social well-being using COVIDENCE software.
- The review highlighted that nature-based activities help in building social connections and activities such as group walk, community gardening, forest therapy was quite effective.
- The review suggests that policy makers and urban planners should consider integrating nature-based interventions into public health strategies such as creating greenspaces that encourage social connection. It also recommends evaluation of effectiveness of interventions over time.

4. The effect of social anxiety on teenagers' internet addiction: the mediating role of loneliness and coping styles

Dong, W., Tang, H., Wu, S., Lu, G., Shang, Y., & Chen, C. (2024). The effect of social anxiety on teenagers' internet addiction: the mediating role of loneliness and coping styles. *BMC Psychiatry*, 24(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-024-05854-5>

This study examines the effect of social anxiety on the internet addiction of teenagers.

- The study uses the Social Anxiety Scale, Internet Addiction Test, Loneliness Scale, and Simple Coping Style Questionnaire to investigate 1188 students in high school. The study also used Pearson's correlation analysis and the Process Macro Model 81 in regression analysis to explore the relationships among social anxiety, loneliness, coping styles, and Internet addiction.
- The study found that social anxiety, loneliness, and coping styles directly affect teenagers' Internet addiction.
- These results show just how essential it is to help teens with social anxiety so they don't become addicted to the Internet. At the same time, it also stresses the need to help teens feel less alone and learn how to deal with problems in a healthy way.
- This study also has some theoretical value for studies on teenagers' mental health and interventions for Internet addiction.

5. Combating the mental health challenge of loneliness among urban youth: Could finding meaning in life and experiencing thriving enhance their well-being?

Chhajer, R., Chaudhry, S., & Mishra, A. (2024). Combating the mental health challenge of loneliness among urban youth: could finding meaning in life and experiencing thriving enhance their well-being? *BMC Public Health*, 24(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-024-21185-2>

This study examines the impact of meaning in life on loneliness, thriving, and well-being.

- The study used a cross-sectional design and gathered data from 328 young people aged 18 to 30 living in cities through an online survey. The survey had scales to measure social, psychological, and emotional well-being, as well as the presence of meaning, the search for meaning, loneliness, and thriving.
- The study found that loneliness and thriving were substantially positively correlated with the presence of meaning. In contrast, the pursuit of meaning was substantially positively correlated with thriving but not with loneliness. There was a significant negative correlation between loneliness and psychological, emotional, and social well-being. Social, emotional, and psychological well-being were substantially positively correlated with flourishing.
- These results show that giving urban youth a sense of purpose in life is essential to lowering loneliness and enhancing well-being.
- The study also talks about promoting thriving, educational institutions and mental health organisations should create initiatives that assist people in identifying and pursuing fulfilling pursuits.

6. From loneliness to social connection: charting a path to healthier societies

World Health Organization. (2023). From loneliness to social connection: Charting a path to healthier societies. World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240095476>

- Social health is a vital but often overlooked pillar of health: It is just as essential as physical and mental health. Social connection can reduce the risk of disease, lengthen life expectancy and strengthen the fabric of communities and society. Social connection enhances life, giving us meaning and a sense of belonging.
- Today, Social disconnection is widespread. Between 2014 and 2023, an estimated 16% of people worldwide- one in six people experienced loneliness and cause about 871000 deaths annually. Loneliness is another form of social disconnection.
- It affects all ages and regions but is most common among adolescents and young adults (20.9% among 13–17-year-olds and 17.4% among 18–29-year-olds) and decreases with age.
- Marginalized group- such as people with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer (or sometimes questioning) and others (LGBTIQ+) individuals and migrants – are more likely to experience loneliness and isolation than other groups.
- Many factors, such as modernity, industrialization, technological change and secularization, are blamed for what is often assumed be an increase in social isolation and loneliness. Certain factors increase the risk of individuals experiencing social disconnection. These include poor physical or mental health (especially depression), personality traits such as neuroticism, being without a partner or unmarried, living alone.
- Social isolation and loneliness have serious impacts on mortality, physical health (e.g. cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes), mental health (e.g. depression and anxiety) and society (e.g. education, employment, economic growth, innovation).
- Solutions to social disconnection and loneliness include advocacy, campaigns, networks, and coalitions that raise awareness, shift public attitudes, and strengthen policy support. Policies play a vital role by promoting a whole-of-society approach, reducing stigma, and encouraging cross-sector collaboration. Community strategies are also key, as they create opportunities for connection through stronger social infrastructure like parks, libraries, transport, and social services.
- Key research gaps include a lack of rigorous policy evaluations, limited high-quality studies on community interventions—especially in low- and middle-income countries—and insufficient evidence on strategies to strengthen social connections at individual and relationship levels.

Queriosity

Compelling Questions asked by the readers

I've been reflecting on the concept of loneliness and its impact on life. While loneliness is often associated with negative effects, I'm curious to explore a different perspective —

Can loneliness also have a positive impact on life? More specifically, is it possible that loneliness can contribute to personal or professional growth in our careers?

Shekhar Asiwal, Former Executive Assistant, IIHMR University

This is a very interesting perspective. It is very important to put forth the fact emphatically that loneliness is not the same as being alone. Being alone can be chosen with a purpose. Loneliness is a negative state of mind, which brings with it negative emotions like sadness, feeling of emptiness, desire to connect socially and even depressive thoughts. Loneliness is very personal and is perceived as a painful and distancing feeling. Loneliness damages the mental health as well as has effects on the physical health and wellbeing of the individual whereby there is evidence of deleterious effects due to increased stress hormone levels like cortisol. Those who experience loneliness are at greater risk of developing diseases like hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases and are at greater risk of early mortality.

It is however important to highlight another state of isolation which is deliberate and can be termed as solitude. Solitude is chosen withdrawal and can be perceived as peaceful and a pondering state. It is adopted by many professionals like scientists, artists, thinkers, philosophers to promote creativity and focus. The individual is often engaged in deep thinking while in solitude and the emotional state is positive. Thus, solitude can be empowering, fosters creativity and can contribute to personal and professional growth.

To summarize, we can conclude that Loneliness refers to an involuntary and potentially damaging state on mind leading to social disconnection which could result in physical, mental and social adverse consequences while solitude is voluntarily chosen retreat from social interactions to promote deep thinking and creativity which could be beneficial for the individual.



जिज्ञासा

पाठकों द्वारा पूछे गए रोचक सवाल

मैं एकाकीपन (Loneliness) के विचार और इसके जीवन पर प्रभाव पर विचार कर रहा हूँ। एकाकीपन आमतौर पर नकारात्मक प्रभावों से जोड़ा जाता है, लेकिन मैं एक अलग दृष्टिकोण को समझने के लिए उत्सुक हूँ - क्या एकाकीपन जीवन पर सकारात्मक प्रभाव भी डाल सकता है? अगर मैं और स्पष्ट रूप से कहूँ तो क्या यह संभव है कि एकाकीपन हमारे व्यक्तिगत या व्यावसायिक (Professional) विकास में योगदान दे सकता है?

Shekhar Asiwail, Former Executive Assistant, IIHMR University

यह एक अत्यंत रोचक दृष्टिकोण है।

यह बात जोर देकर कहनी आवश्यक है कि एकाकीपन और अकेले होना एक जैसी स्थितियाँ नहीं हैं। अकेले रहना अक्सर किसी उद्देश्य के साथ स्वेच्छा से चुना गया निर्णय होता है। एकाकीपन, इसके विपरीत, एक नकारात्मक मानसिक स्थिति है, जो दुःख, खालीपन का अनुभव, सामाजिक जुड़ाव की तीव्र इच्छा और कभी-कभी अवसादजनित (Depressive) विचारों जैसे भावनाओं को जन्म देता है।

एकाकीपन एक व्यक्तिगत अनुभव है, जिसे व्यक्ति दर्दनाक और अलगाव भरी भावना के रूप में अनुभव करता है। यह मानसिक स्वास्थ्य को क्षति पहुँचाता है और साथ ही शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य और संपूर्ण तंदुरुस्ती (Wellbeing) को भी प्रभावित करता है। शोधों से यह प्रमाणित हुआ है कि एकाकीपन के कारण शरीर में तनाव हार्मोन जैसे कॉर्टिसोल (Cortisol) का स्तर बढ़ता है, जिससे हानिकारक प्रभाव होते हैं। जो लोग लंबे समय तक एकाकीपन का अनुभव करते हैं, उनमें उच्च रक्तचाप (Hypertension), मधुमेह (Diabetes) और हृदय रोग (Cardiovascular diseases) जैसी बीमारियों का खतरा अधिक होता है और अकाल मृत्यु (Early mortality) की संभावना भी बढ़ जाती है।

हालाँकि, यह भी उतना ही जरूरी है कि हम एक अन्य प्रकार की एकांतता की स्थिति को समझें, जो जानबूझकर अपनाई जाती है और जिसे "सॉलिट्यूड (Solitude)" कहा जा सकता है। सॉलिट्यूड एक स्वेच्छिक सामाजिक दूरी है, जिसे व्यक्ति अक्सर शांति, चिंतन और गहराई से सोचने के लिए चुनता है। कई पेशेवर जैसे वैज्ञानिक, कलाकार, विचारक और दार्शनिक रचनात्मकता (Creativity) और एकाग्रता को बढ़ावा देने के लिए इसे अपनाते हैं। सॉलिट्यूड की अवस्था में व्यक्ति स्वयं से गहराई से संवाद करता है और उसकी भावनात्मक स्थिति प्रायः सकारात्मक होती है।

इस प्रकार, सॉलिट्यूड एक सशक्त बनाने वाली (Empowering) स्थिति हो सकती है जो नवोन्मेष (Innovation) गहन विचार और व्यक्तिगत तथा व्यावसायिक विकास में सहायक हो सकती है।

सारांश रूप में कहा जा सकता है कि: "एकाकीपन" एक अनैच्छिक (Involuntary) और मानसिक रूप से हानिकारक स्थिति है, जो सामाजिक अलगाव की ओर ले जाती है और जिसके गंभीर मानसिक, शारीरिक और सामाजिक दुष्परिणाम हो सकते हैं। वहीं "सॉलिट्यूड" एक जानबूझकर अपनाई गई एकांतता है, जो व्यक्ति को गहन चिंतन, रचनात्मकता और आत्म-विकास की दिशा में ले जा सकती है।



Queriosity

Compelling Questions asked by the readers

We talk about team work at workplaces but while sitting together, sharing calendars, chasing the same deadlines why is it that we often are lonely on our own levels in hierarchy system while dealing with the pressure and also while taking responsibility?

Mahima Purohit, Research Officer, IIHMR University

It is true that loneliness can develop while handling pressure and responsibilities at all levels of the hierarchical chain in workplace environment. Furthermore, the pressures and responsibilities differ at various levels across the hierarchy. The team is multidimensional with vertical and horizontal dimensions. Vertically, senior leadership links to the subordinates in the working environment and horizontally there are the peers and fellow workers of the same cadre forming a bond. The relative strength of bonding could vary on a short term and long-term scale.

Every cadre has an assigned responsibility. It is however worthwhile to understand that while each cadre is responsible, there is also a graded rise in responsibilities as we ascend the ladder with the top leadership also having the burden of ultimate responsibility. At each step of the ladder there is individual responsibility, pressure of work output, targets and expectations. The imbalance of expectations, performance and realistic output threatens to push the individual into a vicious cycle of withdrawal triggering loneliness. This is where the horizontal dimension comes in handy. If peer support from coworkers sharing similar responsibility profiles is achieved, they will bond well and contribute towards achieving emotional resilience. The cadres higher up can take up the responsibility to mentor the subordinates. This bonding on horizontal and vertical dimensions is critical to dispel the feelings of loneliness and workplace stress.

To summarize we can say that loneliness can creep in while handling work pressure and responsibilities. Loneliness arises out of the imbalance between the assigned responsibilities, expectations and work output. It is critical to nurture horizontal peer bonding and vertical mentoring relationships to dispel workplace stress and consequent loneliness.



जिज्ञासा

पाठकों द्वारा पूछे गए रोचक सवाल

हम कार्यस्थलों पर टीम वर्क (**Teamwork**) की बात करते हैं, लेकिन जब हम साथ बैठते हैं, एक-दूसरे के कैलेंडर साझा करते हैं, और एक जैसे समय-सीमाओं (**Deadlines**) को पूरा करने की दौड़ में होते हैं — तो आखिर क्यों हम अपने-अपने स्तरों पर अकेलापन महसूस करते हैं, विशेष रूप से जब हम कार्यदबाव और जिम्मेदारियाँ निभा रहे होते हैं?

Mahima Purohit, Research Officer, IIHMR University

यह तथ्य है कि कार्यस्थल की पदानुक्रम व्यवस्था यानि कि पद प्रबंधन की श्रेणीबद्ध संरचना (**Hierarchical system**) में, दबाव और जिम्मेदारियों को निभाते समय अकेलापन (एकाकीपन) किसी भी स्तर पर पनप सकता है। इसके अतिरिक्त, यह समझना भी महत्वपूर्ण है कि हर स्तर पर दबाव और जिम्मेदारियों का स्वरूप अलग होता है। टीम का ढांचा बहुआयामी (**Multidimensional**) होता है — कार्यस्थल पर टीम एक ऐसी संरचना होती है जहाँ ऊपर के अधिकारी और नीचे के कर्मचारियों का आपसी संबंध भी होता है, और साथ ही एक ही स्तर पर काम करने वाले लोग आपस में मिलकर सहयोग भी करते हैं। ऊपर से नीचे वाले पदक्रमीय सम्बन्ध के अंतर्गत, वरिष्ठ नेतृत्व का संबंध अधीनस्थों से होता है, जबकि समकक्ष पदक्रमीय सम्बन्ध के अंतर्गत, समान स्तर पर कार्य कर रहे सहकर्मी (**Peers**) और सहकार्यकर्ताओं के बीच एक प्रकार का जुड़ाव या संबंध बनता है।

इन संबंधों की मजबूती अल्पकालिक या दीर्घकालिक रूप में अलग-अलग हो सकती है। हर स्तर (**Cadre**) की अपनी एक विशेष जिम्मेदारी होती है। लेकिन यह समझना जरूरी है कि जैसे-जैसे हम इस सीढ़ी पर ऊपर बढ़ते हैं, जिम्मेदारियों का गहराई और भार दोनों में बढ़ना स्वाभाविक है - और शीर्ष नेतृत्व (**Top leadership**) पर तो अंतिम और समग्र जिम्मेदारी (**Ultimate responsibility**) का भार होता है।

हर स्तर पर व्यक्तिगत उत्तरदायित्व, कार्य निष्पादन का दबाव, लक्ष्य प्राप्ति और अपेक्षाओं का संतुलन बनाए रखना होता है। जब दी गई जिम्मेदारियों, अपेक्षाओं और वास्तविक कार्य-परिणामों के बीच असंतुलन उत्पन्न होता है, तो व्यक्ति भीतर ही भीतर अलग-थलग पड़ने लगता है, और यही अकेलेपन का दुष्चक्र शुरू कर सकता है। इसी स्थिति में समकक्ष पदक्रमीय सम्बन्ध (**Horizontal bonding**) उपयोगी सिद्ध होते हैं। यदि समान कार्यभार वाले सहकर्मियों के बीच सहयोग और समर्थन विकसित हो, तो यह जुड़ाव उन्हें मानसिक रूप से सशक्त कर सकता है और भावनात्मक सहनशक्ति (**Emotional resilience**) बढ़ाने में मदद करता है। इसी प्रकार, वरिष्ठ स्तर के अधिकारी अपने अधीनस्थों के मार्गदर्शन (**Mentoring**) की जिम्मेदारी निभा सकते हैं, जिससे ऊपर से नीचे वाले पदक्रमीय सम्बन्ध भी मजबूती पाते हैं।

इस तरह समकक्ष और ऊपर से नीचे वाले पदक्रमीय सम्बन्ध — दोनों प्रकार के रिश्ते अकेलेपन और कार्य-स्थल के तनाव (**Workplace stress**) को कम करने में केंद्रीय भूमिका निभाते हैं।

सारांशतः कहा जा सकता है कि कार्य का दबाव और जिम्मेदारियाँ निभाते हुए अकेलापन धीरे-धीरे मन में घर कर सकता है। यह अकेलापन तब उत्पन्न होता है जब जिम्मेदारियों, अपेक्षाओं और कार्य-परिणामों में असंतुलन होता है। इसलिए यह अत्यंत आवश्यक है कि समान स्तर के सहकर्मियों के साथ समकक्ष सहयोग और वरिष्ठों द्वारा अधीनस्थों का मार्गदर्शन (**Vertical mentoring**) - इन दोनों प्रकार के संबंधों को पोषित किया जाए, ताकि कार्यस्थल का तनाव और उससे उपजा अकेलापन कम हो सके।



Queriosity

Compelling Questions asked by the readers

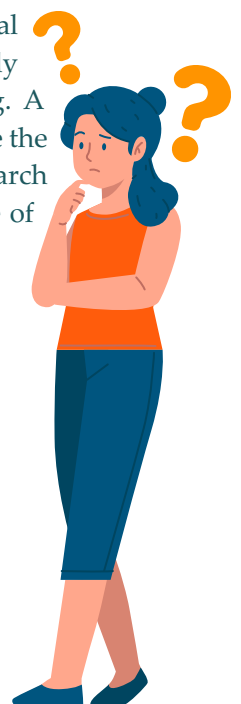
During my exploration on the theme of loneliness and its impact on society and psychology, I came up with the following queries : Why is it important to recognize and talk about loneliness? In what ways can loneliness affect a person's emotional and mental well-being? What role does technology play in increasing or reducing loneliness?

