
FRONT COVER:

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Foreword

As humans, we are social creatures. We are like the ants and the bees when it comes to sheer existence; we want others of our ilk to be with us at all times.

Whether we are in the early years of our lives or in our prime, or have crossed the age that most people consider to be the prime of our lives, we want companionship. Loneliness can be a sure killer, and that is the reason why most people try to avoid the blight of loneliness as much as they can.

It is indeed a curse to be lonely. What can we do if we do not have someone likeminded to share things with us in whatever we do? Most of us would not even like to watch a movie or eat at a restaurant alone.

But, at the same time, there are some people who are living this curse day in and day out. Due to some reason or the other, which may or may not be their fault, they have to suffer a lonely life.

In this eBook, we have understood the problem of loneliness. We have taken the problem piecemeal and analyzed it. Why does loneliness happen? Can it happen to anybody?

And, if it happens, what are the different ways in which it can be eliminated? How can a lonely person become a social butterfly? These are some of the questions that we are going to find answers to in this eBook.

You need to put your heart and soul into the issue. If you think you are lonely, you are actually not alone. There are millions of people in this world who are living a lonely life, and this eBook tries to reach out to all those people. This life-changing tool may be just what you need to unleash the true hidden potential within yourself.



Loner's Lifehack

The Guide To Escaping Loneliness And Living A Life Surrounded By
Loved Ones

Chapter 1:

What Is Loneliness?

Synopsis

When you are trying to counter something, the most important thing is to first understand what you are up against. Here, your main problem is loneliness.

You are on a journey to find out how you can solve the loneliness in your life, and find out answers to the problem. In order to do so, you have to first understand what loneliness really is.

In this initial chapter of this eBook, we speak about what loneliness really is. Read it, and you will find why you might be alone even if you are living in a crowded house full of people of different types and personalities.



What Is Loneliness?

Everyone has some idea of what loneliness means. Dictionaries define loneliness as the state of being sad because one is without company. If you do not have friends with you at the moment, and you are feeling morose on account of that, then you are suffering from the pangs of loneliness.

This is something that is sapping at your very innards, and you want to snap out of the feeling. Loneliness is, after all, a very discomforting feeling, and we all seek some or the other solution to overcome it.

But, even if you already have an idea about loneliness, you must realize that there are several different kinds of it. For example, the loneliness of someone who has lost a partner to death is quite different from someone who is lonely just because it is raining outside and they cannot venture out of the house.

Even a person who goes to a foreign country might feel lonely, even if they are surrounded by people all the time. All these are different manifestations of loneliness, and they are all cured in different ways. There is no universally applicable solution to loneliness; it has to be dealt with on a case-to-case basis.

Chapter 2:

The Types Of Loneliness

Synopsis

Here we shall take a look at the different kinds of loneliness that exist.



The Forms

State Loneliness

This is the loneliness of the person who has been stranded at home without company because it is raining outside. The person is lonely only because some change in the environment has made it difficult for him or her to mingle with others.

This is also the loneliness of a sick man who has to stay in bed and cannot meet others when they want to. Also, if someone has been kept in confinement against their will, the loneliness can be termed as state loneliness.

State loneliness is always a condition that has been imposed by outside circumstances. The people going through this kind of loneliness actually have very little say in what they can do about improving their condition. They have not voluntarily brought about this loneliness upon themselves.

While we are speaking about what state loneliness is, it is also good to tell right at the outset that state loneliness is the easiest to get rid of.

Whatever the circumstances might be, these people can very easily snap out of their solitude and put their lives in a more meaningful direction. In subsequent chapters, we shall see how state loneliness is easy to treat and what we can do about it in order to come out of the situation.

Trait Loneliness

This is the type of loneliness that people impose upon themselves. Strictly speaking, these people do not want the loneliness, and they can snap out of their condition if they want to, but they are too diffident about their condition. They do not want to do anything about their situation. That is the reason trait loneliness is the most difficult to get rid of.

A woman who has lost her husband feels lonely. Someone who has taken up some work and willingly chooses not to meet anyone for a while is going through trait loneliness too. Trait loneliness is also found in people who lead introverted lives; they like to live that way.

