

Taming Lion Loneliness

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“The opposite of loneliness is a state of wholeness, not being with people.”

**~Mara B. Edmunds,
MMFT**

Process Questions

- 1.) What is the difference between being lonely and being alone?
- 2.) How do you define loneliness? What meaning have you assigned to the state of being alone?
- 3.) When was the first time in your life you felt lonely? What were your unmet needs at the time?
- 4.) When was the last time you didn't feel lonely? Were you doing something healthy that you can replicate now?
- 5.) Does being with others tend to energize or drain you? Which scenarios make you feel whole? When have you felt whole while being by yourself?
- 6.) How do you know when you have had enough time alone? How do you know when you need to be by yourself? Have you found balance with that?
- 7.) Are there times when you have isolated yourself? If so, what were your root needs then and what might you have been trying to protect?
- 8.) How do you actively and regularly contribute to the lives of others? Do you both give and take? How is your self-care routine or do you need to construct one?
- 9.) What does investing in relationships look like for you? What relational investments have you made recently? Which ones can you make this coming week?
- 10.) If loneliness were a messenger, what would it be trying to inform you of?

Common Cognitive Distortions of Being Alone

Directions: Consider the statements below. Place a checkmark beside those you most identify with.

- The opposite of loneliness is being with others. I'm lonely because I'm alone.
 - If I were really worth it, someone would approach me. I must not be worth it.
 - Since no one is actively pursuing me, I must not be desirable.
 - Everyone has "their people" in the world except for me.
 - There is nothing I can do to make this feeling go away. I'll just try to ignore it.
 - I am the only one who is aching like this. No one else could relate.
 - Everyone else has relationships and individuality all figured out except for me.
 - I'm the only one who doesn't have a Hallmark holiday season. I'm unwanted.
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7 Tips for Navigating Loneliness

- 1.) Observe yourself when you're feeling lonely. Keep a journal or log to monitor the patterns of who, when, where, and what influence your feelings of loneliness.
- 2.) Remind yourself that everyone feels lonely at times. It is a natural part of the human experience. It is a normal temporary state, not a permanent sentence of despair.
- 3.) Loneliness is a common indicator of unmet needs. Consider what yours might be.
- 4.) What do you tell yourself when you're feeling lonely? Is your self-talk helpful or harmful? How can you show yourself compassion, gentleness, and understanding?
- 5.) Identify where you feel loneliness show up in your body. Begin intentionally forming the habit of asking yourself what you're needing when you're experiencing those sensations.
- 6.) Clarify your top life goals and regularly invest in them. What do you want said about you after you pass on? Are your daily habits aligning with your life goals?
- 7.) Be on the lookout for those who share similar goals and patient in forming relationships. Relationships worth having require consistent investment and regular maintenance.