Soni Kumari, Research Officer, IIHMR University

Loneliness refers to an emotional state which is described as negative perceived as painful and arising due to social disconnection. Thus, loneliness is a very personal experience felt by an individual and is not merely being alone. The condition is on the rise and WHO estimates that loneliness affects one in six people globally. Loneliness as an emotional state can be deleterious to physical mental and social dimensions of health and can result in serious consequences. This is compounded by the lack of awareness in people about the condition, its effect on health and measures to counter it. It is therefore critical to be aware and spread the knowledge on loneliness.

Loneliness arises out of the imbalance of an individual's desire and the actual status of the social connections. Loneliness can adversely impact the mental health and increase the risk of several mental health disorders like anxiety, depression , sleep disorders and personality disorders. There is evidence that it can also increase the risk of developing Alzheimer's in future. Loneliness also adversely impacts physical health and leads to increased risk of developing CVDs, Hypertension, Diabetes and autoimmune diseases.

The relation of technology with loneliness is complex . While technological tools like social media can help in improving social connections, excessive use of social media can actually limit the social interaction by reducing direct in person interactions and social mixing. A thoughtful application of technology and appropriate interventions is essential to minimize the potential threat of it contributing to aggravating loneliness. This is an area where more research is required to bring out targeted effective interventions to address loneliness through use of technology.



जिज्ञासा

पाठकों द्वारा पूछे गए रोचक सवाल

मेरे एकाकीपन (loneliness) और इसके समाज व मनोविज्ञान (psychology) पर प्रभाव को समझने के प्रयास के दौरान मेरे मन में कुछ प्रश्न उभरे:

एकाकीपन को पहचानना और उस पर बात करना क्यों जरूरी है? यह किसी व्यक्ति के भावनात्मक (emotional) और मानसिक स्वास्थ्य (mental well-being) को किस प्रकार प्रभावित कर सकता है? तकनीक (technology) की क्या भूमिका है – क्या यह एकाकीपन को बढ़ाती है या कम करती है?

Soni Kumari, Research Officer, IIHMR University

एकाकीपन (loneliness) एक भावनात्मक स्थिति (emotional state) है, जिसे नकारात्मक (negative), पीड़ादायक (painful) और सामाजिक अलगाव (social disconnection) से उत्पन्न माना जाता है। यह केवल अकेले होने की स्थिति नहीं है, बल्कि यह एक व्यक्ति द्वारा अनुभव की जाने वाली व्यक्तिगत (personal) और आंतरिक भावना होती है। यह स्थिति तेजी से बढ़ रही है। विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन (WHO) का अनुमान है कि दुनियाभर में हर छह में से एक व्यक्ति एकाकीपन से प्रभावित है। एकाकीपन शरीर, मन और सामाजिक जीवन (physical, mental and social dimensions of health) पर बुरा असर डाल सकता है और इसके गंभीर परिणाम हो सकते हैं।

इस स्थिति को लेकर लोगों में जानकारी (awareness) की कमी है — न तो इसके दुष्प्रभावों के बारे में और न ही इससे निपटने के उपायों के बारे में। इसलिए यह बहुत जरूरी है कि एकाकीपन को पहचाना जाए और इसके बारे में जागरूकता फैलाई जाए।

एकाकीपन तब उत्पन्न होता है जब किसी व्यक्ति की सामाजिक संबंधों की अपेक्षा (desire) और उसके वास्तविक (actual) सामाजिक संबंधों में असंतुलन (imbalance) होता है। यह मानसिक स्वास्थ्य (mental health) को गंभीर रूप से प्रभावित कर सकता है और कई प्रकार के मानसिक विकारों (mental health disorders) जैसे: चिंता (anxiety), अवसाद (depression), नींद से जुड़ी समस्याएं (sleep disorders), व्यक्तित्व विकार (personality disorders) का खतरा बढ़ा सकता है। कुछ शोध इस बात का भी संकेत देते हैं कि एकाकीपन भविष्य में अल्जाइमर्स (Alzheimer's) जैसी न्यूरोलॉजिकल बीमारियों का जोखिम भी बढ़ा सकता है।

एकाकीपन न केवल मानसिक, बल्कि शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य (physical health) पर भी बुरा असर डालता है। यह निम्नलिखित बीमारियों के खतरे को बढ़ा सकता है: हृदय रोग (cardiovascular diseases – CVDs), उच्च रक्तचाप (hypertension), मधुमेह (diabetes), स्वप्रतिरक्षा रोग (autoimmune diseases)

तकनीक और एकाकीपन का संबंध जटिल (complex) है। एक ओर, सोशल मीडिया (social media) जैसे तकनीकी माध्यम लोगों को जोड़ सकते हैं और सामाजिक जुड़ाव (social connection) को बढ़ावा दे सकते हैं। लेकिन दूसरी ओर, अगर इनका अत्यधिक उपयोग किया जाए, तो यह आमने-सामने की बातचीत (in person interaction) और सामाजिक मेलजोल (social mixing) को कम कर सकता है, जिससे एकाकीपन और बढ़ सकता है। इसलिए, तकनीक का समझदारी से उपयोग (thoughtful application) और सही हस्तक्षेप (intervention) जरूरी है ताकि यह एकाकीपन को और बढ़ाने के बजाय कम करने में मदद कर सके। यह एक ऐसा क्षेत्र है जहाँ और अधिक शोध (research) की आवश्यकता है ताकि तकनीक की मदद से लक्षित और प्रभावी उपाय (targeted effective interventions) विकसित किए जा सकें जो एकाकीपन से निपटने में कारगर हों।



Queriosity

Compelling Questions asked by the readers

In what ways does prolonged use of social media, as a response to loneliness while living away from home, influence the real-life decision-making, thought process, and relationships—and is this impact helping or harming personal well-being?”

Mohammad Intesar Alam, Research Officer, IIHMR University

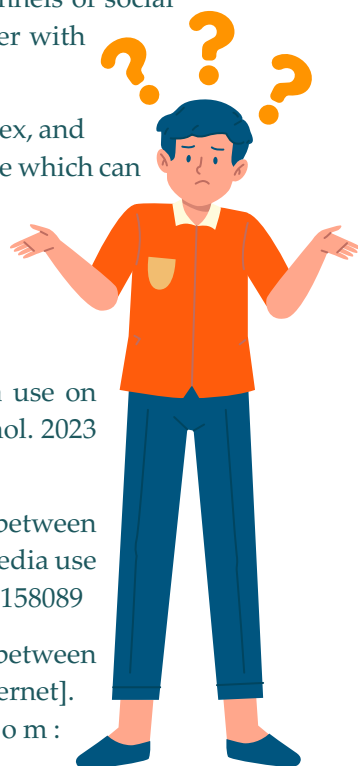
The impact of social media on loneliness and on personal well being on a larger context is rather complex . There have been many studies focussed on this issue which have revealed interesting results. Some studies suggest that Active social media use promotes interpersonal relationship satisfaction , which could have a moderating effect on loneliness behaviour(1). However , many studies have also shown that high social media use is related to increased levels of loneliness as well as mental distress(2). One of the key concerns related to prolonged social media use is decreased attention span(3). The constant notifications, urge for instant gratification and random short form content contributes to the decline in attention span. This further reflects in lack of concentration, emotional lability , social disconnect and consequent effects on mental health such as loneliness, anxiety, irritability and even depression.

It is also worth emphasizing that the motive for social media use needs to be explored. It has been found that people who use social media with the motive of maintaining relations ended up feeling lonely that those who used it for other reasons. Moreover, impact of social media use varies with the age group too. Evidence indicates that while elderly persons (older than 60 years of age) using multiple channels of social media felt less lonely while young and middle aged persons (18-39 years) felt lonelier with similar use of social media (2).

To summarize, we can say that the relationship of social media with loneliness is complex, and depends on the extent of use as well as many other factors like the age group and motive which can have an influence the risk of consequent loneliness. We can therefore conclude that on the basis of available evidence social media should be used in moderation especially if being used to distract oneself from loneliness.

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जिज्ञासा

पाठकों द्वारा पूछे गए रोचक सवाल

जब कोई व्यक्ति अपने घर से दूर अकेलापन महसूस करता है और उससे बचने के लिए सोशल मीडिया का लंबे समय तक उपयोग करता है, तो यह असल जिंदगी में उसके निर्णय लेने की क्षमता, सोचने के तरीके और रिश्तों को किस तरह प्रभावित करता है कृ और क्या इसका असर उसके व्यक्तिगत सुख-शांति (personal well&being) के लिए फायदेमंद है या नुकसानदायक?"

Mohmmad Intesar Alam, Research Officer, IIHMR University

सोशल मीडिया का एकाकीपन और व्यक्ति के समग्र सुख-स्वास्थ्य पर प्रभाव काफी जटिल है। इस विषय पर कई शोध (जनकपमे) हुए हैं, जिनसे कुछ रोचक परिणाम सामने आए हैं। कुछ शोध बताते हैं कि यदि कोई सोशल मीडिया का सक्रिय रूप से उपयोग करता है, तो वह अपने रिश्तों से ज्यादा संतुष्ट महसूस करता है और इससे अकेलेपन (सवदमसपदमे) की भावना कम हो सकती है। (1)

लेकिन कई शोध यह भी बताते हैं कि अगर सोशल मीडिया का बहुत ज्यादा उपयोग किया जाए, तो इससे अकेलापन और मानसिक तनाव (mental distress) दोनों बढ़ सकते हैं (2)।

एक बड़ी चिंता यह भी है कि लंबे समय तक सोशल मीडिया का उपयोग ध्यान की क्षमता (attention span) को कम कर देता है (3)। लगातार नोटिफिकेशन (notifications), तुरंत संतुष्टि की चाह और छोटे-छोटे वीडियो या पोस्ट ध्यान को भटका देते हैं। इसका असर यह होता है कि व्यक्ति की एकाग्रता (concentration) कम हो जाती है, मूड में बार-बार बदलाव (emotional lability) आते हैं, लोगों से जुड़ाव कम हो जाता है और धीरे-धीरे मानसिक स्वास्थ्य (mental health) पर बुरा असर पड़ता है। इससे अकेलापन, बेचौनी (anxiety), चिड़चिड़ापन (irritability) और कभी-कभी डिप्रेशन (depression) जैसी समस्याएँ हो सकती हैं।

यह समझना भी जरूरी है कि व्यक्ति सोशल मीडिया का उपयोग किस उद्देश्य (उवजपअम) से कर रहा है। शोध में पाया गया है कि जो लोग सोशल मीडिया का उपयोग सिर्फ रिश्ते बनाए रखने के लिए करते हैं, वे अंत में ज्यादा अकेलापन महसूस करते हैं, बनिस्बत उन लोगों के जो इसे दूसरे कारणों से इस्तेमाल करते हैं। इसके अलावा, उम्र भी एक अहम भूमिका निभाती है। शोध में यह देखा गया है कि बुजुर्ग लोग (60 साल से ऊपर) अगर कई सोशल मीडिया चैनल्स का उपयोग करते हैं, तो वे कम अकेलापन महसूस करते हैं, जबकि युवा और मध्यम आयु वर्ग (18-39 वर्ष) के लोग इसी तरह के उपयोग से ज्यादा अकेला महसूस करते हैं (2)।

सारांश में कहा जाए तो, सोशल मीडिया और अकेलेपन के बीच का संबंध बहुत जटिल है। यह केवल उपयोग की मात्रा पर ही नहीं, बल्कि उपयोग के उद्देश्य और उपयोगकर्ता की उम्र जैसे कई अन्य कारकों पर भी निर्भर करता है। इसलिए अब तक के उपलब्ध प्रमाणों (evidence) के आधार पर कहा जा सकता है कि यदि कोई व्यक्ति अकेलापन दूर करने के लिए सोशल मीडिया का उपयोग कर रहा है, तो उसे यह सावधानी से और संतुलन के साथ करना चाहिए।

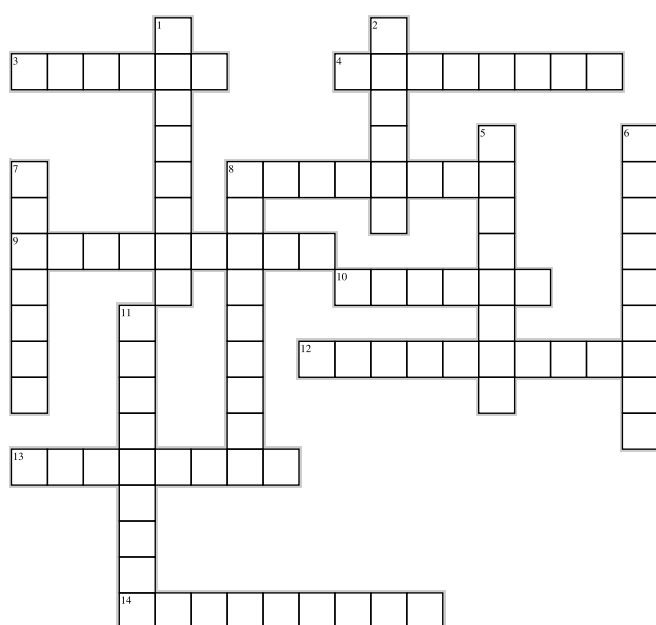
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LogPHRAME

The PHRAME Crossword #4



Get, Set and Fill UP!

PHRAME brings you a stimulating crossword, themed on Vector borne diseases in this issue. Use the clues for filling up the grid in “across” and “down” boxes provided to complete the words. You may send us the scanned copy of the completed crossword (digital or Print editions) by mailing us on phrame@iihmr.edu.in; putting your Name / contact details. We'll publish the names of all readers who send in the correct entries!

Using Mobile to fill this crossword?

