

Empowerment of vulnerable older persons – research and social work in Rotterdam

Anja Machielse

Kopenhagen, 20th April, 2018



‘Social needs’ (Weiss)

- Attachment
- Social integration
- Reassurance of worth
- Nurturance
- Sense of reliable alliance
- Guidance, advice, information (‘coping assistance’)

- Loneliness and social isolation: the concepts
- The Rotterdam Approach to combat loneliness
- Typology for interventions
- Strategies of socially isolated persons
- Limits of guidance trajectories





51
-
49

Tey



graffiti



ONLINE & TILT
BENER
Logo: A stylized yellow cat head.

Boomgaardhof

Heineken
CAFE

Heineken

CAFE TIMMER

Interview location

"They had enough together.

I was an isolated boy from an early age. Anxious and nervous. I felt terribly left to myself."

"You have to participate in the community, but I did not feel at ease."

"They all want to force you into a kind of corset, and I do not feel like that. You have to meet all kinds of expectations and can no longer think or decide as a sovereign person.

You are constantly being manipulated, and it is difficult to resist this."

Loneliness:

“A subjective and negatively experienced discrepancy between the quality and quantity of existing relationships and a person’s desires or standards with regard to relationships

(De Jong Gierveld & Kamphuis, 1985)

Central:

- *A subjective feeling*

Social isolation:

“Absence of personal supportive informal relationships on which people can fall back in case of need.” (Machielse, 2006, 2011, 2015; Pantelle et al. 2013)

Central:

