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Duties to Protect Oneself from Loneliness

Date : 7 April 2025 (Monday)

Time : 16:45 – 18:15

Venue : LKK302 & Zoom Seminar

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While loneliness has received much attention from philosophers in recent years, the question of whether individuals have moral duties to protect themselves from chronic loneliness has been neglected. This article fills this gap, arguing that many of us possess such duties. These duties can be derived from both self-regarding considerations and other-regarding ones, as chronic loneliness often strains relationships, indirectly increases care-giving burdens and public health costs, and may contribute to political radicalization. I proceed to outline a range of low-cost, evidence-based strategies for preventing and alleviating loneliness – such as cultivating friendships, reframing perceptions, and engaging with non-human companions – to which most people have at least limited access. The article concludes by examining how common omissions, like failing to build a sufficiently large and diverse social network before reaching old age or not having enough in-person social interactions in adolescence and early adulthood, are hindering the fulfilment of these duties.

All are welcome

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