



COPING WITH LONELINESS

PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION AND COMPASSION FOR OTHERS

HOW ARE YOU FEELING RIGHT NOW?

**TEA IS A BEVERAGE WHICH NOT
ONLY QUENCHES THIRST
BUT DISSIPATES SORROW.**



Come with a cup of tea!

Are you feeling lonely? Do you...

- Feel shy or timid when socially interacting.
- Have consistent struggles in social settings.
- Cry often.
- Live isolated and not put much effort to reach out to others.
- Eat more unhealthy food/snacks.
- Sleep poorly and not feel rested.
- Feel ill more often and have increased doctor visits.

Let's pray PSALM 32

Let everyone who is sincere
give thanks to the Beloved;
For whenever we feel paralyzed by fear,
we shall be embraced by Love.
Dwelling in the Heart of the Beloved,
we are free from distress,
free to live more creatively.

Psalm 32

O my Beloved, You are my guide,
You teach me to walk in the Light.
Be watchful of me, counsel me as
I listen to You in the Silence.
I pray for the gifts of inner peace
and wisdom,
For the grace to reverence all of Creation.

Psalm 32

Many are the heartaches of those
separated from Love

Steadfast love abides with those
who surrender their lives into
the hands of the Beloved.

Be glad and rejoice! Let your life
give witness to Love's Way

And shout for joy, all you upright of heart!

Feeling lonely ... at times



Self-compassion helps us cope

Chronic loneliness ...



Ask for help ... talk to your doctor ... or a good friend.

Some causes of loneliness



- Abandonment
- Poor support
- Trauma, abuse
- Rejection
- Grief, loss
- Limited support
- Enduring life alone
- Special occasions

Getting in touch with the feeling?

How loneliness can make you feel

distress

painful
feelings

anxiety

helplessness
and emptiness



abandoned

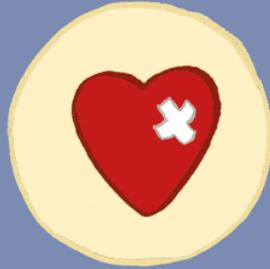
not being
understood
by others

fear and sadness

lost

Your health

How Loneliness Can Affect Your Health



Heart problems



Depression



Higher stress



Decreased memory



Drug abuse risk



Brain changes

How can I help myself ?

1. Have a daily **SCHEDULE**. (Times for rising, meals, exercise, bed)
2. Start a daily **GRATITUDE** journal. (3 a day!)
3. **PRAYER** time: TV Mass; rosary; join virtual groups- BE STILL (Wed. 7:30 p.m.)
4. Some manual **WORK** every day - ONE a day task/tidy/decorate/bake.
5. **STUDY**- library books, audio books, novels, interests. Spirituality books, Bible.
6. **PLAY** Bridge; Scrabble; Solitaire; word search; puzzles; etc.
7. **MUSIC**: limit TV, radio and computer... try classical or harp music channel.
8. **WALK** a BLOCK a day ... indoors or outdoors... in a mall or hallway.

How can I help loved ones?

1. Listen without judgment.
2. Spend time with them if possible. (Zoom, Facetime)
3. Help them engage in enjoyable activities. (car ride)
4. Provide support and encouragement.
5. Do something kind for them.
6. Phone a friend/buddy - share a short spiritual reading

Q and A - Let's talk about it!

Understanding types of loneliness

1. Existential Loneliness

2 Emotional Loneliness

3 Social Loneliness

1. Existential Loneliness

Existential loneliness is good for the soul.

It is definitely an inevitable part of the human experience.

Loneliness tends to stir up negative feelings.

We need to be open to inner healing and spiritual growth.

Loneliness lures us to discover our deeper self and truth.

To Cope with Existential Loneliness

We are born into this world alone.

We go out of this world alone.

Existential loneliness is an inescapable aspect of life.

We can accept the reality as 'belonging' to the human family.

We can live 'at peace' with some loneliness.

BEING alone... and at peace



To Cope with Existential Loneliness

Existential fears, including the fears of isolation, death, meaninglessness are experienced by everyone at some point in time.

