



# Love Over Loneliness Suicide Prevention Week



**Loneliness and isolation pose significant risks to our health and well-being.** Loneliness is a quiet struggle that can lead to deep emotional pain. When someone feels very lonely, they may also feel hopeless and depressed. Even people who have not had mental health issues may experience suicidal thoughts and actions due to loneliness.

Being alone and feeling lonely are not the same. A person who spends time alone might be happy being by themselves. Someone else could have lots of friends, but still feel lonely. Loneliness comes from feeling like your needs for connection are not being met.

Many people feel disconnected right now. The US Surgeon General reports that the US has a “loneliness epidemic.” But he also says we can overcome this challenge by “strengthening our connections and relationships. Our individual relationships are an untapped resource—a source of healing hiding in plain sight.”

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## What is the remedy for the “loneliness epidemic?” And how can we lower Californians’ risk for suicide?

The answer is social connection. Interaction. Sharing love.

**Did you know that our brains release chemicals vital to our health and well-being when we feel a connection with another person, such as a family member, friend, or romantic partner? Petting a dog or receiving a high five from a friend can also work.**



We can make a big difference for our community simply by recognizing when someone is lonely and reaching out to them. Simple acts of kindness or a conversation can be the turning point for someone who’s feeling alone.

During Suicide Prevention Week, let’s focus on spreading “Love Over Loneliness.” By building strong connections and supporting each other, we can make others feel valued and cared for. Reach out to those who may be struggling. Let them know they are not alone. Consider asking them to go for a walk or get coffee, or just catch up over the phone.

**Together, we can help prevent suicide with the power of love and connection.**