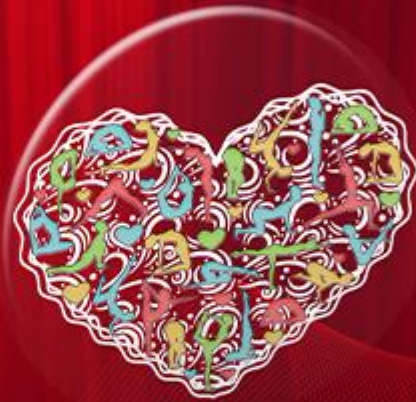


DEALING WITH LONELINESS



**"AN OPEN INVITATION TO LIFE,
LOVE AND TRUE COMPANIONSHIP!"**

**LOVE AND TRUE COMPANIONSHIP!
..AN OPEN INVITATION TO LIFE"**

Dealing With Loneliness

**“An Open Invitation To Life, Love and True
Companionship”**

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Why I Wrote This Book

Welcome, my dear readers!

If you are feeling lonely as you are reading this, you are not alone. The reason why I put this book together is because I know what it is like. Loneliness is a topic that is very close to my heart because I have been through the depths of empty, meaningless feelings many times and I am not new to that kind of feeling.

I have felt every gripping moment of it. The long, long hours which seems like days, the lonely nights where I weep in silence, drenching my pillow salty with tears, the lack of desire to face the next day and the thought of wanting to *end it all!*

It doesn't matter if you have a girlfriend/boyfriend, husband or wife. No matter how close you are with them, there are parts of you that they just don't understand! The pain doesn't fade after confiding with your best friend, your group of buddies, or even your counselor! Nobody seems to understand you yet you want them to feel your pain.

I empathize with you, my friend. I truly do.

But I have good news for all of us lonely hearts out there. I have survived through and I have a way to solve it if not ease the pain at least.

My stories and writings in this book aim to accomplish a few things:

- Understanding the theory behind loneliness to better understand yourself
- Understanding the feelings associated with loneliness
- Developing a healthy feeling of love to help you overcome problems
- Practical steps to break the lonely cycle
- Replace the feeling of loneliness with healthy thoughts

It is my sincere wish that after you read this book, you will be better equipped to cope with loneliness. Even if you don't feel lonely, maybe you know someone who is. Use this information to help them and make their world a better place.

All Alone!

Everyone in the world has felt this emotion one time or another. Especially in these times rapid technological growth the feeling of loneliness is rapidly increasing.

Firstly, we must clarify what loneliness means.

Loneliness is an emotional state. This is a state where people experience a disconnection from people around them as well as a deep feeling of emptiness, which renders their present company around them meaningless.

That person could be in a big crowd or by him/herself, married or single, young or old. They basically find it very hard to connect with others and experiences emancipation from meaningful relationships.

This is not to be confused with being **alone**.

Being alone does not equate to being lonely because sometimes it is good for a person to be alone and at times it could be very refreshing as the person has the opportunity to refresh, recuperate and rediscover part of our lives.

What are the common symptoms of being alone, if you are reading this book? I bet you might be feeling one of these symptoms.

- You think your problems are so unique that other people do not understand
- As a result, you feel that other people in the world has friends and you don't
- You feel extremely self-conscious in everything you do
- You feel that when you do something wrong, you get extremely embarrassed
- When you are in a crowd, you feel drowned by their voices
- You feel disconnected with the crowd even though you are with them
- Feeling shy and scared of others
- Experiencing low self-esteem
- Feeling angry, defensive and critical at everything even if it is not directed at you
- Afraid of strangers and refuse to talk to engage in a hearty conversation
- Being convinced there is something wrong with you
- Feeling anxious and sad believing no one knows how miserable/isolated you feel
- Losing your capacity to be assertive' feeling "invisible"

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- Refusing to accept change and don't want to try anything new
- Feeling as though nothing else matters and contemplating suicide

Crowded Yet Isolated

Ever had that feeling that your wife or husband doesn't understand you? Your spouse or significant other is right beside you yet it doesn't fill that gap.

