



## Background

- Adverse childhood experiences has been heavily linked to loneliness
- Existential isolation has also been linked to negative psychological well-being
- Additional work has also shown that childhood abuse was uniquely associated with greater loneliness among young adults (Landry et al., 2022)
- But the impact of early life experiences on loneliness can be impacted by a multitude of factors including, but not limited to, age, gender, socioeconomic factors, and epigenetic factors (Southwick et al., 2014)
- This present study aims to qualitatively examine the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and existential isolation among adult individuals

## Hypotheses

- Adverse childhood experiences is positively correlated to higher feelings of existential isolation (EI)

## Method

- Participants for Study 1 were 300 TCU undergraduate students
- Participants for Study 2 were 300 registered MTurk workers
- Participants were asked a series of questionnaires that examined how many adverse childhood experiences they were impacted by, loneliness, meaning in life, satisfaction in life, depression and anxiety, and thoughts of death

## Analyses

- Our findings across two studies established a positive association between individuals who have experienced adverse childhood experiences and existential isolation
- Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) were significantly correlated to feelings of loneliness and existential isolation

## Implications

- Very little research has examined the link between existential isolation and how those who have been impacted by childhood maltreatment fare
- This study has added to the body of knowledge in existential isolation research
- Limitations of this study were its self-report collection measures, as the results could have been skewed when participants saw the gravity of the survey questions
- Further directions are to look at how this interaction affect sleep and inflammation through observational studies over self-report

## References