



10 minutes to **togetherness.**

spark **real connection,**
create lasting success

RESEARCH BY

TheLi.st

BERLIN CAMERON

BSG
RESEARCH > STRATEGY > IMPACT

For more information or to talk to us about partnerships, speaking and workshops,
please reach out to us at Connect@10minutestotogetherness.com

HOW WE TACKLE THE LONELINESS CRISIS THAT UNDERMINES WOMEN AT WORK

For a long time, we've deemed loneliness a natural consequence of climbing the corporate ladder—the higher up you go, the lonelier you are. But new research suggests it's not just lonely "at the top" and in fact, loneliness is more widespread than we've been led to believe and it's negatively impacting our careers at every level.



80%

of women in white-collar careers have felt lonely ***because of*** their job

according to data from
TheLi.st, Berlin Cameron, and BSG.

Loneliness is so prevalent that U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy has said it's an epidemic on par with the opioid crisis, creating higher risks of depression, anxiety, cardiovascular illness, dementia, and sleep disturbances. Murthy explains loneliness as a biological response to a need for togetherness, in the same way that hunger is a sign that we need to eat.

We are starving
for connection.

The solution to loneliness is simple to identify, harder to achieve: ***meaningful togetherness***. Not transactional networking but an intentional nurturing of our communities and spaces to create environments where people are free to show up as their full, authentic selves.

And workers can't do it alone. We need employers to invest in building community so the workplace fundamentally changes to breed an environment where we can all thrive in our careers.

WHAT LONELINESS LOOKS LIKE IN THE WORKPLACE

41% of women surveyed said being at work was the loneliest time of day.

People who are lonely at work report feeling “isolated” and “unsupported” in their careers, though they may say they feel “stressed,” “overwhelmed” or “disconnected.”

For women, this feeling intensifies the higher up the corporate ladder they climb.

40% of women said they feel that their company does not help them succeed, according to our 2023 research report.

The loneliness is preventing women from moving into positions of greater influence and power:

53% of early- and mid-career women said they had turned down a promotion, declined a job or stopped working altogether because of the negative impact on their personal life, in our 2023 report.

While people of color feel lonely in their careers at similar rates to white employees, the impact on their mental health is even stronger. Our research found that:

➔ **People of color who are lonely at work don't feel as though they can be their authentic selves; are less likely to feel trusted by their managers; and less likely to feel supported by their coworkers compared to white employees.**

Workplace loneliness is more prevalent among younger workers who are still learning how to navigate the complexities of the modern workplace.

86% of white-collar employees between 18 to 34 years old say they have felt lonely or isolated as a result of their role during the past month compared to 76% of employees who are 35 years or older.

Furthermore, lonely employees are four times more likely to feel dissatisfied with their current careers, which can lead to high turnover and costly recruiting, hiring and training.

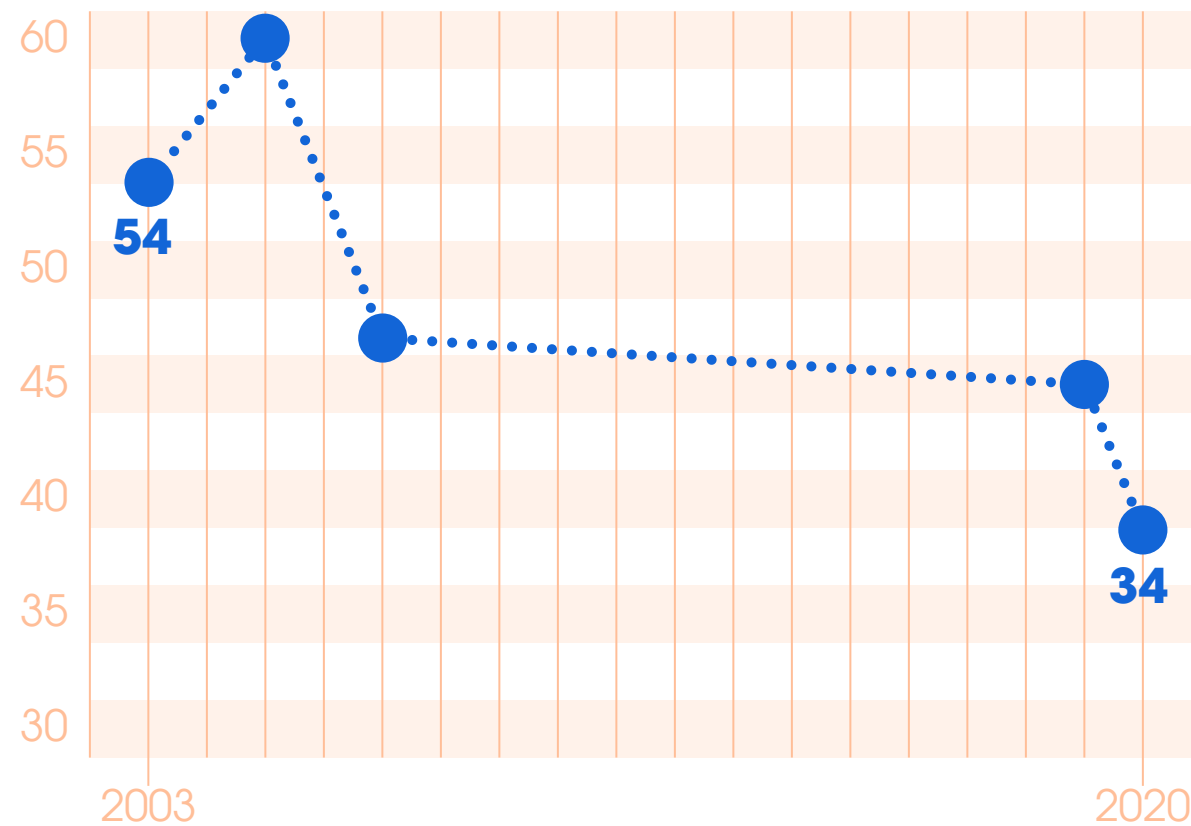
Put simply, loneliness is not only bad for employees, it's also bad for business.