You may be surrounded by many people, yet their company 'drowns' you deeper into loneliness!

People feel that way because we are all unique and different. You see:

There is no one in the entire universe that will have the same personality, ideas, way of life and needs like you. **NONE!** Not even twins! How can anyone fulfill all those needs to cater every individual?

There us a quote from the bible that says if I try to remove the speck from my neighbor's eye, I must first remove the plank from my OWN eye then I can see clearly before I attempt to remove his speck.

How does this apply?

By understanding that other people are not obliged to fulfill our needs, we somehow learn to expect less from others and it eases the pain, because we stop expecting more from others! We learn to accept them better and judge others less so it creates the first step to curing loneliness – giving others slack!

Remember that **we are the sum of the five people we spend most of our time with.**

If you are mixing with a crowd that is negative and makes you feel down all the time, it is no surprise why you are lonely and negative. It is no surprise that children move out from their homes away from negative parents or stop interacting with certain groups of friends all together. Don't let the poison drain your energy.

Emotional Pains in a loveless World

How does the agony of loneliness seem to penetrate the hearts of men and women throughout the world? Even superstars who have been the icon of generations and admired by millions feel unfulfilled (*e.g. Janis Joplin, Kurt Cobain*)

The feeling of loneliness is radically due to the failure of man in loving others. The symptoms of loneliness magnetize the effects of the pain to the extent that it forces the focus of attention more on ourselves and creates a self-preoccupation that creates an obstacle to love others.

Ever had a stomachache? Who are you thinking of at that moment?

This illustrates the point that we are only thinking of ourselves. It shows a terribly pain filled world in which we live in.

Furthermore, the pain does go away like a stomachache. The so called Mid-life crisis is turning more into a 'young adult' crisis now with suicide rates hitting the roof and most diseases in the world today mentally induced or cured in psychiatric wards.

The basis of trust between people is eroding and less and less people are opening up to one another. By failing to open up to others, the lonely symptoms spring up as other people will not open up to you if you do not open yourself to others first.

It is said that **if you want to be surrounded by friends, be a friend to others first.**

Love – The Verb, Not The Feeling

Love, or rather the lack of it constitutes the loneliness breeding in a person's heart. It is a scary fact to note that we are largely shaped by others (remember the sum of five people we spend most of our time with) who hold our destiny in THEIR hands.

We are what we are today – a product of those who loved us or have refused to love us.

Love gives life to others. But what is most important is to remember is that in order to love someone else effectively, we must love ourselves first! You can't give what you don't have!

You may think you 'love' a beautiful girl or a handsome guy if you don't love yourself (there is a song that goes: *I am nobody until I met you or my life is meaningless until you came into the picture*) but that is not love.

You may admire that person because he or she is good looking, you may worship that person because you think he or she is better, you may even sacrifice your life for him or her for your own selfish, self-gratifying ego, but you do not love.

Love is a verb. It is an action. The feeling of 'love' is actually a product of the verb or action. By loving yourself first, it forms the basis or foundation by which you love others without which it is merely a baseless act of self-deception that appears to be loving.

But how do we love ourselves if we have never been loved? In the next chapter we will explore this area.

Learning How to Love

How do I take the first step to deal with loneliness? By learning to love. But first we must examine the paradox to love.

When we are lonely, we feel like we are in an unbearable prison. By its very nature of loneliness is just like the stomach ache – the attention centers only on ourselves. So we try and fill this emptiness by finding others who will give us that very love we need.

People often try to do things for others to gain their love. They barter trade favors with each other thinking that they are loving people. We know that our loneliness can only be filled by the love of others and therefore we must feel loved by others.

The paradox of love is this:

If we seek to fill the void of our own loneliness in seeking love from others, we will inevitably find no consolation but only a deeper desolation. In other words, if we seek the love that we need, we will never find it.