Recognize the fear and use it as a motivator to live more fully and more in the present moment.

COME TO ME...

all you who labour and
are heavy burdened and
I will give you rest...

rest for your souls!



Surrender prayer ... 'A MINISTERING ANGEL'



JESUS, I SURRENDER MYSELF TO YOU. TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING.

2. Emotional Loneliness

This type of loneliness arises from a feeling that you lack relationships or attachments.

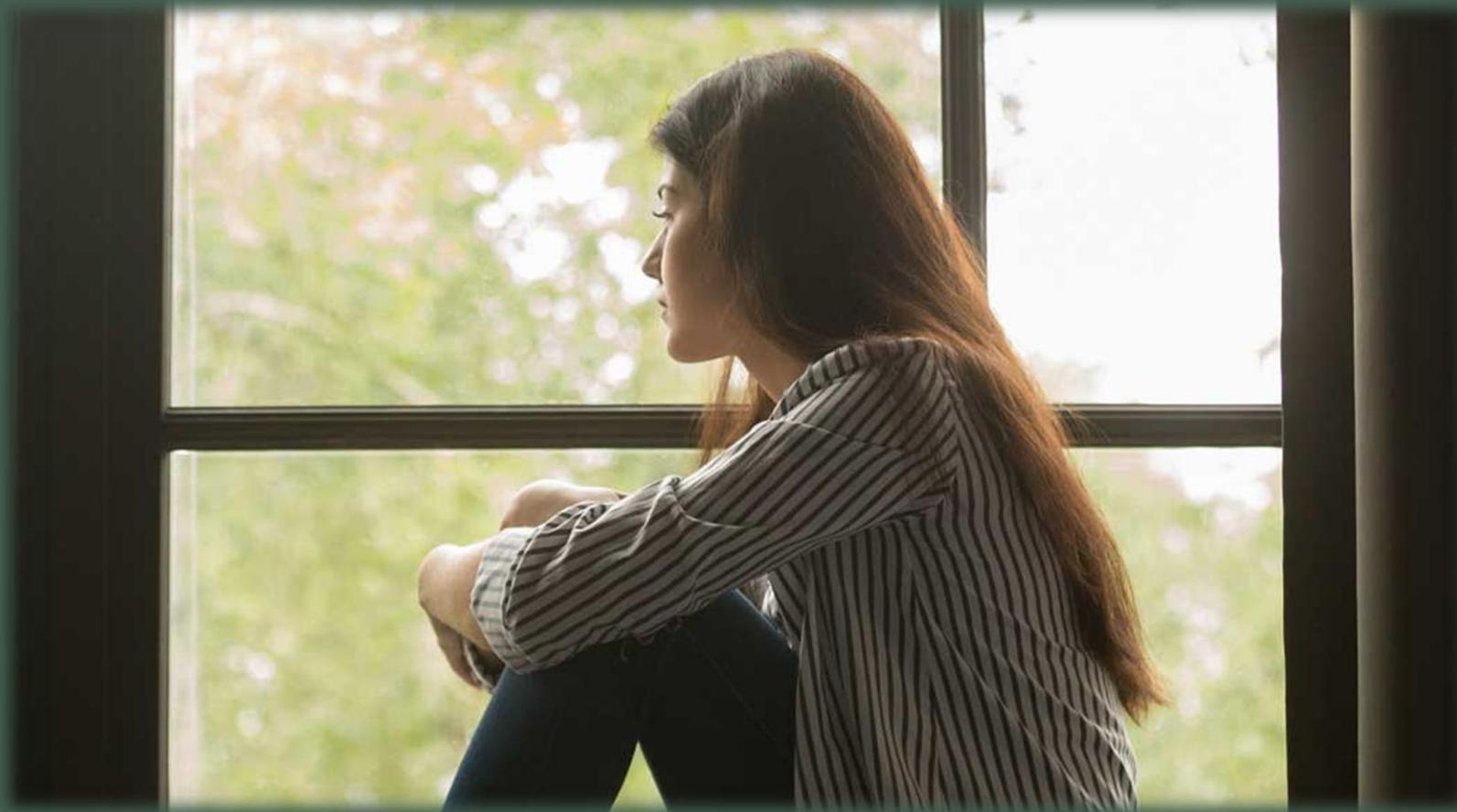
You might experience emotional loneliness when everyone but you has a romantic partner in your group. Or you feel lonely even with your spouse or adult children.

