



A Resource Center for Today's Case Manager

# How Can Social Connection and Community Impact the Health of Our Clients?

*A close look at how loneliness and isolation effects overall health*

---



**Julianne Holt-Lunstad, PhD**  
Professor of psychology and neuroscience  
and director of the Social Connection &  
Health Lab at Brigham Young University



**MaryBeth Kurland, MPA, CAE, ICE-CCP**  
CEO, Commission for Case Manager  
Certification

# CM Learning network<sup>®</sup>

A Resource Center for Today's Case Manager

## Agenda

---

- Welcome and Introductions:
  - Commission for Case Manager Certification
- Presentation:
  - Julianne Holt-Lunstad, Ph.D.,  
Professor of psychology and neuroscience and  
director of the Social Connection & Health Lab  
at Brigham Young University

# CM Learning network<sup>®</sup>

A Resource Center for Today's Case Manager

## Exam Prep Resources

---



Quiz App



Practice Exam



Glossary App



Certification 360  
Virtual Workshops



Printable  
Glossary



Exam Prep  
References



8-Week  
Prep Circuit

# CM Learning network<sup>®</sup>

A Resource Center for Today's Case Manager

**If you're watching this webinar and do not need CE credit, please take a moment to fill out this survey.**

**<https://bit.ly/CCMCWebinarLoneliness>**

Your feedback helps us provide speakers and topics most relevant to you and the important work you do!



# CM Learning network<sup>®</sup>

A Resource Center for Today's Case Manager

FIND A CCM CCM VERIFICATION JOBS MEDIA CONTACT

LOG IN



Commission for Case Manager Certification



SEARCH



About CCMC

Get Certified

Stay Certified

Develop Others

Workforce Development

## Workforce Development

The case manager's role as patient-centered guide and hub for the care team is more significant than ever. We need a knowledgeable case manager workforce ready to adapt and lead.

The Commission's Case Manager Role & Function Study ties the latest practice demands and knowledge requirements to the Certified Case Manager credential. As the delivery system transforms and we focus on management of populations across the community, the Commission will continue to offer patients, employers, payers and providers access to a trained and prepared case manager workforce. We are seeking Champions of Case Management to drive and encourage certification as a career pathway.

The Commission provides professional development resources, delivered face-to-face, online and for self-learning, to help meet the demand for highly trained, competent case managers.

### FAST FACTS



Who is Today's CCM?

- 96% are women, average age 54
- 80% have bachelor's degree or higher, with this figure increasing
- 24% are in executive or management roles



A Resource Center for Today's Case Manager

## Learning Outcomes

---

After this presentation, the successful participant will be able to:

**Define social connection and community and explain their significance in relation to clients' health.**

**Identify the physical, mental, and emotional impacts of loneliness and isolation on overall health.**

**Analyze the factors contributing to loneliness and isolation in different populations.**

**Explore strategies to foster social connections and build supportive communities for improving client health outcomes.**



A Resource Center for Today's Case Manager

## How Can Social Connection and Community Impact the Health of Our Clients?

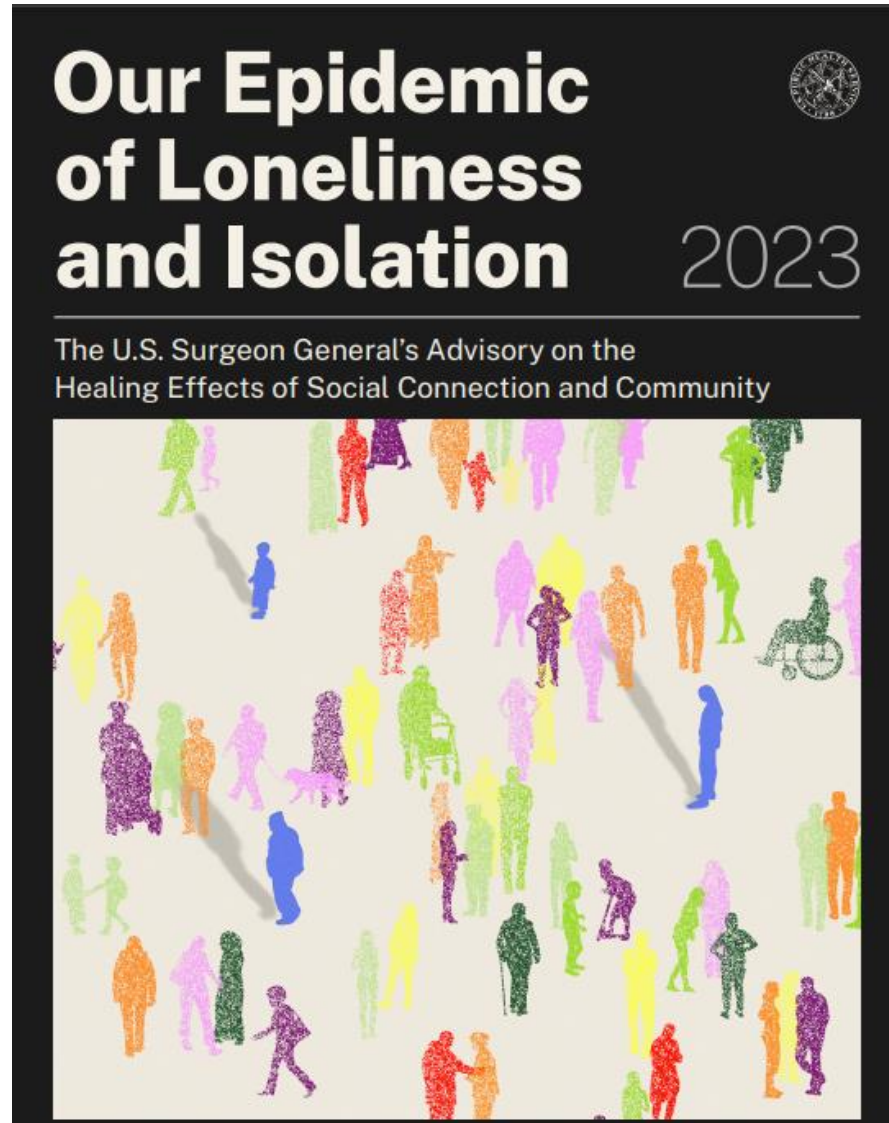
---



**MaryBeth Kurland, MPA, CAE, ICE-CCP**  
**CEO**  
**Commission for Case Manager**  
**Certification**



# How Loneliness and Isolation Effects Overall Health

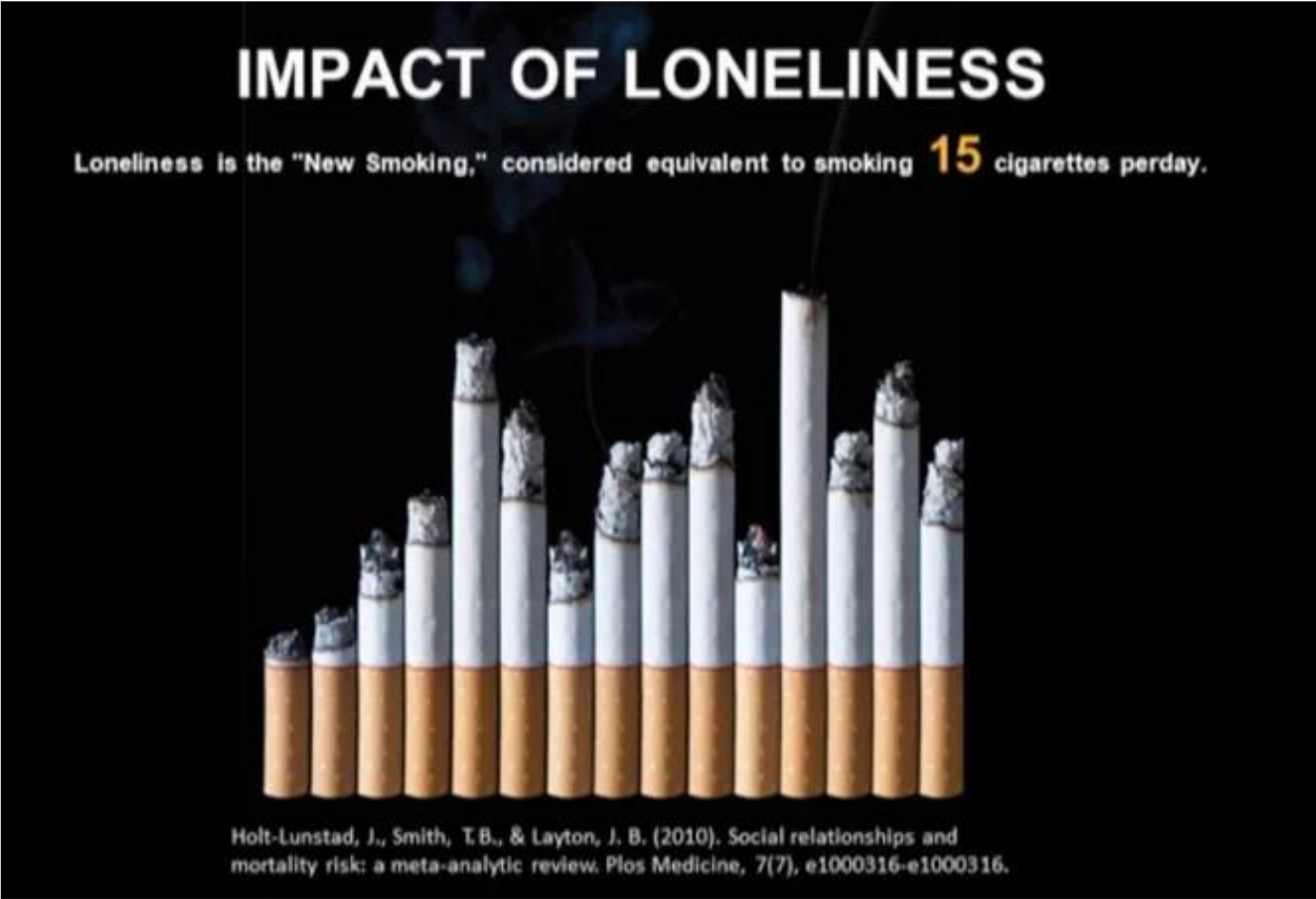


- Being socially connected not only enhances our emotional well-being but also has profound impacts on our physical health.
- Weak social ties face increase the risk of heart disease by 29%, and the risk of experiencing a stroke by 32%<sup>1</sup>.

1. General USPHSO of the S. Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community. [archive.hshsl.umaryland.edu](https://archive.hshsl.umaryland.edu). Published May 3, 2023. Accessed September 15, 2023. <https://archive.hshsl.umaryland.edu/handle/10713/20582>



# How Loneliness and Isolation Effects Overall Health



# CM Learning network<sup>®</sup>

A Resource Center for Today's Case Manager

## How can Social Connection and Community Impact the Health of Our Clients?

---



**Julianne Holt-Lunstad, PhD**  
**Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience**  
**Director of the Social Connection & Health Lab**  
**Brigham Young University**



# **How Can Social Connection and Community Impact the Health of Our Clients?**

A close look at how loneliness and isolation effects overall health

Julianne Holt-Lunstad, PhD

CCMC

---

# Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation



2023

## The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community



We are called to build a movement that will take all of us—individuals and health care and public health systems, governments, faith organizations, and communities—to destigmatize loneliness and change the culture. It will require reimagining the structure of a community to best support the diverse needs of all.

