

Loneliness vs. Being Alone

October 11

Without even knowing, I developed a snug comfortableness in isolation, but there was always an undercurrent of fear. I knew that in isolation I was hiding from something. That something was the feeling that I never belonged. When I was with others, it was as if there were an umbrella of inadequacy that hovered over me. I was apart from others no matter where I went. So, I developed a set of messages that protected me in my isolation and I grew to feel safer alone than in a group.

Commented [JF1]: were (since this is a hypothetical situation "were" is correct).

I was safe because you didn't know the thoughts that kept me from you. Sure, I wanted to be accepted and loved, but was terrified of being rejected. I told myself if you knew the real me that is what you would have done. Inside, I was desperately lonely.

In learning to differentiate being alone from being lonely, we find we can be alone but not lonely, if alone is what we want to be. We concede that while loneliness causes emotional pain, recovery gives us the amazing power to change our thinking and take action.

As we engage others and their needs, we cease to be a victim of loneliness. Our ability to care about something or someone other than ourselves lifts us out of that dark pit of loneliness.

Prayer and meditation help to reduce the feeling of loneliness as we remember we are no longer alone. We realize in amazed honesty the Ninth Step Promise that says, "That feeling of useless- ness and self-pity will slip away," has come true for us. When we choose now to be alone, we are no longer lonely, just alone.

TODAY'S MEDITATION

God, when I focus on loving thoughts and apply them with you, I am everything I need to be right this moment. With your encouragement, I help others and when I am alone it is by choice. I can be alone, but never have to feel lonely again because I have you.

.....
"...alkies are tortured by loneliness. Even before our drinking got bad and people began to cut us off, nearly all of us suffered the feeling that we didn't quite belong." —As Bill Sees It, page 909