

2-14-2018

How Does the Psychology of Loneliness Affect the Desire to Travel Alone?

Zoe M. Myers

Johnson & Wales University - Providence, zmyers02@wildcats.jwu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.jwu.edu/student_scholarship



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Myers, Zoe M., "How Does the Psychology of Loneliness Affect the Desire to Travel Alone?" (2018). *Honors Theses - Providence Campus*. 28.

https://scholarsarchive.jwu.edu/student_scholarship/28

This Honors Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Arts & Sciences at ScholarsArchive@JWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses - Providence Campus by an authorized administrator of ScholarsArchive@JWU. For more information, please contact jcastel@jwu.edu.

How Does the Psychology of Loneliness Affect the Desire to Travel Alone?

By Zoe M. Myers

Advisor: Dr. Dorothy Abram

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the 'University
Honors Scholar' designation at Johnson & Wales University

2018

Abstract

Do feelings of loneliness affect an individual's desire to participate in solo travel? There has been extensive research done on the psychology of loneliness: how it is defined, its effects on a person's mental health, possible explanations for its causes, and what can be done to resolve the emotion. Regarding solo travel, the act of traveling alone has experienced an immense growth in the past decade. However, there has been little to no research completed regarding an explanation as to why many people still have no desire to travel alone. Do these people typically have a greater sense of loneliness and do the individuals who participate in solo travel typically have a lesser sense of the emotion?

In this thesis, I will be discussing the psychology of loneliness, the market for solo travelers, the research that I conducted, and my own personal experience of traveling alone. To conduct my own research, I administered a survey to 106 individuals which questions their degree of loneliness, as measured by the UCLA Loneliness Assessment, their willingness and desire to participate in solo travel, and their personal reasons as to why or why not they would consider traveling alone. As a result of my survey, I found that there is no definite correlation between loneliness and one's desire to travel alone. However, I was able to make conclusions based on other aspects of the survey which will be discussed within the thesis.

Acknowledgments

I hereby convey my deep acknowledgement to all those who made it possible for me to complete this thesis, by extending their support and continuous cooperation.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Dorothy Abram, for consistently providing me with helpful feedback and leading me in the right direction throughout this process.

I would also like to thank Professor Kristi Girdharry, who assisted me in establishing my topic as well as the outline for my thesis. Without her help, I would never have gotten past the first stages of this process.

I would like to acknowledge the consistent encouragement by Dr. Wendy Wagner, Director of the Honors Program at Johnson & Wales University.

Finally, my sincere gratitude to my mother whose constant efforts, suggestions, and heartfelt support helped me in the successful completion of this project. Without her patience and willingness to listen to me read every word of my developing thesis over the phone, this project would have never been completed.

Table of Contents

Section 1:

Defining the Psychology of Loneliness..... 5

Section 2:

The Market for Solo Travelers..... 15

Section 3:

The Desire to Travel Alone..... 24

Section 4:

Solo Travel Experience..... 37

Appendix..... 42

Works Cited..... 43

Defining the Psychology of Loneliness

To understand if there is any correlation between loneliness and the desire to travel alone, we must first look at the psychology of loneliness. An extensive amount of research has been done regarding loneliness; specifically, on its development and how it has changed throughout history. According to the *Psychology Dictionary* online, loneliness can be defined as “a sometimes long lasting feeling of having no alternative to turn to in times of distress and depression” (Nugent). However, I believe that there is so much more to this seemingly simplistic word, and with a multitude of scholarly articles that delve into the term’s origins, causes, effects, and much more, there is truth to my claim.

The emotion of loneliness seems to be more of a modern problem. Throughout history, there has been a significant amount of research regarding emotions such as love, anger, fear, envy, etc., but loneliness has not been a scholarly issue for nearly as long as these other emotions. K.D.M. Snell, a contributing author to Ami Rokach’s book *The Correlates of Loneliness*, argues that it is important for us to gain an understanding of this emotion and how it has affected humans throughout history. This is because, according to Snell, the fear of loneliness has influenced many of our decisions, such as marriage age, decisions to marry, family formation and structures, choices over immigration and emigration, and many more related issues (Rokach).

Although there is not a lot of historical evidence regarding loneliness, Snell theorizes that the regional or national differences in choices to live alone may have several connections to modern loneliness (Rokach). He gives the example of strong Protestant traditions of being more culturally ‘self-reliant’ or proudly immune to self-declared loneliness. However, he argues that as secularization progresses, this immunity may become less evident. Another example Snell

offers is the complex family forms of the Catholic culture, which may be used indirectly as a safeguard against loneliness (Rokach). Snell essentially concludes that although loneliness seems to be more of a modern issue, it has been relevant throughout history and it is only because of the development of secularization that the emotion is now becoming an epidemic (Rokach).

Since many researchers are viewing loneliness as an epidemic, it is important to understand how it affects people. One common misconception about loneliness is that it can only be felt by certain people because of certain events. Yet, loneliness knows no age, gender, culture, or lifestyle. Though I will not be limiting my research to a certain age group or gender, I believe that the idea of solo travel is more pertinent to certain age groups, such as a middle-aged or younger audiences as these age groups tend to be more capable of traveling alone, health-wise. Therefore, I will be discussing how loneliness affects all age groups, but will be focusing on the age groups that are more capable of solo travel.

For starters, according to Ami Rokach, 38% of third to sixth graders reported having experienced loneliness in school (Rokach). Although children are unable to participate in solo travel, I believe that if people experience loneliness in their childhood, especially in their school environment which is meant to encourage positive socialization, it could affect if and how they experience loneliness in their adulthood. Rokach continues her studies by stating that when asked how their loneliness felt, these children indicated that it was associated with peer exclusion, poorer friendship quality, and school avoidance (Rokach).

Contributing to Rokach's focus on loneliness in children is Carla Sacchi and Maria de Minzi's "Adolescent Loneliness Assessment" which develops a loneliness scale for adolescents to assess their perceptions of the quality of their relationships with parents and peers. It provides each participant with a 20-item scale and instructs them to rate each item as either O ("I often

feel this way”), S (“I sometimes feel this way”), R (“I rarely feel this way”), or N (“I never feel this way”) (Sacchi and de Minzi). Sacchi and de Minzi administered the assessment to 1,233 Argentine secondary school students, aged 13-16 years. The results of the assessment concluded that four factors – peer rejection, family deficits and parent rejection, personal inadequacy, and significant separation – accounted for 43.13% of the variance.

It can be suggested that people who experience any or a combination of these four factors in their childhood will more easily succumb to the feeling of loneliness if they experience the factors in their adulthood. First focusing on university students, Rokach correlates loneliness in this age group to loneliness in children. She begins this argument by discussing how college students tend to report increased levels of loneliness; this is typically the result of students who are becoming more independent, who may feel disengaged from their families, and/or who are operating in a new environment (Rokach). Rokach essentially states that children who were not taught to properly cope with loneliness or to appreciate the benefits of solitude will have a much more difficult transition into university or adulthood compared to children who were.

Loneliness appears to be most apparent in adults. This may be because there is a multitude of potential causes of loneliness in one’s adulthood, such as the pressure of marriage, living alone, finding a job, expanding a family, etc. Many adults are dependent on these factors during this age, and if their expectations of the factors are not met, it could potentially lead them to feelings of loneliness. According to *Psychology Today*, loneliness in adults tends to have profound results as loneliness is a major precipitant of depression and alcoholism (Marano). It is also during this age that loneliness appears to be the cause of a range of medical problems, some of which do not appear until later in life.

Another age group that tends to gravitate towards loneliness is elders. According to a study conducted by the University of California, San Francisco, 18% of seniors live alone and 43% report feeling lonely on a regular basis (Botek). For the most part, loneliness in elders is heavily dependent on the quality of their relationships. During this time in a person's life, it is more common to experience the death of loved ones, to experience more medical issues, and to even feel abandonment when placed in nursing or retirement homes, among many other factors. This loneliness can lead to depression and increased health problems. The study conducted by UCSF also found that, "people 60 years and older who reported feeling lonely saw a 45% increase in their risk for death and isolated elders had a 59% greater risk of mental and physical decline" (Botek).

Segrin, Burke, and Badger, additional authors in *The Correlates of Loneliness*, continue the discussion of the physical effects of loneliness on a person. Although I am focusing my studies on the psychological effects of the emotion, it is important to understand how loneliness can affect a person physically as well. These authors state that "abundant research evidence indicates that loneliness represents a risk for poor cardiovascular fitness, poor immune functioning, psychological and physical health complications associated with cancer, chronic illness, and all-cause mortality" (Rokach). According to the authors, stress tends to be one of the core pathways from loneliness to disease. This ties into loneliness anxiety, which is the fear of feeling lonely; those who suffer from this form of anxiety tend to be more stressed, which can initiate as well as complicate a wide range of health problems.