Each of us can start now, in our own lives, by strengthening our connections and relationships. Our relationships are an untapped resource—a source of healing and support that can help us live healthier, more productive lives. Answer that phone call from a friend, reach out to a neighbor without the distraction of your phone, and be yourself authentically. The keys to living a meaningful life are extraordinarily powerful.

Each of us can start now, in our own lives, by strengthening our connections and relationships.

Loneliness and isolation represent a significant barrier to well-being. But we have the power to change this. Every day to strengthen our relationships and efforts to rebuild social connections together. We can build lives and communities that are happier. And we can ensure our children and grandchildren have more than ever to take on the challenges of the future.

Our future depends on what we do today.

Vivek H. Murthy, M.D., M.B.A.  
10th and 21st Surgeon General of the United States  
Vice Admiral, United States Public Health Service

### Why It Matters

Loneliness, family, friends, and community are some of what create a sense of belonging. In neighborhoods, digital technology, and social connections—our relationships are a critical contributor to community safety, health, and well-being. In many ways, loneliness is a barrier to good health.

Although it is often illustrated as a lack of social connection, social isolation is objectively defined as a state of being without the social connections or support that most people have. It is a state of being that is often associated with loneliness or unmet needs.

Individual health and well-being are affected by social connection. Research shows that social connection can increase life expectancy, reduce the risk of heart disease, and decrease the risk of depression and anxiety.

Economic costs to individuals, including lost productivity, are estimated to be \$154 billion annually, largely due to the impact of loneliness. Moreover, beyond direct costs, loneliness is associated with lower academic achievement in the U.S., stress-related health problems, and other important social determinants of health, including (but not limited to) mental health, substance use, and safety risks.

Why does social connection matter? Social connection is essential for survival. Access to food, water, and shelter has been crucial to survival throughout human history. We are biologically wired for social connection. Living in isolation, without the support of others, significantly reduces one's chances of survival. Without engaging with others, our biological need for social connection is not met.

Loneliness and isolation are a critical public health issue. A study found that when asked if they were socially isolated, only 39% of adults said no. An important indicator of social connection is the proportion of Americans who are socially isolated, which is approximately half of the highest rates among countries. Research also indicates that loneliness is a major health issue, associated with a 29% increased risk of premature death, a 14.7% increased risk of depression, and a 32% increased risk for anxiety. Social connection may be one of the most important factors that can improve health and well-being.



# Our relationships are essential to our health and well-being.

Learn more at:  
[surgeongeneral.gov/loneliness](https://surgeongeneral.gov/loneliness)



Office of the  
U.S. Surgeon General

## Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation

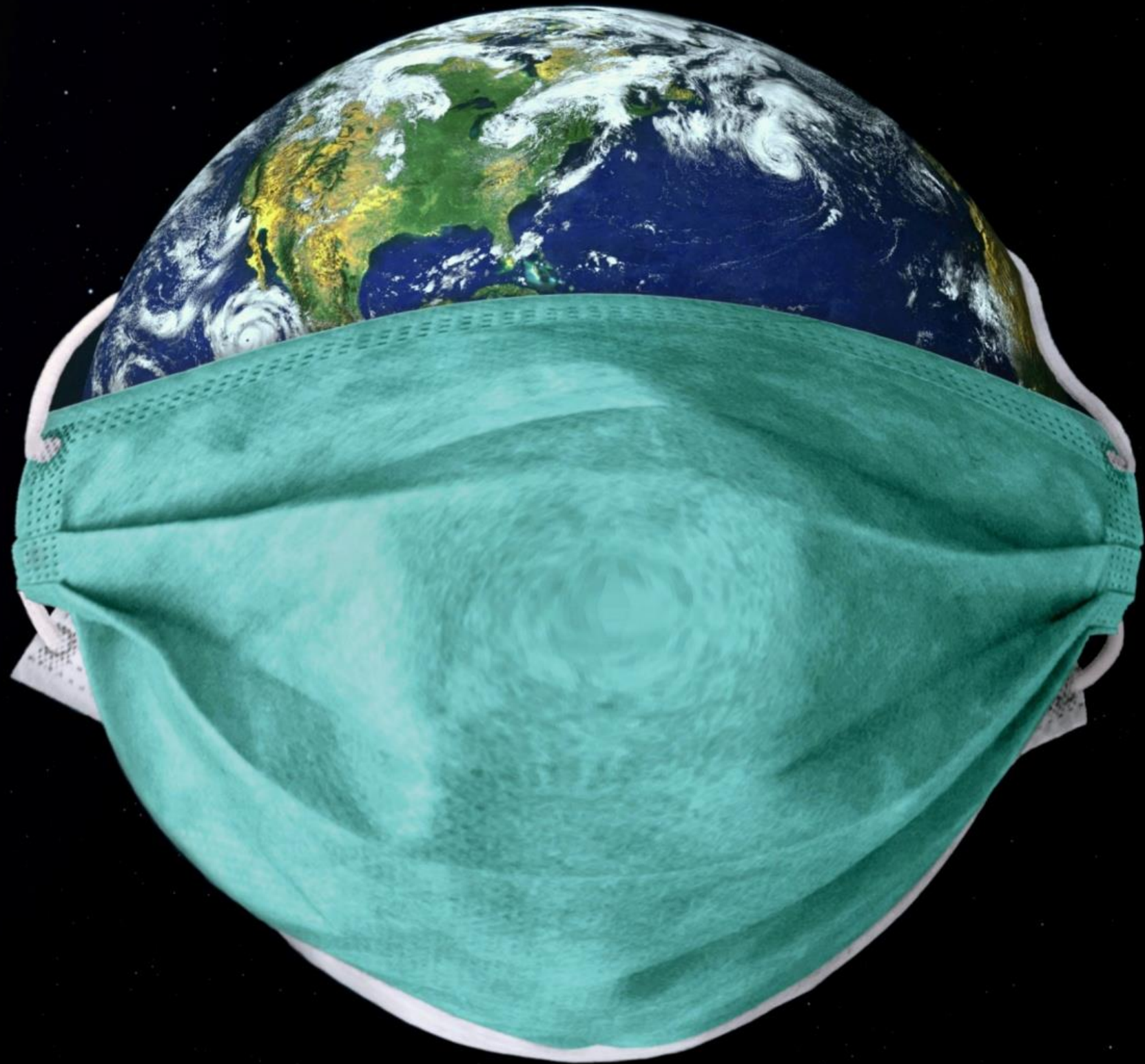


2023

The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the  
Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community







# The Importance of Social Connection

Social Connection is a critical and underappreciated contributor to individual and population health, well-being, community safety, resilience, and prosperity.



**Health**



**Happiness**



**Longevity**

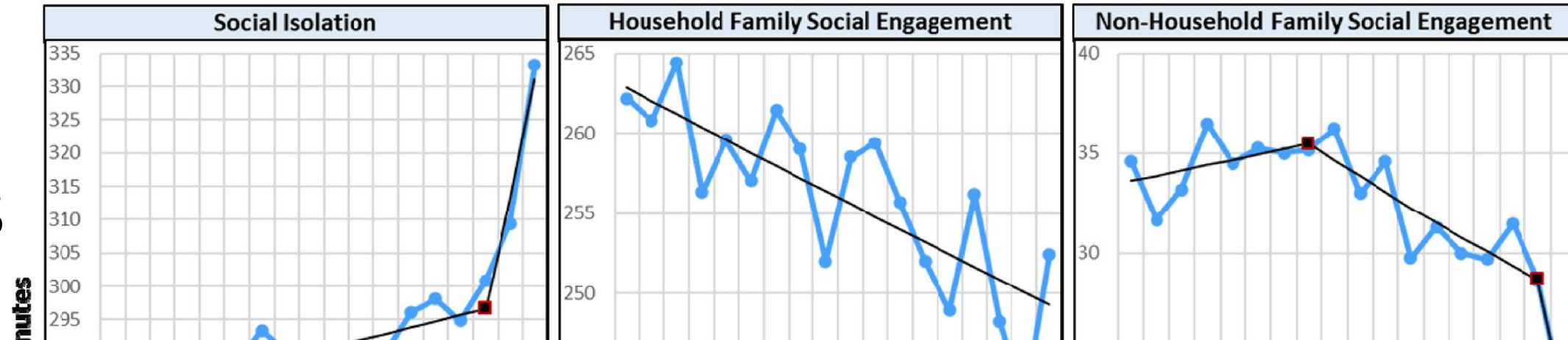


**Economic Prosperity**

People who have strong social connections are happier, healthier, and live longer than those who don't.



# Current Trends



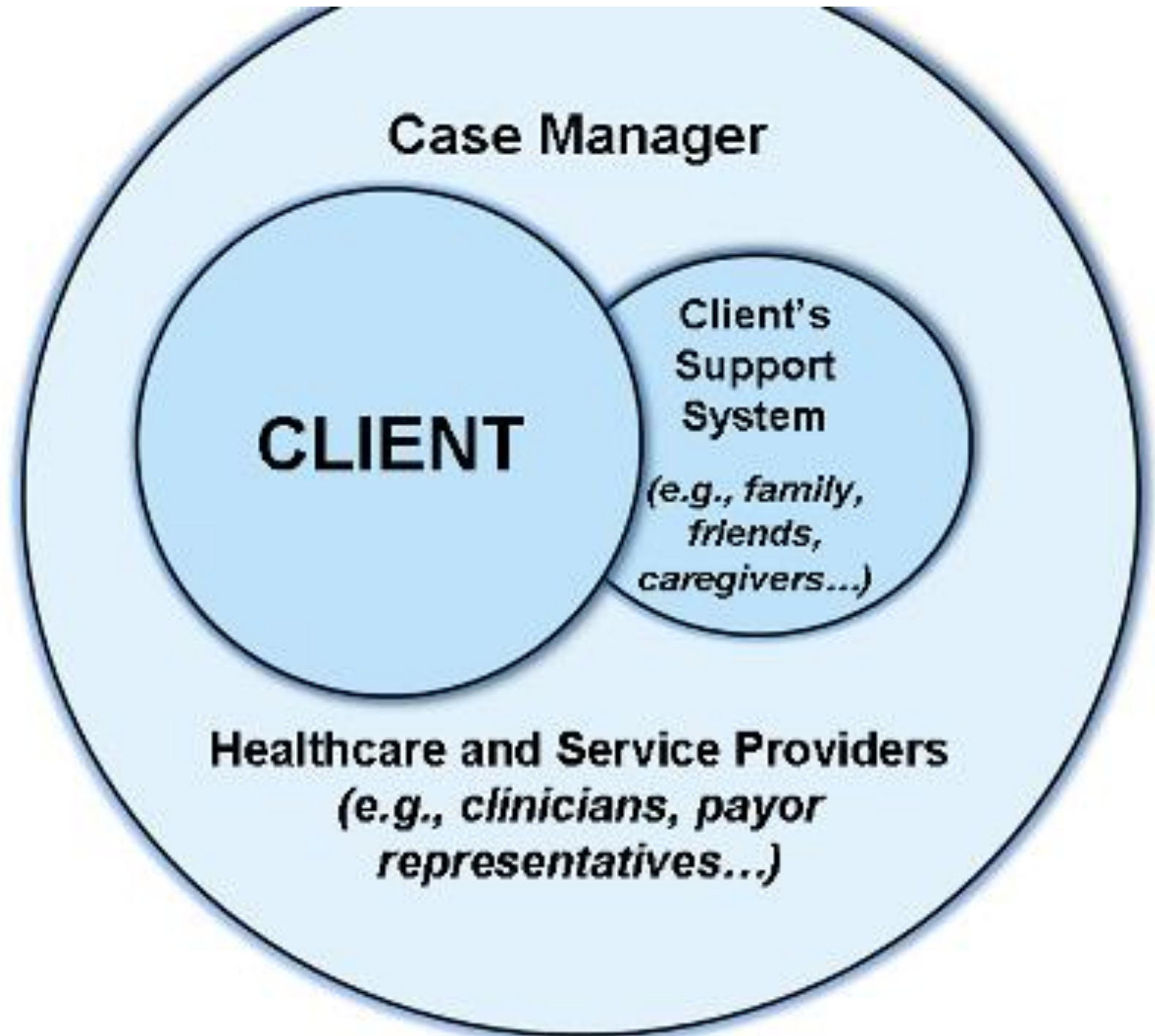
About **1 in 2** American adults report experiencing loneliness.