Please use Adobe Reader / Adobe Acrobat Pro version 10 or above

CLUES

Across

3. As remarked by historian Richard Westfall this legendary Scientist & Mathematician "was a man who lived alone and died alone.", but is credited with pathbreaking discoveries. (6)
4. A global public health intervention which was implemented out of necessity in 2020 that deepened feelings of isolation and sparked a loneliness pandemic. (8)
8. This American Neuroscientist often called the "father of loneliness research" (8)
9. A condition characterized by the inability to feel pleasure — often shadowing chronic loneliness and depression. (9)
10. First name of the woman adventure pilot who dared to fly solo across the Atlantic—her solitude in the sky was symbolic and real. (6)
12. Japanese term for individuals, often young, who withdraw from social life for years. (10)
13. First name of the legendary American boxer whose post career isolation made him a metaphor of loneliness (8)
14. Meaningless repetition of words heard by someone —seen in autism; reflects social disconnection. (9)

Down

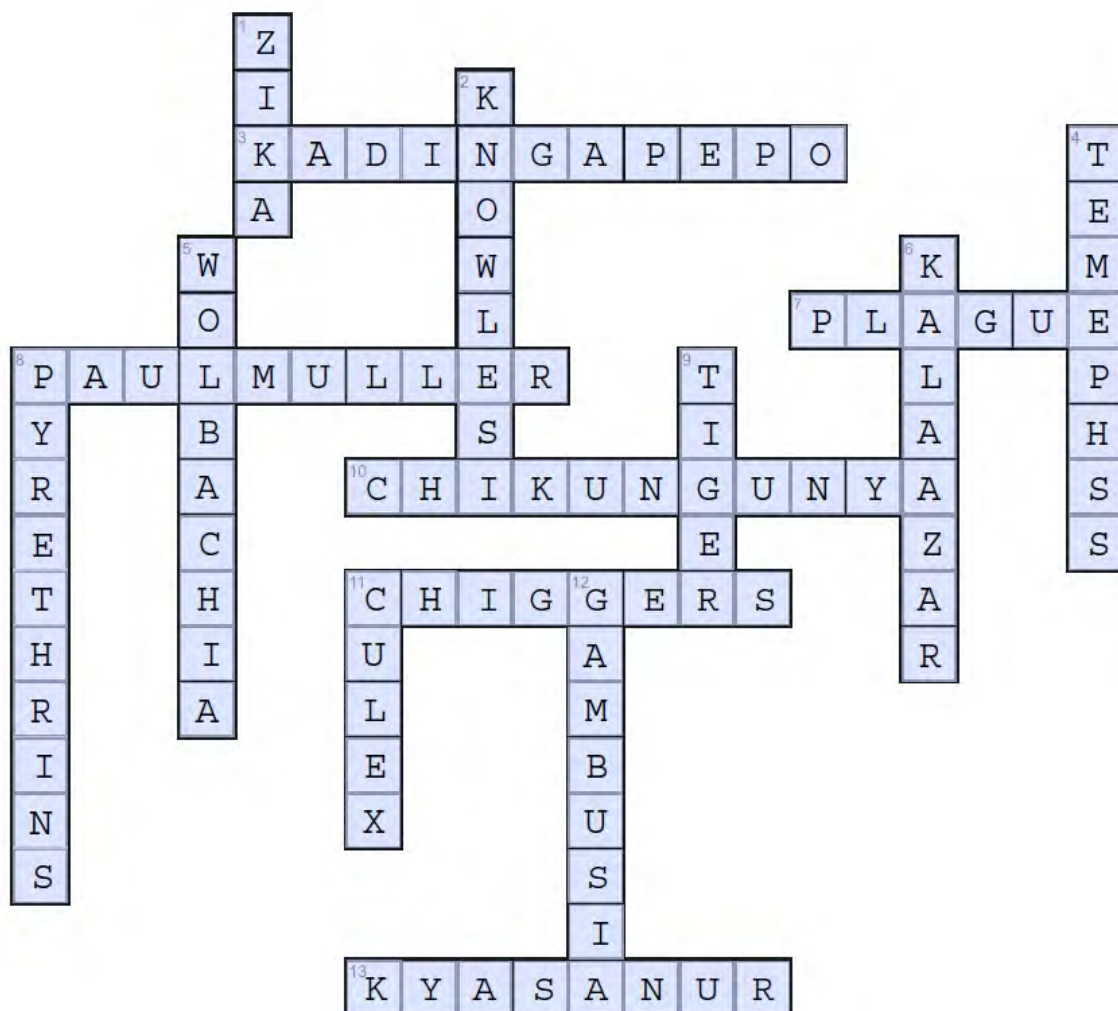
1. The condition of being alone, sometimes chosen for reflection. (8)
2. City where Earth's most ambitious Mars isolation mission, Mars500, unfolded in a sealed habitat of silence and went on for 520 days. (6)
5. Chronic loneliness elevates this stress hormone, affecting heart and immune health. (8)
6. The science of physical distance-this field studies how physical space affects emotional connection. (9)
7. "Eleanor Rigby" - perhaps the most iconic rock song dedicated to loneliness was sung by this band. (7)
8. French Italian research base located in Antarctica nicknamed "White Mars"—is dedicated to studying isolation and social stress. (9)
11. Country that launched "Community Befrienders" to tackle its ageing and socially isolated population. (9)

Name.....

Contact No.....

Email.....

PHRAME Crossword #3 solution :



Winners out of tons of responses from our readers, three winners are randomly selected.



Ms Srayasi Prakash
 Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
 Humana People to People India
 Researcher, New Delhi

Public Health Hall of Fame



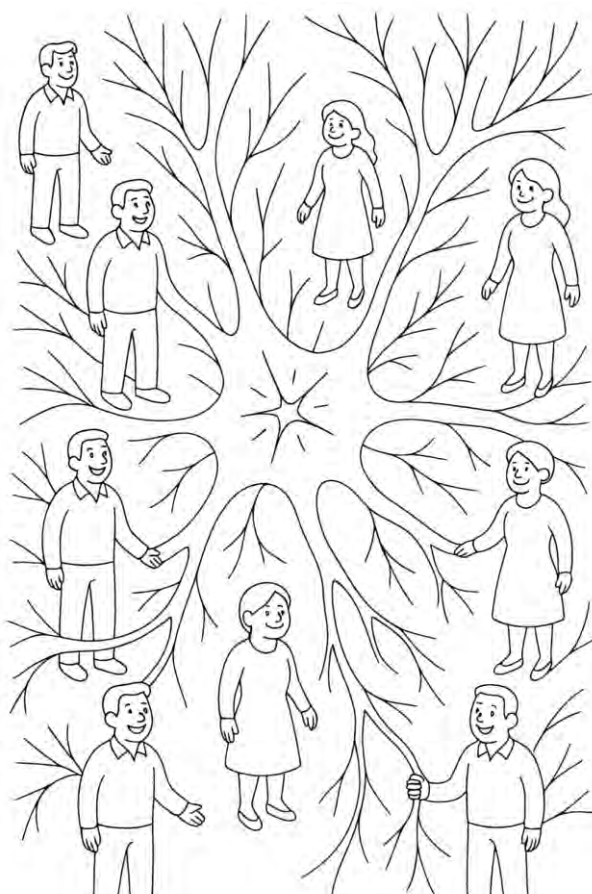
Dr John T. Cacioppo

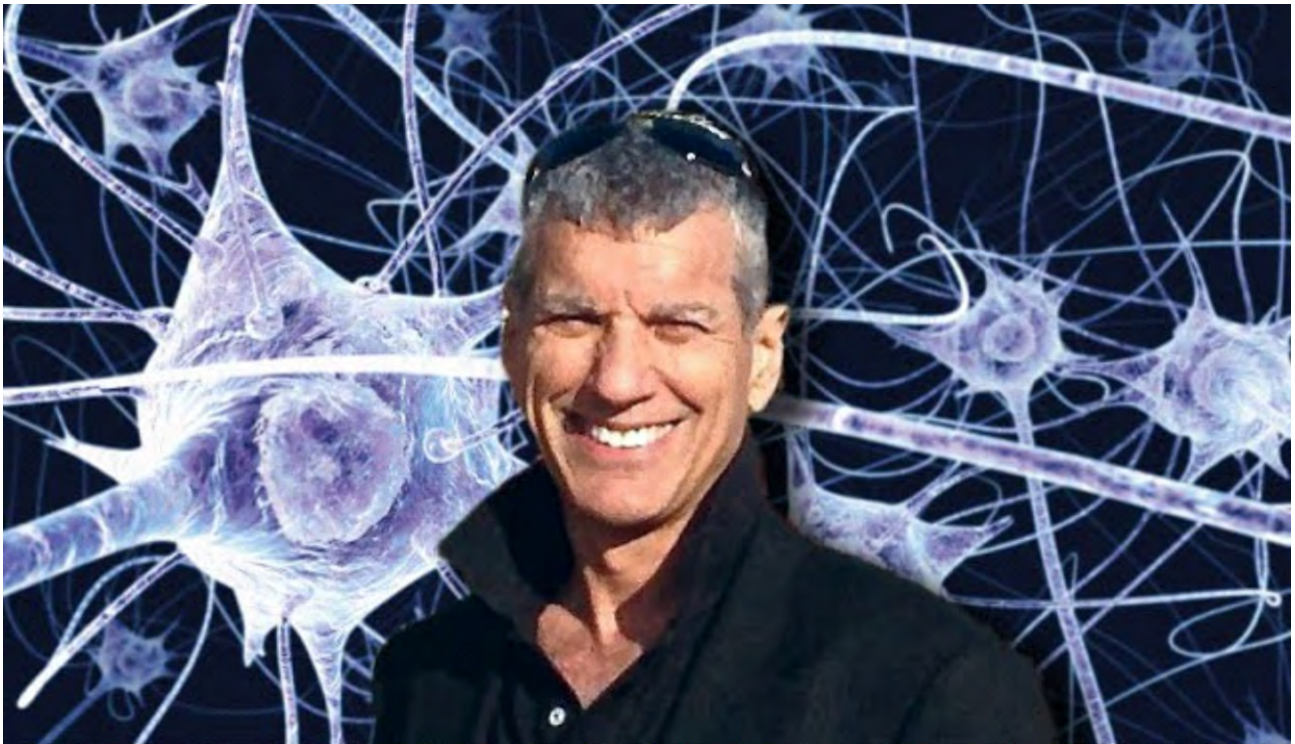
In every issue we select a personality who has made outstanding contribution to the area of public health related to the theme. This is our tribute to remember the pioneering efforts of these legends who excelled in their disciplines

Presented by : Dr Vinod Kumar SV & Mr Puneet Sharma

John Terrence Cacioppo was a pioneer of loneliness research. Born on June 12, 1951 in a business family at Marshall, Texas, USA. His parents Cyrus Cacioppo and the Mary Katherine Kazimour had had a chain saw distribution business and an Apple orchard in Swisher, Iowa. John was the first from the family to attend a college, and was sharp in Maths. He earned his bachelor in economics from University of Missouri in 1973 and aspired to pursue law. His interaction with a university professor however led him to change the mind and he decided to pursue a career in psychology(1).

John Cacioppo went on to do MA in psychology and PhD in Social Psychology from Ohio State University in 1977 under the supervision on Professor Anthony Greenwald. He served on the faculty positions of University of Notre Dame, Indiana (1977–1979), University of Iowa (1979–1989), and Ohio State University (1989–1999)(2). He eventually took up the faculty position at University of Chicago in 1999. Here he founded the University of Chicago Center for Cognitive and Social Neuroscience and was the director of the Arete Initiative of the Office of the Vice President for Research and National Laboratories at the University of Chicago.





He was a prolific researcher and writer credited with over 500 scientific articles, chapters, reviews, and commentaries, and having authored or edited more than 20 books. Along with Louis Tassinary and Gary Berntson, Cacioppo edited several editions of the globally acclaimed Handbook of Psychophysiology(3).

One of the first areas of John's research was on attitudes and persuasion. He worked in the area of attitude change with his colleague and roommate Richard Petty.(4) Interestingly, it is said that they became room mates since they had so many intellectual arguments ! They had painted an entire wall black where they could scribble down the competing propositions.(1) They together worked on several important studies on attitude change. He ventured into the field of psychophysiology, and his doctoral thesis work was also related to this. His thesis title was Heart Rate, Cognitive Response, and Persuasion. He had this intriguing thought on whether there could be any effect of exogenously induced changes in the heart rate on facilitation of thoughts and resistance of individuals to persuasion. For his research, Cacioppo teamed up with a Cardiologist and took a group of patients with implanted pacemakers. In the experiment, the participants were made to read persuasive messages once with their basal heart rate and another time with their pacemaker rate being increased. He noted that even when the participants did not notice a change in their cardiac activity (feel the increased heart rate), an increase in heart rate was associated with more counter arguments and a resistance to persuasion. John was one of the first researchers to shed light on the unperceived effect of autonomic nervous system on cognition, which was earlier not known. Over the next few decades, he contributed immensely towards establishing a clear relationship between processes in psychological and physiological domains.(4,5)

Cacioppo also took up the research on the absence of social connections and its effect on brain. From there he moved on to do pioneering work on loneliness which has greatly contributed to our current understanding of this condition. He made it very clear that loneliness is not the same as being not in company of anyone. Lonely people can be as in company of friends, family and colleagues as others but the true dimension that sets loneliness apart is the perceived negative emotion which makes the individual sense that the relationships are not meeting the social needs of the person. (6–9)

John married Stephanie Ortigue, in 2011. This was his third marriage. John was the Tiffany and Margaret Blake Distinguished Service Professor of Psychology at the University of Chicago and served as director of the Center for Cognitive and Social Neuroscience and chair of the Social Psychology Program. Stephanie serves as director of the brain dynamics laboratory at the University.

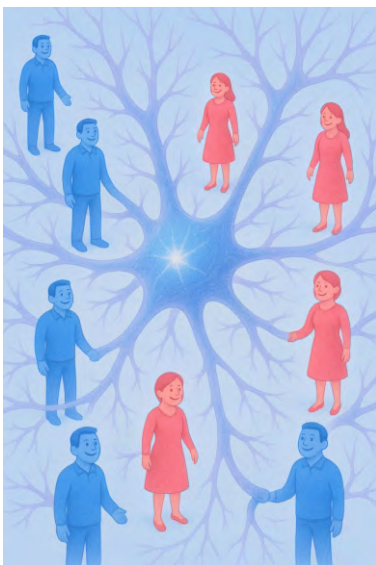
Stephanie joined John at University of Chicago at the Pritzker School of Medicine. Pleasant irony of their relationship was that while John was deep into loneliness research while Stephanie's area of specialization was Love and its benefits. The couple went on to collaborate and contributed to many joint research works especially in the field of social neuroscience.



University of Chicago news quoted that the couple shared the same office and the same desk at the institution with the nameplate on the door reading “The Cacioppo” (1) The joint work yielded great breakthroughs for Cacioppo in developing deep understanding in their respective areas of research. It was also a journey of research into their own lives – a study of a loving couple to see the effects of emotions on the cognitive functions. While John went on to do the pioneering work on Loneliness, Stephanie has contributed tremendously in furthering the scientific understanding of love from being considered too casual a research topic to an intricate and inherent neurobiological phenomenon. (10)



John Cacioppo along with Gary Bernsten are credited as the founders of the field of Social Neuroscience. Their first reference and use on this term was in a paper in 1992 published in American psychologist, in which they argued that psychologists and psychophysicologists have much to offer to the field on Neuroscience. (11) John continued to advocate on the importance of collaboration between neuroscientists, cognitive scientists and social scientists. Slowly the discipline of Social Neuroscience started to crystallize (11,12). In 2006 two journals Social Neuroscience and Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience were founded. Society for Social Neuroscience was finally established in 2010. (4)



John Cacioppo has been widely recognized and felicitated for his remarkable contributions. Some of the major awards received by him include William James Fellow Award from the Association for Psychological Science, a Distinguished Scholar Award from the Society for Social and Affective Neuroscience, Distinguished Scientist Award from the Society for Experimental Social Psychology, Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award from the American Psychological Association, the Campbell Award for Distinguished Scientific Contributions to Personality and Social Psychology from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, and an Award for Distinguished Scientific Contributions to Psychophysiology from the Society for Psychophysiological Research. He was also awarded the prestigious Phoenix Prize by the division of Social Sciences ,

University of Chicago.

