

MyQuest

By Daniel Labbe

Today's Meditation - Loneliness, it has afflicted us all at one time or another. For many of us it is a chronic condition we have ~~been~~ resentfully grown to accept. For me, loneliness is the feeling that no one knows, or is concerned with, the deepest and best parts of who I am and ~~the~~ the disconnect that comes with not knowing someone else on such ~~a~~ a close level. It's peculiar how we can be surrounded by people, even people we've known for some time, yet feel utterly alone.

I often wonder, how many of the people around me, the people I talk to on a daily basis, how many of them experience the ~~same~~ empty, hollow affliction of loneliness like I do? Then I wonder, why do we, do I, feel like this? Is it because I don't trust people enough to bare my vulnerable side? Do I think ~~they~~ they won't "get it"? I haven't had much luck in sharing the parts of myself that I like the most. In childhood these parts were viewed as weaknesses, and here in prison I have the same problem. Do we all have our own reasons that keep us from expressing our most ~~valued~~ prized selves? And what about the opposite problem - the problem of being overly critical and judgemental of others, we have so many ~~ways~~ rules or ways to exclude people. "He likes rap music, this one is undereducated, she dresses funny, he's too moody," and soon. ~~I'm~~ I'm as guilty of this as the next guy. I judge people and believe that they won't respond well to my "true self" so why not play it safe and use my "social self," the people pleasing personality that never fails...but holds no true meaning, leaving each interaction with a shallow feeling.

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If any of this sounds familiar to you I would like to suggest two ideas that I have found helpful. First, I like to remember the words of Gandhi - "Be the change you seek..." To me this means that I need to befriend others, provide a listening ear, validate, and offer myself to those who seem lonely, help cure their loneliness and so cure my own. There's an old saying that says "It doesn't matter which direction the river is flowing when you jump in - either way you'll get wet." It ~~does~~ ^{doesn't} matter which way the love is flowing, as long as you're a part of it you'll feel the love.

Second, there's one person who is always with us, one person who we have full control over and can show us friendship and kindness whenever we choose - ourselves! I encounter enough negativity and criticism from some of the people around me; the last thing I need is to add to it. I always have the choice to be kind to myself, to appreciate myself, to encourage myself - why not make use of this freedom as much as I can? I've found that when I do this that gnawing sense of loneliness subsides for a while and I am more able to enjoy the day.

What do you think of these ideas?

Current Events - On April 14, 2010 ~~a young man~~ I saw a young man run by me with a huge grin on his face and he was waving his arms. I wondered "What's he so happy about?" I soon forgot about him and went into the library. Within a minute there was a loud, sickening slapping sound that made everyone jump. I then heard someone yell, "He jumped! He jumped!" I saw a crowd gathering by the window so I went to see

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What was happening, I saw the young man ^{that} ~~he~~ ran past me sprawled out on the concrete floor. He had run up the ramp, climbed the railings, and had jumped. ~~about 25-30~~ The fall was about 25-30^{ft.} Yesterday I heard he had broken both his heels.

Things like this actually become common place in Prison. I found myself feeling disturbed and saddened for about five minutes, then returning to business as usual. Other guys had similar reactions, but some paid no attention at all to what happened while others were making jokes. I've seen two suicides and one murder, countless bloody fights, people cutting themselves, and I've lost several friends to suicide. Violence always disturbs me, but it has become so common place that it doesn't take me long to recover these days. ~~One of the reasons I am in Prison is because~~ One of the reasons I am in Prison is because of violence. Whenever I turn on the news I see violence. It's becoming overwhelming.

Recently I made a decision not to watch the News more than twice a week and to ~~stop~~ ^{stop} watching TV. Shows that feature violence as the main draw. I'm also committed to never being a ~~perpetrator~~ perpetrator of violence again - unless my very life is at stake.

I've been wondering how so many people can believe that human-kind ~~has~~ has evolved much in the last 2,000 years. Sure, we have learned how to manipulate materials to our advantage, we have cool gadgets and have discovered many break-throughs in ~~medicine~~ medicine, but how have we evolved? Open a history book and you'll find that we still struggle with the same issues; we still have no idea how to live peacefully and purposefully as a

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Society. In fact, I believe some ancient cultures were far more advanced than we are in the areas that actually count. Who cares that we have cars and cell-phones, big deal. We still (myself included) have no idea how to live any more than peoples of 2-3,000 ~~ya~~ years ago did. The Romans, The Greeks, Mesopotamian (spell?) cultures — they all struggled with similar issues as we do today only they didn't have iPhones. Have we really evolved? We've had an industrial revolution, a technological revolution, but what about a revolution of consciousness? Everything else is ~~the~~ child's play.

Answer to last puzzle - I before e except after c.

New puzzle -

Nose
\$\$\$
Chin

 - What popular phrase does this represent?

Quote of the day - "We lift ourselves by our thought, we climb upon our vision of ourselves" Orson Sweet Marden

Leave a comment or write me at:

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P.S. I am mailed your comments once every two weeks, so please be patient. I will do my best to respond to them all, but ~~so~~ snail-mail takes time! 