



I AM LONELY Norman Vincent Peale

Realize that lots of other people are lonely too, so look around for those who seem to be alone and show an interest in them. You will be surprised how quickly many such people will come to depend upon you and this will help to alleviate your own loneliness.

Study yourself to discover why you have so few friends. Honestly analyze. Ask what it is that fails to attract other people. Are you dull in conversation, hard to get along with, critical, not neat and attractive in dress, deficient in intellectual interest or other factors? Consult your pastor as a counselor regarding this problem to be sure your analysis is objective.

Study and master the art of being a good conversationalist. Read books, newspapers and form opinions, but don't present them as though you know it all. Do not get argumentative, but have something thoughtful to say about matters that interest people. Get some sparkle into your conversation. Don't be a clam.

Learn how to tell a happy story. Make a list of such stories and be alert in conversation to recognize the place where such stories would add a unique touch. When you tell a story put your whole self into it. Then let the other fellow tell one. Give him genuine interest and appreciation. In other words, participate but don't monopolize. Always try to bring the other person out rather than bring attention to yourself. Others will like you for this if you do it genuinely.

Develop a prayer list. Every day pray for those on your list. Send out thoughts of prayerful interest toward them. Whether you ever become close to these people or not, by praying for them you are sharing your deepest personality with them and thus they are your friends. It is amazing how many times your circle is enlarged by this procedure.

Look for opportunities to bring encouragement, especially to those who suffer sickness, sorrow, disappointment. Telephone or write or call upon them and offer support and friendliness. Also, join in people's successes and joys by sending a word of congratulation or pleasure in the happiness that has come to them. The idea is to lose in other people's lives that self-centeredness which is basic in your present loneliness.

Practice developing a great mental storehouse of pleasant and happy thoughts, memories, ideas and experiences. When alone, draw them one by one into the center of consciousness and live them over or meditate upon their rich meaning. The person who does this effectively is never at a loss for good company for he is his own good company.

Live with the light of God in your mind. It will do something to you that will draw others to you. God's light in you will irresistibly attract people to you, for you will have something for them and they will recognize that fact.

It is all as simple as going around doing good in God's name. But don't act pious. Be normal and genuine, happy and self-forgetting. "To have friends, be friendly."