John Cacioppo died on 5 Mar 2018 due to the complications of salivary gland cancer which was diagnosed in 2015. The couple had two children Anthony and Christina. (1)

Public Health Hall of Fame



डॉ. जॉन टी. कासियोपो

“हर अंक में हम जन स्वास्थ्य से जुड़े तथा वर्तमान थीम से संबंधित क्षेत्र में असाधारण योगदान देने वाले एक व्यक्तित्व का चयन करते हैं। यह इन दिग्गजों के परिवर्तनकारी प्रयासों को याद करने और उन्हें सम्मान देने की हमारी विनम्र कोशिश है।”

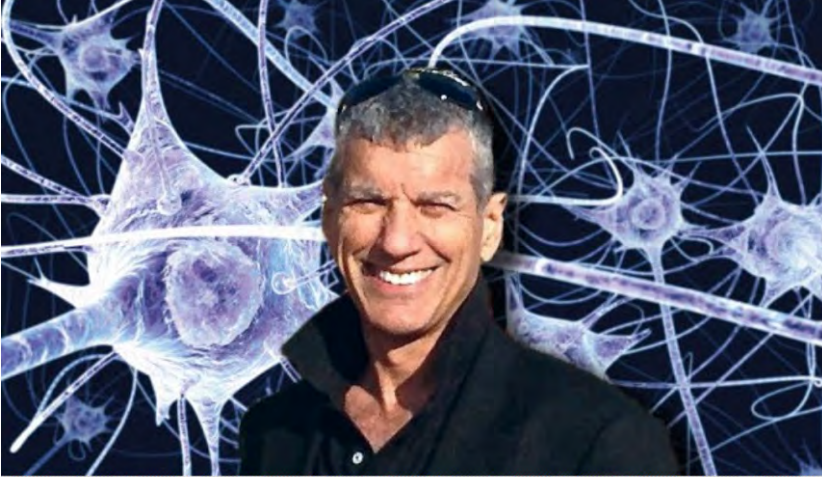
प्रस्तुति: डॉ. विनोद कुमार एस.वी. एवं पुनीत शर्मा

जॉन टेरेंस कासियोपो अकेलेपन पर शोध के अग्रणी वैज्ञानिक थे। उनका जन्म 12 जून, 1951 को अमेरिका के टेक्सास राज्य के मार्शल शहर में एक व्यावसायिक परिवार में हुआ था। उनके माता-पिता, साइरस कासियोपो और मैरी कैथरीन कजिमौर, स्विशर (आयोवा) में चैन साँ वितरण का व्यवसाय और एक सेब का बाग चलाते थे। जॉन परिवार से कॉलेज जाने वाले पहले सदस्य थे और गणित में बहुत तेज थे। उन्होंने वर्ष 1973 में यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ मिसौरी से अर्थशास्त्र में स्नातक की डिग्री हासिल की और कानून की पढ़ाई करने की इच्छा रखी। लेकिन विश्वविद्यालय के एक प्रोफेसर के साथ हुई बातचीत ने उनका विचार बदल दिया और उन्होंने मनोविज्ञान में करियर बनाने का निर्णय लिया।

जॉन कासियोपो ने मनोविज्ञान में एम.ए. और वर्ष 1977 में ओहायो स्टेट यूनिवर्सिटी से प्रोफेसर एंथनी ग्रीनवालड के निर्देशन में सामाजिक मनोविज्ञान में पीएच.डी. की। उन्होंने फ़ैकल्टी सदस्य के रूप में यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ नोर्ट्रे डेम, इंडियाना (1977–1979), यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ आयोवा (1979–1989), और ओहायो स्टेट यूनिवर्सिटी (1989–1999) में कार्य किया। बाद में वर्ष 1999 में वे शिकागो विश्वविद्यालय से जुड़े। यहाँ उन्होंने यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ शिकागो सेंटर फॉर कॉग्निटिव एंड सोशल न्यूरोसाइंस की स्थापना की और शिकागो विश्वविद्यालय में वाइस प्रेसिडेंट फॉर रिसर्च एंड नेशनल लेबोरेट्रीज के अधीन Arete Initiative के निदेशक भी रहे।



वे एक प्रखर शोधकर्ता और लेखक थे, जिन्होंने 500 से अधिक वैज्ञानिक लेख, अध्याय, समीक्षाएँ और टिप्पणियाँ प्रकाशित कीं तथा 20 से अधिक पुस्तकों का लेखन या संपादन किया। लुईस टैसिनरी और गैरी बर्न्टसन के साथ मिलकर कासियोपो ने विश्व-प्रसिद्ध हैंडबुक ऑफ साइकोफिजियोलॉजी के कई संस्करणों का संपादन भी किया।



जॉन के शोध का एक प्रारम्भिक क्षेत्र रवैये (attitude) और मनाने की प्रक्रिया (persuasion) था। उन्होंने अपने सहकर्मी और रूममेट रिचर्ड पैटी के साथ मिलकर 'रवैये में परिवर्तन' पर काम किया। दिलचस्प बात यह है कि वे रूममेट इसलिए बने क्योंकि उनके बीच बहुत अधिक बौद्धिक बहस होती थी! उन्होंने एक पूरी दीवार काली रंग दी थी, जिस पर वे एक-दूसरे के विचार और तर्क लिखते थे। दोनों ने मिलकर इस क्षेत्र में कई महत्वपूर्ण अध्ययन किए।

जॉन ने आगे चलकर साइकोफिजियोलॉजी (मनो-शारीरिकी) के क्षेत्र में भी कदम रखा। उनका डॉक्टरेट शोध-प्रबंध (थीसिस) का विषय था – 'हार्ट रेट, कॉग्निटिव रिस्पॉन्स, एंड पर्सुएशन'। इसमें

उन्होंने यह रोचक विचार रखा कि क्या हृदयगति में बाहरी रूप से किए गए परिवर्तन व्यक्ति के विचारों को प्रभावित कर सकते हैं और उन्हें मनाने की प्रक्रिया के प्रति प्रतिरोधी बना सकते हैं।

इस शोध के लिए उन्होंने एक कार्डियोलॉजिस्ट के साथ मिलकर पेसमेकर लगाए हुए मरीजों के समूह पर प्रयोग किया। प्रतिभागियों को दो स्थितियों में प्रेरक संदेश पढ़ने को दिए गए – पहली बार सामान्य हृदयगति पर और दूसरी बार जब पेसमेकर से उनकी हृदयगति बढ़ाई गई। परिणाम में यह पाया गया कि भले ही प्रतिभागियों ने अपनी हृदयगति में बदलाव को महसूस नहीं किया, लेकिन हृदयगति बढ़ने पर उन्होंने अधिक प्रतिवाद (counter arguments) किए और उन्हें मनाना कठिन हो गया।

जॉन उन पहले शोधकर्ताओं में से एक थे जिन्होंने यह दिखाया कि स्वायत्त तंत्रिका तंत्र (autonomic nervous system) का सोचने की प्रक्रिया पर अप्रत्यक्ष और अनदेखा प्रभाव पड़ता है, जो पहले ज्ञात नहीं था। आने वाले दशकों में उन्होंने मनोवैज्ञानिक और शारीरिक प्रक्रियाओं के बीच गहरे संबंध को स्थापित करने में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया।

क्या आप चाहेंगे कि मैं अब तक दिए गए सभी हिस्सों को जोड़कर एक क्रमबद्ध और प्रवाहपूर्ण जीवनी (Biography in Hindi) बना दूँ, ताकि इसे सीधे किसी लेख या प्रकाशन में इस्तेमाल किया जा सके?

कासियोपो ने सामाजिक संबंधों की कमी और उसके मस्तिष्क पर प्रभाव से जुड़े शोध भी किए। इसी से आगे बढ़ते हुए उन्होंने अकेलेपन (loneliness) पर अग्रणी कार्य किया, जिसने इस विषय को समझने में आज हमारी सोच को बहुत गहराई दी है। उन्होंने यह स्पष्ट किया कि अकेलापन केवल दूसरों की संगति न होने का नाम नहीं है। अकेला व्यक्ति भी दोस्तों, परिवार या सहकर्मियों के बीच रह सकता है, लेकिन इसे अलग बनाती है वह नकारात्मक भावनात्मक अनुभूति, जिसमें व्यक्ति महसूस करता है कि उसके संबंध उसकी सामाजिक जरूरतों को पूरा नहीं कर रहे हैं।

जॉन ने वर्ष २०११ में स्टेफनी ऑर्टींग से विवाह किया। यह उनका तीसरा विवाह था। जॉन शिकागो विश्वविद्यालय में टिफनी और मार्गरेट ब्लेक डिस्टिंग्विश्ड सर्विस प्रोफेसर ऑफ साइकोलॉजी के पद पर कार्यरत थे। साथ ही वे सेंटर फॉर कॉग्निटिव

एंड सोशल न्यूरोसाइंस के निदेशक और सोशल साइकोलॉजी प्रोग्राम के अध्यक्ष भी रहे। उनकी पत्नी स्टेफनी वर्तमान में विश्वविद्यालय में ब्रेन डायनामिक्स लेबोरेटरी की निदेशक हैं।



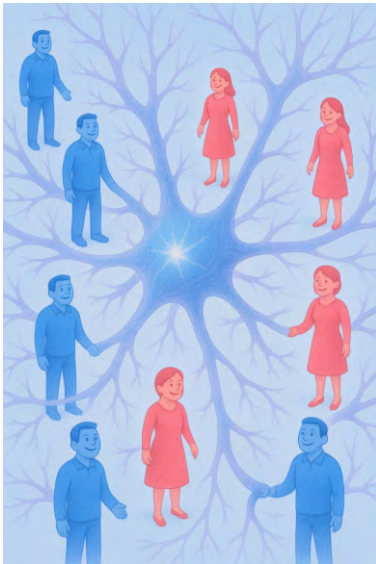
स्टेफनी शिकागो विश्वविद्यालय के प्रिंटजर स्कूल ऑफ मेडिसिन में जॉन के साथ जुड़ीं। उनके संबंध की एक सुखद विडंबना यह थी कि जहाँ जॉन अकेलेपन पर गहन शोध कर रहे थे, वहीं स्टेफनी का विशेष क्षेत्र प्रेम और उसके लाभ थे। दोनों ने मिलकर काम किया और विशेष



रूप से सामाजिक न्यूरोसाइंस (Social Neuroscience) के क्षेत्र में कई संयुक्त शोधों में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया।

शिकागो विश्वविद्यालय की एक रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, यह दंपति (जॉन और स्टेफनी) विश्वविद्यालय में एक ही दफ्तर

और एक ही मेज साझा करते थे, और उनके कमरे के दरवाजे पर लगे नेमप्लेट पर लिखा होता था – 'The Cacioppo's'। उनके संयुक्त कार्य ने उनके-अपने शोध क्षेत्रों में गहरी समझ विकसित करने में कई महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धियाँ दीं। यह उनके अपने जीवन का भी एक शोध-यात्रा था – एक प्रेमपूर्ण दंपति के रूप में यह जानना कि भावनाएँ संज्ञानात्मक (cognitive) कार्यप्रणाली को कैसे प्रभावित करती हैं। जहाँ जॉन ने अकेलेपन पर अग्रणी कार्य किया, वहीं स्टेफनी ने प्रेम के विषय को एक साधारण और हल्का शोध-विषय माने जाने से आगे बढ़ाकर एक जटिल और स्वाभाविक न्यूरोबायोलॉजिकल घटना के रूप में स्थापित करने में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया।



जॉन कासियोपो और गैरी बर्नटसन को सामाजिक न्यूरोसाइंस (Social Neuroscience) क्षेत्र की स्थापना का श्रेय दिया जाता है। इस शब्द का पहला उल्लेख और उपयोग उन्होंने वर्ष 1992 में अमेरिकन साइकोलॉजिस्ट पत्रिका में प्रकाशित अपने शोध-पत्र में किया था, जिसमें उन्होंने तर्क दिया था कि मनोवैज्ञानिक और साइकोफिजियोलॉजिस्ट न्यूरोसाइंस के क्षेत्र में बहुत योगदान दे सकते हैं। जॉन लगातार इस बात के पक्षधर रहे कि न्यूरोसाइंटिस्ट, कॉग्निटिव साइंटिस्ट और सोशल साइंटिस्ट के बीच सहयोग अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है। धीरे-धीरे सामाजिक न्यूरोसाइंस एक स्वतंत्र विधा के रूप में आकार लेने लगी। वर्ष 2006 में दो पत्रिकाओं – सोशल न्यूरोसाइंस और सोशल, कॉग्निटिव एंड अफेक्टिव न्यूरोसाइंस – की शुरुआत हुई। अंततः 2010 में सोसाइटी फॉर सोशल न्यूरोसाइंस की स्थापना हुई।

जॉन कासियोपो को उनके असाधारण योगदानों के लिए व्यापक रूप से सम्मानित और पुरस्कृत किया गया। उन्हें मिले प्रमुख पुरस्कारों में शामिल हैं – विलियम जेम्स फेलो अवॉर्ड (Association for Psychological Science), डिस्टिंग्विश्ड स्कॉलर अवॉर्ड (Society for Social and Affective Neuroscience), डिस्टिंग्विश्ड साइंटिस्ट अवॉर्ड (Society for Experimental Social Psychology), डिस्टिंग्विश्ड साइंटिफिक कॉन्ट्रिब्यूशन अवॉर्ड (American Psychological Association), कैपबेल अवॉर्ड (Society for Personality and Social Psychology) तथा डिस्टिंग्विश्ड साइंटिफिक कॉन्ट्रिब्यूशंस टू साइकोफिजियोलॉजी अवॉर्ड (Society for Psychophysiological Research)। इसके अलावा उन्हें शिकागो विश्वविद्यालय के डिवीजन ऑफ सोशल साइंसेज द्वारा प्रतिष्ठित फीनिक्स

प्राइज से भी सम्मानित किया गया।

जॉन कासियोपो का निधन ५ मार्च २०१८ को लार ग्रंथि के कैंसर की जटिलताओं के कारण हुआ, जिसका पता वर्ष २०१५ में चला था। दंपति के दो बच्चे थे – एंथनी और क्रिस्टीना। ये दोनों बच्चे उनकी पहली शादी से थे।

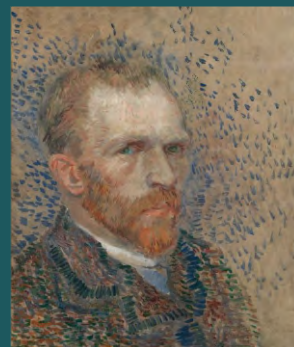
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AVATAR

A Story worth telling

Avatar or incarnation signifies taking up of form. This space is dedicated to personalities who may not be from public health discipline, but have made exceptional contributions in their areas of expertise and the current theme has deeply influenced their lives .



Vincent van Gogh

Presented by : Dr Vinod Kumar SV & Ms Amrita Sharma

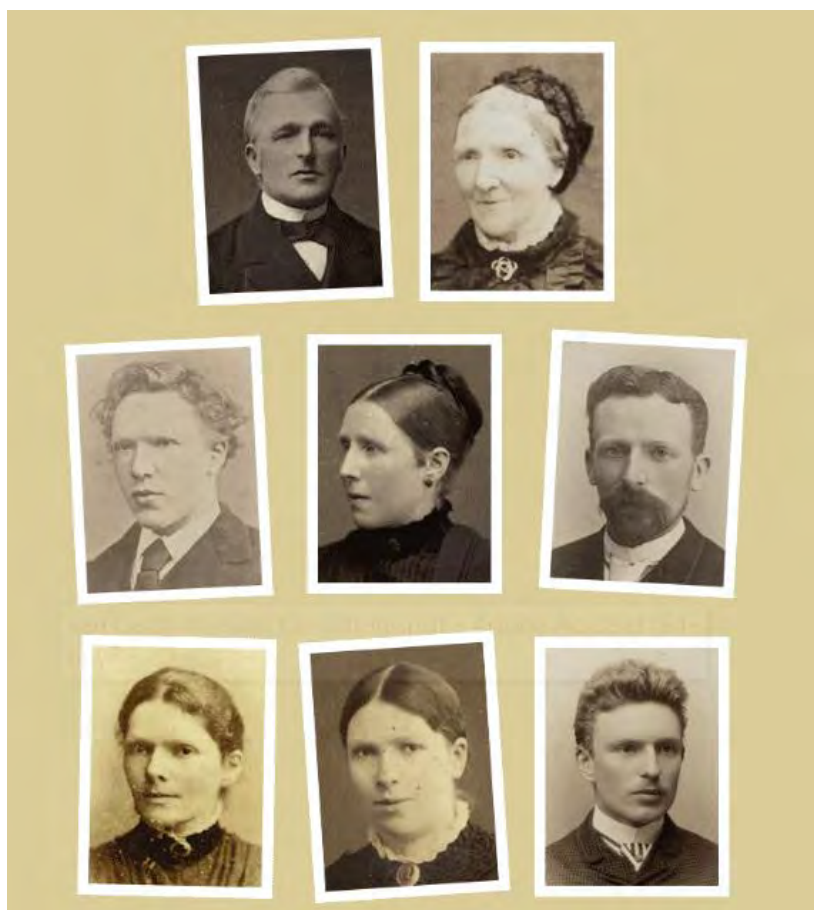


Vincent van Gogh - Sunflowers (1889), 95 cmx73 cm, oil on canvas
Credits : van Gogh museum, Amsterdam

There are sunflowers in the painting, and amazingly the yellow flowers sit vibrantly against a brighter yellow backdrop in this painting. Come down to the pot and the resting surface and there is a third shade of yellow. Notice deeper and there are flowers in all stages, fresh blooms to wilting ones.. probably tracing the life cycle or the journey of life itself. The painting symbolizes the creative genius of one of the most legendary painters of modern style – Vincent van Gogh(1).

