

Alone And Lonely: What's That?

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Bindu Midha

BEFORE: It is certainly a little awkward to sit by yourself sipping coffee or watching a film or taking a walk or even having a meal whilst the others around you have company. Their tinkling laughter and sundry conversation seems to unsettle as you are by yourself moping about the presence of that someone who would offer you company. Sometimes being by yourself at home too is a challenging time as we wait eagerly for the doorbell to ring and even if it is a salesman to sell a welcome relief. The day is saved and so is the mood.

Or is it? Does it not actually tantamount to time lost? A depletion from the precious me time, the time to spend with yourself, do little things that you would like to do in your own company. Isn't that what this alone time is all about? Shouldn't it be a time to rejoice in, to celebrate rather than feel despondent and despair? It is like a bonus, an unexpected one at that, to venture into a number of activities that you would actually like to take up but couldn't manage on account of lack of 'self-time'. Like many other individuals, I too would feel quite insecure in my own company. But after much thought and experience the Eureka moment dawned- IF I DON'T ENJOY BEING WITH ME THEN WOULD ANY OTHER INDIVIDUAL BE HAPPY TO BE WITH ME? So I decided: Alone, yippee, time to relax and pamper myself!

AFTER: Peace descended. I picked up pieces of my crestfallen self and began to enjoy doing things around the house and outside it for myself. I began to read voraciously, almost greedily, as if to catch up for the time gone past. I began to walk and needless to say gained in more ways than one. No longer did I feel envious of the couples who swished past me. I revelled in the glory of being able to breathe deeply, observe my environs and fellow walkers and absorb the enriching experiences. And the loss was only where it ought to be- the endlessly irksome-'wait' and weight! Suddenly, my surroundings became greener and more alluring. An occasional visit to a coffee shop, shopping for groceries, evening walks left me with millions of experiences to write about. I felt prosperous. So, what made the transition, the transformation possible? Just one decision: I AM HAPPY TO BE BY MYSELF TOO. So am I classified as a social? Certainly not! I revel as much in company of others as I much as I do of my own! Except now, I no longer feel at sea when I do not see a human presence in the vicinity.

Undoubtedly, we need company but we can choose to be self-contained in its absence. There's always so much to do and catch up with. So let us become our own wish granting fairy and puff-

stay engaged! Some ways to enjoy me-time:

- Declutter all: your mind & body. Shelves, cupboard, fridge!
- Catch up on your beauty sleep.
- Indulge in exercises, do yoga and meditate. Silence helps.
- Go window shopping .
- Volunteer help to someone in need-teach a child, chat with an elderly.
- Enhance knowledge and use it to create.
- Travel down memory lane. Dust those albums, cards, letters. Use ideas obtained in the present!
- Do things you have left behind- cycling, swimming, trekking, making paper boats.
- Most importantly, forget that you are alone, you are only with yourself!

So, enjoy being alone, and don't feel lonely. Spend me time wisely. You are your best friend.