# Relevance to Case Managers:

The Connection to Quality and Patient Empowerment

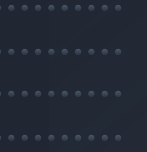
# Connection to Key Aspects of Case Management

(e.g., Advocacy,  
Coordination,  
Empowerment)



# DEFINING THE ISSUE

TERMINOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF HEALTH CARE AND  
CASE MANAGEMENT







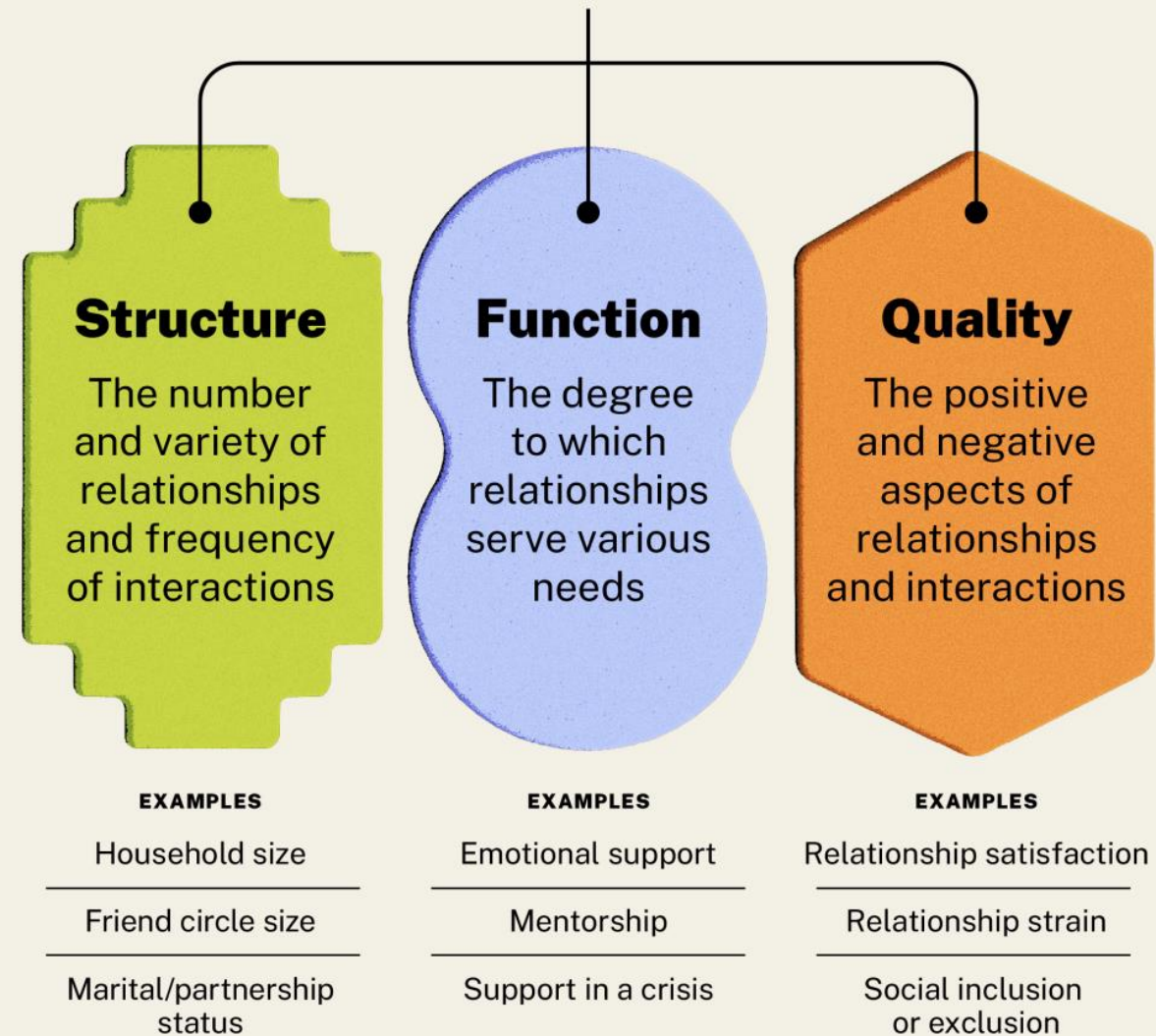
- **Social Isolation:** Is objectively being alone, having few relationships, or infrequent social contact.
- **Loneliness:** Is subjectively feeling alone. The discrepancy between one's desired level of connection and one's actual level.
- **Social Connection:** An umbrella term that encompasses the structural, functional, and quality aspects of social relationships

# All important

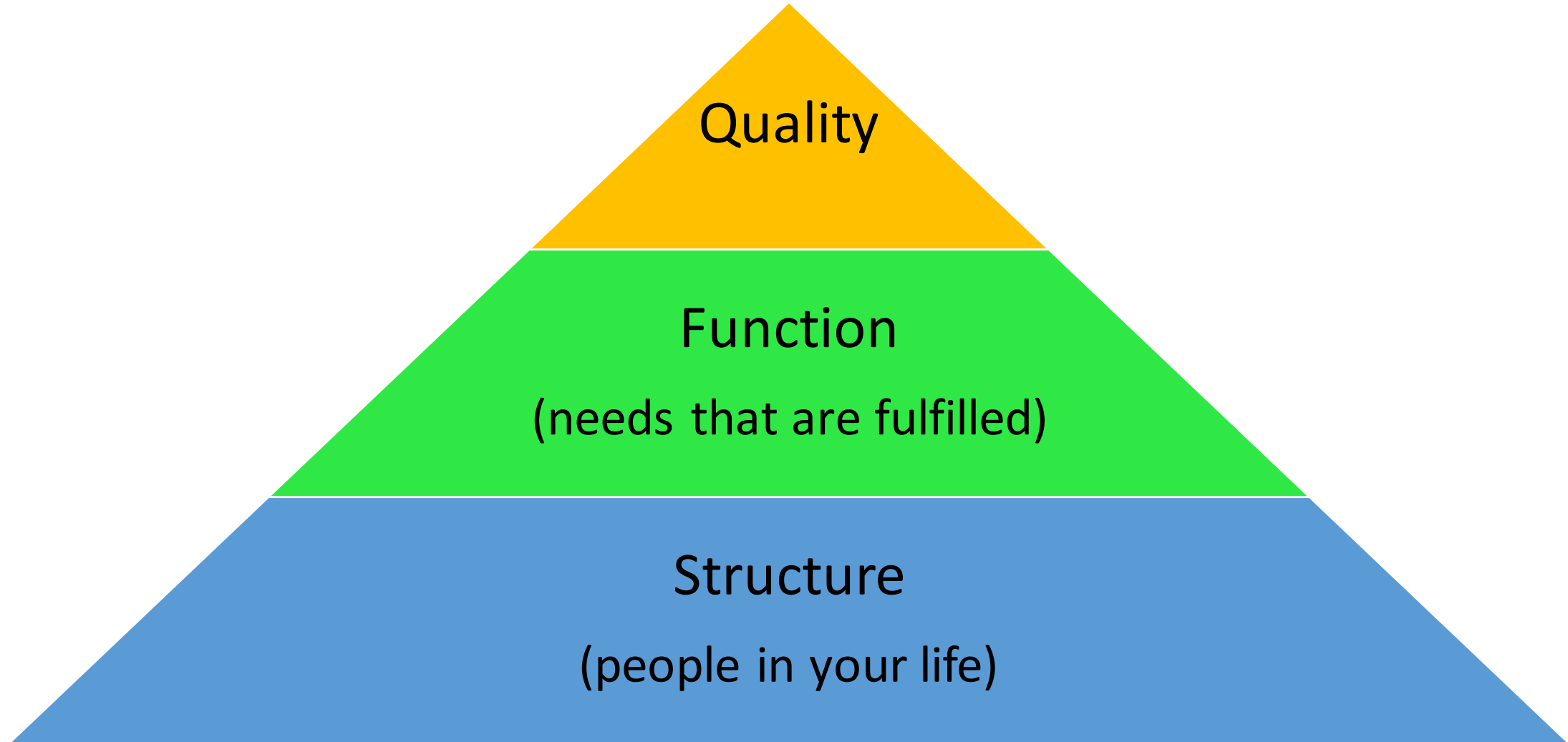
- Each component on a continuum
- Loneliness and isolation are examples of low social connection

## The Three Vital Components of Social Connection

The extent to which an individual is socially connected depends on multiple factors, including:



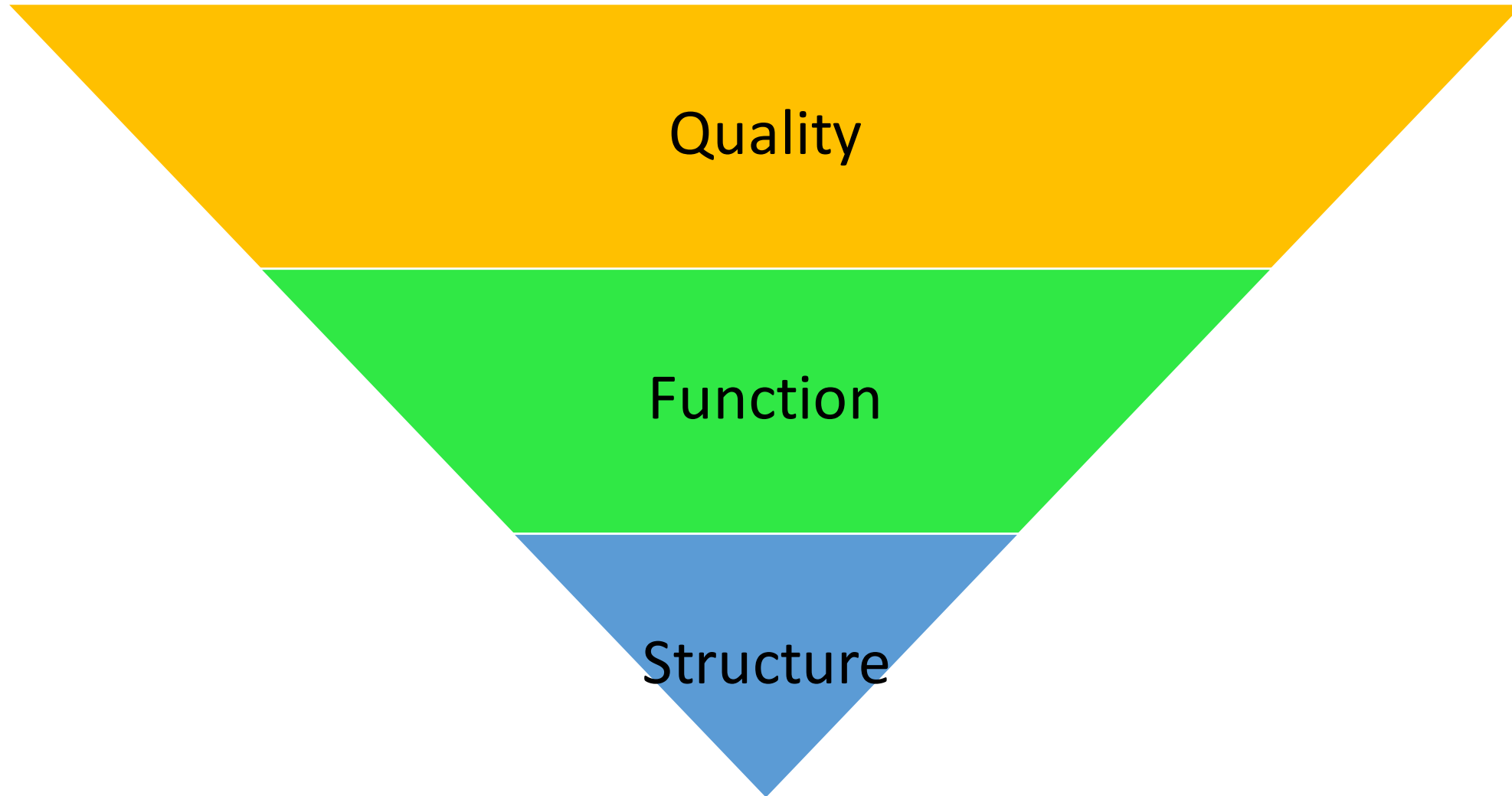
# Social Connection



Example: Wide social foundation to draw upon for needs

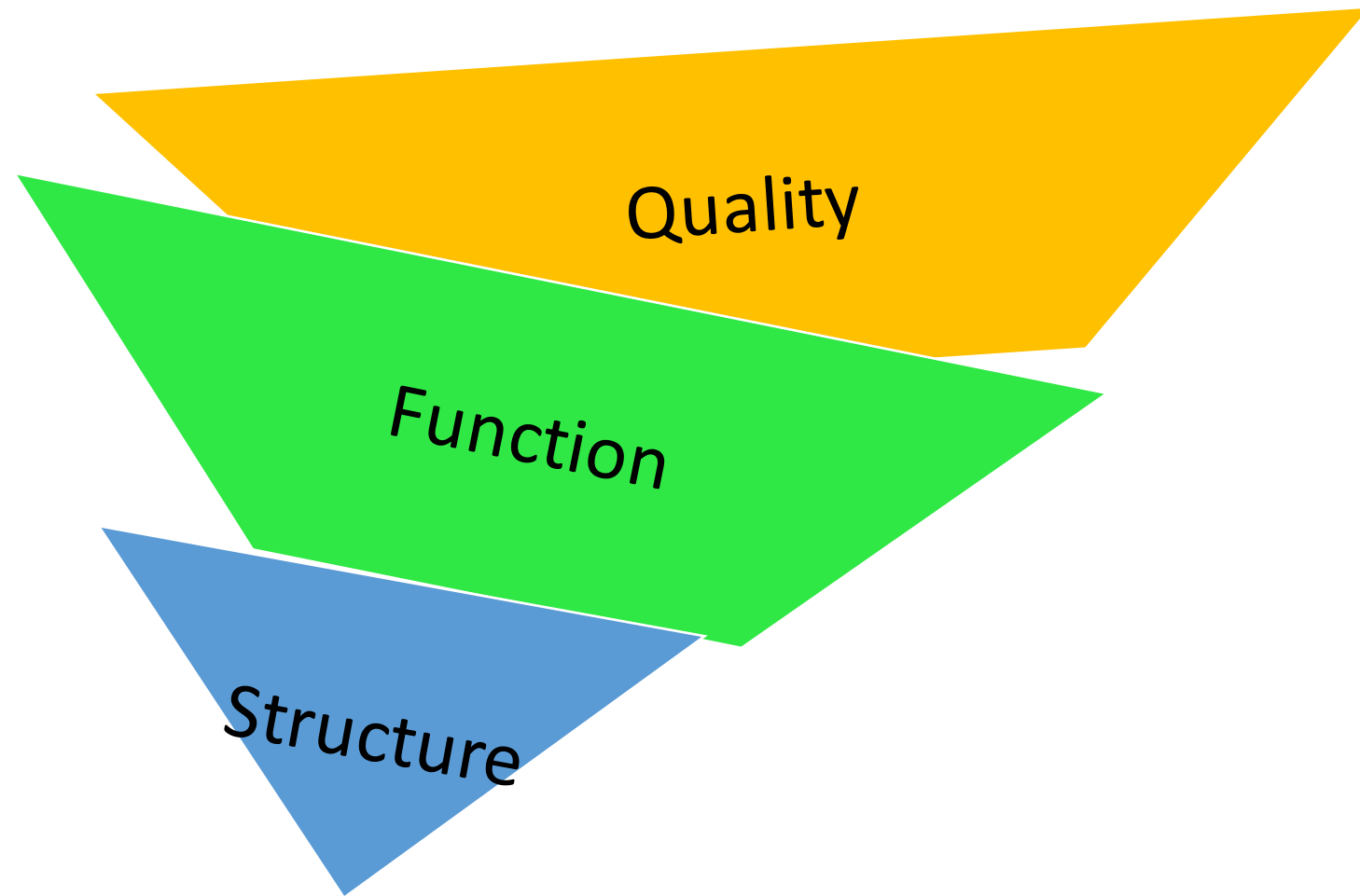


# Social Connection



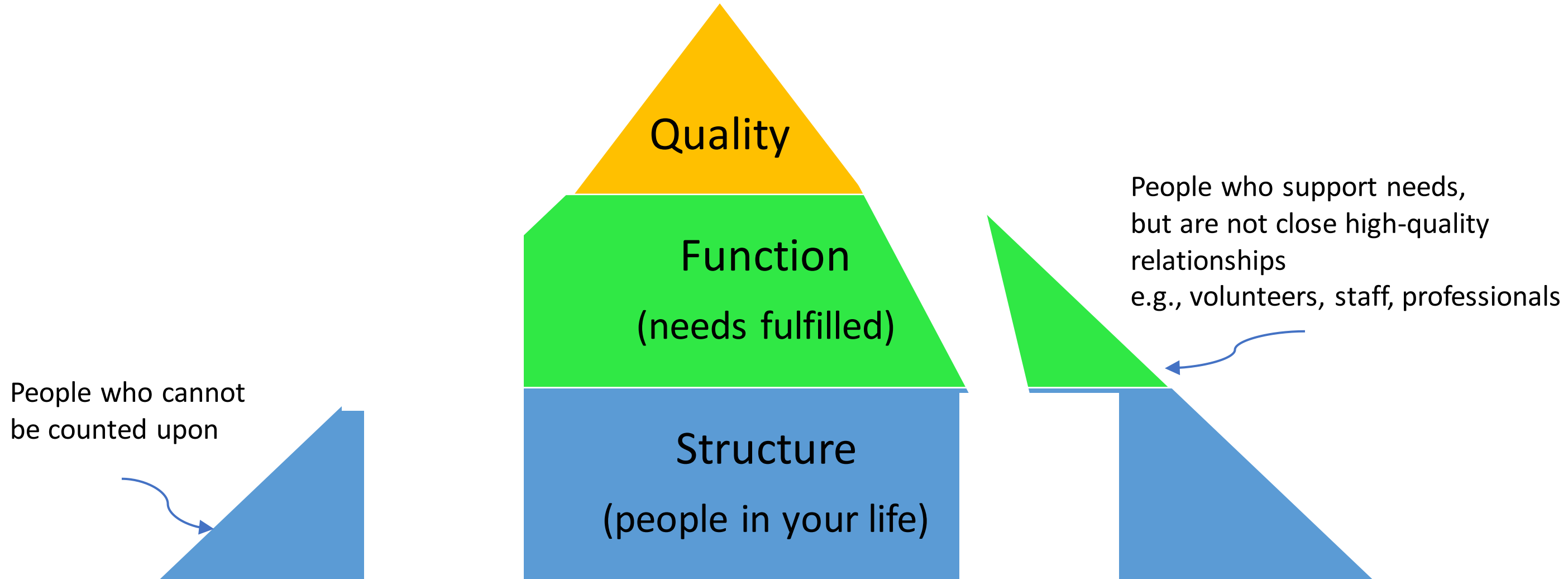
Example: Someone who may be thriving but foundation may be vulnerable