With an understanding of what loneliness is and how it can affect people both physically and mentally, John Cacioppo's book, titled *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection*, provides a further understanding of the psychology of loneliness. This book focuses

on the scientific studies of the causes, nature, and consequences of loneliness and social connection from an institutional, disciplinary, and international boundary and includes analyzed research in an extensive number of fields, including genetic, behavioral, social psychological, and demographic (Cacioppo). All of this research leads to one general idea: that humans are social beings who typically require some sort of a social connection.

Cacioppo begins his argument by stating that “when people are asked what pleasures contribute most to happiness, the overwhelming majority rate love, intimacy, and social affiliation above all” (Cacioppo). This evidence is supported by society’s common desire to connect with others. For example, it is generally understood that many people are afraid of never falling in love, which they believe may be the deciding factor on their ultimate happiness. But is the failure to find love or to connect to others on a physiological level what leads to what we understand loneliness to be? Cacioppo argues yes.

His research demonstrates that the culprit behind loneliness is not usually being literally alone, but the subjective experience known as loneliness (Cacioppo). He believes that regardless of whether a person is at home with their family, working in an office crowded with bright and attractive young people, or sitting alone in a hotel room, chronic feelings of isolation can occur at any point, anywhere. This argument provides the basis for a correlation between the psychology of loneliness and the hesitation for people to participate in solo travel. People may not be afraid of being physically alone, but they may be afraid of feeling alone. That is the difference.

Cacioppo continues this idea of humans being inherently social beings by describing the nature of loneliness. He relates this feeling to physical pain, stating that, “physical pain protects the individual from physical dangers while social pain, or loneliness, evolved to protect the individual from the danger of remaining isolated” (Cacioppo). According to Cacioppo, feeling

lonely at any moment simply means that you are human; it is only when someone feels lonely consistently that they can begin to suffer from a self-reinforcing loop of negative thoughts, sensations, and behaviors. But what causes this psychological feeling?

Cacioppo argues that the problem of loneliness stems from three major factors: the level of vulnerability to social disconnection, the ability to self-regulate the emotions associated with feeling isolated, and the mental representations and expectations of others (Cacioppo). Each of these factors can affect individuals in very different manners as human variation in the desire for connection is very broad. For example, regarding the level of vulnerability to social disconnection, Cacioppo claims that we inherit a certain level of need for social inclusion from our parents, like how we inherit body types and a basic level of intelligence (Cacioppo). This factor is greatly influenced by the environment in which a person is raised and helps to determine if an individual's need for connection is being met. If that need is not being met, it can result in the feeling of loneliness.

Regarding the ability to self-regulate the emotions associated with feeling isolated, Cacioppo claims that "successful self-regulation means being able to cope with challenges while remaining on a fairly even keel- not just outwardly, but deep inside" (Cacioppo). When individuals are unable to manage these challenges and emotions, the feelings of isolation become persistent and increase in magnitude. It is almost like a ripple effect; once an individual is unable to regulate initial feelings of isolation, he or she becomes vulnerable to various other stressors that only increase these feelings. This is what leads to loneliness.

Of the three factors that Cacioppo claims to cause loneliness, the third and final one is the most intriguing: the mental representations and expectations of others. Cacioppo states, "when loneliness takes hold, the way we see ourselves and others, along with the kinds of responses we

expect from others, are heavily influenced by both our feelings of unhappiness and our impaired ability to self-regulate” (Cacioppo). Some individuals expect consistent reassurance and feel as if they must constantly be surrounded by loved ones to be happy; and if these expectations are not met, that is when they typically begin to feel isolated and lonely. Meanwhile, others are extremely dependent on their “alone time” and do not have as strong expectations of their social connections, and therefore tend not to as easily succumb to the feelings of isolation. Again, these mental expectations vary greatly from person to person but can be an important influence in the psychology of loneliness.

This idea of what causes the feeling of loneliness leads to the next source that I will consider: Thomas Dumm’s research regarding the central question of “what does it mean to be lonely?” (Dumm). In his research, Dumm talks about what is beyond the social circumstances of loneliness and delves into the deeper forces that shape humans’ very own existence as modern individuals. He suggests the opposite of Cacioppo: that humans are fundamentally lonely. However, he focuses this claim on not how we can overcome loneliness, but how we can re-inhabit it into a better way of living.

He begins his argument by focusing on one’s being. In this section of his book, titled “Loneliness as a Way of Life”, he states that in today’s modern world, most individuals tend to be more interested in how they are rather than who they are (Dumm). He continues by essentially saying that people are afraid of being alone because they are hesitant to rely on themselves for happiness, but there is no escaping one’s self. Everyone is expected to know themselves best, but many people are pushing that expectation onto others, therefore relying on companions and loved ones to keep them from isolation (Dumm). This, in turn, is what truly leads to loneliness. It is one of the reasons why I believe that some may have no desire to travel alone; they may be

afraid of relying on themselves for happiness and they feel as if they must be surrounded by others to feel that emotion.

Dumm continues his argument by stating, “for being alone is not only the worst we can experience; it is also the inevitable moment of some of our greatest experiences. It teaches us how to become who we are” (Dumm). I constantly ask myself, “how can we expect to fully give ourselves to someone, when we don’t fully understand who we truly are?” This is something that I believe many struggle with. It seems as if today, too many people do not know themselves without relying on someone else. For example, I suspect that many individuals are too reliant on a significant other to be able to feel like themselves; they are too reliant on someone else to make them feel whole. Dumm contributes to this belief by stating that this reliance is what leads to a deep-rooted loneliness in people who experience the loss of a loved one (Dumm).

When describing the fear associated with being alone, Dumm presents his own personal experiences to further develop his argument. For example, he states that, “I focus on the trauma and pain of the experience of deep isolation, a state of a certain kind of despair, rather than the greater pleasures of solitude and self-reliance” (Dumm). It can be argued that most people would agree with this statement and live their lives in this way. This sort of loneliness that many fear all too often is marked when a person registers the death of another, when someone ceases to be connected to the things that surround them, and when an individual notices that they somehow have become something that they no longer recognize as themselves (Dumm). According to Dumm, however, there are ways to re-inhabit this fear and this inherent loneliness into a better way of living.

For starters, an individual must establish a certain distance from their companions and their distractions to think more clearly about what it is that they are seeking from someone else

(Dumm). They must not go so far as to create a fatal separation from others, but is it necessary for them to understand the dangers that accompany separating themselves from their loved ones. This is what ties into a person's reliance on others for happiness. By truly understanding what a person's loved ones mean to them and how much they need them in their lives, they can work on uniting their self-reliance with the reliance on others.

Another suggestion that Dumm offers to re-inhabit one's loneliness is to allow for it to take part in a person's greatest passions by simply accepting that the emotion is present and using it positively to support one's ardor. Dumm uses his own personal example of his writing. He says that after his wife passed, he did not think that he would ever be able to properly communicate his emotions nor draw upon his own experiences when writing. However, he soon learned that, "it is through the process of discovery, available to us through the use of our language, that it becomes possible to imagine a way forward, toward a continuous becoming, another turn" (Dumm). This sort of discovery can also be realized through different forms of art, for example. A person can express their loneliness using illustration, dance, song, etc. The communication of this emotion is what will positively impact a person and allow for them to accept it and re-inhabit it.

The last piece of advice Dumm offers is another form of acceptance. In this, he admits that an inherent loneliness will always be a part of oneself as it is an elemental component of being human. However, he states that, "as long as we continue to exist, we may also come to realize that as alone as we are, we are not only alone" (Dumm). Human beings are so much more than a single defining factor. If an individual can accept loneliness as one of their fundamental emotions, it will not possess them; it will not be able to determine their every move and their every thought. As Dumm states in the final sentence of his book, "that we do not know our next

step does not mean that we are lost; it only means that we have yet to find ourselves” (Dumm). If people do not allow for the fear of loneliness to dictate what they do with themselves, that’s when they can truly discover who they are, and this discovery can be facilitated by the act of traveling alone.

In summation, when defining the psychology of loneliness, an understanding of the emotion predominately comes from K.D.M Snell, Ami Rokach, John Cacioppo and Thomas Dumm. Their research is centrally focused on what loneliness is, how it affects people both physically and mentally, and how it can be re-inhabited to positively impact a person’s life. In the following sections I will look at the market for solo travel and the desire to travel alone. I will utilize my understanding of the psychology of loneliness to research a potential correlation between loneliness and an individual’s decision to participate in solo travel.

The Market for Solo Travelers

The act of solo traveling has experienced an immense growth in the past decade. For example, G Adventures, a popular small group travel agency, claims that it has seen a 134% increase in solo travelers since 2008 with solo travelers making up 40% of their total travelers (Sendecki). Correspondingly, roughly one in four people say they will travel solo in 2018, according to a survey by marketing firm MMGY Global (“Solo Travel Statistics and Data”). With such a significant increase in the desire to travel alone, I seek to understand the market for solo travelers, including destinations that cater to those traveling alone, an analysis of solo travelers, and what differences men and women face when traveling alone. Although it is typically understood that most people travel with another person or in a group, the market is changing, and I will explore how the travel-tourism industry is accommodating to the needs of solo travelers.