2. Emotional Loneliness

Emotional loneliness can be felt when you need someone to talk to about something going on in your life, but feel that there is no one available to contact.

If your heart has broken, you might feel lonely for the person who has moved out of your life. You might be lonely for a close friend, a parent, or a sibling.

Young persons ... feel lonely



To Cope with Emotional Loneliness

Try to establish and maintain a healthy support system.

You can't make "instant friendship" happen or find a "soulmate" overnight, but you can maximize your chances of deepening a friendship by reaching out to friends you ALREADY have.

Be willing to be the one to suggest a meet-up.

To Cope with Emotional Loneliness

- Make the effort to reach out to others.
- You may be pleasantly surprised at how much better you begin to feel, even if you just exchange a couple of texts with a friend or have a brief conversation on the phone.
- Let someone know you "need to talk" opens the door to a deeper bond. Don't overburden others with your needs.

REACH OUT
TO ONE PERSON...



TALK TO ME...



TRY SPIRITUAL DIRECTION... if you need to talk/heal/grow



3. Social Loneliness

This type of loneliness occurs when you don't feel a **sense of belonging** to a group – be it your family, parish, or workplace.

You can feel social loneliness even when you're in a relationship with a spouse you love. You cannot seem to connect or relate deeply any more.

If you don't have a wider circle of social support, you may feel that you and your family don't have a group with whom you belong.

3. Social Loneliness

When you walk into a church or a social gathering and don't recognize anyone familiar, a feeling of social loneliness may wash over you.

If you don't feel that your presence is valued in a wider circle, you might experience social loneliness.

We all want to “be seen and heard” to be valued.

Elderly persons ... feel lonely



To Cope with Social Loneliness

- This feeling arises when we feel left out of a larger group. Find a friendly face and ask to join their table.
- Exclusion from a group can be painful, even if it's not intentional. An easy way to combat social loneliness is to start a new activity or join a new small group.
- Show up! If everyone in the room is "new," it can be easier to strike up conversations and new friendships.

To Cope with Social Loneliness

- If you and your spouse feel like you don't have a shared network of friends, join an art or dance class, a book club, a choir, prayer group.
- Get involved in volunteering together, whether it's building houses or stuffing envelopes or delivering meals to the homebound.
- You'll know that the other people in the room at least share a similar interest with you and it may spark a new friendship.

BE CONTENT
WITH
ONE OR TWO
CLOSE FRIENDS...



FIND A HOBBY
OR LEISURE
ACTIVITY...





Take comfort ...

Q and A - Let's talk about it!

HOW CAN WE MOVE FROM LONELINESS TO SOLITUDE

It is a movement from the **restless senses** to the **restful spirit** within.

Do not run away but be quiet and silent.

Listen attentively to your own struggle.

The answer to your question is hidden in your own heart.

ALONE... not lonely

Solitude of heart is an inner quality.

It can be maintained even within a busy lifestyle.

It is not just for monks and hermits living in solitary places.

