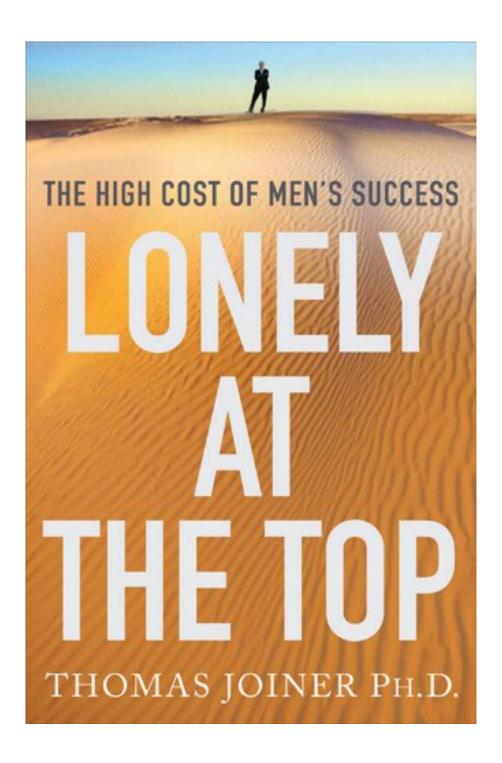


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Review

"Thomas Joiner has written an important and insightful book about the vulnerability of aging men to isolation and loneliness - an enormously important and largely ignored problem that propels them in significant numbers to depression and suicide. This well documented, articulate book will help men and those who love them recognize the symptoms of male depression. This book will undoubtedly help save men's lives." ?Marianne Legato, MD, author of Why Men Die First

"An effective exploration of why many men succumb to loneliness and the ways to assuage the condition." ?Kirkus Reviews

About the Author

Recognized expert in men's health, Thomas Joiner, PhD, is The Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor of Psychology at Florida State University. He is an advisor to Men's Health magazine and is principal investigator of the Department of Defense-funded Military Suicide Research Consortium, an \$18.1 million dollar project on how to lower suicide rates in the military. Recipient of fellowships from the Guggenheim and the Rockefeller Foundation, he has made numerous radio, print, and television appearances, including The Wall Street Journal, National Public Radio, and Dr. Phil. He lives in Tallahassee, FL.

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Men appear to enjoy many advantages in society-on average they make more money, have more power, and enjoy a greater degree of social freedom than women. But many men pay a high price for the pursuit of success and power. Taking family and friends for granted, men will often let relationships take a back seat to their professional ambitions, only to ultimately find themselves with few real friends they can rely on in hard times. As a result, they turn to affairs, alcohol, and other self-destructive behaviors. Sadly, millions of men suffer untreated depression.

In this groundbreaking and provocative book, award-winning clinical psychologist Thomas Joiner makes an impassioned call for society to recognize the harmful effects that solitude can have on men. Drawing on original research done for the National Institute of Mental Health, he focuses on the particular situations that leave men rudderless. He offers advice on support systems that are most useful to men, and he offers prescriptive advice on how men can improve their lives.

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Most helpful customer reviews

10 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

a book that can literally transform people's lives

By Todd B. Kashdan

Drawing on decades of research, Thomas Joiner weaves a neglected story about how the manly pursuit of status, power, wealth, and autonomy leads to great rewards in work and play but at the expense of loving, caring friendships.

Using rigorous scientific techniques, we know that what we strive for matters for well-being. Striving for wealth and power is less likely to bring about happiness and meaning in life than working hard to care for other people and developing intimate bonds. But if there is one thing we know its that whatever society rewards is what you will see more of. Have you seen Forbes list of the 500 foremost people who provide love, friendship, support, and laughter in the world? Nope. Have you received any feedback on your ability to make and maintain friends in high school, college, or in the workplace? Probably not. Have your friends and colleagues given you a surprise party to celebrate your amazing ability to ask questions and take an interest in what they are passionate about? your willingness to sacrifice countless late nights consoling them? Unlikely. But if you landed a work promotion, published a book, or appeared in a movie, champagne bottles tend to appear alongside lavish praise.

In this book, Joiner does not suggest that we choose between success and friendship. He suggests that balance take the place of overly simplified solutions. Conscious attention needs to be given to friendships. Without regular nourishment, relationships wither and die like any other living, breathing organism. And when important relationships falter, and they will, we need to replenish them.

Unlike many researchers turned authors, Joiner doesn't let the storyline get weighed down with intricate details of study after study. Instead, he synthesizes what is known and provides insights into how people can manage loneliness and improve their social connections. We are not talking about psychological disorders or mental illness. We are talking about the difficulties of being human. We are talking about issues that men rarely acknowledge, talk about, or address.

Having worked with many people in the business world, I know many men and women who fit the template of prioritizing success at the expense of significant, meaningful relationships. Here's hoping this book gets into people's hands. The science is strong, the writing flows smoothly, and the final section on interventions makes sense and can be readily implemented right away.

cheers,

Todd

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

Okay, I haven't bought the book-- yet!

By marew

Having read one of Dr. Joiner's previous books, "Why People Die by Suicide," I so looked forward to the publication of this, his latest book. As with the previous publication, it did not disappoint. I admit I borrowed it from my local library.

I so enjoyed reading this book! It is crammed full of timely, excellent research, amazing insights, etc. This book is light years from the dry, boring stuff contained in many of these types of books. This book is so thoughtfully written, so completely absorbing, and so well put together that I could barely put it down. I have been employed in the area of social services for over 25 years and have a graduate degree from FSU where Dr. Joiner teaches. A good amount of what I have learned through decades of experience has been laser-

focused by Dr. Joiner's excellent books.

I vehemently disagree with the reviewer who said this book has "Not Enough Meat." On the contrary, it is an overflowing banquet! I cannot recommend this book highly enough. Thank you, Dr. Joiner.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

This book should be translated!

By Nanook

I have read all of Dr. Joiner's books and found each one of them insightful and essential. (I am a university lecturer, working mostly with young adults. My students' well-being is as important to me as their progress in my courses.) This book is a must-read for North American men, many of whom are single, childless, and, typical of North Americans, cherish their independence and self-reliance. But, as the book stresses, there is a terrible price to pay later in life for a life "unfettered" by close relationships. I taught four years in Hungary, and in a discussion with young engineering students I learned of the stresses and challenges men face in their culture. (Suicide claims many lives in Hungary.) I feel men in other cultures would benefit from this book, and I do hope that it will be translated into other languages, especially into Hungarian.

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