According to *Solo Traveler World*, between August 2015 and August 2017, the number of searches on Google for solo traveler increased by 58% (“Reach the Solo Travel Market”). Today, if a person simply types “solo travel” into the Google search engine, they will receive over 89 million results. These results include blog posts from people who have traveled alone, news articles featuring tips for solo travelers, the best destinations to travel alone to, articles specifically geared towards female solo travelers, and additional sources of information regarding the topic. Within the results are also several advertisements for potential solo travelers including postings for solo cabins on cruise lines, books on solo traveling, luxury travel groups, tours for solo travelers, and many more.

One of the most interesting developments in the market for solo travelers has been the addition of single cabins on cruise ships. Many cruise ships, especially those that have been

renovated or began sailing in the past decade, offer single cabins for solo travelers. The cruise line industry has gained an understanding of the increase in solo travelers and has actively worked to accommodate the changing market. Although this change is a significant development in the market for solo travelers, it is still developing and there are still many issues with solo cabins. For example, when considering the price of a solo cabin, the general understanding is that those cabins start out priced higher than the per-person rate for a double-occupancy stateroom, but lower than the rate for a single person booking a double-occupancy stateroom. So, although cruise lines are offering solo cabins, in most cases, it is cheaper for a person to travel with someone else in a double-occupancy room.

While the price of solo cabins are not as good of a deal as one would like to presume, there are still several cruise lines that are actively trying to market their ships for the solo traveler. The best example of this is Norwegian Cruise Lines, which has been named a leader in the industry for solo travelers by *Cruise Critic* (Buchanan). This is because Norwegian Cruise Line's Norwegian Epic was the first ship in its fleet to feature studio cabins (solo cabins) targeted at and priced for solo travelers in 2010. Since then, a multitude of cruise lines have followed suit and renovated or built solo cabins that can accommodate the needs of those traveling alone. Norwegian Cruise lines continued this trend by increasing the number of studio cabins on four of their other ship's to as high as 82 studio units (Buchanan). The cruise line has also been named an industry leader because of its introduction of a Studio Lounge, which is an exclusive, shared social space that cruisers who are staying in the studio cabins have access to. This lounge includes large-screen TVs, coffee makers, a bar during certain hours of the day, and daily hosted pre-dinner gatherings. This is a way for solo travelers to connect and meet other people who are traveling alone and is a notable development in the market for solo travelers.

For those traveling on land, hostels are a great form of accommodation for a solo traveler. Traveling alone may be all about solitude and withdrawal from society for some, but for most people, solo travel is about the opportunities to meet locals, other travelers, and to simply enjoy the journey. Hostels provide many opportunities for travelers to meet one another, learn from them, share experiences, and possibly develop friendships. They can allow for a person to travel alone, without feeling alone. Hostels also typically market their property to solo travelers.

Those who stay in hostels can usually choose between a shared or private room and between a co-ed or single-sex room. Of course, price varies greatly for hostels depending on geographical location, location within the city and what attractions are near it, the type of room, etc., but generally, a solo traveler is able to book a hostel for cheaper than a hotel. Hostels also typically focus on an experience-based accommodation style; they may offer game nights, bars, a lounge area, libraries, guest kitchens, meet and greet events, and many more. This may be why hostels are so popular among solo travelers, especially among millennials. According to the findings of “The Global Hostel Marketplace 2014-2018”, more than 70% of hostel travelers are millennials and approximately 72% of all U.S. hostel travelers are solo travelers (“Report: Millennial Travelers...”). Although many hostels limit themselves to a certain age group, some do accept travelers of any age. However, B&Bs and boutique hotels are still great options for any solo traveler to gain a unique experience in a destination as opposed to staying in a general hotel.

Regarding where a solo traveler should go, *Fodor's Travel* has come up with a list of 15 of the world's best destinations for solo travelers. This list includes cities within Iceland, France, Indonesia, Thailand, Spain, Croatia, Ireland, New Zealand, Chile, Kenya, Canada, Belize, Japan and the U.S. (Shah). Upon further research, several other online sources listed many of these destinations as the most accommodating for solo travelers as well. This list takes into

consideration the safety of the destinations, the ease of traveling around, and how traveler-friendly each destination is. Fodor's Travel also lists insider tips for solo travelers for each of the 15 destinations. Lists such as these ones can be extremely helpful for solo travelers when picking a destination to go to as typically language barriers, safety, and traveler-friendly characteristics can play a considerable role for anyone who is traveling alone and must be thoroughly considered.

To fully understand the market for solo travelers, it is important to understand who solo travelers are. I would like to focus on Christian Laesser's study, which analyzes solo travel and offers a conceptual framework of solo travelers- the type of person they are and what type of traveling they are doing. The conceptual model of the study incorporates four types of solo travel which is formed by departure status and arrival status. The departure status compares a single, one-person household to a collective, multi-person household. The arrival status compares solo travel to group travel (Laesser).

To collect the data of the study, Laesser administered surveys and written interviews to a sampled number of 3,050 households and all their members during the entire year of 2004. All interviews came from a sample of households located in the German and French-speaking part of Switzerland, and Laesser states that the data is representative in terms of size of household, age, gender, income, education, and profession (Laesser). Only cases with someone over the age of 18 were included when the data was analyzed.

The results of the study revealed some interesting differences between the four types of solo travel following the conceptual model. Regarding socio-demographic variables, Laesser found that travelers who came from a single household, whether traveling with a group of other people or not, tended to be older females; meanwhile, travelers who did not live alone but

traveled alone tended to be younger males (Laesser). Laesser also found that solo travelers who participated in group travel, rather than being solo the entire trip, were typically either students or well-educated individuals who held professional positions.

Regarding personality traits and motivations, Laesser discovered that there were significant differences between people who traveled alone versus people who participated in group travel. According to the results of the study, people who traveled solo tended to be more empathic, emotional and imaginative, whereas those who traveled in a group could be described as doers and lovers of material comfort (Laesser). In terms of motivation for traveling, the data revealed that of the four groups, solo travelers who came from a single household and traveled alone were the only group that traveled for rest and relaxation. All three other groups traveled for curious hedonism and social matters (Laesser).

The last part of Laesser's findings in this study relates to the types of trips that solo travelers take. I find these observations to be most compelling as each of the four groups seemingly participated in different types of trips. According to the study, people who came from a single household and traveled alone predominantly visited friends and relatives; people who came from a single household and traveled in a group were more often found on sightseeing trips/tours; those who did not live alone but traveled alone undertook primarily city and shopping trips as well as cruises and breaks in warm areas; and lastly, those who did not live alone but took off by themselves to travel as part of a group were likely to be found at events and sports holidays (Laesser).

Other research has found that solo travelers tend to have certain characteristics. According to Georgina Smith, a "Travel Experience" writer for *Saga Magazine*, solo travelers often have a reasonable sense of self-confidence, a penchant for adventure, are content with their

own company, are independent and spontaneous, and are often very sociable (Smith). Although solo travelers do not have to possess any or all of the qualities, it is more often than not that a person traveling alone is equipped with these characteristics. Of the characteristics listed, having a reasonable sense of self-confidence is the most necessary. For a person to travel alone, they must have a feeling of trust in their own abilities, qualities, and judgement, or else it is more likely that they will not enjoy their time traveling and any time and money spent on the trip would be squandered.

Another important factor that must be taken into consideration when classifying the solo traveler, is the difference between men and women. While researching about the market for solo travelers, it became apparent that most of the articles published were geared towards women- “Tips for the Solo Female Traveler”, “Where can Women Solo Travelers Go?”, “The Twenty Best Destinations for Solo Female Traveler”- just to name a few of the articles. Why is there such a focus on the female solo traveler? The most obvious answer would be the safety concerns that surround a solo female as opposed to a solo male when traveling abroad. Of course, there are published articles that focus on male solo travelers; however, many of those articles specifically target men who are not in a relationship. Meanwhile, almost none of the articles that focus on solo female travelers mentions anything concerning the woman’s relationship status.

Although both males and females may experience some degree of safety concerns or difficulties when traveling solo, it is typically more common for females to be treated differently than men when they are alone. This is simply because males generally do not have to worry as often about certain dangers, such as kidnapping, rape, sexual harassment, etc. It is much more common to hear about these incidents being experienced by females as compared to males. This difference in traveling conditions has led to the stigma that women traveling without a

companion is dangerous and frowned upon, whereas there is typically no judgment surrounding a male who is traveling alone.

