

# Don't Be Alone

Humans are social animals and our genetic make-up predisposes us to want to seek the company of others. But like most genetic character traits, there appears to be a significant variation in how much individuals desire to be social. Some people say they can't stand to be alone for even a few hours. Others say they prefer to be alone much of the time. But despite the variation in the desire for social contact, from a psychological perspective, social isolation can be a big problem, particularly during times of emotional stress. Ideally, people should have at least several close friends, as well as a group of people that makes them feel they are connected to a community. A close-knit family, of course, is also important.

If you find yourself being alone much of the time—even if it “feels” okay to you—you should consider increasing your social contact. Take a look at the social activities listed below. When you get up each morning, think about at least one social activity you can do each day. Note: Internet-based social activities are helpful, but they do not replace real life contact with people.

## Social Activities Checklist

(Choose at least one to do each day)

- Have dinner with a friend.
- Attend a Meetup (go to Meetup.com for groups in your area).
- Take a walk with a friend.
- Attend a community service group (Rotary Club, Kiwanis, and so on).
- Reconnect with friends and family. List two or three people that come to mind:  
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- Attend a spiritual or religious group.
- Go on a nature related activity (e.g. hiking, bird watching, travel).
- Attend a hobby or craft related group (e.g. knitting, photography, etc)/
- Attend a course.
- Attend a community, or political meeting.
- Attend a support group.
- Volunteer at a hospital or other non-profit organization.

Other social activities you can try:

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