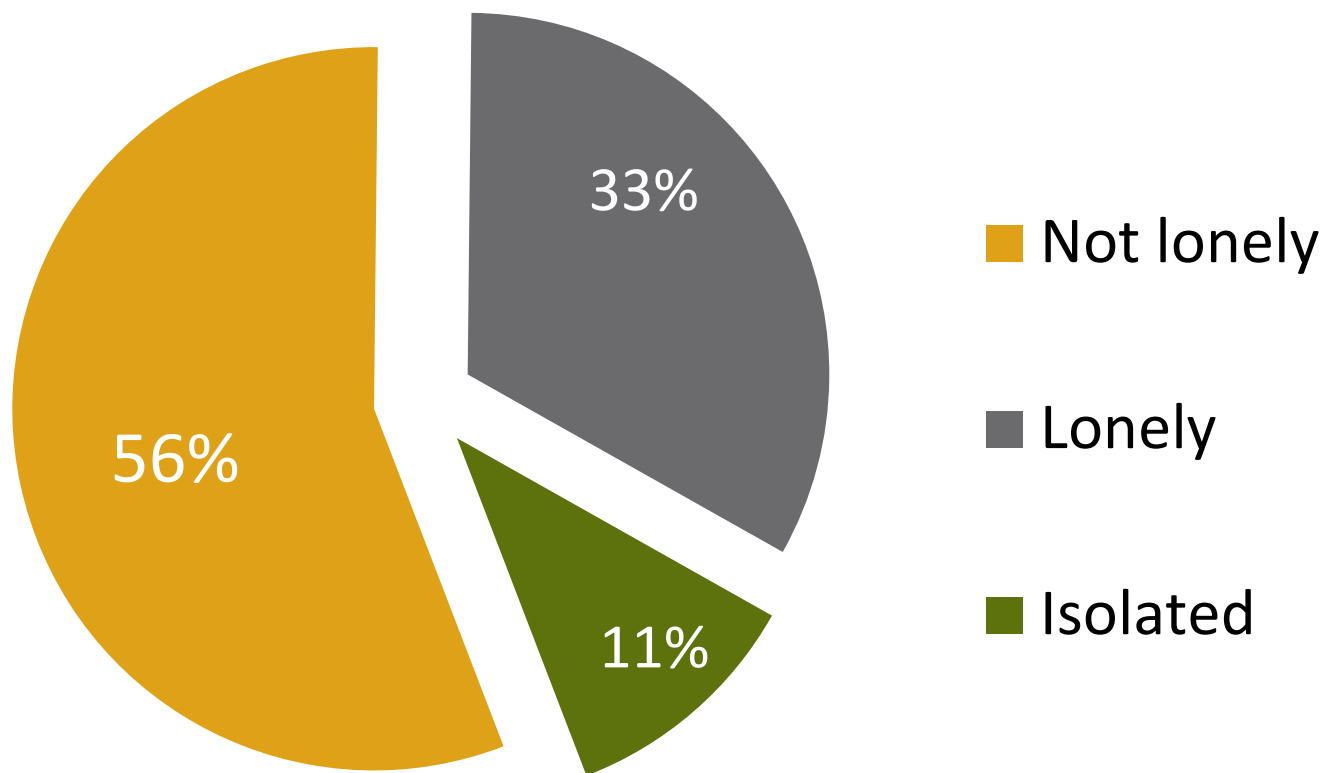
An objective situation

The city of Rotterdam

- Second greatest city in the Netherlands
- 630.000 inhabitants
- Growing with 6.000 each year
- 176 different cultural backgrounds
- Top 10 Lonely Planet

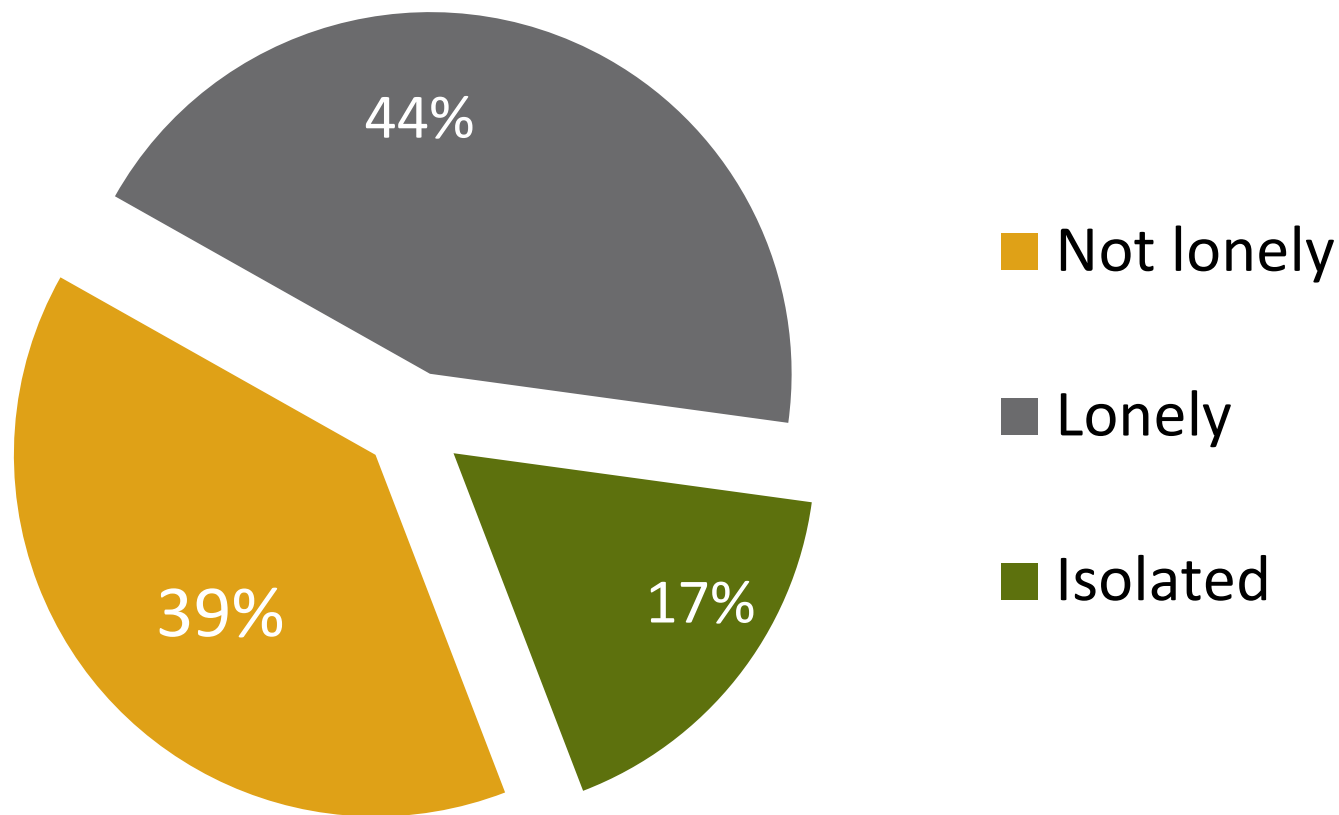


Loneliness in Rotterdam (> 19 jaar)



