

Loneliness equals change

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Throughout our lives, we all go through periods of loneliness and change. Whether it's having to leave your house and downsize to an apartment after a layoff, or having to suffer the pain and seclusion after the death of a loved one, the loneliness can be hard. We are led to believe in this society that solitude, whether it be mental or physical, is a good state of being, even though it might not seem that way at first.

The person that I have found to be most disrupted by being alone, and often times lonely, is the complex creature fondly known as an American Teenager, or me. Drastic changes occur when you least expect them and mine morphed into play when I decided to change schools. From the age of four to fourteen, I had attended a private Christian school. Many have heard that they are strict and preach the Doctrine religiously to their pupils, sometimes browbeating them into displaying signs of becoming an introvert, preferring to enjoy the company of one. I am here to confirm that this can many times be true.

Countless times I was left on my own, expected to spend my academic time alone, with no interaction from my fellow students. At first I found this hard, having to cloister myself away from social interaction. Funny thing about having no social outlets, you never miss what you have never known, correct? A person can be alone and lonely at the same time. I know this, it was me. After moving onto junior high school, I confided to my parent about the loneliness I was constantly confronted with, my evolving need to make and keep friends, great friends who would always be there to share some of life's greatest moments with me. At this time, I was still unsure of what or how I would accomplish the task of making a friend.

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My teachers did not care for their students anymore and just passed them along, regardless of their retention of course material. Often I remember dreaming about graduating alongside my new friends, all of us keeping in touch during college, perhaps sharing holidays and vacations as a group. That dream is one I reflect on sometimes, times when I feel the isolation of being in my own company too often. The move from a Christian School to a public high school brought about the next drastic change in my life, emphasized how small and lonely my life had been. The easiest change I found was starting as a brand new freshman, everyone approaching their adventure with a clean slate, and coming together from different schools.

The potential to greet and acquire new friends gave me hope of a new start. The different curriculum that I found there, the various denominations of the three thousand students there were mind boggling. Can you imagine coming from a school with a student body of three hundred to an astounding ten times that much? But thankfully, I met a handful that very first day. At first, I refused to relate aloud the whereabouts of my elementary education for fear of being ostracized. No one wants to befriend the nerdy, religious kid from the private school. I have heard this many times, but can you imagine my immense surprise when confronted with endless questions about my Christian education, rather than the scorn I expected.

Finally, I had made friends. Attending a standard high school has been quite an eye opening experience for me. During my freshman year, I was brought up and personal to the dangers that lurk within our public school system. The gangs, drug paraphernalia, weapons, bullying and just the lack of academic commitment by many of the students were horrific. I could not spend one

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single day at school without having these dangers brought up and personal to me. Because of these conditions, my mother and I have turned to an online public school that I found while browsing the internet.

It is called K12 and I absolutely love it. Being able to complete my last three years in a strong educational environment has given me a chance to meet other students. The curriculum is independent study, and although lonely at times, I am able to interact with my teachers and often times with other students. The transition has been miraculous and has even had me break out of my comfort zone and try several kinds of social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Millions of people communicate through social avenues such as these, reaching out and making contact with people who meet their idea of a friend. It is amazing. As I have previously mentioned, I now have scores of friends at school and through the internet. I have learned to adapt to my new surroundings and have seen a difference in myself.

In fact, I see my entire life in a whole new light. It's all about being optimistic and making yourself go out and have fun. Change - people shun and despise it. What they don't realize is that change goes on around them every day. Some say " everything happens for a reason." I say " let God do his job.

" Sometimes we can't stop change from happening, but it's not always a bad thing. Whatever happens happens. It's up to you to decide what the outcome of that change will be. Will you go against it and try to reset things? Or will you try to work with its silver lining? It is up to you to decide.