However, this stigma has not prevented many women from traveling alone. In fact, many articles and novels specifically encouraged women to travel alone and gave tips on how to stay safe during their time abroad. An example of this is Sunni Dawson's book, *Kicking Ass on the Road: The Ultimate Guide for the Solo Woman Traveler*. In this book, Dawson, who spent five years of her life traveling the world with just a backpack filled with the essentials, provides insight regarding the benefits and the disadvantages of traveling alone as a woman (Dawson). She recounts her experiences of traveling through different countries, how she was treated, the few times in which men sexually harassed her, and overall tips on how women can "kick ass" whilst traveling alone.

Dawson is not the only writer who offers tips for solo female travelers. Countless other online articles and blogs provide tips and tricks as well. For example, *Forbes Magazine* posted an online article that offers six safety tips for the solo female traveler. These tips include doing your research, choosing a social accommodation, sharing your itinerary, using technology to your advantage, familiarizing yourself with the area, and exuding confidence while walking with purpose (Houghton). Although these tips can be shared with both male and female solo travelers, it is usually much more important for a solo woman traveler to keep these tips in mind when traveling abroad as they typically have more safety concerns to be aware of.

Of these six tips, the most emphasized one that seems to be repeatedly included in many online blogs and articles is "exude confidence and walk with purpose." As stated in the *Forbes* article, if a person is wandering around and appears to be lost or frightened, it is more common for them to attract unwanted attention (Houghton). Depending on where a person is traveling to,

it may be obvious that they are a tourist, which automatically can attract attention. However, if a person appears to be very confident and acts as if they know exactly where they are going, they are less likely to be targeted by someone with nefarious intentions. For someone who is lost and needs help with directions, one of the easiest ways to safely ask for help is to speak with a shop owner or a worker in a hotel or restaurant as opposed to a random stranger on the street.

Other tips that were listed by many online blogs and articles that are essential for solo women travelers include never telling anyone you don't know that you are traveling alone, drinking to enjoy yourself but not to get drunk, trying to arrive to a destination during the daylight, and not hesitating to spend extra money on safer accommodations. Again, these tips also apply to male solo travelers but typically should be more actively followed by the female solo traveler. These are simply precautions for women when traveling abroad to ensure that the traveler experiences a safe and fun trip.

With countless resources regarding where solo women travelers can go and how they can stay safe, it is no surprise that there has been an increase in the number of women traveling alone. According to *Condé Nast Traveler Magazine*, several travel and tour companies have seen significant increases in the number of solo female travelers who book through them (Lippe-McGraw). For example, REI Adventures, a tour company that focuses on outdoor activities, stated, "since 2010, women traveling with us has grown by 60%, and we continue to see this figure grow steadily each year. Last year alone, 58% of all our guests were women" (Lippe-McGraw). Another example is the small-group adventure travel company, Intrepid Travel, who reported a 35% increase in solo women booking trips in just the first few months of 2017 (Lippe-McGraw). Contributing to these statistics, according to a survey by Solitair Holidays, 72.4% of women are more likely to travel alone, compared to just 27.6% of men (Meades). Even with the

stigma that women traveling without a companion is dangerous and frowned upon, it is much more common for women to travel alone as compared to men.

Although most of the solo traveler based literature targets females and most of the solo travelers are female, there are still many resources for the male solo traveler. However, most of the online articles and blogs for men mention little about safety concerns and usually include a section dedicated to sexual activities. For example, *USA Today*, in an article titled “*Travel Advice for Single Men*,” dedicated a portion of its article to potential sex traps that men could fall into as well as the importance of practicing safe sex (Thyberg). The other pieces of advice regarded the use of taxis, the best accommodations, and tips for nightlife. Another online article, posted by *Solo Traveler*, listed “wrap it up” as one of its ten tips for solo male travelers, advising males to always carry a condom with them (Janice). Only one of their listed tips regarded safety: “know that you, too, are vulnerable to muggings” (Janice). All other tips were focused on how to make the most of the trip and what to pack. So, even though tips for solo travelers for both men and women touch on safety, it is apparent that it is much more extensive for female solo travelers.

The Desire to Travel Alone

With all the developments in the market for solo travelers, the desirability of traveling alone is higher than ever. However, there are still many individuals who have absolutely no desire to participate in solo travel. I theorize that this lack in desire correlates to the psychology of loneliness: those who are not willing to travel alone tend to experience loneliness more often than those who are willing to travel alone. This experience of loneliness results in a hesitation to solo travel as one may fear that they will be consumed by the emotion throughout the trip. For someone to have a desire to travel alone, they must be confident in themselves as well as the relationships they have with others, generally meaning that they should be happy and not experience loneliness in their everyday life.

To test my theory, I administered a survey to 106 people. This survey included the entire UCLA Loneliness Assessment as well as personal responses that questioned the participant's willingness to travel alone and individual reasons as to why or why not they would participate in solo travel. Of the 106 respondents, 38 participants were male, 66 participants were females, one individual was gender fluid, and one individual did not respond. It should also be noted that a majority of the participants, 74 of the 106, were between 20 and 29 years old, most likely a result of the survey being administered online. Six of the participants were between 30 and 39, six participants between 40 and 49, and the remaining 20 participants were all above the age of 50.

The UCLA Loneliness Assessment, similar to Carla Sacchi and Maria de Minzi's "Adolescent Loneliness Assessment" which was mentioned in the first section, is a 20-item scale designed to measure one's subjective feelings of loneliness as well as feelings of social isolation (Russell). Participants are asked to rate each question as either "Never" (1), "Rarely" (2), "Sometimes" (3), or "Often" (4). Once completed, each of the corresponding numbers to the

response are totaled to get a final score; note that nine of the 20 questions (those with an asterisk) are reversed scored. (See Appendix for the UCLA Loneliness Assessment)

When analyzing scores, it is assumed that higher scores indicate a greater feeling of loneliness. The lowest score a participant can receive is 20, which can be interpreted as having no consistent feelings of loneliness; these participants have strong relationships, are confident in themselves as well as those they surround themselves with, and they generally never feel alone. The highest score a participant can receive is 80, which can be interpreted as having consistent feelings of loneliness; these participants do not have a strong relationship with anyone in their life, they are not confident in themselves, and they feel alone all the time. This assessment is subjective and a definite diagnosis cannot be concluded from the results of the assessment, but a general inference of a person's loneliness can be analyzed by their resulting score.

The results of the 106 participants of the survey are as follows:

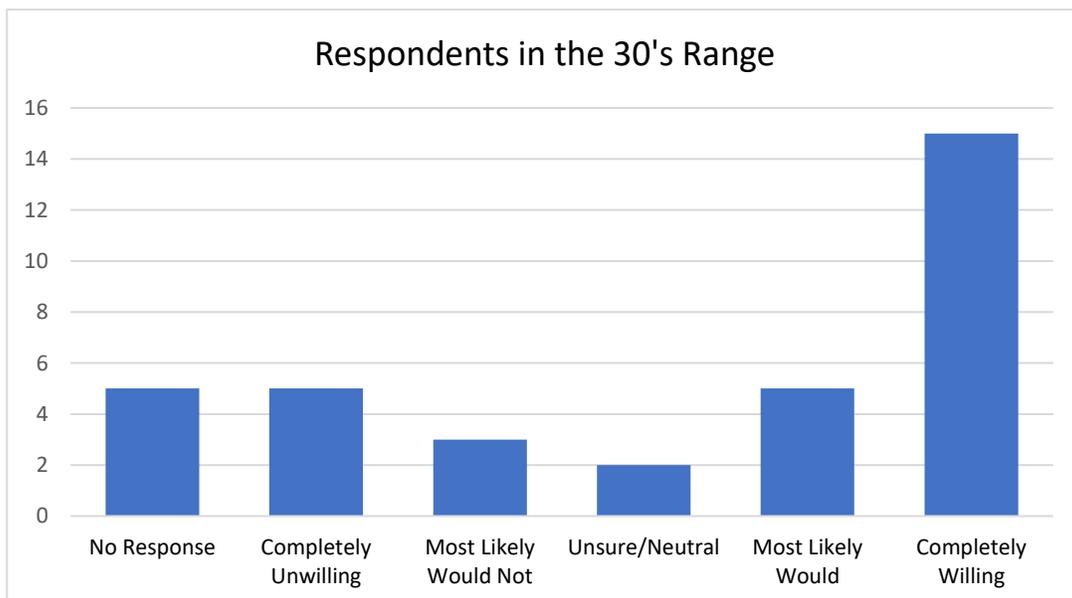
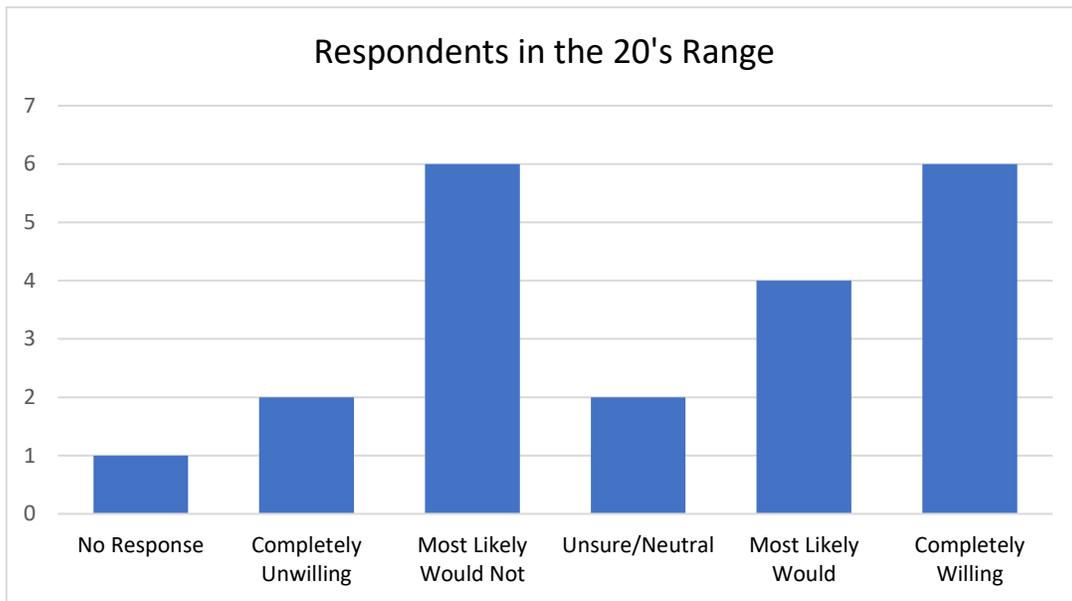
- 21 people scored in the 20's range
- 35 people scored in the 30's range
- 25 people scored in the 40's range
- 17 people scored in the 50's range
- 7 people scored in the 60's range
- 1 individual scored in the 70's range