Vincent van Gogh was born on 30 Mar 1853 to Theodorus van Gogh and Anna Carbentus at Brabant village of Zundert, Netherlands. He was the eldest surviving son of his parents, with one elder to him

bearing his name having been stillborn. He would go on to have five siblings – two brothers (Theo and Cor) and three sisters (Anna, Elisabeth 'Lies', Willemien 'Wil'). Vincent quit schooling at the age of thirteen and never went to school again. One of his uncles helped him get a job as an art dealer with Goupil & Cie at the age of sixteen and so did his younger brother Theo, who worked in Brussels. Vincent would eventually get transferred to the London branch and then to Paris. This set the stage for what would become a lifelong exchange of letters with his younger brother Theo, which throw much light on the life of Vincent as we know it now(1).



Family of Vincent van Gogh

(L to R & Up to Down) Father, Mother, Vincent, Anna, Theo, Lies, Willemien, Cor

Credit : van Gogh Museum , Amsterdam

During his stay at Paris, he grew increasingly religious and would eventually start to lose interest in his job. He was eventually dismissed from his work by Goupil in 1876. He eventually returned to stay with his parents and

eventually tried many jobs like Bookseller, lay preacher and even living with the miners and their families, eventually losing all his belongings. His selflessness earned him the nickname 'Christ of the Coal Mine'.

It was during these random wanderings and switching of jobs that Theo suggested him to focus on art. Vincent considered his advice and moved to Brussels to take up art. He practiced art and would eventually move to Hague. During this time his artist Uncle Anton Mauve helped him learn the basics of painting in watercolour and oil. As he was not earning, Theo used to send him money to sustain his living. After wandering across many places, Vincent returned finally to his parents. After his father's death in 1885, Vincent left Netherlands for Antwerp in Belgium and eventually to Paris where his brother Theo was now a Manager with Goupil(1–3).

Through his brother Theo, Vincent came to know about the works of contemporary artists and especially the use

of bright colours which led a transition in his works from the dark tones to the bright shades. His early works, such as "The Potato Eaters," depict the working poor with genuine dignity and are dark, earthy, and raw. Bent over their meals, illuminated by flickering lamps, and absorbed in the grey of survival, these people are just as lonely as he was. He sought truth rather than beauty, and truth was often lonely. However, his colour scheme shifted after he relocated to France and was exposed to Impressionism and Japanese prints. The brushstrokes became bolder, more spontaneous, more rhythmic, and the colours brightened. The loneliness was still there, though it was more radiant and expressive now.

Coming of Age and the changing styles

Two paintings from van Gogh capture the transition in his painting styles from dark tones to the use of bright vibrant portrayals



Vincent van Gogh, Woman on the Peat Moor, 1883. (Amsterdam, Netherlands) 27.8 cmx36.5 cm, oil on canvas. Credits : van Gogh museum, Amsterdam.



Vincent van Gogh, Fishing Boats on the Beach at Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, 1888. (Arles, France) 65 cm x 81.5 cm, oil on canvas. Credits : van Gogh museum, Amsterdam

After two years in Paris, he moved out to the quieter south of France in Arles. His time at Arles was perhaps his ambitious best, in the sense that Vincent hoped set up a studio with multiple artists living together in an artists' colony of sorts. Thus he rented a Yellow House with four rooms in Place Lamartine. In December 1888 Paul Gauguin arrived to stay with Vincent. Theo again supported all the costs. Theo wrote "So Gauguin's coming; that will make a big change in your life. I hope that your efforts will succeed in making your house a place where artists will feel at home". On this optimistic note the two set out to create some of the real masterpieces.

The two had very different styles though, with Gauguin painting from memory and Vincent creating from what is

there in sight. This soon led to difference in opinion and arguments. Gauguin threatened to leave and this made Vincent aggressive and mentally agitated. He eventually sliced his own ear off with a razor. Post this bout of aggression, Vincent was admitted to Hospital and Gauguin returned to Paris shattering the creative dream of Vincent. After his discharge from Hospital, Vincent returned to painting, though he had frequent bouts of illness, he was prolific in this period creating some of his best works.

His mental health deteriorated and he had to be admitted to the mental hospital in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence. He continued to paint and created almost 150 paintings during his one year stay at the hospital. His creations here included the masterpiece Almond Blossom.



Vincent van Gogh - Almond Blossom (1890), 73.3 cm x 92.4 cm, oil on canvas
Credits : Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)

Despite his deteriorating health it was not that Vincent's work was not going unnoticed. Theo had been making efforts to publicize the creations and many of Vincent's creations were selected for the Brussels exhibition.

After his discharge from the hospital, Vincent visited Theo and his family, where he came to know that his brother was planning to quit the job and start his own business. This triggered a deep concern in Vincent about his future and the financial security. After returning from there Vincent made a couple of more paintings, masterpieces which express the turbulence in his mind, the desire of freedom and flight of ideas ironically fuelled

by the deep feelings of loneliness. He said in his letter to Theo describing the Crows in the Wheatfield :

'... knowing clearly what I wanted I've painted another three large canvases since then. They're immense stretches of wheatfields under turbulent skies, and I made a point of trying to express sadness, extreme loneliness. You'll see this soon, I hope – for I hope to bring them to you in Paris as soon as possible, since I'd almost believe that these canvases will tell you what I can't say in words, what I consider healthy and fortifying about the countryside.'



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Vincent van Gogh - Wheatfield with Crows (1890), Auvers-sur-Oise, 95 cmx73 cm, oil on canvas
Credits : Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)

This was around 10 Jul 1890. The calm countryside fuelled his creativity as well as deepened his hollowness from within till he could take it no more. On 27 Jul 1890, he walked into the countryside and shot himself in the chest, before walking back to his room. Vincent van Gogh died of his self-inflicted gunshot injuries on 29 July 1890(1,4).

Van Gogh gave the world not only colour but also the silent admission of a man who lived life just out of reach of the human hand, as seen in the painted whirl of stars, in fields that lean toward no one, and in chairs that are always empty. Like his life, his art was a cry through a closed window: dazzling, desperate, and solitary.

In around 10 years van Gogh created more than 2,100 works of art, which included 900 paintings and the remaining sketches and drawings on paper(1,2). Vincent van Gogh epitomizes how a life of deep anguish, inner turmoil compounded by persistent loneliness and limited resources could fuel the mind to express the highest level of creative excellence. His struggles throughout his life translated through the brush into expressive and colourful masterpieces revered much after he was gone. His bold use of impasto a thick, visceral brush technique, gave his paintings texture, motion, and intensity and his vibrant use of colours and vivid capture of expressions and symbolism made him an icon of post-impressionist art.

It is debated that whether van Gogh just suffered from loneliness eventually leading to psychotic episodes or he also suffered from epileptic attacks (5–7)

His brother Theo organized a memorial exhibition displaying the works of van Gogh. Theo suffered a nervous breakdown and died few months after the passing of van Gogh. The legacy of van Gogh's monumental contribution to art passed through the care of Theo's wife Jo van Gogh to Theo's son Vincent Willem van Gogh who was an engineer. In 1962, Willem van Gogh transferred the collections to Van Gogh foundation and the Govt of Netherlands undertook to create the van Gogh Museum. Queen Juliana opened the Van Gogh Museum on 2 June 1973, since then it has become the major center for visitors around the world.

What van Gogh had aspired finally came true years after he left : 'I can do nothing about it if my paintings don't sell. The day will come, though, when people will see that they're worth more than the cost of the paint and my subsistence, very meagre in fact, that we put into them.'

Van Gogh's life had spans of loneliness, bizarre behaviour speckled with phases of immense creativity. He also

struggled with alcohol use particularly Absinthe , which is a flavoured liquor derived from several plants and herb and is thought to contain 50-70% alcohol. Van Gogh consumed Absinthe in excess for many years and later abruptly stopped drinking. This could have led to development of delirious state and there is also evidence for potential epileptic seizure episodes suffered by him. He also suffered from frequent mood swings and depressive episodes(7,8).

He's the one who painted sunflowers like they were burning prayers,
The one who captured starlight not to illuminate the world, but to soothe the darkness within.

The one whose brush did not just move with colour- but was driven by the pain,
longing, and the silent echoes of a soul too full for this world.

Despite multiple mental health issues, van Gogh was one of the most creative and prolific painters who left an indelible mark on the history of art giving it a whole new direction. Though he sold limited paintings in his lifetime, in modern era, Vincent van Gogh's paintings are among the most expensive ones ever sold. Today, approximately 1.8 million visitors come to the van Gogh museum in Amsterdam to see his creations. His contribution to art has been remarkable and makes us ponder as to whether it was the loneliness that fuelled his creativity .

Our tributes to a legend who revolutionized art and his lived experiences set the stage for a public health narrative to fight mental health challenges, address loneliness and offer solutions to affected people so that they are detected early and optimally managed. His life also underscores the dire need to invest in mental health and address the spectrum of mental health challenges and to take note of loneliness in particular as a fast-emerging public health problem. We must evolve public health strategies to screen and manage these challenges to ensure that the people lead a health and productive life(5). Imagine the loss the world suffered due to the passing of a genius like van Gogh so early in his life, depriving the world of many more classics which remained unpainted in the mind of a genius which was lonely but full of creativity!

अवतार

ए स्टोरी वर्थ टेलिंग

एक अनमोल दास्तान

अवतार का अर्थ है रूपधारण करना। यह स्पेस उन व्यक्तित्वों को समर्पित है, जो भले ही जनस्वास्थ्य के क्षेत्र से न जुड़े हों, लेकिन उन्होंने अपने-अपने क्षेत्र में असाधारण योगदान दिया है और वर्तमान विषय ने उनके जीवन को गहराई से प्रभावित किया है।



विन्सेन्ट वेन गॉफ

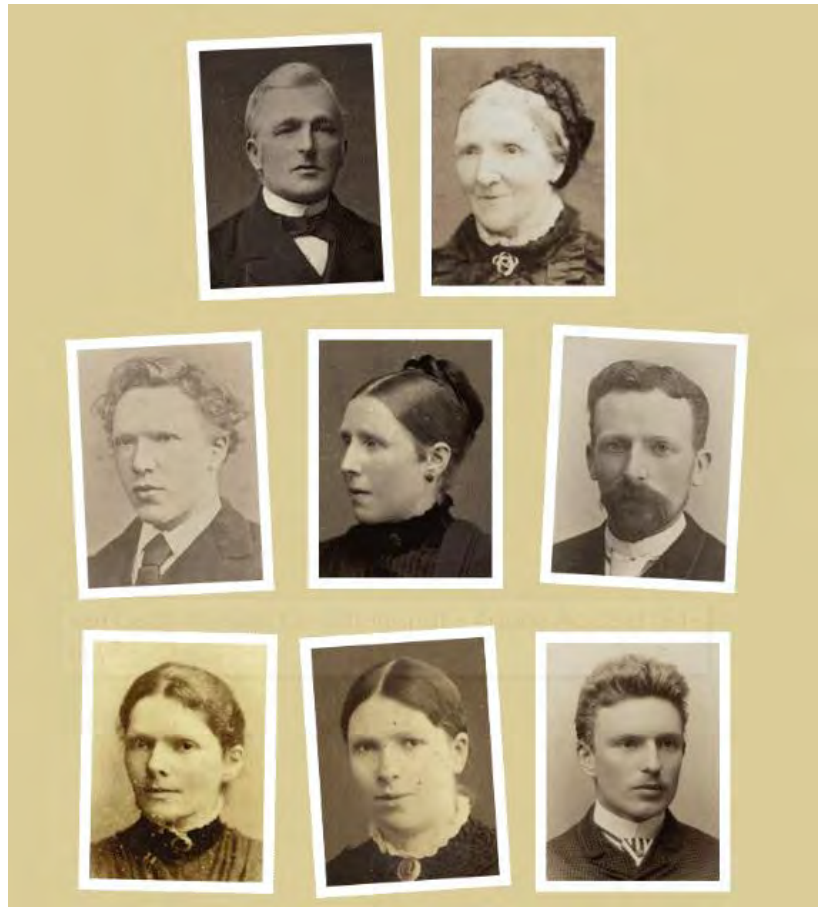
प्रस्तुति : डॉ विनोद कुमार एवं सुश्री अमृता शर्मा



Vincent van Gogh - Sunflowers (1889), 95 cmx73 cm, oil on canvas
Credits : van Gogh museum, Amsterdam

विन्सेंट वेन गॉफ का जन्म 30 मार्च 1853 को नीदरलैंड में जुंडर्ट कस्बे के ब्राबैंट गाँव में थेओडोरस वेन गॉफ और माता अन्ना कार्वेन्टोस के घर हुआ। अपने माता पिता की जीवित सन्तानों में वेन गॉफ सबसे बड़े थे क्योंकि उनके नामधारी एक संतान का पहले मृत जन्म हुआ था। आगे चल कर उनके पांच भाई बहन हुए – दो भाई (थिओ और कॉर) एवं तीन बहनें (एना, एलिजाबेथ और विल)। विन्सेंट ने तेरह वर्ष की आयु में स्कूल छोड़ दिया और फिर कभी स्कूल का रुख नहीं किया। सोलह साल के होने पर उनके

चाचा ने एक आर्ट डीलर के रूप में उन्हें गोपिल एन्ड सीई नामक कलाकृतियों का व्यापार करने वाली एक अन्तराष्ट्रीय कंपनी में नौकरी दिला दी। उनके छोटे भाई थिओ को भी इसी तरह ब्रस्सेल्स में नौकरी मिल गई। बाद में विन्सेंट का स्थानांतरण लंदन और फिर पेरिस हो जाता है। यही पृष्ठभूमि बनी विन्सेंट और थिओ के बीच पत्रों के जीवनपर्यन्त आदान प्रदान का, जिससे हमें विन्सेंट के निजी जीवन के करीब से जानने हेतु बहुत जानकारी मिली।



पेरिस में रहने के दौरान, वह धीरे-धीरे धार्मिक होते गए और अपने काम में रुचि खोने लगे। अंततः 1876 में उन्हें गूपिल द्वारा नौकरी से निकाल दिया गया। इसके बाद वे अपने माता-पिता के पास लौट आए और कई तरह के काम आजमाए — जैसे किताबों की दुकान में काम करना, उपदेशक बनना, यहाँ तक कि खदानों में काम करने वाले मजदूरों और उनके परिवारों के साथ रहना, जिससे अंततः उन्होंने अपना सब कुछ खो दिया। उनके इस त्याग और सेवा भाव के कारण उन्हें 'कोल माइन्स का मसीहा' कहा जाने लगा।

इसी बेतरतीब भटकाव और बार-बार नौकरी बदलने के दौरान थियो ने विन्सेंट को सुझाव दिया कि वह कला पर ध्यान केंद्रित करे। विन्सेंट ने उसके सुझाव को गंभीरता से लिया और ब्रसेल्स जाकर कला को अपनाने की शुरुआत की। उन्होंने कला का अभ्यास किया और बाद में हेग चले गए। इस दौरान उनके कलाकार ममेरे भाई, एंटोन मॉव, ने उन्हें वॉटरकलर और ऑइल पेंटिंग की बुनियादी तकनीकें सिखाईं। क्योंकि विन्सेंट खुद कमाई नहीं कर रहे थे, इसलिए उनके भाई थियो उन्हें जीवनयापन के लिए नियमित रूप से पैसे भेजते थे।

