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MINDFUL SOUL CENTER

bi-monthly magazine

TIME

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WHAT IS IT
REALLY?

ALONE OR LONELY WHAT IS THAT? ARTHA
RECIPES & FOOD DELICIOUSNESS **8D MEDITATION AUDIO**

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I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH - 1770-1850

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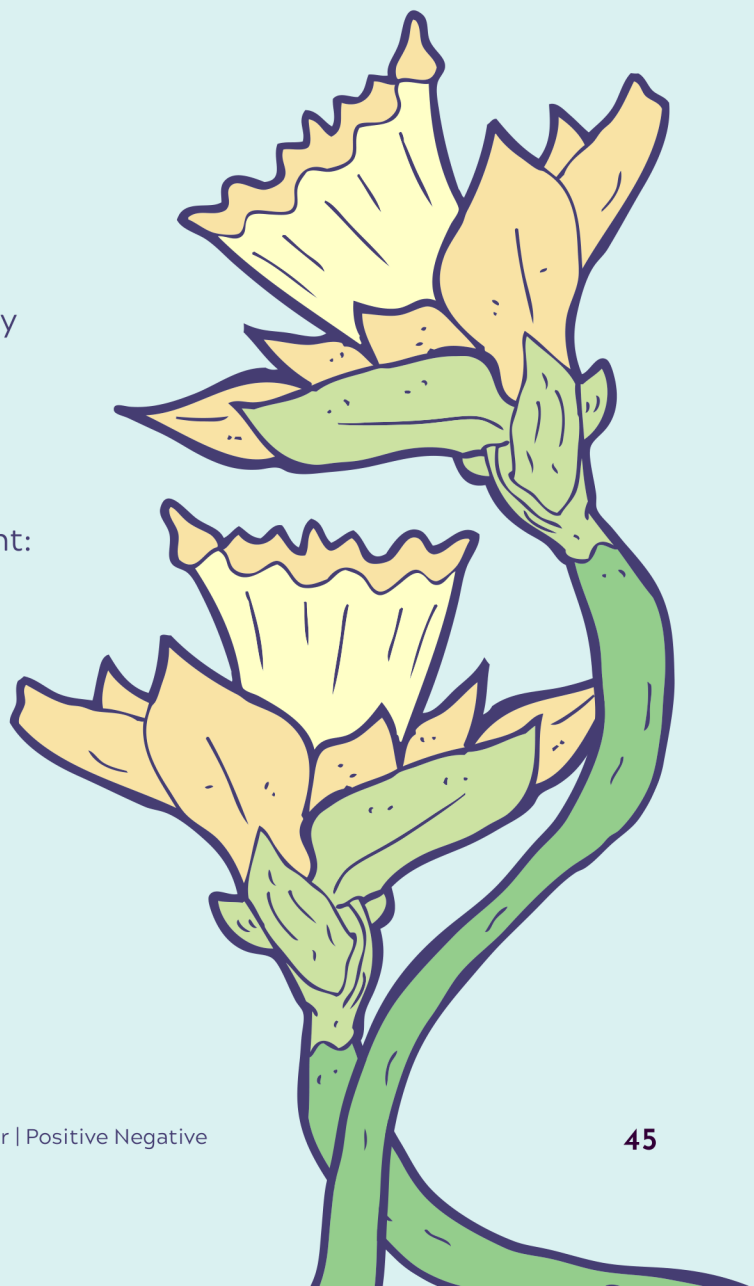
I wandered lonely as a Cloud
That floats on high o'er Vales and Hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden Daffodils;
Beside the Lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:-
A Poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the shew to me had brought:

For oft when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the Daffodils.

shew - show
jocund - cheerful and light-hearted





positive
negative



ALONE ≠ LONELY PART ONE

In the liminal state between waking and sleep, you muster all the strength you have and extend your arm towards your beloved next to you and they're not there. You hop nimbly off the bus and quicken your step with anticipation of seeing your grandma who lives in the modest apartment downstairs...did she make rice pudding?

For a moment you've forgotten that they left - your partner, your grandmother, your beloved friend, or dog - it doesn't matter how they left - they're gone and suddenly you feel alone. The feeling matches the reality. You are alone.

You are missing them and that state can pass as you process the feeling, the sadness. Maybe that state even lingers awhile, it's a part of life - it passes. For all one knows it doesn't. Maybe it continues to linger. Then you aren't indeed alone, you feel lonely. You are naturally wanting something that isn't anymore - the companionship, the laughter, the tears and all the things that invariably come with connection and relationship. You miss that person; you miss the feelings that you felt when you were with them.

ALONE ≠ LONELY

When we are looking to others to give us the things, we need most, then we can ask ourselves if we're giving these things to ourselves.

We can dearly miss things and people we never even had. They are emblems of instinctive desire creating a wanting, a lack. Others can seem to "have it all" - the people and things around them and still be lonely. You might even be that person that has a partner or other people around you and be lonely at times. Sometimes that state passes and sometimes it seems perpetual.

Though, all the while, there is someone else that we must confront. The person that we have to come face to face with each day when you are lonely and that's you. The whole you - the integral you. Do you like you?

The ineffable sadness will come and go. That by heart is life on Earth. It's when that sad state becomes perpetual, then it can become a negative state - it turns into loneliness. Eventually and inevitably over time, the weight of sadness becomes easier to carry from loss, separation and change.

Whatever independent judgements we place on our attitudes, habits and unique ways of being are our own. When we're alone there is no one else to blame for how we behave. That's equally true when we have others around us all the time too. For then it's easier to find a convenient scapegoat, someone else to blame.

If you haven't been alone very much throughout your life, it can be profoundly uncomfortable at first. The discomfort isn't the state of loneliness when we miss someone or miss the way

were at one time. The discomfort is finding out who you really are without the social and cultural expectations of others. When we are surrounded by others and their apparent wants, needs and expectations from and of you, we must take time to be alone. Not only to know and appreciate ourselves but to restore our own sense of well being.

positive negative

When we don't know ourselves, it's not others who abandoned us, it's us. We have abandoned the person who you will spend your entire life with on Earth.

Through the years we keep shedding our skin. It keeps growing back as our life transforms and changes until we get comfortable in our skin. Then we will continue to be challenged, to grow and evolve with each life that we live in this lifetime.

As we let go of others ideas of whom we are and we come to know ourselves, this discomfort can transform into joyful ease as we peel the layers away of identities placed upon us, even the ones that we've built ourselves. Then we are alone and enjoying that aloneness.

All of these thoughts and ideas, even if they are valid are separated from daily life when we're in the world living. We might think we don't have the luxury of being alone. Or maybe we don't want to be alone because we are trying to distract ourselves from us. Get to know yourself. Take some time and take up some space. You are worth knowing.

I'll hear about other people's experiences of loneliness and being alone. in part two. Send your stories to amy@themindfulsoulcenter.com.

Listen up people!



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YOU MUST NOT EVER
STOP BEING WHIMSICAL.
AND YOU MUST NOT,
EVER, GIVE ANYONE
ELSE THE
RESPONSIBILITY FOR
YOUR LIFE.

Mary Oliver, Wild Geese



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