# Social Connection



Example: A vulnerable social foundation can threaten access to other components

# Social Connection



Example: Someone who has some gaps in their social foundation

# Take-Aways

Social connection is an umbrella term

Patients level of social connection is important for health

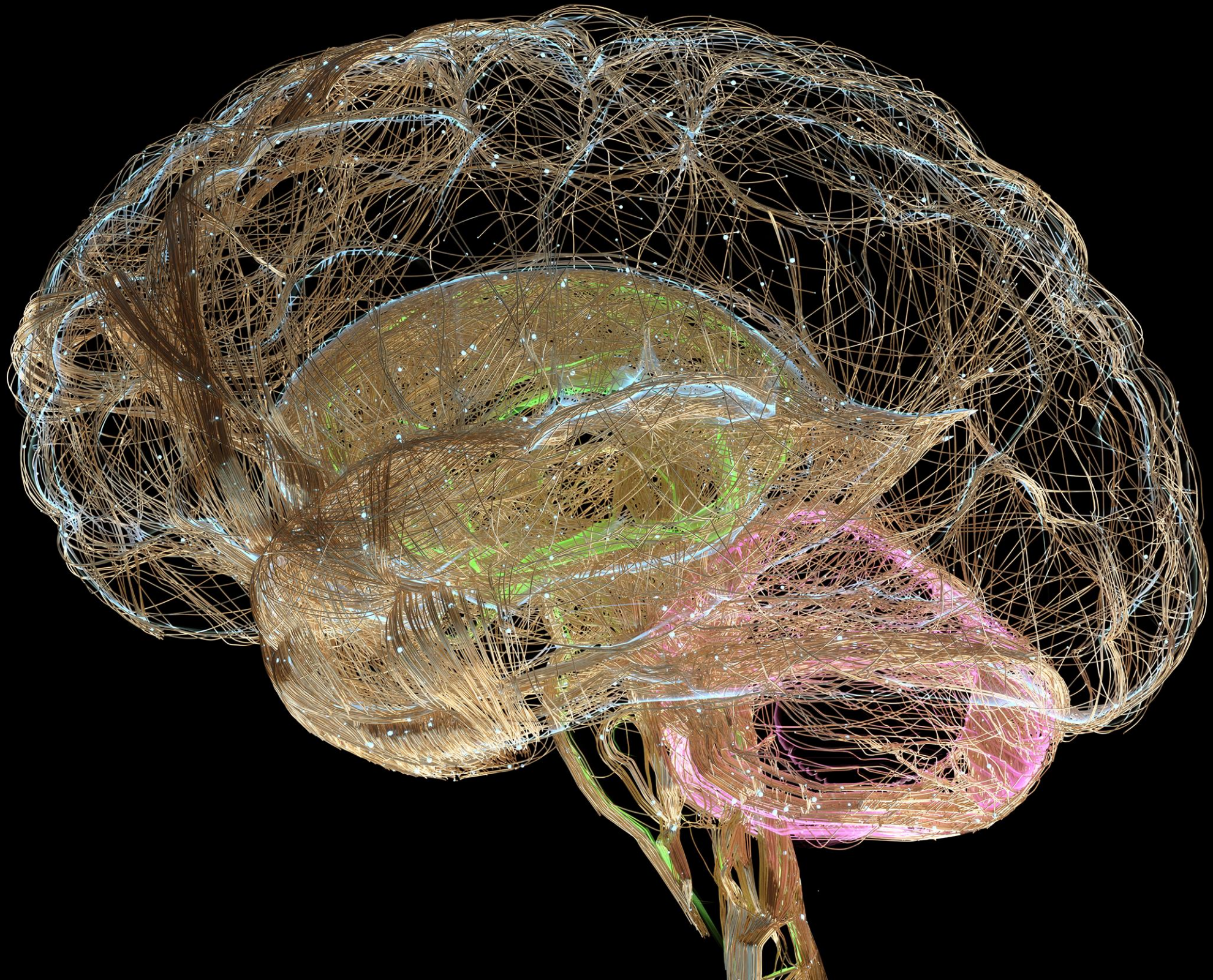
Patients may lack connection in a variety of ways— including isolation, loneliness, lacking social support, or having poor-quality relationships, or a combination.

These may present in different ways, have different underlying causes, but all impact health.



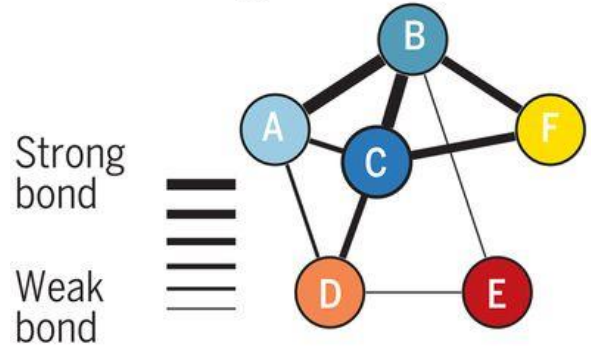
# The Impact of Social Disconnection on Health



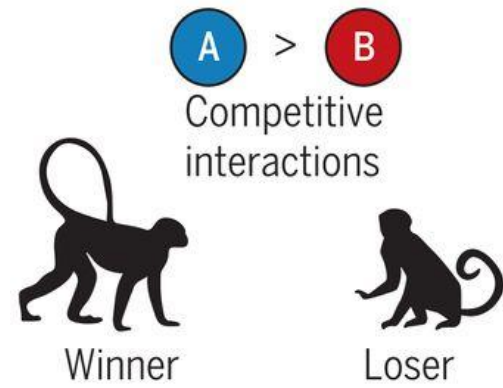




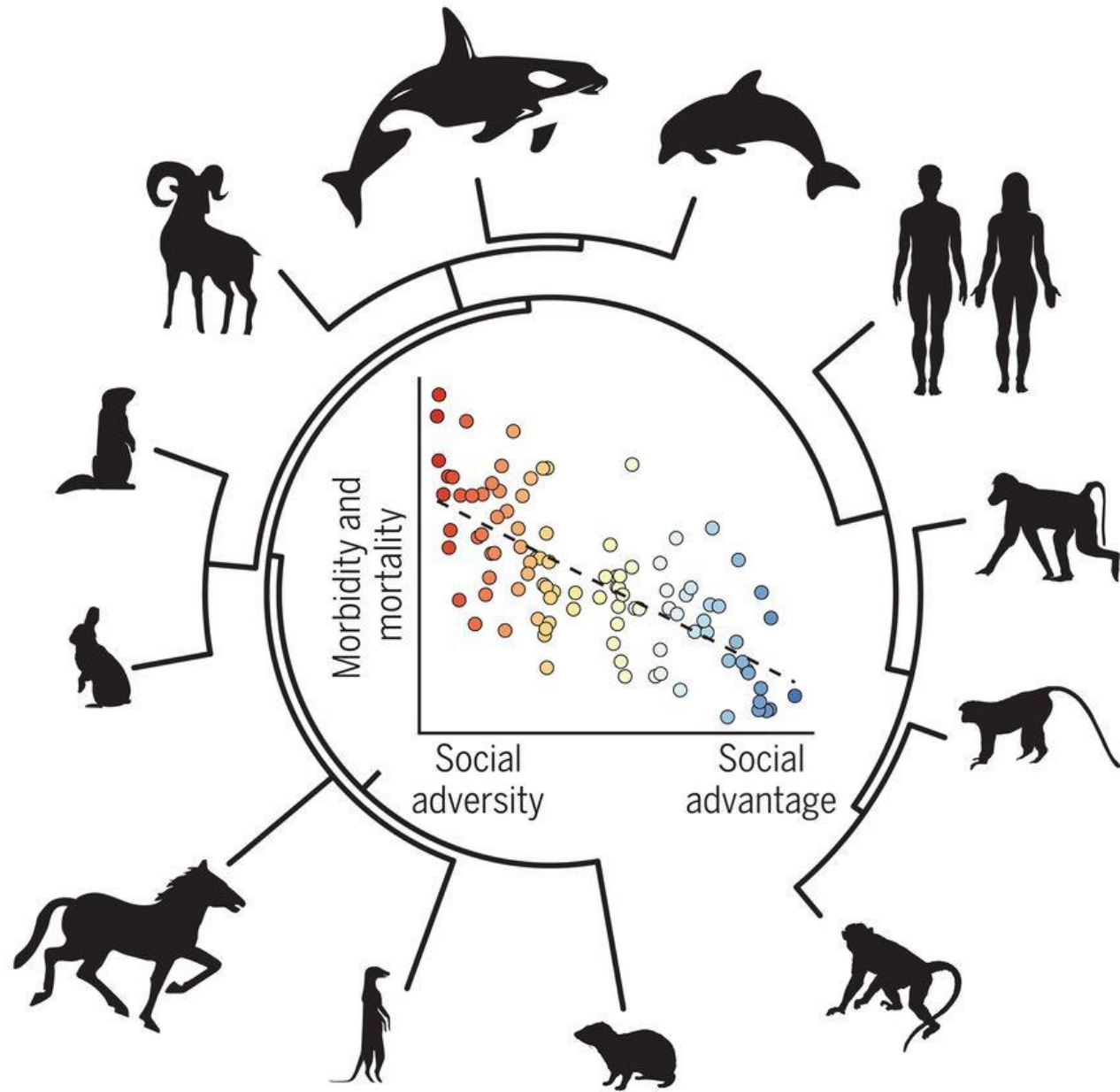
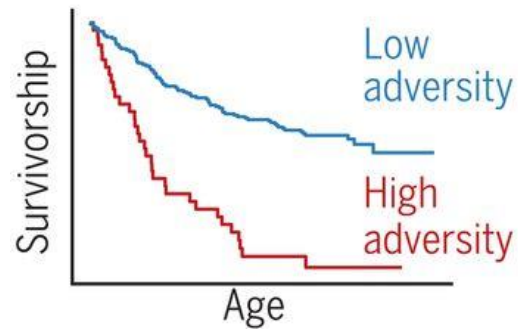
### Social integration



### Social status



### Early life adversity







3.4 million people

**Loneliness**

Increases earlier death by

**26%**

**Social Isolation**

Increases earlier death by

**29%**

**Living Alone**

Increases earlier death by

**32%**

# The influence of Social Disconnection on Health and Economy



## Physical Health

Cardiovascular Disease  
Stroke  
Type2 Diabetes



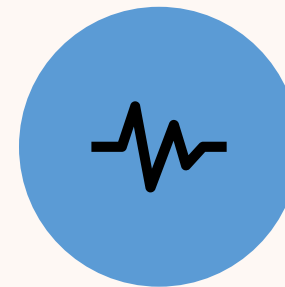
## Mental & Behavioral Health

Depression & Anxiety  
Suicidality  
Addiction



## Cognitive Health

Cognitive decline  
Dementia  
Alzheimer's Disease



## Economic Health

\$6.7B in Medicare Spending  
Lower productivity  
More Absenteeism  
Lower quality of work

Sources: Cené et al, 2023; Holt-Lunstad et al, 2015; NASEM, 2020; AARP, 2017; Holt-Lunstad, 2022; Hong et al, 2023;

## Population Health



Ex: Spread of Illness  
Covid Response

## Violence/Safety



21% reduction in murders  
20% reduction in car thefts  
(Stuart & Taylor, 2021)

## Preparedness/Resilience



natural hazards,  
pandemics,  
safety threats.

# Social Connected Communities

# Combating loneliness and rebuilding connection is essential to our health and well-being.

[surgeongeneral.gov/loneliness](https://surgeongeneral.gov/loneliness)



Office of the  
U.S. Surgeon General



# Implications for Case Managers: Ensuring Appropriate Care





# At-Risk Populations and Risk Factors



How do we identify those who may lack social connection?

