
Nobody knows you when you're down and out (and single and old): AARP

By Editorial Staff *Thu, Mar 9, 2017*

Lonely older adults are much more likely to have an annual household income of less than \$25,000 and assets under \$10,000, and are more likely overall to be in the lowest income group.

Nearly half of U.S. adults age 62 and older experience loneliness, and lonely older adults are likelier to have lower income and fewer assets than non-lonely adults, according to research conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago and funded by the AARP Foundation.

“Income is a significant factor in social connectedness,” said Lisa Marsh Ryerson, president of AARP Foundation. The study is part of Connect2Affect, a collaborative effort by AARP Foundation to learn more about isolation and loneliness in older adults.

Nearly half (48%) of the respondents feel some degree of loneliness; 29% experience “occasional” loneliness while 19% are “frequently” lonely. Socioeconomic status stands out as a differentiator between non-lonely and lonely individuals.

Lonely older adults are much more likely to have an annual household income of less than \$25,000 and assets under \$10,000, and are more likely overall to be in the lowest income group.

The lonely group is also less likely to be married than the non-lonely group, and more likely to be divorced, separated or widowed. The data show that 14% of married older adults and 30% of unmarried older adults fall into the lonely group.

Married women are at a higher risk of loneliness than married men, but unmarried women are at a lower risk of loneliness than unmarried men. Those with more support and less strain in their marital relationship are at lower risk of loneliness.

Findings were based in part on data from the National Institute on Aging and the National Institutes of Health.

© 2016 RIJ Publishing LLC. All rights reserved.