Bron: Gezondheidsmonitor (GGD, CBS, RIVM, 2012)

Loneliness in Rotterdam (> 75 jaar)



Bron: Gezondheidsmonitor (GGD, CBS, RIVM, 2012)

Nieuwsbrief

brancheorganisatie sociale sector

rotterdam

3e jaargang, nummer 3

Rotterdam is de eerste stad in Nederland die de problematiek van sociaal geïsoleerden stadsbreed aanpakt. SoZaWe financiert voor de periode 2007-2010 zes Rotterdamse projecten, gericht op het voorkomen en bestrijden van sociaal isolement. In dit traject werkt SoZaWe samen met het Landelijk Expertisecentrum Sociale Interventie (LESI), verbonden aan de Universiteit Utrecht (UU).

Rotterdam investeert in de problematiek van sociaal geïsoleerden

Anja Machielse (wetenschappelijk onderzoeker UU/LESI) en René van Sluijs (beleidsadviseur SoZaWe) zetten kort het hoe en waarom van de projecten uiteen.

René van Sluijs: 'Met deze investering wil Rotterdam bereiken dat er in de stad eenduidigheid ontstaat over definities en structuren bij de aanpak van sociaal isolement, zodat ontwikkelde kennis verankerd wordt in de lokale sociale infrastructuur. Onderdeel van het traject is ook dat medewerkers van tien Rotterdamse instellingen de Masteropleiding Sociale Interventie volgen waardoor

In samenwerking met Roelof Hortulanus (UU/LESI) heeft Anja Machielse wetenschappelijk onderzoek verricht naar de problematiek van sociaal isolement. Hieruit is gebleken dat de sociale competenties van mensen een belangrijke rol spelen bij het ontstaan van sociaal isolement. Een belangrijke conclusie was dat sociaal isolement onder alle categorieën in de samenleving voorkomt, maar niet zichtbaar is. Bovendien was niet helder gedefinieerd wat onder sociaal isolement moest worden verstaan.

Anja Machielse: 'Reden voor ons om een eenduidige definitie te

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Elderly woman lay dead in Rotterdam home for 10 years

Friday 22 November 2013

The neighbours of a Rotterdam woman who lay dead in her home for 10 years have told Nos television they noticed nothing wrong.

'We did not smell anything or see vermin,' one neighbour told the broadcaster. Neighbours said they thought the woman had moved in with her daughter after she vanished.

Her body was found on Thursday after building workers alerted the police because the door was not being opened.

'The police officers saw a pile of post behind the door and the house appeared to have been abandoned,' a police spokesman said. 'That made the police officers suspicious.'

Post

After breaking down the door, police found the body of a 74-year-old woman, who appears to have died of natural causes. They were able to say how long she had been dead by the dates on the unopened post.

The city council said later on Friday it would investigate how the woman's disappearance could have gone unnoticed for so long.

Police have so far been unable to trace any surviving relatives, Nos said. 'No-one appears to have missed her. No-one came to check,' the spokesman said.

Because the woman was not officially dead, she continued to receive her pension and her rent and electricity bills were automatically paid.



Actieprogramma
gericht op het
bestrijden van
eenzaamheid

December 2014



**Voer
mekaar**

Stella laat mevrouw Hijnen niet alleen

Drink ook eens een kopje koffie met
ouderen in de buurt.



Hebbie
effe...



8 SPANGEN



Wij laten jou niet alleen

et alleen . Marianne laat
ers niet alleen . Tineke laat
bdel niet alleen . Meneer
it zijn tante niet alleen .
ers laten elkaar niet alleen .

Stelk laat verlaten. Maar niet alleen. Het is niet alleen
Marjke laat hulpverleners en andere die voor je zorgen.



Dan's
PALEIS





“I did not get that letter about a home visit.”

“I could have been dead, and they would not
have noticed it.”

“I am always a bit apprehensive about their meddling. Yes, it is difficult for them to reconcile with the fact that I am outside the model and that I can best be left alone. They want to take all of you in and take you in. They all want to force you into a kind of corset, a mold. Yes, they are trying to do that.”

“When I get sick, the end is there. I am not someone who has to suffer for a long time. I hope for a brief definite end, a sudden death, a heart attack or a stroke.”