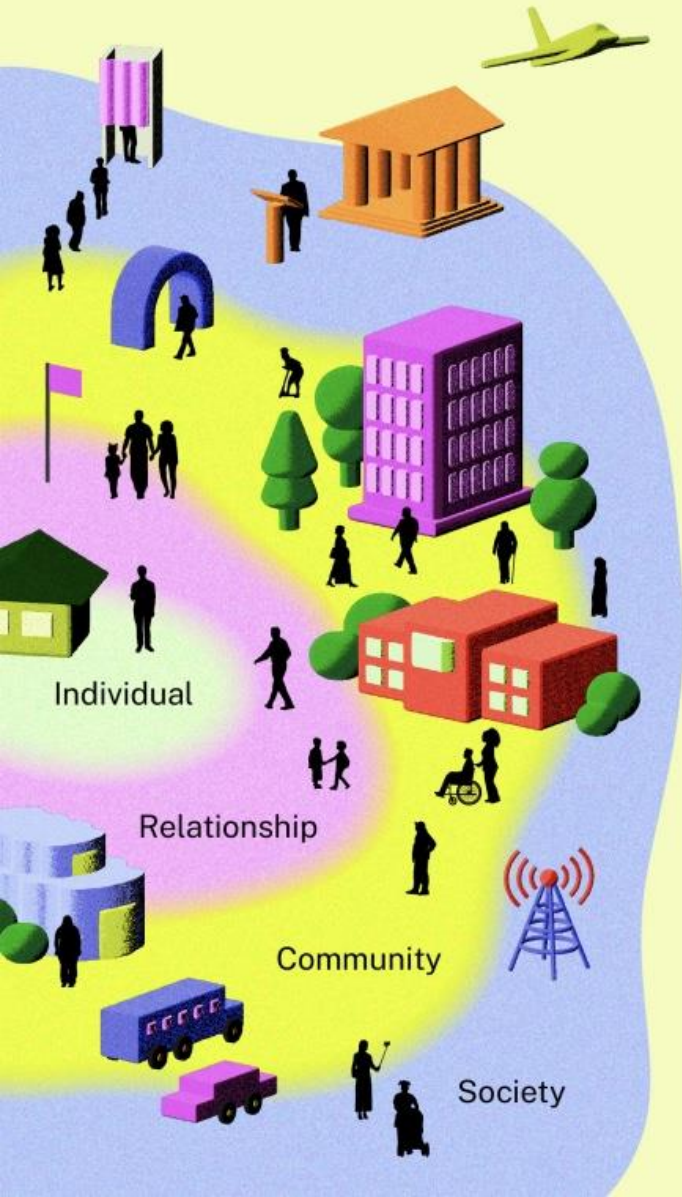
## Signs to look for:

- Not always obvious
- Spending significant time alone
- Recent changes in living situation, health, or relationship status





# Factors That Can Shape Social Connection



## Individual

- Chronic disease
- Sensory and functional impairment
- Mental health
- Physical health
- Personality
- Race
- Gender
- Socioeconomic status
- Life stage

## Relationships

- Structure, function, and quality
- Household size
- Characteristics and behaviors of others
- Empathy

## Community

- Outdoor space
- Housing
- Schools
- Workplace
- Local government
- Local business
- Community organizations
- Health care
- Transportation

## Society

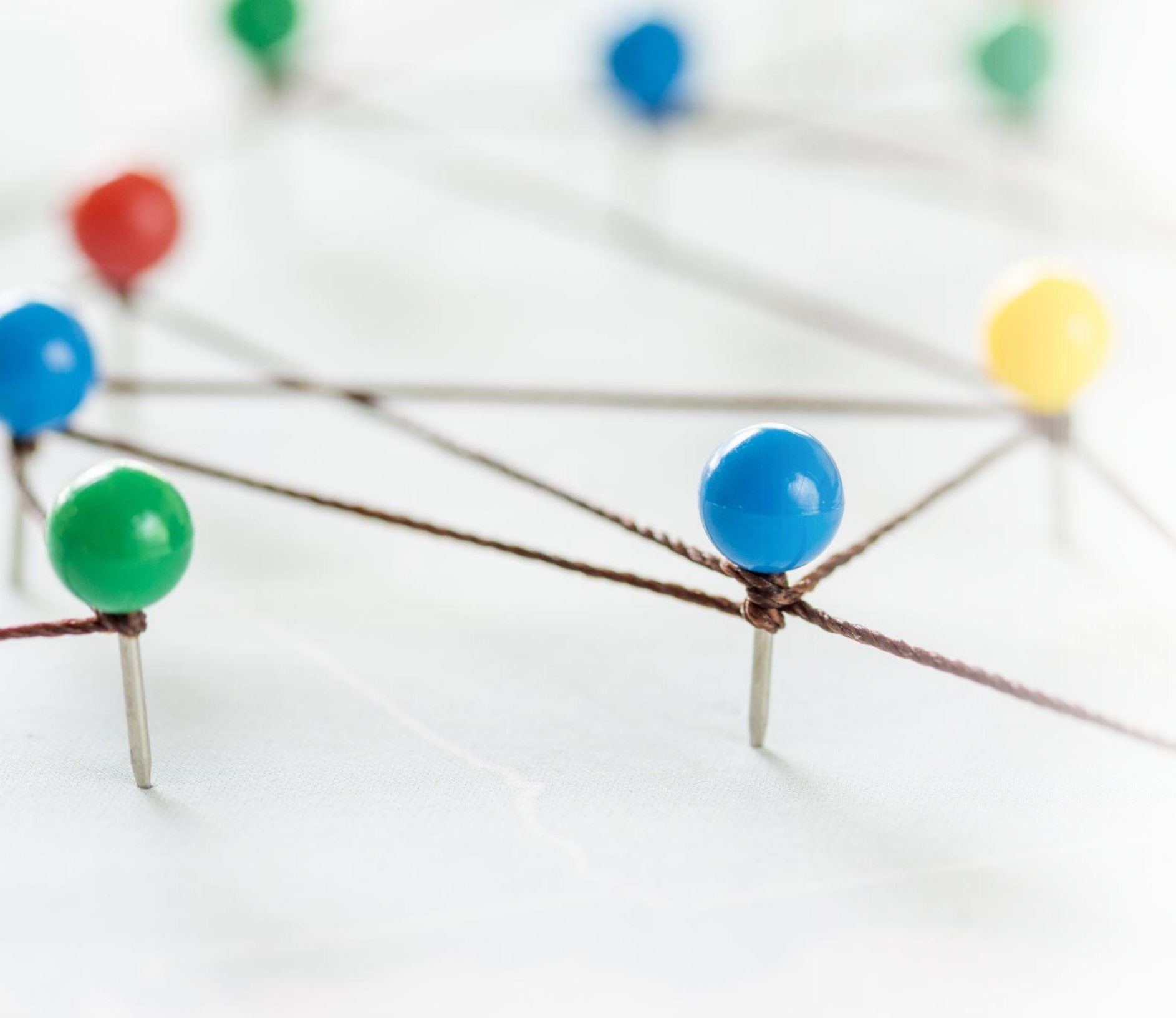
- Norms and values
- Public policies
- Tech environment and use
- Civic engagement
- Democratic norms
- Historical inequities

What leads us to be more or less connected?

This is more than a personal issue

# You may be at greater risk if you:

- Live alone
- Can't leave your home
- Had a major loss or life change, such as the death of a spouse or partner, or retirement
- Struggle with money
- Are a caregiver
- Have psychological or cognitive challenges, or [depression](#)
- Have limited social support
- Have trouble hearing
- Live in a rural, unsafe, and/or hard-to-reach neighborhood
- Have language barriers where you live
- Experience age, racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity discrimination where you live
- Are not meaningfully engaged in activities or are feeling a lack of purpose



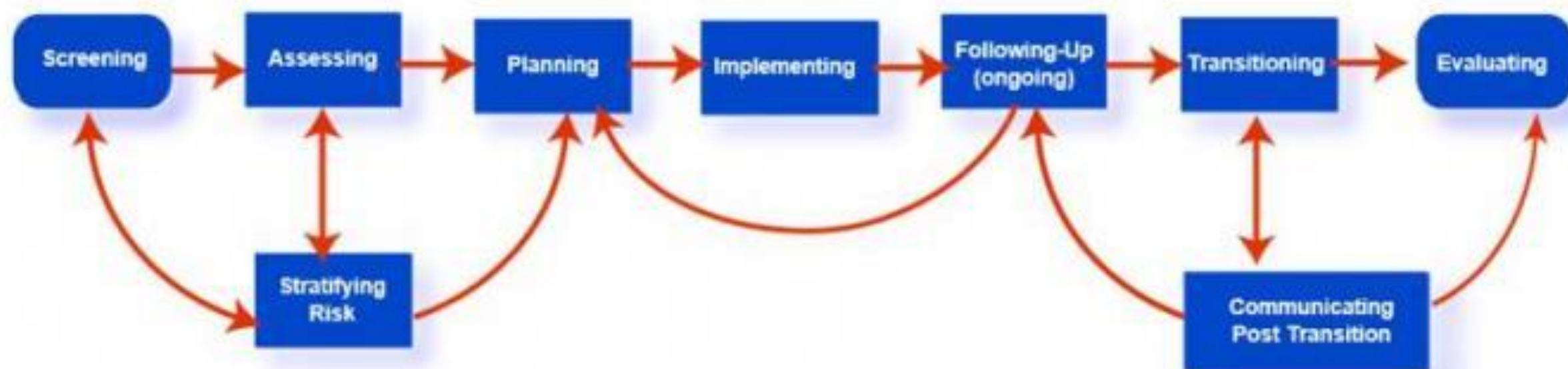
# Strategies to Foster Social Connection



