

## Abstract for

20th WADP congress / XXXIII International Symposium of the German Academy  
for Psychoanalysis (DAP) e.V., 16.04.2024 to 20.04.2024, Marrakech, Morocco  
"Social Challenges - Shared Responsibility in Psychiatry and Psychotherapy"

Key Lecture

Male  / Female  / Diverse

Name: **Spitzer**                      First Name: **Manfred**

Title / Position:                      Professor for Psychiatry at the university of Ulm.  
He directs the Psychiatric University Clinic at the University of Ulm

Country:                                  Germany

Presentation title:                      **Loneliness Amplified by the Three Megatrends of Urbanization,  
Mediatization, and Individualization Causes Pain, Contagion, and Death**

Abstract text up to 20 lines in English:

Imagine a disease that causes chronic pain and is the leading cause of death in the civilized Western world. It is contagious and spreads faster than immunity from it. The disease is a significant risk factor for other common and deadly diseases: Those who suffer from it are more likely to get colds, depression, dementia, heart attacks, strokes, and cancer. What makes matters worse is its insidious nature, because most people do not even know they suffer from it. And even medicine, as a science, has paid little attention to it so far. – You actually need not imagine this disease because it actually exists. Its name: Loneliness.

In the past decade, substantial progress has been made in elucidating the causes, effects, mechanisms, and consequences of loneliness, from basic research to clinical applications research. What has emerged is still little known, even to some physicians, not to mention the medical layperson. This is partly due to the fact that the published papers on the subject is scattered over a wide scientific literature landscape, in journals on immunology, epidemiology, psychosomatics, economics, social medicine, genetics, and geriatrics, to name just a few of the fields in which the problems and pathology of loneliness are discussed. Loneliness overlaps with, but is also distinct from, social isolation. Loneliness is painful, contagious, and lethal. A lot can be done to either decrease it or mitigate its effects.