

Read each statement, and place a mark along the axis according to your response. Then flip and continue.

Not at allNot so muchA bitYes, quiteYes, absolutely

I HAVE PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR ME AND LOVE ME

Not at allNot so muchA bitYes, quiteYes, absolutely

I HAVE PEOPLE I CARE FOR AND THAT I LOVE

Not at allNot so muchA bitYes, quiteYes, absolutely

I HAVE SOME PEOPLE I CAN CALL OR SEE WHEN I'M NOT DOING OK

Not at allNot so muchA bitYes, quiteYes, absolutely

I HAVE REGULAR CONTACTS WITH FRIENDS AND/OR FAMILY

Not at allNot so muchA bitYes, quiteYes, absolutely

ON A DAILY BASIS, I HAVE MANY CONTACTS WITH PEOPLE (WORK, MESSAGING, CALLS, SHOPPING, ETC.)

Not at allNot so muchA bitYes, quiteYes, absolutely

I HAVE SOME FRIENDS OR FAMILY REGULARLY COMING OVER AT MY PLACE

Not at allNot so muchA bitYes, quiteYes, absolutely

I REGULARLY GO OUT TO SOCIAL GATHERINGS/EVENTS/CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Not at allNot so muchA bitYes, quiteYes, absolutely

I'M SOMEONE EASY TO TALK TO AND GET ALONG WITH

Not at allNot so muchA bitYes, quiteYes, absolutely

I AM RARELY TOTALLY ALONE WITH NO CONTACT WHATSOEVER (NOT EVEN THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA/MESSAGING)

Not at allNot so muchA bitYes, quiteYes, absolutely

I AM SATISFIED AND HAPPY WITH MY SOCIAL LIFE

Not at allNot so muchA bitYes, quiteYes, absolutely

Well done, you have completed the test! Now to see the results, count how many marks do you have in each five areas (dotted lines), then flip and unfold the page to discover the results.

A

B

C

D

E

HOW SOCIAL ARE YOU?

Results

If you have a majority of marks in the A & B areas:

You might be going through a tough time, and it's okay not to want to socialize. But, sometimes, we don't even realize how isolated we've become until it starts to weigh on us. You are possibly at risk of isolation and you should not ignore it. Generally speaking, you suffer, even if you don't necessarily experience it this way, from a lack of social relations, in terms of quantity and/or of quality. Maybe both. Quantity is the number and intensity of relations. In your case, you may suffer from too few relations, too few occasions to socialize. Quality is the value of those relations. Quality is about care, love, authentic relations. About people you can count on, who are there for you if you need. Some people may have many friends (or family) but very little that really matter or mean something (deep connection). Others will only have 1 or 2 closed relations but then are very subject to isolation if they lose that unique relation (for example the death of a lover). Isolation is a hard burden. And sorrow is not fun. Don't be ashamed of asking for help. Dare to call your old friend, or family. If you don't have the courage, then talk to your neighbour. Or to a public service agent. Or a local association. They're many people out there who may help. And make you smile and laugh. Don't let yourself down, you matter.

If you have a majority of marks in the C area:

Your social life is not great but it's ok. You're not alone, with no one to talk to or see. But, clearly, you're not super social either. You could consider connecting a little more with others. Going out a bit more maybe, or inviting people over to your place for example? Don't forget to get news from the people you love. Sometimes, we forget, we're all busy with our daily lives, and we forget to ask for news, or to create the occasions to meet and see each other. Sometimes, months and years pass by without noticing. Then we realize how much time has passed, and how much a shame it's been not to benefit from those relations.

If you have a majority of marks in the D & E areas:

You are socially connected. You have people around you. They are precious. Keep them around you, keep taking news of them. Keep caring for them. They make you happy, they give you joy and comfort. Even if sometimes there might be disagreements. Life can be hard, and being able to count on others is reassuring. But relations are not permanent, they need to be nurtured, taken care of. So keep contact, keep seeing friends or family. Keep creating occasions. And most of all, try to keep an eye on those around you that you feel might be getting isolated... slowly, seamlessly withdrawing, or being forgotten. You can prevent them from falling into isolation.

About social isolation

'High-quality social connections are essential to our mental and physical health and our well-being. Social isolation and loneliness are important, yet neglected, social determinants for people of all ages – including older people.'

Social isolation and loneliness are widespread, with an estimated 1 in 4 older people experiencing social isolation and between 5 and 15 per cent of adolescents experiencing loneliness. A large body of research shows that social isolation and loneliness have a serious impact on physical and mental health, quality of life, and longevity. The effect of social isolation and loneliness on mortality is comparable to that of other well-established risk factors such as smoking, obesity, and physical inactivity.

Social isolation and loneliness are increasingly being recognised as a priority public health problem and policy issue across all age groups. During the course of the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030), the Demographic Change and Healthy Ageing Unit will be addressing social isolation and loneliness as one of the themes that cuts across the four main action areas of the Decade.'

The World Health Organization

This tool is experimental. It has been developed by Christophe Gouache, Lead Expert of the Breaking Isolation URBACT network, as a prototype. It is meant to be tested, revised, improved, modified.