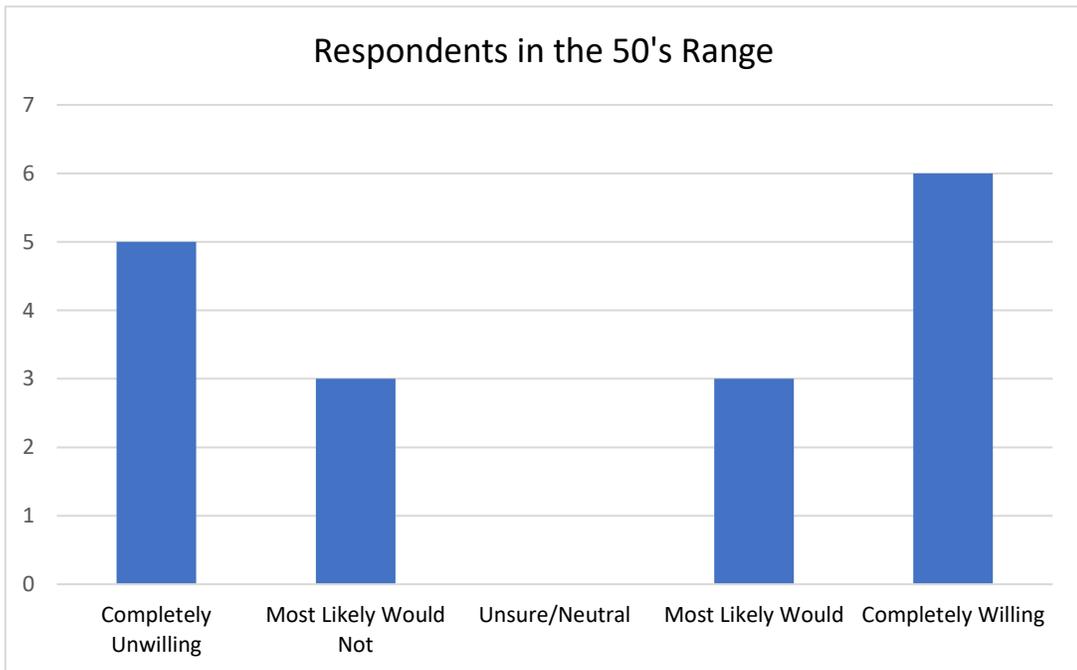
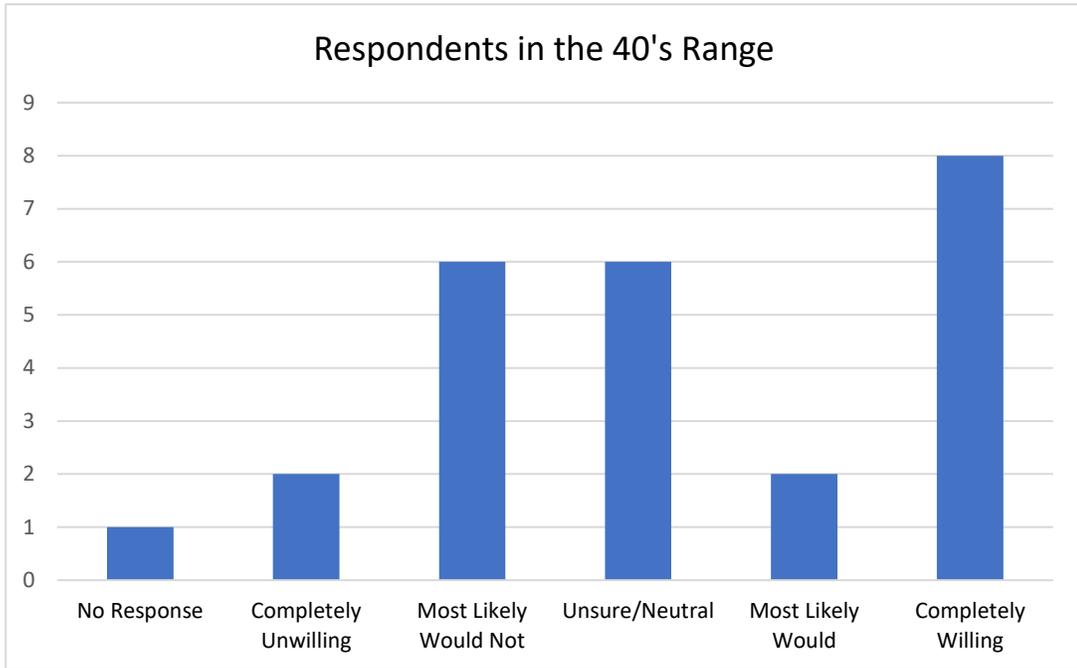
The lowest score of the UCLA Loneliness Assessment was 21, while the highest score was 70.

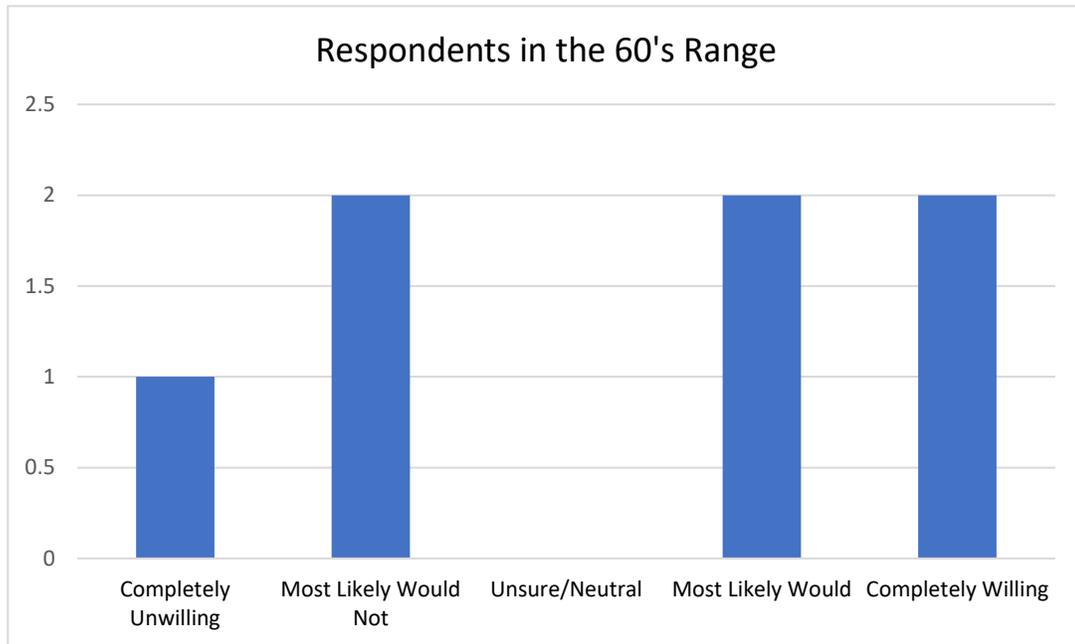
The average of the scores was 41, while the mode of the scores was 27, with 8 respondents scoring this number.