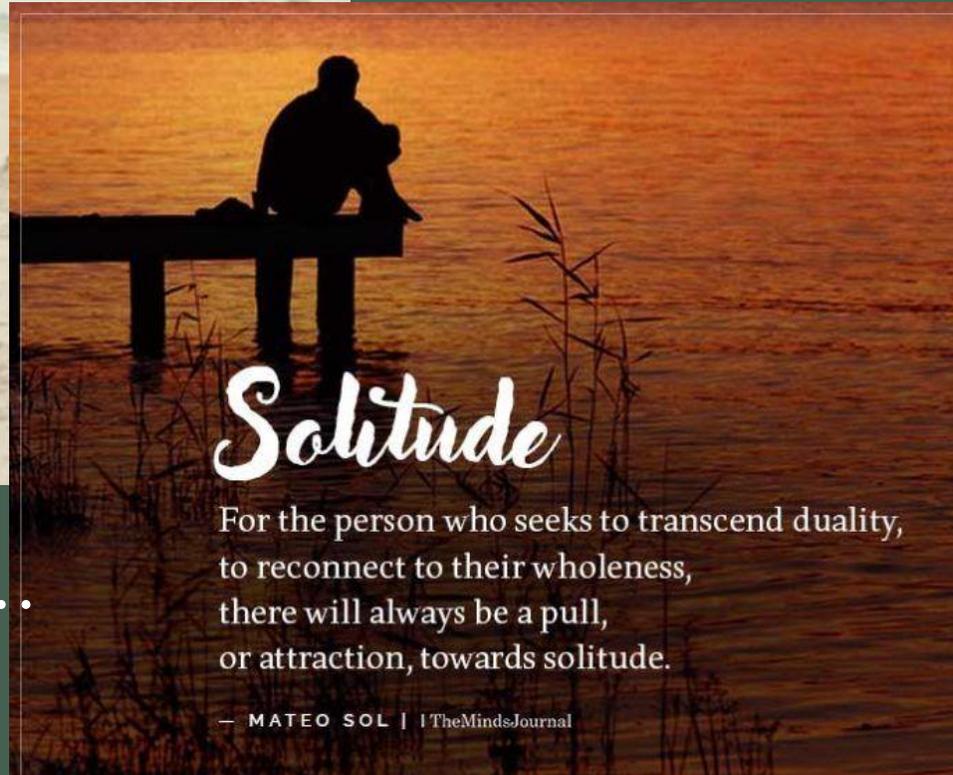
This solitude of heart creates a quiet, inner center.

We can speak, listen, and watch “the world” around us from a tranquil centre.



Seek out solitude...

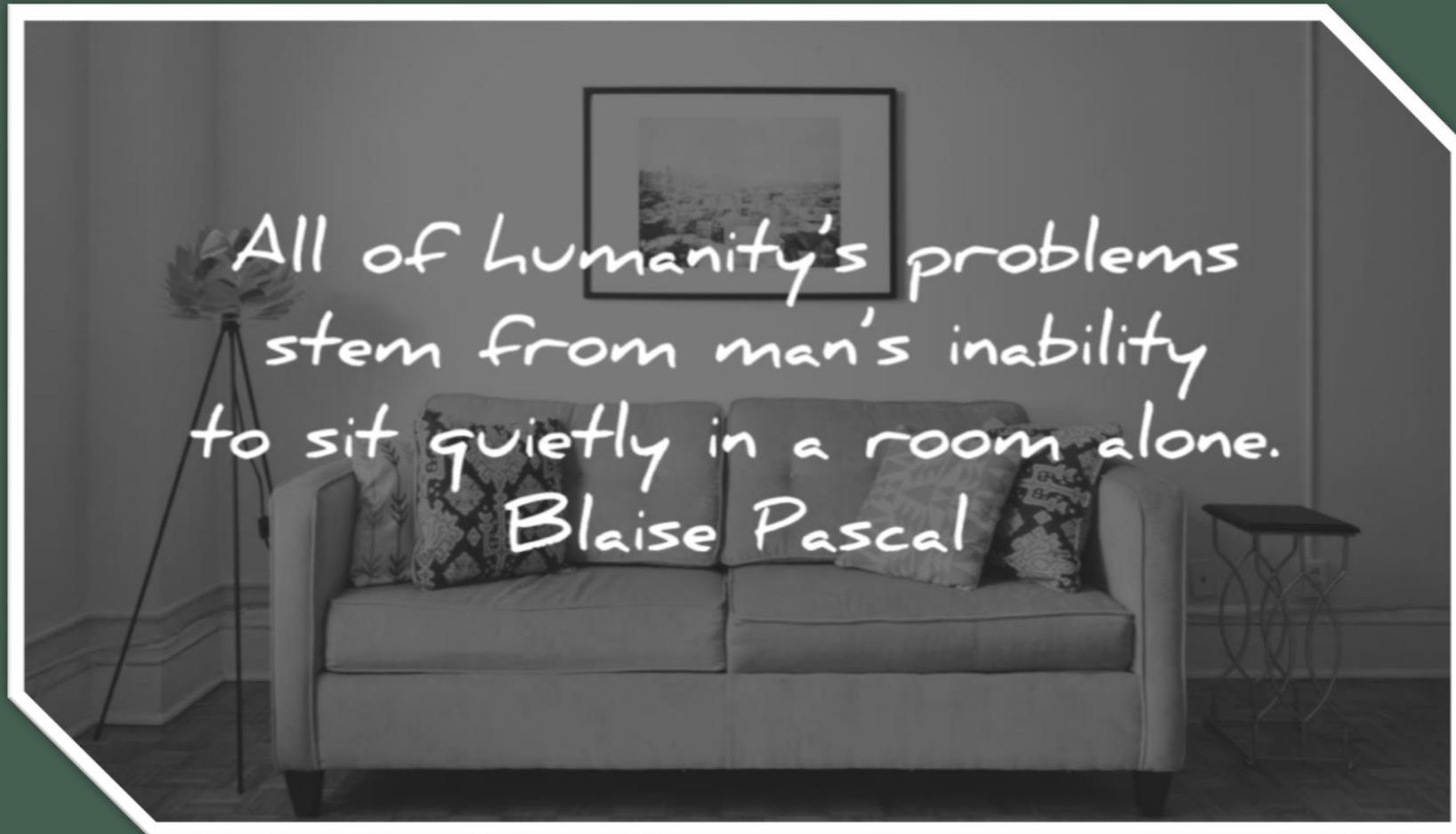
take the risk of entering
into your own experience.