कई स्थानों पर भटकने के बाद, विन्सेंट आखिरकार अपने माता-पिता के पास लौट आए। 1885 में जब उनके पिता का देहांत हुआ, तो वे नीदरलैंड्स छोड़कर बेलजियम के एंटवर्प चले गए और अंततः पेरिस पहुँचे, जहाँ उनके भाई थियो अब गूपिल में मैनेजर बन चुके थे।

थियो के माध्यम से विन्सेंट को समकालीन कलाकारों के कार्यों के बारे में जानने का अवसर मिला, विशेषकर उन कलाकारों से जो चमकीले रंगों का प्रयोग करते थे। इसका प्रभाव उनकी कला पर स्पष्ट झलकने लगा - उनके चित्रों की गहरी और धूसर टोन अब उजले और जीवंत रंगों में बदलने लगी।

उनके प्रारंभिक चित्र, जैसे “द पोटेटो ईटर्स”, मेहनतकश गरीबों को एक गहरी संवेदनशीलता और गरिमा के साथ चित्रित करते हैं। भोजन करते हुए झुके हुए चेहरे, टिमटिमाती रोशनी में डूबे दृश्य, और जीवन संघर्ष की धुंध में लिपटे पात्र - ये सब विन्सेंट की खुद की तन्हाई को प्रतिबिंबित करते थे। वह सौंदर्य से अधिक सत्य को खोजते थे, और सत्य में वो अक्सर अकेले होते थे। लेकिन फ्रांस में स्तनांतरित होने और इम्प्रेशनिज्म और जापानी प्रिंटों को देखने के बाद उनके रंगों में निखार आया। ब्रश-स्ट्रोक्स अधिक स्पष्ट, सशक्त, सहज और लयबद्ध हो गए, और रंग अधिक चमकीले व जीवंत हो उठे। तन्हाई अब भी बनी रही — लेकिन अब वह और अधिक अभिव्यक्तिपूर्ण और उजली हो गई थी।

Coming of Age and the changing styles

Two paintings from van Gogh capture the transition in his painting styles from dark tones to the use of bright vibrant portrayals



Vincent van Gogh, Woman on the Peat Moor, 1883. (Amsterdam, Netherlands) 27.8 cm x 36.5 cm, oil on canvas. Credits : van Gogh museum, Amsterdam.



Vincent van Gogh, Fishing Boats on the Beach at Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, 1888. (Arles, France) 65 cm x 81.5 cm, oil on canvas. Credits : van Gogh museum, Amsterdam

पेरिस में दो साल बिताने के बाद, विन्सेंट फ्रांस के शांत दक्षिणी इलाके आर्लस (Arles) चले गए। यह समय उनके लिए बेहद महत्वाकांक्षी था, क्योंकि विन्सेंट की इच्छा थी कि वे एक ऐसा स्टूडियो स्थापित करें जहाँ कई कलाकार साथ रहकर काम कर सकें — एक तरह की “कलाकार कॉलोनी”। इस उद्देश्य से उन्होंने प्लेस लामारतीन (Place Lamartine) में चार कमरों वाला पीला घर किराए पर लिया।

अक्टूबर 1888 में कलाकार पॉल गोगान (Paul Gauguin) उनके साथ रहने आ गए। थियो ने इस पूरे प्रयास के लिए आर्थिक सहायता दी। थियो ने लिखा -

“तो गोगान आ रहा है इससे तुम्हारी जिंदगी में बड़ा बदलाव आएगा। मुझे उम्मीद है कि तुम्हारा प्रयास सफल होगा और तुम्हारा घर एक ऐसा स्थान बनेगा जहाँ कलाकार अपने को घर जैसा महसूस करें।”

“So Gauguin's coming; that will make a big change in your life- I hope that your efforts will succeed in making your house a place where artists will feel at home

इस सकारात्मक सोच के साथ दोनों कलाकारों ने मिलकर कुछ उत्कृष्ट कृतियाँ रचने की दिशा में कदम बढ़ाया। हालाँकि दोनों की चित्रशैली में बड़ा अंतर था - गोगान स्मृति के आधार पर चित्र बनाते थे, जबकि विन्सेंट प्रत्यक्ष दृश्य को देख कर चित्रित करते थे। यह रचनात्मक अंतर जल्द ही वैचारिक मतभेदों और बहसों में बदल गया। गोगान ने आर्लस छोड़ने की धमकी दे डाली, जिससे विन्सेंट मानसिक रूप से बेहद व्यथित हो गए।

एक क्षणिक मानसिक उत्तेजना में उन्होंने उस्तरे से अपना कान काट लिया। इस घटना के बाद उन्हें अस्पताल में भर्ती कराया गया, और गोगान पेरिस लौट गए - जिससे विन्सेंट का रचनात्मक स्वप्न टूट गया। अस्पताल से छुट्टी के बाद, विन्सेंट ने दोबारा चित्र बनाना शुरू किया। हालाँकि मानसिक स्वास्थ्य की अस्थिरता बनी रही और बीमारी के दौरे आते रहे, लेकिन इस दौर में भी उन्होंने अत्यंत प्रभावशाली कृतियाँ बनाईं।

हालात बिगड़ने पर उन्हें सेंट-रेमी-दे-प्रोवेंस (Saint-Rémy-de-Provence) के मानसिक अस्पताल में भर्ती कराया गया। यहाँ एक वर्ष की अवधि में भी उन्होंने लगभग 150 चित्रों की रचना की - जिनमें ‘अलमंड ब्लॉसम (Almond Blossom) जैसी असाधारण कृति शामिल है।



विन्सेंट वैन गॉफ .आल्मंड ब्लॉसम (1890), 73.3 सेमी x 92.4 सेमी, कैनवास पर ऑयल पेंटिंग
 सौजन्य : वैन गॉग संग्रहालय, एम्स्टर्डम (विन्सेंट वैन गॉग फाउंडेशन)
 Vincent van Gogh - Almond Blossom (1890), 73.3 cm x 92.4 cm, oil on canvas
 Credits : Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)

लगातार गिरते स्वास्थ्य के बावजूद ऐसा नहीं था कि विन्सेंट के कार्य पूरी तरह नजरअंदाज हो रहे थे। थियो उनके चित्रों को लोगों तक पहुँचाने के लिए लगातार प्रयास कर रहे थे, और ब्रसेल्स प्रदर्शनी में विन्सेंट की कई कलाकृतियाँ चुनी गईं।

अस्पताल से छुट्टी मिलने के बाद, विन्सेंट ने थियो और उनके परिवार से मुलाकात की। वहीं उन्हें पता चला कि थियो अपनी नौकरी छोड़कर खुद का व्यवसाय शुरू करने का विचार कर रहे हैं। यह सुनकर विन्सेंट के मन में अपने भविष्य और आर्थिक सुरक्षा को लेकर गहरी चिंता घर कर गई। वहाँ से लौटने के बाद विन्सेंट ने कुछ और चित्र बनाए : वे उत्कृष्ट कृतियाँ थीं, जो उनके भीतर की बेचौनी, स्वतंत्रता की तीव्र इच्छा और विचारों की उथल-पुथल को दर्शाती हैं। यह भी विडंबना ही थी कि इन चित्रों को जन्म देने वाली सबसे बड़ी प्रेरणा उनकी गहरी अकेलापन की अनुभूति थी।

विन्सेंट ने थियो को एक पत्र में अपने चित्र "क्रोज इन द व्हीटफील्ड" (Crows in the Wheatfield) के बारे में लिखा:

"... पूरी तरह से जानते हुए कि मैं क्या चाहता हूँ, मैंने तीन बड़े कैनवास और बनाए हैं तब से। ये विशाल गेहूँ के खेत हैं, जिनके ऊपर अशांति से भरा हुआ आकाश है। मैंने जानबूझकर इनमें उदासी और गहरे अकेलेपन की अनुभूति को अभिव्यक्त करने की कोशिश की है। मुझे उम्मीद है कि तुम इन्हें जल्दी ही देख सकोगे - क्योंकि मैं इन्हें जल्द से जल्द पेरिस लाने की कोशिश करूँगा। ऐसा इसलिए क्योंकि मुझे लगता है कि ये चित्र शायद तुमसे वह सब कह सकेंगे जो मैं शब्दों में नहीं कह पाता — और जो मुझे ग्रामीण जीवन में स्वस्थ और ऊर्जा देने वाला लगता है।"



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 Journal article
 citing the painting

विन्सेंट वैन गॉफ - व्हीटफील्ड विद क्रोज (1890), ओवेर-सुर-ओआज, 95 सेमी x 73 सेमी, कैनवास पर ऑयल पेंटिंग
 सौजन्य : वैन गॉफ संग्रहालय, एम्स्टर्डम (विन्सेंट वैन गॉग फाउंडेशन)
 Vincent van Gogh - Wheatfield with Crows (1890), Auvers-sur-Oise, 95 cm x 73 cm, oil on canvas
 Credits : Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)

यह समय जुलाई 1890 के आसपास का था। शांत ग्रामीण वातावरण जहाँ एक ओर विन्सेंट की रचनात्मकता को प्रेरित कर रहा था, वहीं यह उनके भीतर की खालीपन और टूटन को भी गहराता जा रहा था - तब तक कि और सहन करना मुश्किल हो गया। 27 जुलाई 1890 को वे खेतों की ओर गए और अपनी सीने में गोली मार ली। उसके बाद वे वापस अपने कमरे तक खुद ही लौट आए। 29 जुलाई 1890 को विन्सेंट वैन गॉफ की मृत्यु हुई - खुद के द्वारा चलाई गई गोली से हुई गंभीर चोटों के कारण।

वैन गॉफ ने इस दुनिया को सिर्फ रंग ही नहीं दिए, बल्कि एक ऐसे व्यक्ति की मौन स्वीकारोक्ति भी दी जो जीवन को हमेशा इंसानी पहुँच से थोड़ा बाहर जीता रहा - जिसे हम उनके चित्रों में देख सकते हैं: उन घूमते हुए तारों में, उन खेतों में जो किसी ओर नहीं झुकते, और उन कुर्सियों में जो हमेशा खाली रहती हैं।

उनका जीवन ही उनकी कला बन गया - एक बंद खिड़की के पार से निकली एक पुकार: चमकती हुई, बेचौन, और एकाकी। करीब 10 वर्षों के भीतर वैन गॉफ ने 2100 से अधिक कलाकृतियाँ बनाई - जिनमें लगभग 900 चित्र, और शेष स्केच तथा ड्राइंग्स थीं।

विन्सेंट वैन गॉफ इस बात का प्रतीक हैं कि गहन मानसिक पीड़ा, भीतरी संघर्ष, लगातार अकेलापन और सीमित संसाधन - ये सभी मिलकर एक मन को किस तरह अतुलनीय रचनात्मक ऊँचाइयों तक पहुँचा सकते हैं।

उनका जीवन संघर्ष उनकी तूलिका से बहकर ऐसे चित्रों में ढल गया, जो आज विश्व भर में सराहे जाते हैं।

उनकी विशेष तकनीक इम्पास्टो (impasto) - जिसमें गाढ़े, मोटे ब्रश स्ट्रोक का उपयोग होता है — ने उनके चित्रों को गहराई, गति और तीव्रता दी। उनके रंगों का जीवंत प्रयोग, अभिव्यक्तियों की तीव्र पकड़ और प्रतीकों का साहसिक इस्तेमाल — इन्हीं ने उन्हें पोस्ट-इम्प्रेशनिस्ट कला का एक अमिट प्रतीक बना दिया। यह आज भी बहस का विषय है कि क्या वैन गॉफ केवल अकेलेपन के कारण मानसिक रूप से अस्थिर हुए या क्या वे मिर्गी के दौरों (epileptic seizures) से भी पीड़ित थे।

उनके भाई थियो ने उनकी स्मृति में एक प्रदर्शनी आयोजित की, जिसमें वैन गॉफ की कृतियाँ प्रदर्शित की गईं। वैन गॉफ की मृत्यु के कुछ ही महीनों बाद थियो भी मानसिक अवसाद में चले गए और उनका निधन हो गया। वैन गॉफ की विरासत का संरक्षण थियो की पत्नी जो वैन गॉफ ने किया, और फिर उनके बेटे विन्सेंट विलेम वैन गॉफ को सौंपा, जो एक इंजीनियर थे। 1962 में, विन्सेंट विलेम वैन गॉफ ने यह संग्रह वैन गॉफ फाउंडेशन को सौंप दिया। इसके बाद नीदरलैंड सरकार ने वैन गॉफ म्यूजियम की स्थापना की। 2 जून 1973 को रानी जूलियाना ने इस संग्रहालय का उद्घाटन किया, और तब से यह दुनिया भर के दर्शकों का प्रमुख केंद्र बना हुआ है।

जो सपना वैन गॉफ ने देखा था, वह उनकी मृत्यु के वर्षों बाद जाकर पूरा हुआ:

“अगर मेरी पेंटिंग्स नहीं बिकतीं, तो मैं कुछ नहीं कर सकता। पर वो दिन जरूर आएगा जब लोग समझेंगे कि ये चित्र उस पेंट की कीमत से कहीं अधिक मूल्यवान हैं - और उस बेहद सीमित जीवन-यापन से जिसे हमने इनके लिए झोंक दिया।”

“I can do nothing about it if my paintings don't sell. The day will come, though, when people will see that they're worth more than the cost of the paint and my subsistence, very meagre in fact, that we put into them.”

वैन गॉफ का जीवन एक ओर गहन एकाकीपन और विचित्र व्यवहार से भरा था, तो दूसरी ओर उसमें जबरदस्त रचनात्मक चमक भी थी। उन्होंने विशेष रूप से एब्सिंथ (Absinthe) नामक एक शराब का अत्यधिक सेवन

किया - जो विभिन्न जड़ी-बूटियों से बनी होती है और जिसमें 50-70% तक अल्कोहल हो सकता है। उन्होंने कई वर्षों तक इसका अत्यधिक सेवन किया और फिर अचानक बंद कर दिया। यह भी संभव है कि इससे उन्हें मानसिक भ्रम की स्थिति (delirium) हुई हो। साथ ही, मिर्गी जैसे दौरे आने के संकेत भी उनके जीवन में मिले हैं। वे बार-बार मूड स्विंग्स और अवसाद से भी जूझते रहे। कई मानसिक स्वास्थ्य समस्याओं के बावजूद, वैन गॉफ इतिहास के सबसे रचनात्मक और विपुल चित्रकारों में गिने जाते हैं, जिन्होंने कला की दुनिया को एक नई दिशा दी और उस पर अमिट छाप छोड़ी।

वही था जिसने सुर्यमुखियों को तस्वीरों में खिलाया
मानो वे प्रज्वलित प्रार्थनाएँ हों...

... वही जिसने सितारों की चमक को संजोया न
कि दुनिया को प्रकाशित करने के लिए
अपितु मन के अंधेरों को सहलाने को...

.... वही जिसकी तूलिका चली रंगों से नहीं

वह तो चली पीड़ा से, विरह की सीलन से और
चली अंतरात्मा की मौन प्रतिध्वनियों से

थी बहुत ही बोझिल जो ,इस जग के लिए

हालाँकि अपने जीवनकाल उनके बहुत कम चित्र बिके, लेकिन आज के समय में विन्सेंट वैन गॉफ की पेंटिंग्स दुनिया की सबसे महँगी बिकने वाली कृतियों में शामिल हैं। आज हर वर्ष लगभग 18 लाख दर्शक एम्स्टर्डम स्थित वैन गॉफ म्यूजियम में उनकी कृतियों को देखने आते हैं। उनकी कला में दिया गया योगदान इतना अद्भुत है कि यह सोचने को विवश करता है — क्या वाकई उनकी रचनात्मकता का स्रोत उनका अकेलापन था?