Diversity of the target group

- Different causes
- Different manifestations/appearances
- Different ambitions
- Different interventions

“I intentionally avoid cafes and other places like that, where many people come. There are always the same cliques with people, always the same talk. That does not appeal to me in any way.”

“I have always kept others at a distance and I should not think that I would be forced to come among the people. I prefer to be left alone.”

Typology for interventions

Dimension 1: Persistence of loneliness/isolation

Duration of the (negative) situation

- Situational (after a major life event)
- Structural (started early in life already)

Persistence of the social isolation		Orientation of actions	
		Aimed at social participation	Not (clearly) aimed at social participation
Situational isolation	<i>Active coping strategy</i>	Actives	Secures
	<i>Passive coping strategy</i>	Laggers	Dependents
Structural isolation	<i>Active coping strategy</i>	Compensators	Outsiders
	<i>Passive coping strategy</i>	Hopefuls	Survivors

Mr. S.

“As a young man I was already a loner. I have never led a 'normal' life. I am a bit of a misfit. I am not complete. Socially and emotionally, mentally, I am not fully grown. I'm not completely finished.”

Typology for interventions

Dimension 2: Action Orientation

The need and motivation to participate in social/societal contexts

- A strong need for contact with others
- No need for contact with others

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Mr. S.

“Yes, I have a social instinct, all people have, but I am social when I take a walk through the city. There are people. I like to ride the tram, watching people get on and off [...].

I am like a bird in a tree. I watch everything, but I do not belong, I only belong to myself. That has always been the case, I also wanted to hear from my brothers, but I did not belong there.”

Typology for interventions

Dimension 3: Coping strategy

Coping strategy in dealing with negative situations

- Active coping strategy (mobilising support, seek compensation)
- Passive coping strategy (e.g. avoidance, withdrawal)

Mr. S.

“I never made a real decision in my life.
Maybe to stay alone, but that was not a decision.
If you do nothing, nothing happens,
and then you remain alone.”

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Anthony Giddens



Structuration theory

(Giddens, 1984)

Central:

- Social (inter)action
- Social rules and conventions
- Routinisation of daily life
- Ontological security system
- De-routinisation

“I was a loner as a young child already. I was a lonely boy. My brothers were too busy with themselves. And my parents could not handle that, they were well-meaning people, very nice, but not sufficiently washed out for that. I did not feel comfortable at home until I was in my own cocoon.”



“What I remember is the terrible isolation, the loneliness of my youth. It was a continuous attempt to stay alive, so I lived completely in my imagination. In part I was present in my daily life, with my father and mother and my brothers, but for the rest I was somewhere else. In my head. That is not good for your social education. You will not become a really useful member of society.”

“If life became too bad for me in society, then I could always retire to a safe place. I do not think that is inhuman. So I was very attached to my own status. Whether it was entirely in line with social utility or social desirability? No, I did not think so. But yes, that could not bother me. In the end it was all about me, I had to breathe, and just get up again and go to bed again, and dress and undress.”

“And I felt: this is not good, you will not be useful to society, you will still remain an outsider, I felt like an outsider, but I certainly enjoyed it, I did not mind. You are in a flow of your own. You give your energy, put yourself in one, you are a kind of generator that strengthens itself.”

“No, I do not see that someone else cares about me, or wants to take care of me. Because I am such an individualistic man, Only when I become completely helpless, I have to entrust to someone else completely. Because you have to.”

“Unfortunately, I’m getting really old. I’d like to die. I am now in my 82nd year of life and have had enough. I can no longer change my life. I’ve done it alone and I probably shouldn’t have done that. But yes, that’s how I did it. What can one do about it at this point?”

Results of guidance

- Personal attention
- Emotional support
- Solved practical problems
- More self-sufficiency
- A point of contact
- A safety net

"I am not satisfied with it, it probably could have been different and better. I know I did it all wrong. Well, not everything of course, it's not hopeless! But it could have been so much better, though."

[...]

"I am someone who also wants to be caressed on his head. I feel that every now and then. Where is that hand that strokes my head? Yes, because I am also a man who wants to have a stroke over his head. I also feel that occasionally. Where is that hand that strokes my head when I'm in bed at night. The feelings are there, yes. Because I am a human being, because I am always alone."

"I think it's nice that I can go somewhere. That there is a point somewhere to go to and that she keeps an eye on things. If there are not too many consequences. They should not try to take me in and take care of them."

Thanks for your
attention!