From loneliness to solitude

- Become aware of our “inner emptiness”.
- Do not run away from our loneliness.
- Do not try to deny or forget it.
- Rather, protect it and turn it into **a fruitful solitude.**
- Show courage and faith to enter into the desert of our loneliness.
- Make gentle and persistent efforts to embrace our inner solitude.

Finding GOD within my soul...



How hear the “*still small voice of God*”?

By slowly converting our loneliness
into deep solitude,
we create that precious space
where we can discover the voice
telling us **answers** to our questions.

Wait. Listen. Rest.

QUESTIONS
PROBLEMS
CONCERNS

Jesus and Samaritan woman



“Jesus says to her,
Woman, there is living
water within you. You
will never have to be
thirsty again...”

Find the LIVING WELL of peace
within yourself.

Finding solitude within

Repeat this mantra throughout your day!

My God within me, I adore you.

My God within me, I adore you.

My God within me, I adore you.

No longer feel empty ... sense being filled with the Divine Presence.

SPIRITUAL LIVING – from our solitude



Thomas Merton, Trappist monk

“It is in deep solitude that I find the gentleness
with which I can truly love my brothers.

The more solitary I am,
the more affection I have for them.

It is pure affection and filled with reverence
for the solitude of others.”

Praying at home...

Every
Wednesday
at 7:30 p.m.



How to Create a
PRAYER CORNER



A blessing of solitude

May you recognize in your life
the presence, power, and light of your soul.
May you realize that you are never alone,
that your soul in its brightness and belonging
connects you intimately
with the rhythm of the universe.

A blessing of solitude

May you have respect
for your own individuality and difference.
May you realize that the shape of your soul
is unique,
that you have a special destiny here,
that behind the facade of your life
there is something beautiful, good,
and eternal happening.

A blessing of solitude

May you learn to see yourself
with the same delight, pride, and expectation
with which God sees you in every moment.

- John O'Donohue, *Anam Cara*

Cup of tea with friends...

What did I learn tonight?

What ONE thing stays with me
that I am going to try?

Q and A - Let's talk about it!

Let us go now living in the peace of Christ.

