

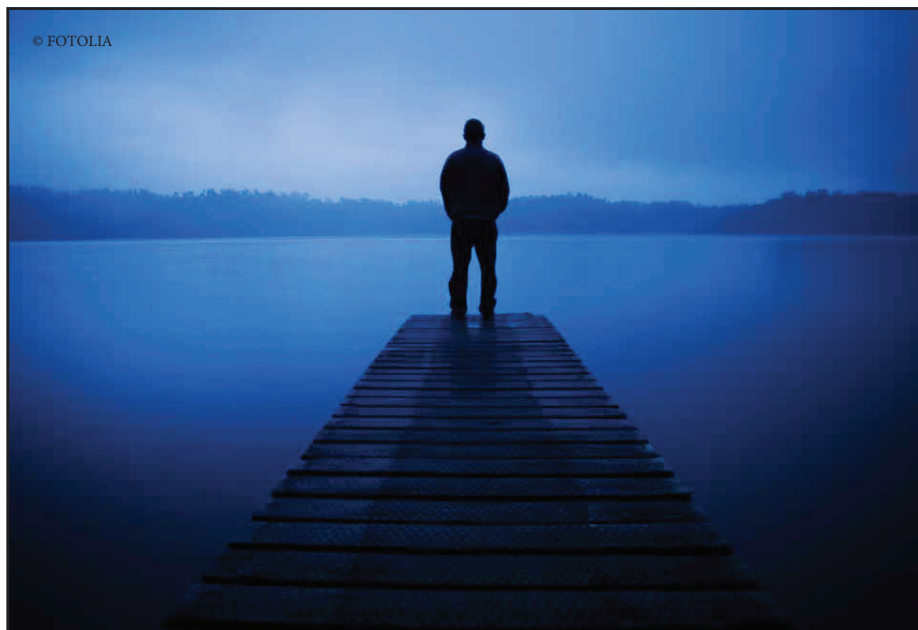
Dealing with the Blues

We've all had a bad day. It's how we bounce back from negative experiences that helps us move forward and achieve our life goals. And the key to bouncing back is having a strong support group around us.

People who are lonely have more physical and mental health problems than those who feel connected to others, according to a new report in Psychological Science.

The report details the importance of creating and maintaining positive relationships in the workplace, family and other social circles.

Without people to interact with and vent to, we can become even more inclusive and shut ourselves out to the external world. This behavior has been proven to be harmful to our confidence levels and abilities to cope with negative situations.



THE SCIENCE BEHIND LONELINESS

Scientific research shows the positive impact that strong social lives can have on our overall health. One Colorado State University study found that the more positive social interactions people with depression had, the more improvement in the symptoms they experienced.

Other research in

the journal Health Psychology has shown that you'll eat less healthful food if you frequently eat by yourself, and you are more likely to be physically inactive the lonelier you feel.

MAKE NEW FRIENDS

Your community is likely ripe with opportunities to meet new people and build new relationships. Try vis-

iting local businesses to establish rapport with business owners and workers.

Even if you don't actually interact with these types of connections on a daily basis, the conversation and camaraderie can be enough to make you feel more comfortable in other social situations.

Other ideas for making new connections include joining a professional association, enrolling in a cooking class at your local community college or signing up for a gym membership.

You will find like-minded people, leading to common ground and easy, comfortable conversations.