It becomes very difficult to handle people who are suffering from trait loneliness. Reversing this condition requires dedicated efforts from the sufferer as well as from the person or people treating them. It might usually require changing the personality of the person who is going through the condition.

The Difference

On reading these two fundamental kinds of loneliness, you will have recognized one fact. State loneliness happens mostly because of an external factor, while trait loneliness happens because of the person's intrinsic tendencies.

Even in the case of a woman who has lost her husband, she chooses to stay that way. She can find company in various activities, but she often chooses to spend time in remembering her husband, and staying lonely. The people who stay at home for work and lead an introverted life have made a conscious decision to stay that way. Hence, trait loneliness is brought on by people upon themselves.

On the other hand, state loneliness is not because of the person's choice. In all the examples we talked about—someone not being able to go out because of the weather or someone who is secluded because of sickness or someone who is in prison—it is some outside condition that has caused them to be alone. These people want to break free from their loneliness at the slightest opportunity they can get and, in most probability, they will do that.

Characteristic Loneliness

There is another type of loneliness which we shall term as characteristic loneliness. This is what is also referred to as 'loneliness in a crowd'. It happens with all of us at some time or the other. We are in a crowd of people and then suddenly we find that we do not belong there. We phase out. We take ourselves to a completely different place and think, "What am I doing here?"

A magician who has been called to perform on stage at a rock concert will feel terribly out of place. A person who is surrounded by people who have completely different interests than what he has will feel phased out too. This is characteristic loneliness, what most people suffer from, and what can be easily cured if only the person comes out of denial and start thinking about how to make matters better.

Think of yourself in a company of people whom you think you have nothing in common with. For example, you are with a group of sailors by chance. You are not a sailor; you do not know anything about it. Now, in this case, though you are with people around you, and though they are probably talking, laughing, partying and doing everything else that a merry group of people is supposed to do, you are feeling

left out. You are feeling lonely because you do not connect with these people. This is called as characteristic loneliness.

If you extend this definition for loneliness, you might arrive at the conclusion that everyone has to face a bit of loneliness at several times in their lives. There are so many instances when we are caught in situations where we are out of place.

When we are visiting somewhere that is totally alien to us, we are lonely. When we attend an event where we know no one, we are again lonely. These are examples of a universal type of loneliness, which may not harm anybody if it happens occasionally, but can be quite detrimental in an overdose.

The Overriding Definition

We can see that there are many different ways in which loneliness can be defined. One man's loneliness need not be another man's loneliness too. In fact, what one might find joyful company could become brain-numbing loneliness for someone else. So, is there a definition that can encompass all these different definitions of loneliness?

The truth is there is. In all these above examples, there is one thing that is common, whatever the situation might be.

In all of them, people are devoid of company that they can associate with. Whether you are solitary or in a group of people, you are going to feel left out and lonely if there is no one you can associate with. The mental equation is very important here. You have to have someone with whom you can share things, and feel what they feel.

Thus, we can define loneliness as **lack of companionship** or **friendlessness**. If you do not have friends at any place, you are lonely there; doesn't matter if there are a thousand humans at that place. The connection is very important. If the connection is missing, you are lonely.

This is the overriding definition, the one that supersedes them all. You have to understand that loneliness is a state of the mind. It does not have to do anything with your physical senses.

Your eyes may see people all around; your skin might touch them even. But, if your mind does not associate you with them, then you are going to feel the pangs of loneliness. It is this mental loneliness that we have to learn to conquer.



Chapter 3:

How Do You Know You Are Lonely?

Synopsis

What makes it more difficult to fathom loneliness is that there are so many different types of it. Due to the different types, you may not really understand whether you are actually lonely or it is just a phase that you are passing through.

The problem with psychosomatic and psychosocial disorders is that they do not have very clear indications. They cannot be diagnosed due to the presence of certain symptoms, because these symptoms vary from one person to another. You cannot be certain that what you are facing is really loneliness because one person's case may not fit yours.

What you need to do is to find out for yourself. There are some indicators that can tell you whether you are lonely. This is an assessment that you have to do before you try to find out any remedies for the problem. It is not difficult to overcome loneliness, but you have to go through it the right way, which will help you to find the right solution for your problem.