हमारी श्रद्धांजलि उस महान कलाकार को, जिसने कला की दुनिया में एक नई क्रांति ला दी — और जिनके जीवन के अनुभव आज मानसिक स्वास्थ्य चुनौतियों से लड़ने, अकेलेपन को पहचानने और इससे प्रभावित लोगों के लिए समय पर पहचान व समुचित प्रबंधन की दिशा में एक सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य दृष्टिकोण को प्रेरित करते हैं। उनकी यात्रा न केवल रचनात्मकता की मिसाल है, बल्कि यह भी दर्शाती है कि मानसिक स्वास्थ्य से जुड़ी समस्याओं को गंभीरता से लेना और उनके लिए ठोस समाधान विकसित करना हमारी सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य प्रणाली की प्राथमिकता होनी चाहिए। उनका जीवन हमें यह भी याद दिलाता है कि मानसिक स्वास्थ्य में निवेश करना और मानसिक चुनौतियों की पूरी श्रृंखला को गंभीरता से लेना अत्यंत आवश्यक है। विशेष रूप से अकेलेपन (loneliness) को अब एक उभरती हुई सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य समस्या के रूप में पहचाना जाना चाहिए। हमें ऐसी जनस्वास्थ्य रणनीतियाँ विकसित करनी होंगी, जो इन मानसिक स्वास्थ्य समस्याओं की समय रहते पहचान (screening) कर सकें और उनका समुचित प्रबंधन सुनिश्चित कर सकें, ताकि लोग एक स्वस्थ, सक्रिय और समाजोपयोगी जीवन जी सकें।

कल्पना कीजिए कि इस दुनिया को वैन गॉफ जैसी प्रतिभा को जीवन के शुरुआती पड़ाव में ही खो देने से कितना बड़ा नुकसान हुआ — बहुत सी ऐसी असाधारण , अनुपम रचनाएँ एक प्रखर रचनकार की चेतना में ही रह गईं — कैनवास पर उतर नहीं पाईं। मन प्रतिभाशाली था पर एकाकी और अशांत !

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A Lovely Loneliness

*Waves crashing around
 Sun in the bound
 Marks wash away
 The slate turns clean.*

*Making sand castle
 stand
 Grains slip gently from
 my hand
 Nobody else to play with
 A lovely day yet silence
 stays*

*The sun whispers
 warmth, though it can't
 stay
 And shadows stretch as
 time slips away
 In this stillness, I find
 release
 Loneliness turns to be
 quite peace.*



Ms Reba Mary Mathew
 She is currently pursuing MBA
 Hospital and Health Management
 (Batch 29) at IIHMR University.

Ocean of Woes

*Forlorn in the ocean of woes
 The shell of worry flows
 For peace is like a calm wave
 Bestowed only on those who are brave
 To face your own biggest demons
 To decide whether to pick up or throw the
 weapons
 As the infinite number of sand particles
 flow
 Each passing moment makes my
 anxiousness grow
 Life for me had never been a bed of roses
 It had always been a crown of thorns
 Yet with each door that closes
 I am again left alone
 To face everything undeterred is a
 challenge
 For each of my wounds are probed before
 they heal
 But it's nothing I can't manage
 Because what's life without the hope it
 instills.*



Dr Anushree Mishra
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Unread Messages, Unfelt Touch: The Digital Loneliness Epidemic

*Machines now speak, they hear our
cries,
Yet leave us staring at empty skies.
We type, we scroll, we talk to
screens,
But lose the warmth of human
beings.*

*A chatbot listens, never cold,
Yet lacks a heart, a hand to hold.
Echo chambers, voices fade,
In AI's glow, we're more afraid.*

*No touch, no laugh, no real embrace,
Just silent screens in endless space.
If we let tech replace our ties,
We'll be alone beneath wired skies.*

*So step away, reach out, be near,
Let love, not AI, shape the year.*



Mr Tejas Wakde

He is currently pursuing MPH
 Implementation Science (Cohort 2)
 at IIHMR University

The Moon's Solitude

*At night,
I look up to the moon &
wonder,
Does it feel lonely too at
times?
Surrounded by billions
of stars,
& millions of galaxies,
yet all alone,
Shining so bright.
Maybe it does,
It does feel lonely
sometimes.
But look, it's still
smiling.
Because it has the whole
world,
To light up.
So that people like us,
You & I,
Don't feel lonely
anymore every night.*



Dr Shivanshi Gupta (PT)

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 (Batch 29) at IIHMR University

Loneliness - The Deserted Path

Believe me, there is still time for you to become everything you aspire to be. We all long for connection, yet loneliness has a way of slipping into our lives when we least expect it. It's not about running away into illusions or distractions—it's about facing the reality of feeling alone. And sometimes, being alone is okay.

Walking through the streets, surrounded by people yet untouched by their presence, is a kind of solitude. It's like standing by a rushing mountain stream, watching the water carve its path, feeling the vastness of the world while being just one small part of it. There's a kind of beauty in that stillness.

The loneliness we feel in a crowd is different—it's the weight of existence, the restlessness of a mind filled with knowledge, responsibilities, and expectations. We often mistake this feeling for emptiness, but maybe it's just a reminder that we need time with ourselves. Imagine coming home, making a cup of tea, sitting in the quiet. Some may call it loneliness, but for others, it's freedom.

True freedom is deeply personal—an internal state, not just an external condition. It's the ability to listen to your own thoughts, to explore your emotions without interference, and to find meaning beyond the noise of the world. Growth often comes at the cost of solitude, but instead of fearing it, we can embrace it. Use it to take on new responsibilities, to serve a purpose greater than yourself, and to transform loneliness into something meaningful.

*And most importantly, thank yourself.
For holding on when things felt impossible.
For showing up, even when no one was watching.
For refusing to give up, despite the struggles.
For continuing to live, grow, and evolve.
You've always been there for yourself—and that's something worth appreciating.*



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Wings to Fly, Roots to Stay: The Loneliness of Letting Go

However, life has its own plans. Over the last year, we realized that both of my parents are dealing with serious physical health issues. Diagnoses have been established, and treatments have begun, yet something still seems wrong. There is a loss of motivation, a sense of hopelessness that medication cannot alleviate. And when we peel back the layers, the underlying cause becomes clear—it's not simply the physical illnesses. It is anxiousness. It is depression. But why? Everything else in their world has stayed unaltered. What's changed? Ah, yes. Their children are no longer home. For more than two decades, I was the center of their world, the axis around which their entire existence spun. Their purpose. Their air. Their reason for existence. And now I am gone—not in spirit, but in presence. The empty home, which used to reverberate with my laughter and footsteps, now magnifies the stillness. Here's the dilemma that weighs on both them and me: They had always hoped to see me prosper and enter the world as a healthy, accomplished adult. However, in pursuing that ambition, they have lost the purpose that previously defined them. They have neglected their own needs for almost two decades, and now that they have the opportunity to regain their ambitions, they are at a loss for where to begin. Perhaps they don't even

recall what their dreams were. As a result, we arrive at a heartbreaking truth: what once provided them such joy—parenting—is now the root of their loneliness. As I pursue my dreams, I am haunted by the realization that, while they are proud of the life I am creating, they are left wondering how to live the remainder of theirs.

The entire point of this is to strike a balance between raising the children to be strong, rational and independent adults while also ensuring the parents do not lose the one life they get to live. Parents, it is important to understand you can recover your life whenever you want. Having passions and interest is the right of every individual. Once you become a parent to a child, you never stop being one no matter how old the child has grown. The child always comes first and that is natural. But it is also important to understand that when a child is capable of looking after themselves, it is once again time for you to look after yourself and do things that love that you denied yourself out of compulsion or responsibility.



Dr Srabani Chattopadhyay

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Are You Really Lonely?

*In the stillness of a quiet room;
When all your shadows fight to take their
place, When the demons and monsters
under your bed,*

*Fall over one another to surround you
with their void gaze; When all you hear is
the hollow chime of the clock on the wall,
Reminding you of every moment,
stretching from the longest summer, to
the darkest fall.*

*Pick yourself up, my little friend, stand
tall; Run, walk, crawl, make your way
towards the door, The you waiting
tomorrow will thank you ever more.*

*And then if you look around and don't
find a hand to hold, look down at your
own shadow; Intertwine your fingers
with her and run out into that meadow.
Find your company in every bird soaring
high and tearing across the blue sky,
Every cloud under its wing, along with
its neighbor grumbling about storms to
bring.*

*Every little critter, everything that
breathes,
Began its journey on this planet like you
and me- alone, racing towards inevitable
storms on the horizon that seeth; And
while we talk about breathing, place your
palm on your chest,
My dear, the only thing you need to live
is right there- worth every mighty quest.*

*Then if the moors turn grey under the
stormy clouds, And the moon hides
herself under the night's deep shroud; It's
just another night - look up to the sky,*

*look at the stars,
I wonder if their shimmer is just their
arms reaching out to embrace you, but
you seem too far.*

*Find your company in every drop of rain,
In every pebble along the road, every
fallen twig in this city's twisted lanes.
In every gust of wind ever so gently
brushing your hair and face,
In the city lights; in the leaves of the trees
that break the mighty Sun's rays.*

*Feel every blade of grass and thorn under
your feet,*

*Make friends with every wave that
crashes against the shore, so ephemeral
and sweet.*

*Talk to every handful of sand that you
lose to the wind; Every new dawn that
gives the birds a reason to sing.*

*The entire world was crafted to grace
your eyes;*

*Every deep ocean, dark forest, every
comet racing across the skies, Every fresh
parchment, every melody and the quiet
rustle of towering trees;*

*Now ask yourself, darling, are you really
lonely, or are you free?*



Dr. Sreyasi Chattopadhyay

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The Inevitability of Loneliness and the Human Struggle Against It

Man, by nature, has been conditioned not to live in the shadows of loneliness, but in the arms of his companions and associates. He is a being who seeks intimacy, who longs for the joy that is shared, and for the consolation that is shared with others. But what horror haunts him more than any other? It is not the pain of fleeting loss, nor the hardship of his toil in the world, but that harsh spectrum of loneliness, always lurking on the margins of his days. To stand alone, lost in the deep abyss of time yes, this is the dread that makes his heart tremble.

Therefore, he struggles and endeavors, weaving the fabric of his life with the threads of affection, seeking solace in the warmth of love, in the bond of family, and in the joy of companionship. He marries, has children, and builds a home for himself that is filled with sounds, so that the funereal song of silence does not descend on his soul. But fate, that fickle lady, does not listen to his pleas. Death may snatch the beloved wife, children may leave for distant lands in pursuit of their dreams, and friends may drown in their own worries. And here he is, in the fall of life, finding himself ostracized alone.

Loneliness is not just an imaginary ghost, it is a constant reality, as certain as the grave itself. A man may stand in the midst of a crowd, his ears ringing with the noise of voices, his hands busy with the affairs of life, and yet loneliness may creep in and colonize his soul. There are those who claim to be ascetic in company, and boast of their ability to do without others, boasting that they are their own master and ruler. But what a cruel irony fate weaves for them! Such people are

often the most depressed, and the most likely to commit suicide when there is no one left to help them.

Does man resign himself to this inevitable end? No, it is not in his nature to give in so easily! If he is destined to face loneliness in the end, let him delay its arrival as long as he can, as long as there is a breath of life in his chest. Let him seek companionship, fill his days with the laughter of those who dispel the loneliness of the days, and surround himself with those who restore color to his dull world. . I remember that there was an old woman who lived in my neighborhood and everyone left to find herself alone, so she resorted to taking a small child as a way to listen to her entertaining stories for him, and to fill her own emptiness in order to avoid her loneliness, I think that when this child grows up, he will realize that he was listening to a human experience full of lessons and not just stories and adventures that happened to that old woman in her youth.

So let it be known: Seeking to escape loneliness is not an illusion, but the essence of man's defiance of the power of fate. If loneliness must come, let us be careful not to be the one who invites it to our door with our hands.



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Loneliness and Parasocial Relationships: A Psychological Perspective

In such an era under which digital interactions are replacing personal connections, loneliness has become an arising issue. Quite a few people, dealing with social isolation as well as emotional disconnection, often turn toward parasocial relationships as one form of companionship. These imbalanced affective relations toward media personalities bring comfort and a sense of affiliation-a need most especially for those who might not have adequately satisfying face-to-face relationships with actual people in their lives, such as social media personalities or fictional characters.

Loneliness exists as a personal emotion that develops in people who experience differences between their existing social relationships and their ideal social connection requirements. People can experience different types of loneliness such as existential loneliness which affects people throughout their existence alongside others; social loneliness driven by insufficient social connections and emotional loneliness resulting from missing meaningful intimate relationships. People who experience chronic loneliness develop psychological issues that include anxiety and

depression alongside low self-esteem. People who find it difficult to maintain meaningful relationships in their everyday lives may use parasocial connections as an emotional outlet to deal with social connection issues.

The term "parasocial relationship," coined by Horton and Wohl in 1956, clearly defines the illusion of intimacy that individuals often experience with media characters or fictional characters. Unlike traditional relationships, which are characterized by mutual recognition, parasocial interactions are distinctly one-sided: the media figure remains unaware of the individual's existence, yet the individual feels a strong emotional connection. People who constantly encounter media figures build authentic connections to these personalities which they view either as close friends or important influencers. A music fan may feel deeply connected to a singer or actor, believing they "understand" them through interviews, social media posts, and performances, despite never having met in person. Research supports the established relationship between loneliness and parasocial relationships by showing that lonely people are more prone to form

parasocial bonds. This connection has multiple psychological explanations. First, the development of parasocial relationships helps individuals maintain social connections by offering virtual camaraderie in place of missing direct full-personnel encounters. Individuals who encounter difficulty preserving their interpersonal relationships because of social anxiety, geographic barriers or personal factors can access stable emotional support through parasocial contact. Through parasocial relationships, people avoid the unpredictability found in real-life relationships since these connections eliminate the potential for rejection and conflict alongside disappointment. Many followers of YouTubers, streamers, or Instagram influencers feel a personal bond with them due to frequent, informal content that creates an illusion of friendship which is difficult for them to find in real-world relationships.

Although parasocial relationships can reduce loneliness and foster a sense of belonging, an over-reliance on them may hinder face-to-face social encounters. Unrealistic expectations about these interactions can lead to disappointment and distress, particularly if a media personality ceases to produce content or fails to meet expectations. In extreme

cases, unhealthy relationships may be the cause of compulsive behaviours.

An over-dependence on parasocial contacts can also contribute to clinical psychiatric disorders by encouraging social isolation and dysfunctional attachment styles. When individuals replace regular social bonds with parasocial connections they might develop loneliness and anxiety because their preferred media character disappears or fails to meet their expectations. Obsessive behaviours, including excessively following a celebrity's activities, can occasionally be mistaken for symptoms of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). Furthermore, some people may experience illusions such as erotomania, where they erroneously believe that a media figure reciprocates their feelings.

People with social anxiety and avoidant personality disorders might develop extreme parasocial contact because it intensifies their fear of real-world social interactions. Unhealthy parasocial connections frequently produce emotional attachment issues that hinder people from developing meaningful long-term relationships which represent another insecure attachment pattern. People experiencing these tendencies eventually become so emotionally

threatened that they need therapy for standard social interaction recovery.

Additionally, people who suffer from social anxiety or avoidant personality disorders could retreat even further into parasocial contacts, which makes them even more afraid of interacting with others in the actual world. These unhealthy parasocial attachments can further lead to emotional reliance and make it challenging to establish long-lasting relationships, which are another manifestation of insecure attachment styles. Over time, these tendencies may increase psychological suffering to the point where therapy intervention is required to restore normal social functioning.

To maintain a healthy balance, it is essential to recognize the limitations of parasocial relationships while actively engaging in real-world social interactions. Although media figures might offer comfort and inspiration, they cannot replicate the depth and reciprocity of genuine human relationships. Limiting media use, encouraging offline social connection, and developing self-awareness about one's emotional needs are necessary to keep parasocial relationships from replacing in-person relationships. In cases where loneliness persists, seeking

professional help through therapy or counseling can provide helpful strategies for developing meaningful relationships and improving emotional wellness.

