

live:kind

Kindness to people living alone

Being lonely or living alone is worse for your health than smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

1. Pray for those you know who are living alone, whatever their circumstances.
2. 'Adopt' a few singles and invite them to your home regularly for bread, soup and laughter. Play fun games, watch a good movie, or just get to know each other better.
3. Cook food for enough for an extra person. Pack it in take away dishes or freezer boxes. When you have a few prepared meals, take them to an elderly person so they can defrost a good dinner when they don't feel like cooking.
4. Once a month, invite a person living alone to have a meal or a snack with you. They will be happy with simple food. The important thing is being together. Meet in a café if that's more convenient.
5. Call a relative who is living alone. Listen to their stories.
6. Invite any students at your church to come to your home for a simple meal and time together. Your home can be a haven for them. They don't mind what it looks like. Your warm welcome is the most important gift.
7. Invite someone you know who has come from another country and is living here all alone. It can be very challenging to live and work or study in a strange country. Get to know them, learn about their culture, help them to understand yours.
8. Life can be burdensome for people living alone because they feel like they have to do everything by themselves because there is no one to help. Ask if you can help them to tackle a big job, like decorating a room, or tidying their garden.
9. Visit your neighbours and find out who is living alone. Let them know that they can call on you if they ever need a hand. Give them your phone number. Pop by regularly to check on them so that they know you care.
10. Hold a 'coffee morning' in your home and invite people living alone to get together.
11. Look out for single parents. They need extra support. Be available to lend out when they need a hand. Offer babysitting, decorating and car maintenance.

12. Think about starting a toddler group in your church. This is a social group for young parents and their children. It is a great way to counteract loneliness because even parents with partners can feel alone when they are at home with children. One of the best times to reach young families is when they have babies. If you want to know how, you can find lots of information at <https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/faith-in-the-family/playtime>

13. Start a community breakfast in your church. Charge a very small amount and serve a buffet breakfast. Make friends with the people who come along.

14. Start a breakfast meeting that moves from café to café in your area. Choose large cafés and check that they are willing to host the event. Advertise the event on social media and encourage people to come along and meet new people. Each person pays for their own meal. Encourage conversations by placing several interesting questions on each table.

15. Offer to accompany a person living alone to a medical appointment or other meeting that they might find intimidating.

16. Invite people living alone to travel with you on a car journey, perhaps to a work appointment. Get to know them as you travel. They can have a few hours to explore a new place whilst you are at your meeting.

17. Start a knitting club, or other activity-focussed group, and advertise it locally. Emphasize that people can come as complete beginners and learn a new skill together. Lots of friendly chatter often happens when people come together, and they can form friendships that can continue to flourish outside of the group.

18. Invite people living alone to join you, or a group of people, in a project that helps others. People living alone may have less opportunities to be kind to others. Being involved in kindness to others will bless their life too.

19. Take a small bunch of flowers to a person living alone or leave it on their doorstep. Each time they see the flowers in a vase it will remind them that someone else thinks about them and cares for them.

20. Invite a person living alone to join you for a short walk in a lovely place. Some people feel unsafe walking alone, and your company will bring them safety and joy.

21. Find out about people who might be isolated, such as a missionary family, or someone in prison, and start sending them letters.

22. Discover the birthday of someone living alone and plan a surprise for them. Send them a card or make a small cake for them.

23. Make sure you listen to the story of a lonely person. Empathise with their feelings and show that you understand and care.