



Loneliness vs Solitude: Finding Strength in Being Alone

Many people use the words solitude and loneliness interchangeably, but there is a world of difference.

Loneliness is an unintentional, perceived state that brings feelings of isolation and emotional discomfort. In contrast, solitude is an intentional, positive state where you spend time in your own company.

Benefits to spending time in solitude:

- 1 Build your self-esteem:** it gives you time to reflect your identity and goals without the input of others.
- 2 Regain perspective:** you understand yourself on a deeper level without worrying about what others think.
- 3 Become more secure in yourself:** when you truly know yourself, you are more likely to carry yourself more confidently and less likely to rethink your identity by others' ideas of what you should be.
- 4 Improve your relationships and interactions with others:** you allow your social battery to reset. When in solitude, you can recognize and regulate your emotions, making you more present when interacting with others.

The practice of solitude can seem daunting if it unfamiliar to you. Have patience with yourself and start slowly. You can set aside a few minutes each day for intentional alone time and build up to longer periods of time. It may feel uncomfortable the first few times, but this is where progress often stems from.

Spending time with others and in solitude both offer different benefits. Finding a good balance is key, and your journey will be unique to you.