In conclusion, the relationship between loneliness and parasocial involvement highlights the complexity of human social needs in a technologically connected society. Parasocial relationships can provide temporary relief from loneliness, but they shouldn't replace face-to-face communication. Finding a balance between media use and close social relationships is necessary for long-term emotional fulfilment. As society struggles to control the effects of digital media on interpersonal interactions, developing real human connections remains crucial to psychological well-being.



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निरन्तर कूच, एक नए सवेरे की ओर

रोज उठते हैं एक नये सवेरे की
खोज में...

दिन भर बादलों के पीछे सूरज
छिपा रहता है और जब तक
बादल बिखरते हैं तब तक रात
हो जाती है...

फिर उठते हैं अगले दिन एक
नये सवेरे की खोज में...

बादल जैसे लुप्त रहते हैं इस
बार, पर आरसील बुलाएं लाए गए
एक ग्रहण की वापसी से उस
सूरज का मात्र एक प्रतिबिम्ब
रह जाता है...

और जब तक ग्रहण खत्म
होता है, आसमान में पहरेदारी
करने चाँद पहुंच जाता है...

फिर उठते हैं एक बार और,
एक नये सवेरे की खोज में...



Dr Govind Sharma

He is a Medical Doctor who graduated from BHU, Varanasi. He is passionate about poetry and music and is currently preparing actively for postgraduate specialization

The Lonely Tidings

*Along the hospice way
Amidst the gloom and grey
Incessantly living the winning and losing
play
Beholding the forlorn seeking the sun's
ray
At times, awake I stay
Become lonesome my nights
Thinking, will the ailing be blessed to live
another day?
As flicker the lights
of uncertain life
The constant strife
Amidst life and death!
Monitoring the fluctuating health
Many a time
Lonesome too my days
As I arrive at the crossways
of the unforeseeable rhyme
The unpredictable pulse
Having to be ever mindful of my own
helpless impulse
For, called to ease else's pain
Time and again*

*I trod alone
The lanes between the known and unknown
Caught in the conundrum
How to tell them
"Seeming to seek never ending rest
Yielding to the unforgiving test
Accepting defeat
Might soon cease the warrior's quest
Leaving behind the family nest
Shattered and incomplete."
Trained to care genuinely
Yet, not susceptibly
To be the oarsman of the boat
Yet, not to emote
Not to sink
to every blink
of the storm
has been the norm.
Overcoming the lonely tidings
Owning the dark moorings
Beholding, becoming and being the stoic oar
Once again, I embark to make the sinking
voyagers safely reach ashore!*



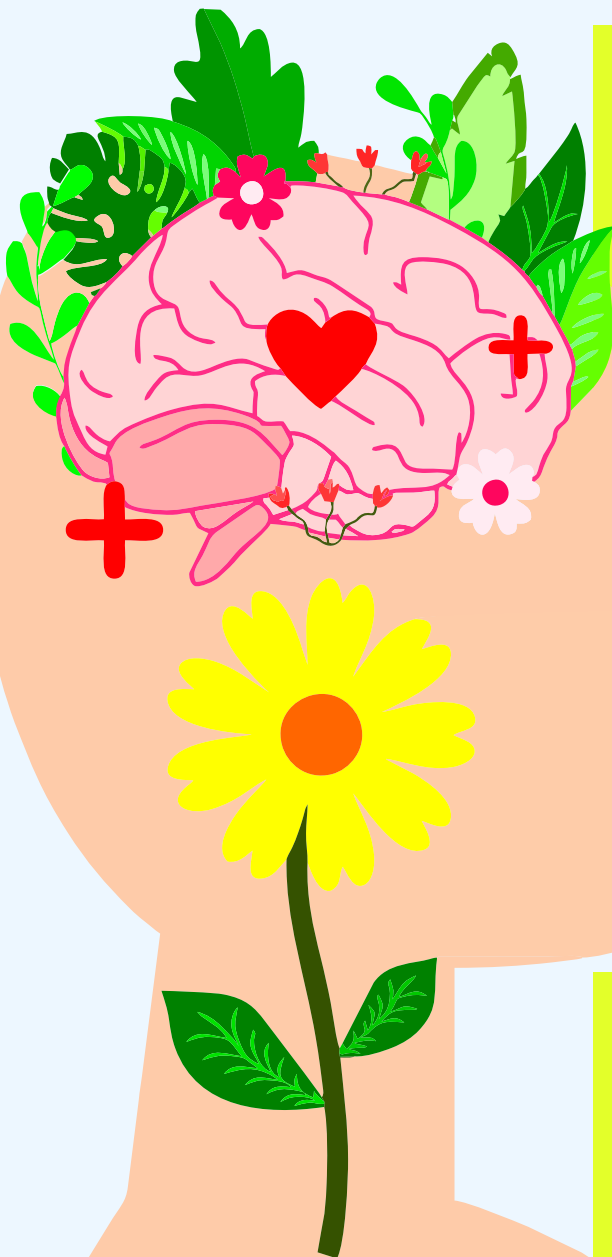
Ms Sailaja Devaguptapu

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Healthy Minds Overcoming Loneliness

Finding Joy Beyond Loneliness

You are Not Alone!



Loneliness as a chance to know ourselves in moments of being alone, we often find the parts of ourselves we didn't know were there. Being lonely can sometimes help us learn more about who we really are, what we like, and what we need.

Loneliness and creativity: loneliness can turn into a blank page for creativity. When we're alone, it might feel tough, but it can also be the perfect space to come up with new ideas or make something unique.

Loneliness is a shared feeling: loneliness isn't just about being by yourself, it's about not feeling understood. Sometimes, we feel alone not because no one is around, but because we don't feel truly connected to others

The Hidden Gifts of Loneliness: A Path to Self-discovery and Creativity

"Loneliness is not the absence of love, but the presence of self." – marianne williamson. Loneliness is a universal experience, often viewed with negative connotations and avoided at all costs. However, it holds the potential for profound personal growth, creativity, and healing. In the moments when we are alone, we are presented with the opportunity to silence

our inner critic, embrace imperfection, and discover parts of ourselves that we may not have known existed. By embracing loneliness, allowing ourselves to feel deeply, and using it as a space for self-reflection, we can emerge stronger, more self-aware, and better equipped to face the world around us."

Loneliness As A Chance To Know Ourselves

Loneliness, while initially uncomfortable, can provide a unique space for self-reflection. In times of solitude, individuals often encounter parts of themselves that might have been overlooked in the busyness of life. This process allows for introspection, leading to a deeper understanding of one's desires, needs, and values. Through loneliness, we can also heal past wounds and begin to address emotional scars that have been left unhealed. For instance, author and psychologist Susan Cain, in her book Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking, argues that solitude is

an essential ingredient for self-discovery. She explains that introverts often prefer to spend time alone, use these moments to reflect, recharge, and better understand their true selves. Studies have shown that self-reflection, often fostered in solitude, can increase emotional intelligence and improve decision-making. In this sense, loneliness can become a tool for personal growth, rather than a source of sadness. By allowing ourselves to feel vulnerable and embrace imperfection, we make space for healing, self-acceptance, and a deeper connection with who we are.

Loneliness And Creativity

One of the most powerful, yet often overlooked, aspects of loneliness is its potential to spark creativity. When we are alone, our minds are free from the distractions of others, giving us space to explore new ideas, experiment, and innovate. History is filled with examples of individuals who used periods of solitude to produce their greatest work. For example, the famous artist Pablo Picasso is known to have spent long periods working in isolation. It was during these times that he created some of his most iconic works, such as his early blue period paintings. Studies show that solitude fosters a state of "divergent thinking," where people can generate a variety of ideas and solutions, rather than simply focusing on one. A 2016 study

published in Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin found that solitude, particularly when self-chosen, enhances creativity and problem-solving skills. In these quiet moments, we can also silence our inner critic, who often tells us that our ideas are not good enough or that we are incapable of creating something worthwhile. Loneliness offers a chance to face those fears, break free from self-doubt, and approach creativity with an open mind and heart. Thus, loneliness can act as a blank canvas, offering a place to think freely and unimpeded by external influences. Though the feeling of being alone may be initially unsettling, it can also be the perfect environment for breakthroughs in both art and thought.

Loneliness As A Shared Feeling

While loneliness is often perceived as a solitary experience, it is a shared human emotion. People can feel isolated not only when they are physically alone but also when they do not feel understood or connected to those around them. Studies suggest that social disconnection – the feeling of not being truly understood or appreciated by others – can have a more significant impact on mental health than physical isolation. A study by Julianne Holt-Lunstad, a Psychologist at Brigham Young University, found that social isolation and loneliness increase the risk of early death and have an impact on mental health, equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Interestingly, the study highlighted that it's not just physical presence that matters, but emotional connection and understanding. People who feel emotionally disconnected, even when surrounded by others, are more likely to experience feelings of deep

loneliness. This sense of shared isolation is particularly important in an age where social media often portrays idealized versions of life, making individuals feel left out or unseen. Recognizing that loneliness is a shared experience can help people feel less alone and more motivated to reach out to others for connection. By facing our social fears and acknowledging that others also experience loneliness, we can build a sense of solidarity, helping to break down the emotional barriers that often make us feel disconnected. Loneliness can be heavy, like an echo in an empty room, making us question our worth. Too much time alone can lead to sadness, anxiety, and self-doubt. As Rainer Maria Rilke said, "the only journey is the one within," but sometimes, that journey feels too hard. In these moments, loneliness isn't about growth—it's about longing for connection.



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Resonant Insights

Transforming the feeling of loneliness to aloneness: a pathway to wellness

Dr. Nutan P. Jain, Professor, IIHMR University

Feeling lonely may be a common experience for many of us. Humans are “social” and wish to remain connected with others especially with those who are likeminded persons and/or communities. Social connectedness gives meaning to life. It is natural as well but at the same time lack of it becomes a serious concern. Keeping in view of the increasing number of people reporting loneliness, the public health experts consider it an epidemic. Loneliness may cause chronic illness in the future and may affect it in various ways. On the contrary, health conditions also play a vital role in loneliness.

If we take a spiritual or philosophical approach, every person has come into this world as a single entity. We come alone and will go alone. Why should we feel lonely? We need to explore meaning in loneliness and probably, people will enjoy.

Being alone is an opportunity. Even in very intimate relationships people will need their “own space”. Here, space means the physical or emotional protected zone for individuals' well-being. Asking for space does not mean anything wrong. Once you have your own space i.e., you are alone, devote time for introspection, exploring the eternal questions like “who am I” for personal growth.

Start by appreciating each of the body organs, how useful they are or if we do not have these functional organs, how life will be. This realization will take you away from feeling of loneliness and enjoy being along with functional organs. Similarly, be thankful to all the people, human beings, plants, material, and non-material things which co-exist in surroundings. These moments will make you forget loneliness and give a feeling of wellness.

D.L. Surkalim, M. Luo, R. Eres, K. Gebel, J. van Buskirk, A. Bauman, D. Ding

The prevalence of loneliness across 113 countries: systematic review and meta-analysis
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Carrasco, P.M., Crespo, D.P., García, A.I.R. et al. Predictive factors and risk and protection groups for loneliness in older adults: a population-based study. BMC Psychol 12, 238 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-01708-7>

ON A MISSION

Introducing one of its kind ENTRY LEVEL Master of Public Health (MPH) Program at IIHMR University

IIHMR University is known for its pioneering contributions in the field of Hospital Management and Public Health. Among its full-time degree programs, IIHMR University offers its flagship MBA Programs in Health and Hospital Management, Pharmaceutical Management, Development Management, Health Care Analytics and Master of Public Health in cooperation with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, USA. The institution delivers only the highest quality, competency based and contextual degree programs which are world class. The university also has the unique distinction of offering the Master of Public Health (Implementation Science) Program supported by full academic scholarships from WHO TDR. IIHMR University is one among the eight institutions globally selected for this unique program.

Based on the felt need for young, dynamic and competent public health professionals, IIHMR University has decided to introduce an exciting entry level Master of Public Health (MPH) program. The program is effective from the current Academic Session and will be a two-year full time on campus degree program. The aspirants for this program can be graduates from any discipline with a passion for public health. Fuelled by a robust competency-based curriculum, the program packs the punch of core public health disciplines mixed with extensive field exposure opportunities, which gives it an edge over the existing courses in the country.

The design gives the flexibility for the students to pursue a General MPH or a Specialized MPH in Implementation Science. The program is designed to deliver the foundational courses during the initial few months, which lets the students settle in and develop the public health approach, following which they are expected to undertake their Goal setting which their passion, interest and future dreams help them crystallize their career pathway in an advisor facilitated fashion to choose a generic MPH or MPH (IS) degree.

The program offers internship and capstone opportunities and a full-fledged practicum assignment for completion of the degree. The degree positions itself as the most comprehensively thought off degree program for entry level candidates aspiring to be public health professionals.

The students in this program will have the opportunity to learn alongside international students from Southeast Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean region who are selected for the scholarships offered by TDR through Postgraduate Training Scheme. If you have a flair for public health and are passionate to make a positive change in the health of not one but many at a time, this exciting program is a serious option for you.

Public Health Beckons...become a leader in shaping the healthy world of tomorrow!! Don't miss the opportunity to know more about this program. Visit the website on the link <https://iihmr.edu.in/program/master-of-public-health>



MPH (Implementation Science) Cohort 1, 2022-24, (WHO TDR Scholarship Grantees)

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With unwavering support, zeal and efforts from all of you, the Purple hues shall prevail!!

Dr Vinod Kumar SV

On Behalf of the PHRAME Team

Upcoming Issue

Upcoming issue of PHRAME will focus on Venomous Bites & Stings! PHRAME welcomes articles, reviews, updates, creative content including poems, thoughtful essays, sketches, cartoons, paintings related to the theme from interested readers.

You can submit content for publication to us on phrame@iihmr.edu.in

Contributors are requested to refer to guidelines for submissions to PHRAME on the following link:

<https://iihmr.edu.in/jaipur/guidelines-for-contributors>

Next on PHRAME Venomous Bites & Stings!





On the Cover

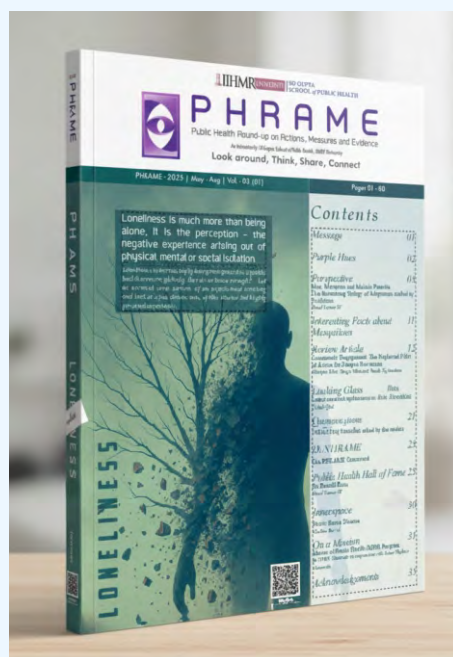
The Melancholy Green shatters you (Digital Art : Mr Puneet Sharma and Mr Ravi Bhardwaj)

Green hue of the picture is eerie, uncomfortable and creates a deep sense of agonizing isolation. This captures the feelings of the protagonist who looks onto the barren and stony landscape enveloped in a brownish dusty haze with a few dried shrubs to one side and the cloudy.

The emotional depth of loneliness can be felt in this thoughtful and symbolic imagery. The human figure is faceless and a mere shadow of oneself. The stillness amid a vast, empty space suggests being unnoticed, forgotten, and emotionally detached from the world. Loneliness shatters not only the mental state but takes a heavy toll on the body which can be seen disintegrating into pieces which bear semblance to stony fragments, representing emotional fragmentation, depersonalization, and the slow erosion of identity.

The dry leaves and fragments drifting away from the body evoke a sense of lost connections, broken relationships, and fading memories pieces of the self gradually dispersing into emptiness. The hazy, fog-like atmosphere and the cloudy skies create a feeling of uncertainty and internal confusion, with no clear path or horizon, underscoring the disorientation that often accompanies prolonged loneliness.

Together, the image powerfully captures the negative emotions perceived by the central figure and underscores the fact that loneliness is not just about being alone, it's about slowly losing oneself inside that emptiness.



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