The next question asked in the survey was: "Please rate on a scale from 1-5 how willing you would be to travel to another country on a solo trip: 1= completely unwilling, 2= most likely

would not, 3= unsure/neutral, 4= most likely would, 5= completely willing”. It should be noted that of the 106 respondents, only 98 responded to this question. Of those 98, 15 answered “completely unwilling,” 20 answered “would most likely not,” 11 answered “unsure/neutral,” 16 answered “most likely would,” and 37 answered “completely willing.” When comparing the scores of the UCLA Loneliness Assessment to the responses of the willingness to travel to another country on a solo trip, the results are as follows:







- The one individual who scored in the 70's range responded with “unsure/neutral”

Based on the comparison between the willingness to solo travel and the scores of the UCLA Loneliness Assessment, no significant correspondence between the psychology of loneliness and the desire to travel alone was found. Despite my initial assumption that loneliness would play a major role in a person's willingness to travel alone, the data collected from my survey shows that there was a variety of willingness amongst each range in scores from the UCLA Loneliness Assessment. I believed that those who scored lower on the assessment would be more willing to solo travel and that those who scored higher on the assessment would be less willing; I was anticipating a clear distinction between the responses in the data I collected. However, there is no clear distinction between the highest ranges and the lowest ranges in terms of willingness to travel alone.

This leads me to believe that the desire to travel alone is based on each individual. In terms of loneliness, it may be possible that those who scored in the 20's range and indicated that they are completely unwilling to travel alone may have very strong relationships and would simply prefer to travel with their companions. Alternatively, it may be possible that the people who scored higher on the UCLA Loneliness Assessment and indicated that they are completely willing to travel alone may have accepted their loneliness and re-inhabited it into their everyday lifestyle, meaning that they are willing to fully welcome the act of solo travel.

When analyzing the data, the only range that had a notable majority was the 30's. Although the respondents who scored in the 30's range of the UCLA Loneliness Assessment cannot be classified as experiencing a definitive degree of loneliness, it can be assumed that these respondents have relatively reliable relationships, may have some doubts regarding themselves and/or their relationships, and to some level, feel loneliness in their life but it may not be consistent. With the largest number of respondents scoring in this range, it seems as if an average person can expect to score somewhere in or near the 30's when taking this assessment. When comparing the responses of the 30's range to the willingness to travel alone, this range had the highest percentage of respondents indicating that they are either completely willing or would most likely travel alone with 57.1%. If the participants who did not respond are excluded from the analysis, the percentage jumps to 66.7%.

Comparatively, 50% of respondents who scored in the 20's range indicated that they are either completely willing or would most likely travel alone, excluding the individual who did not respond. The 40's range did not have any majority despite the highest number of respondents answering completely willing. 52.9% of respondents in the 50's range indicated that they are either completely willing or would most likely travel alone, and lastly, 57.1% of respondents in

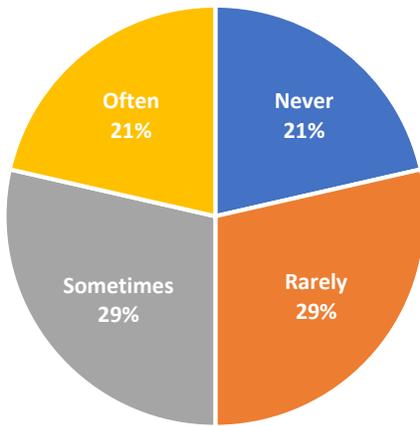
the 60's range also indicated that they would be willing to travel alone. Although no definite correlation between the psychology of loneliness and the desire to travel alone can be made, it can be noted that the desire to travel alone is relatively high in all ranges of loneliness.

Another aspect of the collected data that is significant is an individual's level of shyness compared to the willingness to solo travel. According to the *Personality and Individual Differences Journal*, shyness refers to an inhibition of expected social behavior, together with feelings of embarrassment and discomfort in social situations (Zhao, Jingjing, et al.). Numerous studies have analyzed and concluded a correlation between shyness and loneliness. For example, Craig Anderson and Lynn Arnoult concluded in a large-scale questionnaire study they conducted, that those who often feel shy, more easily succumb to the feelings of loneliness. As stated in their findings, "those suffering from shyness often avoid social situations and seldom attempt to learn or enact appropriate social behaviors while those suffering from loneliness often avoid the one-on-one situations that are necessary to develop close personal relationships" (Anderson, Arnoult). Seemingly, if an individual typically avoids social situations, they are more likely to avoid the situations which help develop strong relationships with others.

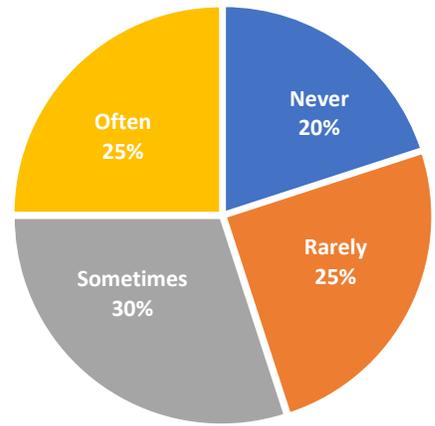
Likewise, a study conducted by Diane Ashe and Lynn McCutcheon, concluded that shy people demonstrated resistance in their emotion and attitude toward social interactions, which makes them reluctant to participate in social activities. This can lead to a strong sense of loneliness as they are unable to easily develop secure relationships with others (McCutcheon, Ashe). This reluctance to participate in social interactions and activities can play a substantial role in one's willingness and desire to travel alone. Regarding the survey I administered, findings of an individual's level of shyness compared to the willingness to solo travel support this claim.

One of the questions of the UCLA Loneliness Assessment was: “How often do you feel shy?” (Russell). Respondents were asked to indicate whether they feel shy often, sometimes, rarely, or never. Comparing these answers to the ratings of the willingness to travel alone, the results are as follows:

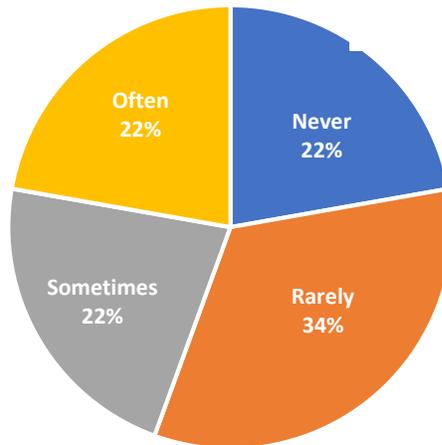
Completely Unwilling



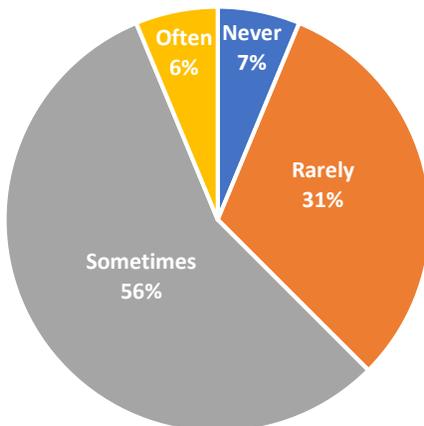
Most Likely Would Not



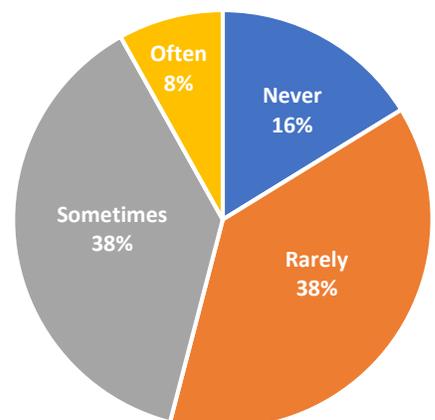
Unsure/Neutral



Most Likely Would



Completely Willing



As shown in the graphs, there is no significant difference between the responses under the categories of completely unwilling, most likely would not, and unsure/neutral. This essentially means that for those respondents who do not have a desire to travel alone, a sense of shyness does not play a major role in their willingness to participate in solo travel. However, for the respondents who do have a desire to travel alone, it can be concluded that the lack of a sense of shyness plays a major role in their willingness to travel alone. Regarding the respondents who indicated that they would most likely participate in solo travel, 56% marked that they only sometimes feel shy while 31% marked that they rarely feel shy. Comparatively, for those respondents who indicated that they are completely willing to travel alone, 38% marked only sometimes when asked how often they feel shy, and an additional 38% marked that they rarely feel shy.

The next section of the survey focused on individual responses. The first question asked, “Have you ever traveled to a different country alone? If you have, please describe your reasons for traveling alone, and describe your overall experience with traveling alone in a few sentences.” 22 of the 106 participants of the survey answered this question by indicating that they have traveled alone in the past. When asked about their experience, nine of the respondents mentioned something regarding the available time to self-reflect and learn more about themselves. One respondent wrote, “I recently traveled a portion of a trip to Southeast Asia alone. Traveling alone helped me identify what I do and do not like during an abroad experience. I wanted this individual time to expand my understanding of myself. My overall experience was better than a group experience because it allowed me to be free and have my own schedule.” Arguably, the two biggest benefits to traveling alone is the freedom to do as one pleases as well as the ability to learn more about oneself.

