

Savour Loneliness



**Don't surrender
your loneliness
So quickly.
Let it cut more
deep.
Let it ferment and
season you
As few human
Or even divine
ingredients can.**

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Hafiz

Relationships are precious because they help us enhance the quality of the Human Experience in ways nothing else can. Relationships are wonderful mirrors that help us steer change, connect to growth and develop resources. Young infants and children for example learn most when they enjoy safe and nurturing relationships with the significant adults or caregivers in their life. Having said this and how we can each treasure relationships, relationships also pave way for deep loneliness sometimes. This can be because of various reasons including the end of a relationship, an imbalance in the give and take equations in the relationship that can leave one person more lonely and vulnerable in the relationship, and because the relationship of expectations often falls short of each expectation and leaves people on either side of the equation lonely, fragmented and deeply afraid to seek closure.

Loneliness is often a wonderful teacher because it helps us connect to authenticity, vulnerability, acceptance, joy, love, humility and so many precious human states that just achievement, success, togetherness and belonging cannot help us with. I used to love reading the quote that asks us to look at the flowers and remind ourselves of why the rain was necessary.

However because of layers and years of conditioning or probably some kind of indoctrination as well, being alone has been equated by generations to an unhappy state that one can never handle. As a result of some of these overt and covert messages received we often trick ourselves to believe that we need to do something to get out of the loneliness to be able to savour life. There is a simple truth here, savour the loneliness. It holds in its bosom treasures that we can take from for our deepest development, healing and integration.

What makes loneliness difficult for most people to deal with are the 3 P's that stunt recovery according to Seligman.

Permanence:

Many people who experience loneliness often get stuck in an illusion that it is probably a permanent state and often do everything in their power to feel included in groups where they have nothing in common, get into dysfunctional, abusive and often codependent relationships to feel wanted, liked, seen or loved. These people often feel like energy vampires to others who begin to avoid them worsening the situation.

This is a plane of impermanence. everything changes especially our emotional states and our relationships. By allowing for genuine change and growth, we make way for healthier relationships often after a period of loneliness similar the darkness a caterpillar endures to find its wings.

Pervasiveness:

When we are lonely, we tend to believe in the pervasiveness of our despair and challenges. We tend to believe that more aspects of our life have been affected than have actually been. I remember a young girl who suffered a major break up after a year of investing deeply in a relationship exclaim, "I have lost everything, everything is over, I have nothing to live for." This summarizes pervasiveness. The feeling that too much has been lost. This stunts recovery the most because it prevents us from looking for areas in our life that are fine and resources we have to

bounce back and take charge or tide over the challenging times of loneliness.

Personalization:

"Why me?" is what personalization means. Very often when good things come our way, we take them in without any qualms. When challenges come our way, it is usually met with the victim wondering "Why Me?". The victim within us is busy finding persecutors in excuses, in people, in situations, in the past and in the drama and the narratives that the teacher in loneliness decides to pass up the opportunity to nurture as lessons for life. This is also one of the reasons for many people why loneliness never becomes deeply enriching solitude.

Take a moment to look at whether you have allowed illusions of pervasiveness, personalization or permanence rob you from the deep growth that loneliness comes to provide. No journey is easy and completely smooth sailing. At best each journey is one where the self discovers a new adventure, a new path, a new high and often a new low too. Without any judgement or expectation allow yourself to embrace the gentle teachers that arise so beautifully in moments we get to spend with ourselves and falsely termed as loneliness or despair.