Supporting Young People to Take Charge of Their Mental Health

Loneliness

What is loneliness?

Feeling lonely isn't in itself a mental health problem, but the two are strongly linked. Having a mental health problem increases your chance of feeling lonely, and feeling lonely can have a negative impact on your mental health.

Being alone is not the same as feeling lonely, and there is nothing wrong with being on your own if you are comfortable with it! At the same time, human beings are deeply relational and belong in community. There is nothing wrong with being on your own but for an improved mental well-being, some sort of balance needs to be achieved. What this balance may be, is likely to be unique to each person.

Loneliness isn't just for the elderly, many young people feel alone and this has been increasing, especially during the pandemic. This stigma leads many young people to feel even more isolated and alone when feeling loneliness.

People usually describe feeling lonely for one of two reasons:

- They simply don't see or talk to anyone very often

- Even though they are surrounded by people, they don't feel understood, heard, or cared for

Ways to cope with loneliness:

- Learn and practice self-love

- Express how you are feeling – this could be by talking to someone, seeking support, writing it out in a journal, speaking out loud to yourself

- Discover / follow your passion - join a club, volunteer, learn a new skill, explore your local area