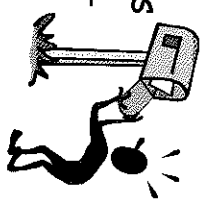


## HOW CAN YOU OVERCOME LONELINESS AND BUILD AND MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS?

- Write, call, or e-mail your family and friends even if you're just saying "hi."



- Be polite, kind, and considerate. Show care and concern for others.
- Stop and think before you speak.
- Be a good listener.
- Consider how your actions will affect others.
- Offer to help and do things for other people without expecting something in return.
- Think of others at least as much as you think about yourself.
- Do volunteer work.
- Join a support group, club, fitness center, or sport's team.



- Take care of your physical appearance. (Clean your clothes, brush your teeth, comb your hair, etc.)

- Be active in church. Join a Bible study group.

- Be positive and work hard to show your best side.

- Adopt and care for a pet.



- Contact the local Brain Injury Association to find out about available resources in your area.

TRY TO DO AT  
LEAST ONE GOOD THING  
FOR SOMEONE ELSE EVERY  
SINGLE DAY.

### National Resource Center for traumatic brain injury

Tools for therapy, education, self-help, and support  
Virginia Commonwealth University Health Systems  
P. O. Box 980542  
Richmond, VA 23298-0542  
(804) 828-9055  
FAX: (804) 828-2378  
[www.neuro.pmr.vcu.edu](http://www.neuro.pmr.vcu.edu)

CALL, WRITE, OR  
VISIT THE WEB  
FOR YOUR FREE  
CATALOG  
TODAY

Layout and design — Debbie West

© 2002 Not to be reproduced by any means without the author's permission

# Building Relationships and Overcoming Loneliness

JEFF KREUTZER  
SARAH DENIM



GUIDE # 6

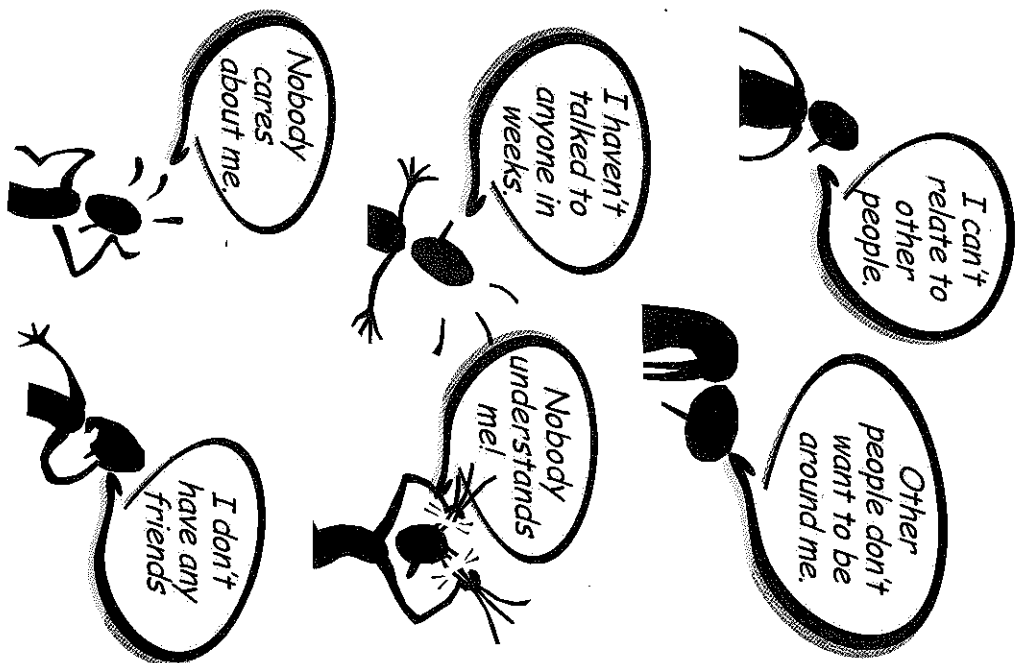
### National Resource Center for traumatic brain injury

Tools for therapy, education, self-help, and support

854-142

© 2002 Not to be reproduced by any means without the author's permission

Loneliness may be one of the most painful consequences of brain injury. Years after injury, many survivors describe feeling alone and misunderstood. Some feel lonely even when they have friends and family and spend time with them.



### *Are you pushing others away by...*

- Arguing or disagreeing?
- Focusing on what's wrong with your life and the world?
- Not listening when others speak, interrupting, or talking too much?
- Not considering other people's interests, needs, or feelings?
- Talking without thinking or saying things that hurt other people's feelings?
- Asking people very personal questions?
- Not using good hygiene?

### **WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO FEELING LONELY?**

- Not working or being involved in social or recreational activities
- Not having the energy to do enjoyable activities
- Feeling self-conscious, different, or less capable than others
- Being irritable and saying or doing regrettable things
- Friends and family being uncomfortable and not knowing what to say, how to act, or how to help
- Not having transportation or money to pay for activities
- Having physical problems that make it harder to travel and visit
- Having neurological impairments that limit self-expression and the ability to understand others
- Fears of being hurt or rejected by others

