

Singles feel singled out

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(Medical Xpress)—Why is a wonderful person like you still single? Research from the University of Exeter has revealed that single people feel worse about being single when they think about themselves as the odd ones out.

Conversely their self esteem improves when they consider [couples](#) to be the exception and singles to be the norm.

The research, published in the [Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin](#), shows that this effect not only applies to singles but is also true for left-handed people. When left-handers were asked to explain how they were different from right-handers they were more likely to feel unhappy about being left-handed. Right-handers were unaffected by how the question was framed.

Susanne Bruckmüller from the University of Exeter said: "These studies show that the way in which we ask people to explain themselves can make a big difference to how people feel about themselves. So the phrase 'how come a wonderful person like you is still single?', although well intentioned, may actually be quite damaging".

The study suggests that speaking exclusively about how minority [people](#) are different from the majority, rather than about how majority groups may be different, can be damaging to [self esteem](#) and so should be avoided.

Provided by University of Exeter

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