10 MINUTES TO TOGETHERNESS

In 2003, Americans spent roughly 54 minutes a day socially engaging with others. In 2020, that number drastically decreased to about 20 minutes per day, according to Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation 2023: US Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community.

THE GOOD NEWS

If we all spend 10 minutes a day intentionally cultivating connections and community, we could reduce this nearly 20 year decline in engagement by 50%.



Social Engagement with Others
a decrease of 10 hours per month

10 minutes to togetherness.

HOW TO CULTIVATE CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY: Time, Transparency & Trust

Our research helped us identify the people who are less likely to feel lonely at work and more likely to feel connected and supported.

We call them **THE COMMUNITY CULTIVATORS.**

Only 1 in 3 employees are Cultivators, but they all share these qualities:

- A network of friends and colleagues they've built and **nurtured** themselves
- Regular opportunities to **collaborate** with others
- **They benefit from transparency** around work being done outside of their immediate teams – a credit to their employers' corporate culture.
- They attend regular company-wide all hands meetings: **not only do "they show up," their employers have provided an intentional, recurring way to do so.**
- **Their networks are diverse.** Including current and former coworkers and managers.

Our research shows that they build these networks with small "micro habits" that become part of their daily routine.

- Staying in touch by text
- Spending time one-on-one
- Collaborating on projects
- Supporting each other through workplace challenges

WHAT EMPLOYERS CAN DO

Loneliness is not just the individual's responsibility to solve for themselves. Our research shows that 65% of white-collar employees think that employers have a responsibility to address loneliness in the workplace. When we look deeper, we find that even **Community Cultivators (those who are doing the work to create togetherness in their careers)** feel that the responsibility for building community is shared equally between their employers and themselves.

EMPLOYERS CAN COUNTER THE EFFECTS OF LONELINESS IN IMPORTANT WAYS ACCORDING TO OUR RESEARCH:

- Prioritize opportunities for employees to interact in-person.
- Lead with transparency.
- Train managers on leading with empathy and respect.
- Encourage and respect vulnerability – in managers and individual contributors alike.
- Nurture a culture that is collaborative and supportive in nature – create disincentives for toxic competition.
- Create formal opportunities for mentor-mentee relationships.

Togetherness is an essential ingredient not only for building strong teams, fostering collaboration and creating a positive company culture, but it is critical to our emotional and mental well-being beyond the workplace. Nurturing a sense of belonging and investing in initiatives that promote togetherness and inclusive leadership practices has the potential to help solve our country's loneliness epidemic. As the wise saying goes, "if you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

METHODOLOGY

BSG conducted a 15-minute online survey among N=2012 American white-collar employees ages 23-70 from October 9th to October 17th, 2023. The margin of error for the total sample is $\pm 2.18\%$ at the 95% confidence level.

Our sample included:
n=1000 Women (MoE= $\pm 3.1\%$ at 95% confidence level)
n=317 Women of Color (MoE= $\pm 5.5\%$ at 95% confidence level)
n=1000 Men (MoE= $\pm 3.1\%$ at 95% confidence level)
n=298 Men of Color (MoE= $\pm 5.68\%$ at 95% confidence level)
n=12 Nonbinary Employees (MoE= $\pm 28.3\%$ at 95% confidence level)
Respondents were recruited via an online panel. BSG applied weights to gender, age, education, race, job level, and income to ensure they were nationally representative of white-collar employees.