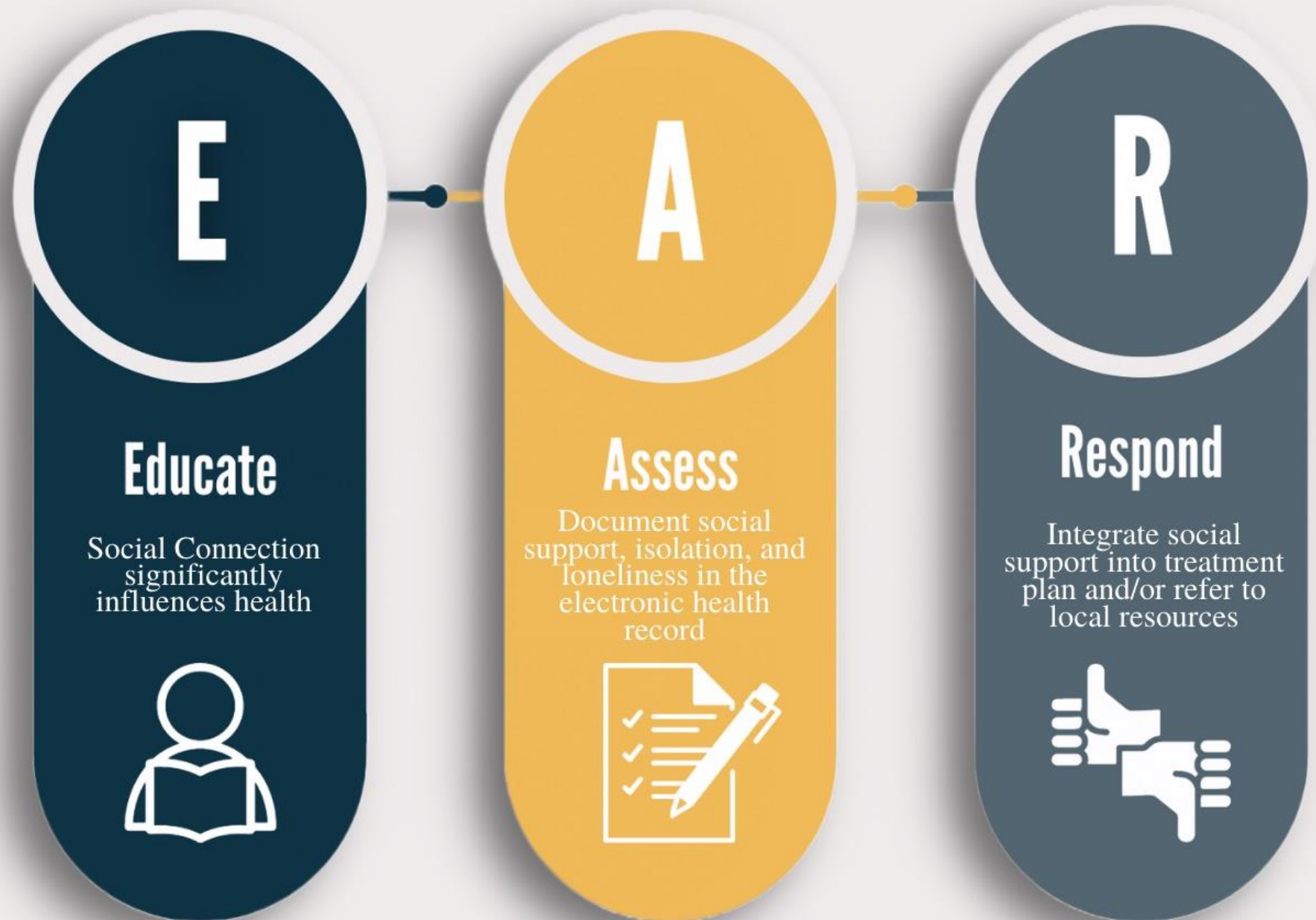
# CASE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

## High-Level

---







Source: Holt-Lunstad & Perissinotto, Social Isolation and Loneliness as Medical Issues.  
*New England Journal of Medicine* (2023)

E

## Educate

Social Connection  
significantly  
influences health



Social Connection is part of a healthy lifestyle

When lacking--can carry significant risk to health, functioning, and earlier death

Social connection helps clients maintain their health, manage existing medical conditions, and adhere to treatment regimens

Source: Holt-Lunstad & Perissinotto, Social Isolation and Loneliness as Medical Issues. *New England Journal of Medicine* (2023)

# A

## Assess

Document social support, isolation, and loneliness in the electronic health record



### 1

Document social support, isolation, and loneliness in the electronic health record

### 2

Identify patients at risk using validated measures of social isolation and loneliness

### 3

Track risk and progress over time

# R

## Respond

Integrate social support into treatment plan and/or refer to local resources

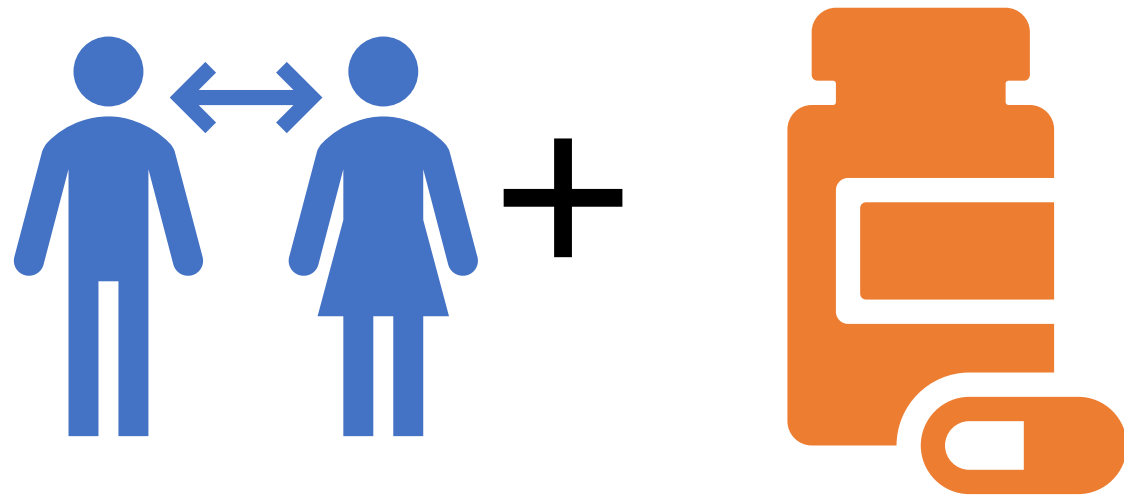


# RESPOND

- Integrate psychosocial support from all members of the care team
- Offer referrals tailored to clients needs and partner with local community resources
- Reassess clients regularly for change circumstances and needs and respond accordingly



# Integrating Psychosocial Support within Tx



---

**20%** increased likelihood of survival for intervention participants compared to controls

---

**29%** increased likelihood of longer survival compared to controls

Meta-Analysis of 106 RCTs within Clinical Settings

Source: Smith et al; Plos Medicine, 2022

# PRESCRIPTION



Referrals: Interventions in the Community

**Social prescribing** connects patients to activities, groups, and services in their community to meet the practical, social and emotional needs that affect their health and wellbeing

# Recommendations

- There is no one-size-fits-all approach to addressing loneliness or social isolation
- Tailor interventions to suit the needs of individuals, specific groups, or the degree/type of disconnection experienced.
- Co-design interventions with the group you are working with
- Identify and overcome barriers
- Evaluate the intervention to identify what works for whom, and in what context.

# First Ever OSG Framework for a National Strategy



## The Six Pillars to Advance Social Connection



**1**

### **Strengthen Social Infrastructure in Local Communities**

Design the built environment to promote social connection

Establish and scale community connection programs

Invest in local institutions that bring people together

**2**

### **Enact Pro-Connection Public Policies**

Adopt a "Connection-in-All-Policies" approach

Advance policies that minimize harm from disconnection

Establish cross-departmental leadership at all levels of government

**3**

### **Mobilize the Health Sector**

Train health care providers

Assess and support patients

Expand public health surveillance and interventions

**4**

### **Reform Digital Environments**

Require data transparency

Establish and implement safety standards

Support development of pro-connection technologies

**5**

### **Deepen Our Knowledge**

Develop and coordinate a national research agenda

Accelerate research funding

Increase public awareness

**6**

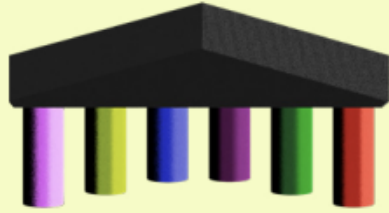
### **Build a Culture of Connection**

Cultivate values of kindness, respect, service, and commitment to one another

Model connection values in positions of leadership and influence

Expand conversation on social connection in schools, workplaces, and communities





**The Six Pillars  
to Advance  
Social Connection**

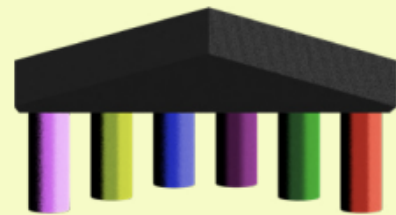
## **Pillar 3**

# **Mobilize the Health Sector**

- **Train health care providers**
- **Assess and support patients**
- **Expand public health surveillance and interventions**



How can your organization benefit from, and contribute to, a greater knowledge of this issue?

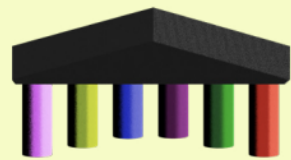


**The Six Pillars  
to Advance  
Social Connection**

### **Pillar 5**

## **Deepen our Knowledge**

- **Develop and coordinate a national research agenda**
- **Accelerate research funding**
- **Increase public awareness**



The Six Pillars  
to Advance  
Social Connection

### **Pillar 6**

## **Cultivate a Culture of Connection**

- Cultivate values of kindness, respect, service, and commitment to one another
- Model connection values in positions of leadership and influence
- Expand conversations on social connection in schools, workplaces, and communities

# Summary of Recommendations



# What Community Based-Organizations Can do

01

Create opportunities and spaces for inclusive social connection

02

Embed social connection in internal policies, practices, programs, and evaluations

03

Actively seek and build partnerships with other community institutions (schools, health organizations, workplaces)

04

Advance public education and awareness efforts

05

Create and provide education, resources, and support programs

06

Foster a culture of connection in the broader community

# What individuals can do:


- Invest time
- Minimize distraction
- Support others, and seek support when needed
- Engage with a variety of others
- Participate in groups
- Be open with provider
- Civic engagement
- Model core values of connection

# Final Take-Aways

Social connection is a key client need that has health consequences



Case Managers cannot solve this alone, but are a key point of identifying needs and access to care



Caring for clients' social needs does not detract from other needs—it is part of wholistic client care.