How Do You Know You Are Lonely?

Loneliness is pronounced by a lot of different manifestations, and that is the reason why people cannot say for sure whether they are lonely or not. There might be some people who have been lonely since ever but they are still not able to find out what their real problem is.

They might be suffering from the pangs of being left out, but still do not know that they are suffering from a problem, let alone try to find out a way to resolve it. This is what happens with most of the lonely people in the world today. They do not realize that they are lonely until it is too late for them to make any improvements in their situation.

Here we shall be talking about some of the indications of loneliness. Sit down and think whether any of these plague you. If they do, you have a better idea of where you should place yourself.

You find yourself doing solitary things more.

If you tend to occupy yourself with more solitary activities, then it might be an indication that you are lonely. For instance, you might enjoy sitting at home, playing on your computer, watching television, reading a book, cooking, etc. more than going out and meeting with people.

If these are the kinds of activities that give you more pleasure than going out and socializing, it might indicate that you are a reclusive person by nature. Not that there is anything wrong with being reclusive, but maybe what you enjoy at the moment can lead to severe problems later on. You might love hacking away at the computer at

the moment, but the very fact that you enjoy that might mean that you do not have anything better to do outside. Over time, this will distance the friends you have and you will slowly find yourself lonelier and lonelier.

Here, the secret is the right balance. There is nothing wrong with the computer or television or a book, but you should know how to balance these activities with other things that you do outside the house, with other people. Everyone needs some 'me' time, but if you spend hours with yourself without giving even a little time to activities that involve other people, then you are not going to sustain this kind of life for long.

You envy people who go out with other people.

Many people who are lonely find a slight twinge of pain when they hear about people having parties, going out with their friends, going on dates and so on. They may not consciously realize this pain—as the pain can manifest itself in several different ways—but they do find themselves asking why only other people can do all of these things, and why are they not in the place of those people.

If you do not understand why other people are finding more company than you are, then you are probably a lonely person. If you had company with you, you would have been going out with others too. It is time to make some adjustments in your lifestyle.

You are gloomy most of the time.

Loneliness can bring about behavioral changes, especially if it continues for a long time. The most common change is that it can

make a person gloomy and sad, and may even lead them to depression if it persists for long.

It may also happen that you start feeling immensely touchy and irritable. People who are lonely often start hating people who are with them but whom they do not perceive as valuable company, such as the people from their family whom they take for granted.

If they feel lonely, they start lashing out at these other people who are with them. Things may take a bad turn when they start hurting people who are with them, just because they cannot be with people whom they want to be with.

If you find yourself saying a lot of hurtful things to your near and dear ones, quarreling with people for no reason and if you find yourself depressed a lot, then it is possible that you do not have many people with you. Perhaps expanding your circle of friends could be a nice solution for improving your lonely situation.

Dreading Special Occasions and Festivals

Do days like Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc. put you in a bad mood? If you do not have many friends, this is bound to happen. You might start feeling the pangs of fear when these days approach just because you do not know what to do.

You do not have people to be with. This puts you in a bad mood. You do not have a date; you do not even have friends with whom you can celebrate these special days. Things take an awful turn when your birthday approaches. There are very few people wishing you, and they are just your family and some few people whom you label as friends,

though you know they are not really that. This can put you in dejection and even depression. If you do not enjoy the special days that you should enjoy, then something is definitely amiss.

Skipping Meals, Insomnia, Etc.

Lonely people suffer from a lot of pathological problems in the long run. We take things like eating for granted. But the fact is that over our times of evolution, we have developed eating into a very social activity. We love to eat with other people.

It is only loners who eat alone. And that is what creates a problem here. If you do not have people with whom you can eat, then the pangs of loneliness start expressing themselves more acutely. All right, everyone wants to be left alone once in a while, but if eating alone becomes a regular affair, then you are definitely not going to be able to sustain it.

Chances are that you will start skipping your meals. You cannot suffer the thought of eating alone. You would rather go to bed hungry than have one more meal in front of the television.

But that is where the situation becomes more problematic. That is because, when lonely people try to sleep, they cannot sleep well. The pangs of loneliness extend to them even then, and insomnia becomes a characteristic problem arising out of their loneliness.

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