

## 5.5 Life Stories Loneliness and isolation

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What	Loneliness and isolation
Purpose	To help students understand the experience of loneliness and isolation among LGBT+ older people.
Target group	Teachers and trainers in vocational education and their students
Level	Level 2-3-4 in vocational education.
Execution	Extra support from the teacher might be necessary depending on the ability of the students to work independently
Sources:	<a href="#">Visible lives: Identifying the experiences and needs of older Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people in Ireland.</a> <a href="#">Lesbian, Gay &amp; Bisexual People in Later Life.</a> <a href="#">All the Lonely People: Loneliness in Later Life</a> <a href="#">The missing million: A practical guide to talking identifying and talking about loneliness.</a> <a href="#">Alone in the crowd: loneliness and diversity</a>

### Introduction

Loneliness is a negative feeling people experience when the relationships they have do not match up to those they would like to have. When this feeling persists it can have a negative impact on well-being and quality of life (Age UK, 2018). According to Stonewall UK (2011), LGBT+ older people are more likely to be single, live alone, and have lower levels of contact with relatives which makes them more vulnerable to loneliness. In addition, LGBT+ older people are less likely to engage with local services as they believe that they do not understand their needs (Stonewall UK, 2011). In addition according to Higgins (2011) LGBT+ older people can sometimes face social exclusion and lack of community involvement because organisations can sometimes be perceived as heteronormative and LGBT friendly organisations can often be youth orientated.

### Activity 1

Individually or in groups, take some time to think about why LGBT+ older people may be more vulnerable to loneliness than other older people.

### Activity 2

Watch the following [video](#) about learning to cope with loneliness as an LGBT+ older person. As an LGBT+ older person, what are Peter's fears about ageing and what is some of the advice he offers to other LGBT+ older people?

### Activity 3

Download the [report](#) 'Alone in the crowd: loneliness and diversity' and read chapter 4 **Going back in: Loneliness and its impact for older lesbian, gay and bisexual people**. What is your understanding of families of choice following engagement with activity 2 and 3?

### Activity 4

Download the report: [THE MISSING MILLION: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO IDENTIFYING AND TALKING ABOUT LONELINESS](#) written by the Campaign to end loneliness. Read the chapter about how to engage with lonely older people. How can you use some of the principles here with LGBT+ older people?

### Activity 5

Watch the following short films where [Cat](#) and [Annabelle](#) talk about their experiences of ageing as trans women. What is the central message communicated by both videos?

### Keep on Learning

- Read the following [case study](#): Combating loneliness amongst older LGBT people: a case study of the Sage project in Leeds (United Kingdom)