

## Too much loneliness: we need the “Telefono Amico”

**Pubblicato:** Lunedì 18 Aprile 2016



**There is too much loneliness.**

We are alone when we suffer, when we are angry, but also when we are happy. There is nobody to share our thoughts or emotions with.

This is why, for dozens of years, **Telefono Amico has been a lifeline for many people.** It is part of our society, a foundation to call when needed: “We have been in Varese for 40 years,” said the chairman **Marco Petino.** “**We work 24/7, every day of the year.** Alone, however, we aren’t able to offer a continuous service. That’s why we created a network with 12 more branches all around Italy. The number to call is always the same: **02/99777.** It’s a switchboard in Milan that automatically sorts incoming calls. **Unfortunately, we manage to answer only a part of them. The request is much more higher than our resources.**”

**There are people calling because they lost their job; others because they are in the downward spiral of addiction, others who are happy but cannot share their feelings.** “The requests are very different. We hear literally everything: not only rage or desperation. **In the end the red thread that binds everyone together is loneliness.**”

Is this society more and more individualistic and egoistic? “I wouldn’t say so. When we listen **to the stories of volunteers from 30 or 40 years ago, we find similar dynamics and situations.** There are some phases in life that come back and, from time to time, the same problems reappear.”

**Telefono Amico is looking for new volunteers in Varese. On Monday 18th April, at 20.45,** at the headquarters of CVV (responsible for the coordination of volunteers) in **via Maspero 20**, there will be the presentation of a free evening lesson, that combines theory and in-depth analysis with practical group exercises. “You don’t need particular skills, just free time to share with us,” says Petino. “We use the Roger Technique, helping people to find their way. We don’t give answers, just a point of view, a confrontation. We accompany them in the search for answers. The phone call hasn’t a time limit: we are there for all the time they need.”

**The registrations are open: “Everyone can try.** We look for people who are willing to listen, interested in communication and ready to put themselves on the line. It’s certainly hard work, because it deals with people’s emotions and with empathy that volunteers establish with other people. These are qualities more common than we think. Often, we realise we are able to offer much more than we expect.”

For further information and registrations, you can call Telefono Amico in Varese at the number 02/9977799 or send an email at [info@telefonoamico.va.it](mailto:info@telefonoamico.va.it)

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