When a person orients his life towards the satisfaction of his own needs, when he goes out to seek the love which he needs, he is basically self-centered, no matter how pitiful he is. As long as he focuses on himself, his ability to love will always remain stunted.

What is the solution then?

If a person seeks not to receive love, but rather to give it without strings attached, he will become lovable and he will most certainly be loved by others in the end.

We must stop being concerned with ourselves and begin to be concerned with others. Beginning with the end in mind – which focuses the results of the act of love others without concerned with self-gain, is the first step to gaining love and easing the pain of loneliness.

Every single person on earth has some capacity to love.

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We all have some ability to focus the attention off ourselves to the needs and concern of others. It is the extent that we are willing to give, are we able to receive that amount of love from others.

Deciding to love others with no strings attached is like a donation (we don't expect anything in return, not even a satisfied ego or relieved guilt), not a barter trade. **When we ask others, "What have you done for me?" we have failed to love.**

Even if at the beginning you are only able to love little, you will be loved little. That very love will empower you to grow and produce more love and in return receive greater love from others.

But always remember that in making this self-donation or self-sacrifice, our minds must always be focused away from ourselves or it wouldn't work.

The Laws of Attraction

As a man thinks, so is he.

Ever wonder why certain people get the polite, respectful, “*Good Morning, Sir*”, and others get the, “*Hey Bud*” or “*Hey, Mac*” kind of treatment?

Think for a moment, now.

What is the difference between *Donald Trump* and a beggar besides a few billion dollars and a couple of skyscrapers?

The answer: The mushy inside your head.

You see, the way people react to you is due to the way you think about yourself. Why do you think people judge a book by its cover or a bad kind by the clothes he wears? I know it is unfair, but the way a person thinks in his heart, he will appear or even live out what he is thinking!

The Law of Attraction is not something new; it is the way things are. It is evident in Murphy’s Law – the things we most don’t want to happen to often happens to us, that is why a dropped buttered toast always land on the wrong side!

Even as a child in school, I have always hoped that when I saw sitting in class, and I didn’t know how to answer a question the teacher asked, I always whispered in my heart, “*Don’t pick me... PLEASE, don’t pick me*” and the teacher always did. It didn’t matter where I was sitting, the teacher had this mind reading ability that knew I didn’t know the answer or wasn’t paying attention.

How does this apply to overcoming loneliness?

If you ‘project’ an aura of unwantedness, you will feel unwanted and your friends will reject you unconsciously. Stop acting like a wet, unwanted puppy who just escaped from the pound.

Say to yourself, “*You find me attractive, loveable and good company.*” It is true we can’t always convince ourselves that we are lovable, attractive and people love being around us.

But since we can’t control what others think, this form of affirmation actually fools our mind into thinking WE ARE lovable and attractive.

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Try it and see!

Practical Steps To Overcome Loneliness

There are a number of ways to begin dealing with loneliness that involve the need to develop friendships, doing things for yourself, or learning to feel better about yourself in general.

- **Constantly remind yourself that the feeling of loneliness is TEMPORARY** and you will get over it in time
- **Make an effort to talk to someone NEW.** I know it is hard, but you must develop momentum and the first step is usually the hardest but most necessary.
- **Put yourself in new situations where you will meet people.** Engage in activities in which you have genuine interest. Meet with people of similar interest
- Join societies like church groups, organizations and others
- **STOP listening to lonely songs** (e.g. *All by Myself* – Celine Dion)
- **OPEN yourself to others first.** Don't expect people to share their problems with a closed person
- **Don't judge new people on the basis of past relationships with old people.** Try to see each person you meet from a new perspective instead of bring judgmental.
- **Intimate friendships usually develop gradually as people learn to share their inner feelings.** Don't rush into intimate friendship by sharing too much or expecting that others will.
- **Don't just seek romantic relationships.** Platonic or even casual buddies can be extremely satisfactory.