Of the 22 respondents who indicated that they have traveled alone in the past, 15 of them marked that they are completely willing to travel alone. Two of the respondents marked that they are most likely willing to travel alone. One individual marked that they are unsure/neutral. One individual marked that they would most likely not be willing to travel alone and another individual marked that they are completely unwilling to travel alone. Two of the respondents did not rate their willingness to solo travel. When asked about their experience with traveling alone, the individual who marked 'most likely not willing to travel alone' stated, "I traveled alone to get an idea of who I am, experience new things, and learn about my family present and past. My overall experience became an overwhelming feeling of isolation and being lonely." The individual who marked that they are completely unwilling to travel alone wrote, "I've traveled alone once to my home country. I was 20 at the time. The whole time waiting at the airport and being on the plane I felt uneasy. It was only better once I was with my family later in the trip. Don't think I would ever go by myself if I didn't know anyone."

Although a large majority of those who have traveled alone before had a great experience and are completely willing to travel alone again, it is important to note those who did not enjoy their experience and would not participate in solo travel again. This supports my earlier claim that the desire to travel alone is characterized by individualism. It is also important to note that of the 22 respondents who indicated that they have traveled alone in the past, all the ranges of the UCLA Loneliness Assessment scores were represented; four of the individuals scored in the 20's range, ten of the individuals scored in the 30's range, three of the individuals scored in the 40's range, three of the individuals scored in the 50's range, and two of the individuals scored in the 60's range. Although it is possible that the participant's degree of loneliness has altered since

their time solo traveling, this data can further prove that there is no definite correlation between the psychology of loneliness and the willingness to travel alone.

The next two questions that were asked in the survey were: “If you would consider traveling alone, please describe in a few sentences why you would like to travel alone” and “If you would not consider traveling alone, please describe in a few sentences why you would not like to travel alone.” Regarding the first question, 52 respondents listed personal reasons as to why they would consider traveling alone. On the contrary, 37 respondents listed personal reasons as to why they would not consider traveling alone.

In terms of those who responded with why they would consider traveling alone, an overwhelming 31 individuals wrote something regarding the ability to see and do as one pleases with the independence of solo travel. As one participant wrote, “You get to experience a new place at your own pace and do the activities you want to do without having to worry about whether the person you’re with would enjoy it or not.” Other reasons listed as to why people would be willing to travel alone include the ability to meet new people, the opportunity to travel in general, to spend quality time with oneself, to simply gain a new experience of doing something alone, to test one’s self-sufficiency, to get out of one’s comfort zone, and because it is easier to plan a trip for one person.

In terms of those who responded with why they would not consider traveling alone, 14 individuals wrote that they would want to share the experience with someone. Many of those individuals specifically mentioned their family members, especially their spouse, expressing that they would prefer to travel to another country with their significant other to gain that experience together. Another common reason that was listed by individuals who responded to this question was the concern for safety. Interestingly enough, all eight respondents who specifically

mentioned safety concerns as one of the reasons why they would not consider traveling alone were all females. This data further proves my prior research regarding the differences in males and females when traveling alone. As mentioned when analyzing the market for solo travelers, females typically have more safety concerns when traveling alone and this could potentially influence their desire to solo travel. It should also be noted that 12 of the 37 respondents who answered this question were male, none of whom listed safety as one of their reasons.

Other reasons that were listed as to why individuals would not consider traveling alone include not being able to make friends easily, the comfort of being surrounded by familiar faces, feelings of shyness, the fear of feeling alone or isolated, the cost of traveling alone, and not being able to trust oneself with plans or directions. Though there may not be a definite correlation between loneliness and the desire for solo travel, it should be noted that in certain individuals, the fear of feeling alone or being isolated does influence their willingness to travel alone. As one respondent wrote, "I do not like to feel alone. I would feel lost without someone there with me." This could possibly mean that regardless of if a person consistently experiences loneliness or not, the fear of experiencing loneliness at all could affect an individual's decision and desire to participate in solo travel.

What can be concluded from the data collected in this survey is that there does not seem to be a definite correspondence between the psychology of loneliness and the desire to travel alone, despite my initial assumption that loneliness would play a major role in a person's willingness to solo travel. I am led to believe that the desire to travel alone is based on individual characteristics and may not be heavily influenced by the degree of loneliness one may feel. However, it can be concluded that for those individuals who would most likely participate in solo travel or are completely willing to, a common characteristic is the lack of frequently feeling shy.

It can also be deduced that for those individuals who have already participated in solo travel, a majority of them would travel alone again due to the freedom experienced and the available time to learn more about oneself. Individuals who indicated that they would consider traveling alone had very similar reasoning while individuals who indicated that they would not consider traveling alone listed reasons such as safety concerns, wanting to share the experience with another, and the fear of feeling alone.

In the following section, I reflect on my own experience with solo travel. In this, I will take into consideration the reasons listed by the participants of my survey regarding why or why not they would consider traveling alone and I support or counter their arguments with my own personal experiences. I also review some of the research I collected on the market for solo travelers and draw upon my own adventures of traveling alone to further support an understanding of this growing market.

Solo Travel Experience

During the summer of 2017, I traveled extensively by myself for a period of one month. My reasoning for traveling alone was simply because I had the time off, enough money saved, and the desire to travel. There was no one else in my life who would've been able to dedicate the time and money to traveling with me, so I decided to do it alone; I didn't want the fear of solo travel to stop me from seeing parts of the world that I had not yet seen. Traveling alone wouldn't have been my first choice, but it was a viable option.

The most surprising aspect of traveling alone was the response I received from others when I told them that I would be or had already participated in solo travel. Many were amazed that as a young female (I was 21 at the time), I was so willing to travel alone; they told me that I was brave. That seemed to be a recurring adjective used to describe me, which eventually led me to ask myself: "Am I considered brave because of safety concerns, or am I considered brave because others are afraid of being alone?" Upon further consideration, I decided that I wanted to see if the psychology of loneliness played a major role in one's desire to solo travel. This keenness to explore a potential correlation between the two is what led to my research regarding the topic.

Although my findings did not prove that there is a definite correlation between loneliness and the desire to travel alone, I found other aspects of my research to be compelling as they were relatable to my personal experience of solo travel. For example, the increase in solo travelers and the developing market for it is what initially led to my willingness to travel alone. Particularly, my discovery of social media postings of millennials backpacking abroad piqued my interest in the manner. It seemed as if traveling alone was becoming the newest trend. I would see random

strangers post online about their experience of packing only the essentials and traveling for long periods of time by themselves; it was inspiring.

When I had the opportunity to do as they had done, I began researching European hostels. This furthered my excitement to travel as many of the hostels specifically targeted young adults traveling alone and were priced accordingly. During my travels, most of the hostels that I stayed in were very experience-based and included full bars and lounges, and usually had some sort of activity to partake in throughout the day. For me, the hostels I stayed in positively impacted my overall experience of solo travel because each of them provided me with a direct connection to other solo travelers, and I met people from all over the world. Looking back on my experience, I believe that if I had stayed in hotel rooms by myself throughout my travels, I would've had a much different experience and would have been limited in opportunities to meet others.

Another part of my research that I found to be enthralling regarded aspects of the solo traveler, where they go and what their characteristics are. As mentioned in the second section, *Fodor's Travel* released a list of the world's best destinations for solo travelers, taking into consideration the safety of the destinations, the ease of traveling around, and how traveler-friendly each destination is (Shah). Of the 15 locations listed, I traveled to three of them during my solo trip- Iceland, France, and Ireland. The other countries I traveled to included England, Wales, Holland, and Belgium. Although I did not research the best destinations for solo travelers beforehand, I chose destinations that I was interested in exploring and were close in proximity. I centrally focused my time in the major cities of these countries as I expected them to be more traveler-friendly and much easier to get around on my own.

Regarding characteristics of a solo traveler, Georgina Smith, a "Travel Experience" writer for *Saga Magazine*, says that solo travelers often have a reasonable sense of self-

confidence, a penchant for adventure, are content with their own company, are independent and spontaneous, and are often very sociable (Smith). I agree with this statement as I believe that is essential for someone traveling alone to possess most, if not all, of these characteristics. One of the reasons that I was so willing to travel alone was because I believed that I had what it takes. I have a fervent passion for adventure, I've always been content with my own company, and I felt that I had enough confidence to handle all the responsibilities of traveling alone. Without these characteristics, I don't think I would have been as willing to solo travel and I would have hesitated to partake in the opportunity.