# Thank you

## **Additional Resources**

- [NASEM 2020 report](#)
- Meta-Analyses of Mortality Risk
  - [Social Isolation, Loneliness & Living Alone](#)
  - [Social Relationships](#)
- [Evidence for Social Connection as a Public Health Priority](#)
- [Social Connection as a Social Determinant of Health](#)
- [Why Social Connection is relevant to health](#)

## **More about my work on Social Connection/Isolation:**

- <http://julianneholtlunstad.com>

Twitter @jholtlunstad

## **For Questions:**

Email: [Julianne\\_holt-lunstad@byu.edu](mailto:Julianne_holt-lunstad@byu.edu)



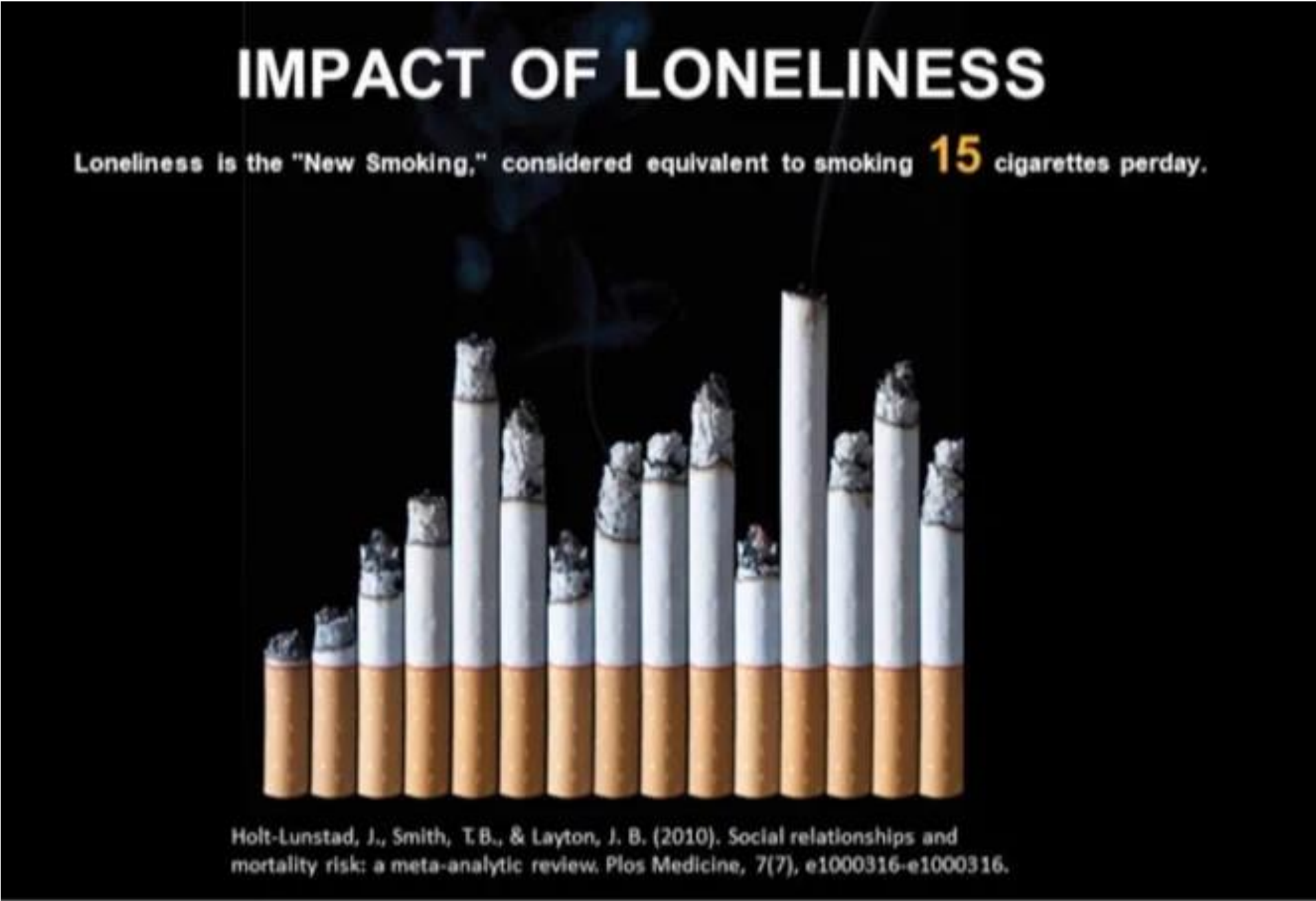
A Resource Center for Today's Case Manager

## Follow Up Questions

---

**In our CEO's introduction, MaryBeth mentioned that lacking social connection is comparable to smoking up to 15 cigarettes per day. This came from your research. Would you mind expanding on this?**

# How Loneliness and Isolation Effects Overall Health



## Follow-up Questions

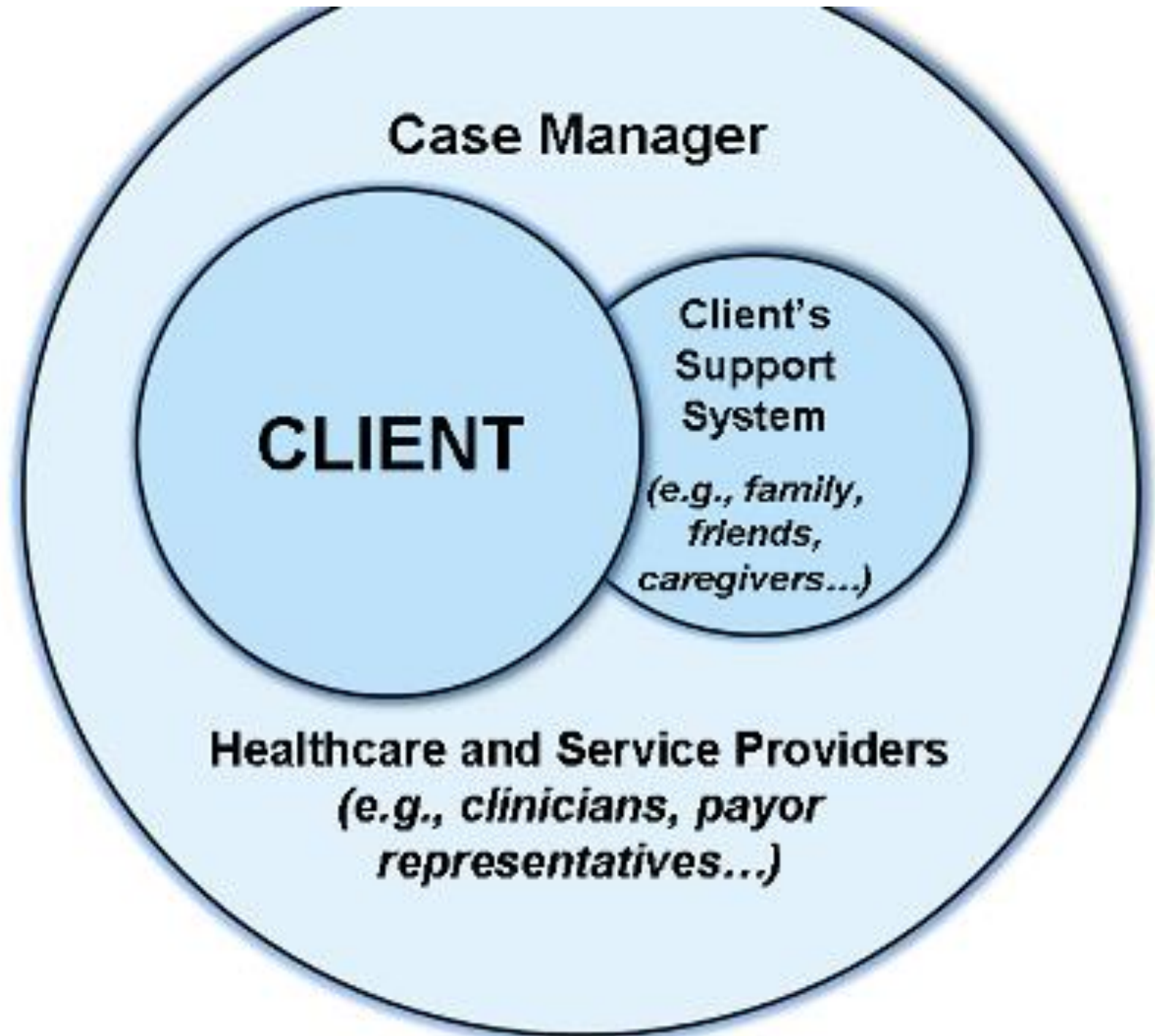
---

**You mentioned several signs that would indicate someone being at a greater risk for social isolation and loneliness. Do you have any recommendations for our case managers as to how they might identify these things and the best way to begin a conversation to help their clients?**



# Connection to Key Aspects of Case Management

(e.g., Advocacy,  
Coordination,  
Empowerment)



## Follow-up Questions

---

**We normally think of loneliness and isolation as impacting the elderly, but your research points to a variety of ages. What demographic was most surprising to you?**

# Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation



2023

## The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community



We are called to build a movement that will take all of us—individuals and health care and public health systems, governments, faith organizations, and communities—to destigmatize loneliness and change the culture. It will require reimagining the structure of a community to best support the needs of all.

Each of us can start now, in our own lives, by strengthening our connections and relationships. Our relationships are an untapped resource—a source of health and well-being that can help us live healthier, more productive lives. Answer that phone call from a friend, take a walk without the distraction of your phone, and be present for yourself authentically. The keys to social connection are extraordinarily powerful.

Each of us can start now, in our own lives, by strengthening our connections and relationships.

Loneliness and isolation represent a major public health challenge to our well-being. But we have the power to address this challenge every day to strengthen our relationships and build social connections. We can build lives and communities that are happier and healthier. And we can ensure our children have a better chance than ever to take on the challenges of the future.

Our future depends on what we do today.

Vivek H. Murthy, M.D., M.B.A.  
10th and 21st Surgeon General of the United States  
Vice Admiral, United States Public Health Service

### Why It Matters

Loneliness and isolation are a family of what create health disparities in our neighborhoods, digital divide, and social connection—our relationships are a significant contributor to community safety. In other words, far too many people, in one way or more ways, are exposed to poor health outcomes.

Although it is often illustrated as a lack of social connection, social isolation is objectively measurable through infrequent contact, subjective internal state, and unmet need for social connection.

Individual health and well-being for premature death by cardiovascular disease can increase by 29% for those who smoke 15 cigarettes a day.<sup>4</sup> In addition, there is an increased risk of depression and a 32% increased risk for anxiety. Social connection may

economic costs to individuals, with loneliness alone accounts for \$100 billion annually, largely due to lost productivity. Moreover, beyond direct costs, loneliness is associated with lower academic achievement in the U.S., stress-related health issues, and other important social determinant factors including (but not limited to) mental health, community safety, and community health.

Loneliness? Social connection is crucial to survival. Access to food, water, and shelter is a social determinant of health. Socially wired for social connection, we are wired to others.<sup>11,12</sup> Our distant relationships, living in isolation, and the difficult demands of survival reduce one's chances of survival.<sup>13</sup> Without engaging with others, our biological need for social connection is unmet.

Loneliness and isolation are a critical public health challenge. Millions of Americans lack social connection. A study found that when asked if they were socially connected, only 39% of adults reported being socially connected. An important indicator of social connection is the proportion of Americans who are socially connected. Approximately half of the highest rates among adults indicate that loneliness is a major health issue of 14.7%,<sup>14</sup> and obesity is a major health issue. Loneliness is a risk factor for premature death, and those who often or always

## Follow-up Questions

---

**What are some key recommendations that you would give healthcare professionals to apply these principles of social connection to their own lives to foster resilience and prevent professional burnout?**





A Resource Center for Today's Case Manager

## Closing Remarks

---



**MaryBeth Kurland, MPA, CAE, ICE-CCP**  
**CEO**  
**Commission for Case Manager**  
**Certification**

Thank you!

---

**Commission for Case Manager Certification**

1120 Route 73, Suite 200, Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

1-856-380-6836 • Email: [ccmchq@ccmcertification.org](mailto:ccmchq@ccmcertification.org)

[www.ccmcertification.org](http://www.ccmcertification.org)