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- **Lead a well balanced life.** Never neglect good nutrition, exercise and sufficient sleep. One of the main causes of depression which leads to loneliness, is the lack of those things.
- **Spending time alone** will help you examine yourself more closely.
- **Don't be a parasite to your friends.** If you seek them for compassion and sympathy, they will be there for you. But if you repeatedly drone over and over about your problems, it becomes a nuisance and your friends will at best just entertain you.
- **Reflect back on good memories** and count your blessings.
- **Learn a new skill.** Success in achieving something will make you feel good about yourself.
- **If you are having long term depression, it is not wrong to seek MEDICAL advice. It is perfectly normal to get a prescription** because lack of certain chemicals in the body is also the source of depression and can be treated easily. If we feel hungry and seek food, having the right medicine in proper dosage is the right way to tackle depression and feel less lonely.
- **See a counselor** and talk in privacy.
- **Spend time in Prayer.**

Breaking the Destructive Cycle

A word of caution:

Don't act like a hero because you are lonely.

You may be surprised. Self-pity is a subtle form of pride. Proud people glory in their *achievements* while people who self-pity glory in their *sufferings*.

It is really dangerous to dwell too long in loneliness because we are created to have relationships with one another.

It is a strong part of human nature that cannot be erased. If you grew up living alone in a jungle, you will most probably interact with animals or plants and talk to them in your own language.

- The greatest worry is when someone dwells too long in their loneliness these few things can happen.
- The loneliness addict shun all attempts to reconnect rendering their people around them lots of pain when their efforts to help the person gets rejected.
- The relationships around them slowly crumbles and when people start to ignore the lonely person, they will feel more justified when they finally exclaim, "Look at them; I was right all along that they never cared for me at all!"
- The loneliness addict eventually gets immune to the pain and embraces loneliness as a way of life. He is too lazy to change.

His disease spread to other 'survivors'.

This should motivate you enough to take action. Don't wait, do it NOW!

Here is an interesting quote:

Loneliness was the first thing that God's eye named not good.

- John Milton

Finding Our Purpose in the Wilderness

Here is a story designed to motivate you. When the dust settles and we have made all the money in the world, reached the height of fame and obtained the epitome of power, what gives us true meaning in life?

Many living things need each other to survive. If you have ever seen a Colorado aspen tree, you may have noticed that it does not grow alone. Aspens are found in clusters, or groves.

The reason is that the aspen sends up new shoots from the roots. In a small grove, all of the trees may actually be connected by their roots!

Giant California redwood trees may tower 300 feet into the sky. It would seem that they would require extremely deep roots to anchor them against strong winds. But we're told that their roots are actually quite shallow -- in order to capture as much surface water as possible. And they spread in all directions, intertwining with other redwoods.

Locked together in this way, all the trees support each other in wind and storms. Like the aspen, they never stand-alone. They need one another to survive.

People, too, are connected by a system of roots. We are born to family and learn early to make friends. We are not meant to survive long without others.

And like the redwood, we need to hold one another up. When pounded by the sometimes vicious storms of life, we need others to support and sustain us.

Have you been going it alone? Maybe it's time to let someone else help hold you up for a while. Or perhaps someone needs to hang on to you.

--- Author Unknown ---

Life Still Has A Meaning

I will end this book with a poem. Read this a few times and let the meaning sink in.

**If there is a future there is time for mending-
Time to see your troubles coming to an ending.**

**Life is never hopeless however great your sorrow-
If you're looking forward to a new tomorrow.**

**If there is time for wishing then there is time for hoping-
When through doubt and darkness you are blindly groping.**

**Though the heart be heavy and hurt you may be feeling-
If there is time for praying there is time for healing.**

**So if through your window there is a new day breaking-
Thank God for the promise, though mind and soul be aching,**

**If with harvest over there is grain enough for gleaning-
There is a new tomorrow and life still has meaning.**

~ Author unknown~

Take care and have a wonderful life!