One of the reasons why so many people characterized me as brave when I described my solo travel experience was because of my age and gender. As discussed earlier, most online articles and blogs discussing solo travel specifically target females as they typically have more safety concerns. Prior to my travels, I was concerned about whether I would be safe or not. However, I didn't want the general fear of safety to prevent me from traveling alone; rather, I let it motivate me during my travels to constantly be aware of my surroundings and to not get into any situation that I wasn't comfortable with. Prior to my departure, I took a few self-defense classes (required by my mother) to better prepare myself to handle any unwelcome situation. I also read Sunni Dawson's *Kicking Ass on the Road: The Ultimate Guide for the Solo Woman Traveler* on the plane ride to Iceland, which was the first country I was traveling to. Luckily, I didn't experience any incidents where I needed to utilize the moves I learned in the self-defense classes. There were several times where men made sexual remarks to me and a part of me believes that I experienced it more often than usual because I was alone, but it was never anything too concerning.

During my travels, I always took precautions to be as safe as possible. My family and best friend were all connected to an app that had every detail of my itinerary, so that they knew where I was staying and what my flights were throughout my entire trip. All the hostels I stayed in had good reviews, specifically focusing on the safety of the accommodation. I had an international phone plan so I could utilize those services while I was out and about, and most importantly, I always walked with purpose. As discussed earlier, one of the best tips I received prior to my travels was to exude confidence and walk with purpose. I tried my best to never look lost and helpless and I truly think that it assisted me in not being targeted or attracting unwanted attention. All in all, there was rarely a time when I did not feel safe during my travels and I'm glad that I did not allow for any safety concerns to hinder my decision to travel alone.

Regarding my findings through the survey I distributed, I was intrigued by the results of the correlation between how often a person feels shy and how willing they are to travel alone. Prior to my solo travels, I would have answered the question of "how often do you feel shy?" with either "often" or "sometimes." I was never the person to randomly initiate a conversation with a stranger. I always found it to be awkward to say hi to someone I didn't know. That was one of the reasons why I wanted to try solo travel; I wanted to get out of my comfort zone and essentially be forced to interact with strangers. At first it was difficult, but I soon realized that there was no harm in simply saying hi to someone and introducing myself. Because of this, I met so many diverse people with incredible stories. Some people I only spoke to for a short time, others for an hour or two, and there was even one person I ended up spending the entire day with. After my travels, I would answer the question of "how often do you feel shy?" with either "never" or "rarely," and I think that is one of the greatest things I took back with me.

I loved reading all the individual responses from the survey I distributed where people discussed why they would be willing to travel alone. Some of those reasons included the ability to see and do as one pleases, independence, the ability to meet new people, to spend quality time with oneself, to get out of one's comfort zone, and to test one's self-sufficiency. My favorite part of traveling alone was without a doubt the independence of being able to see and do whatever I wanted. Throughout my life, I've traveled extensively with my family of four. Of course, I'll forever be grateful for all those opportunities, but it is a completely different experience when you travel with an entire family as opposed to by yourself. With a family, you should take everyone's opinions and preferences into consideration when choosing an activity or even a destination. When solo traveling, the only opinion that matters is your own.

I must admit, there were some moments when I wished that I had my family or my best friend to share my experience with. However, I feel as if I was better able to utilize my time because I could see only what I wanted to. There was never any debate about the day's activities and that freedom was extremely enjoyable. All in all, I would most certainly participate in solo travel again and although not everyone may be cut out to travel alone, I believe that it is an adventure like no other and should be experienced by more people.

Appendix

Statement	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
*1. How often do you feel that you are "in tune" with the people around you?	1	2	3	4
2. How often do you feel that you lack companionship?	1	2	3	4
3. How often do you feel that there is no one you can turn to?	1	2	3	4
4. How often do you feel alone?	1	2	3	4
*5. How often do you feel part of a group of friends?	1	2	3	4
*6. How often do you feel that you have a lot in common with the people around you?	1	2	3	4
7. How often do you feel that you are no longer close to anyone?	1	2	3	4
8. How often do you feel that your interests and ideas are not shared by those around you?	1	2	3	4
*9. How often do you feel outgoing and friendly?	1	2	3	4
*10. How often do you feel close to people?	1	2	3	4
11. How often do you feel left out?	1	2	3	4
12. How often do you feel that your relationships with others are not meaningful?	1	2	3	4
13. How often do you feel that no one really knows you well?	1	2	3	4
14. How often do you feel isolated from others?	1	2	3	4
*15. How often do you feel you can find companionship when you want it?	1	2	3	4
*16. How often do you feel that there are people who really understand you?	1	2	3	4
17. How often do you feel shy?	1	2	3	4
18. How often do you feel that people are around you but not with you?	1	2	3	4
*19. How often do you feel that there are people you can talk to?	1	2	3	4
*20. How often do you feel that there are people you can turn to?	1	2	3	4

Works Cited

- Anderson, Craig A., and Lynn H. Arnoult. "Attributional Style and Everyday Problems in Living: Depression, Loneliness, and Shyness." *Social Cognition*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1985, pp. 16-35.
- Botek, Anne-Marie. "The Elder Loneliness Epidemic." *Loneliness Among The Elderly*, agingcare.com, 21 June 2012, agingcare.com/articles/loneliness-in-the-elderly-151549.htm.
- Buchanan, Gary. "10 Best Cruise Lines for Solo Travelers." *Cruise Critic*, 4 Oct. 2017, cruisecritic.com/articles/cfm?ID=419.
- Cacioppo, John T., and William Patrick. "Chapter 4: Selfish Genes, Social Animals." *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection*, Norton, 2009.
- Dawson, Sunni. *Kicking Ass on the Road: The Ultimate Guide for the Solo Woman Traveler*. Sunni Dawson, 2016.
- Dumm, Thomas L. *Loneliness as a Way of Life*. Harvard University Press, 2010.
- Houghton, Monica. "Safety Tips for Solo Female Travelers." *Forbes*, Forbes Magazine, 24. Nov. 2017, forbes.com/sites/monicahoughton/2017/11/24/safety-tips-for-solo-female-travelers/#6c15e1624fba.

Janice. "10 Tips for Men Traveling Alone." *Solo Traveler*, 28 Feb. 2017,
solotravelerworld.com/men-traveling-alone-10-tips/.

Laesser, Christian, et al. "Solo Travel: Explorative Insights from a Mature Market
(Switzerland)." *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, vol. 15, no. 3, 2009, pp. 217-227.,
doi:10.1177/1356766709104268.

Lippe-McGraw, Jordi. "Women are Becoming More Adventurous Travelers-and They're Doing
It Alone." *Condé Nast Traveler*, Condé Nast Traveler Magazine, 8 Mar. 2017,
cntraveler.com/story/solo-female-adventure-travel-is-on-the-rise.

Marano, Hara Estroff. "The Dangers of Loneliness." *Psychology Today*, Sussex Publishers, 1
July 2003, psychologytoday.com/articles/200307/the-dangers-loneliness.

McCutcheon, Lynn E, and Diane D. Ashe. "Personality and Coping." *British Journal of
Psychology*, 2004, pp. 411-428.

Meades, Sian. "Women are Far More Likely to Travel Alone than Men... and Sex is LAST thing
on their Mind." *Express.co.uk*, Express.co.uk, 2 May 2016,
express.co.uk/travel/articles/666362/women-travel-alone-more-men.

Nugent, Pam M.S., "Loneliness" in *PsychologyDictionary.org*, April 7, 2013,
psychologydictionary.org/loneliness/

"Report: Millennial Travelers are Fueling a Hostel Revolution."

The Global Hostel Marketplace 2014-2018, Hostelworld, May. 2016.

Rokach, Ami. *Correlates of Loneliness*. Bentham Science Publishers Ltd., 2016.

Russell, D. (1996). UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3): Reliability, validity, and factor structure. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 66, 20-40.

Sacchi, Carla and Maria de Minzi. "Adolescent Loneliness Assessment." *Adolescence*, vol. 39, no. 156, 2004, p. 701

Sendecki, Daniel. "Solo Travel Today [Infographic]." *G Adventures Blog*, 21 July 2014,
gadventures.com/blog/solo-travel-infographic/.

Shah, Anisha. "World's Best Destinations for Solo Travelers." *Fodor's Travel Guide*, Fodor's Travel Guide, 19 Oct. 2015, fodors.com/news/photos/world-best-destinations-for-solo-travel.

Smith, Georgina. "The Solo Traveler Personality Profile." *Travel Experiences*, Saga Magazine, 20 Sept. 2016, saga.co.uk/magazine/travel/solo-holidays/the-solo-traveler-personality-profile.

"Solo Travel Statistics and Data" *Solo Traveler*, 9 Dec. 2017, solotravelerworld.com/about/solo-travel-statistics-data/.

Thyberg, David. "Travel Advice for Single Men." *USA Today*, Gannett Satellite Information Network, traveltips.usatoday.com/travel-advice-single-men-12208.html.

Zhao, Jingjing, et al. "The Role of Social Support and Self-Esteem in the Relationship Between Shyness and Loneliness." *Personality and Individual Differences*, pp. 577-581.