

How to remove loneliness

By Myaungmya Sayadaw (October/ November 1993)

What is the cause of loneliness? You should first consider the fact that Loneliness is usually the result of dissatisfaction. It is the result from desire which can never be fulfilled nor gratified. Thus sense desire is the main cause of mental depression, an unhappy feeling of loneliness in the sense of absence of a helping, consoling companion. You and all other persons are born ensnared with attachment, craving or clinging, so from the very beginning all beings are looking forward to getting a companion, friend or relative to have a chat together, to play, to work together, to enjoy common feelings good or bad.

You should know that sense desire can never be fully satisfied. When you get something you eagerly wished for you may feel happy but that happiness does not last long but is fleetingly gone. Then some other thing appears to you as the most desirable and necessary one. If you are fortunate enough to get it, you may enjoy it for some short period of time. But you soon become fed up or disappointed with it. Then again you are looking for another object that you wish to possess. Thus your desire is never ended.

The present modern situation in the world is no longer easy and comfortable. Many problems such as marital, unemployment, poor health etc. are enormous. In the face of such unhappy states everybody is looking for a companion to confront difficulties together. There is, however, no way out of such a troublesome situation and turmoil. For this reason mental peace is not available and due to lack of mental peace everybody feels lonely.

To solve such problems and to give treatment to such mental diseases meditation is the true and effective method. In meditation you are cultivating cognitive power, that is, some sort of knowledge of your inward nature. It is some sort of gradual improvement from ignorance to knowledge, a development from an imperfect stage to a perfect stage.

There is no barrier on the way to that stage. If there is any, it is only temporary. If you regularly take up meditation practice new sides of reality will be exposed to you and some aspects of truth not experienced before will be realized by you. Yesterday there was a limited understanding, today the limit is decreasing and tomorrow it will disappear. Your long standing practice will increase your confidence in the *Dhamma*, which will give rise to self-reliance. If you rely on yourself you have no problem to disturb your mental peace. You will never have such unhappy state of loneliness due to your vigilance or wakefulness on the *Dhamma*.

In this case please learn the Buddha's admonishment, a verse in the *Mangala Sutta*:

"If you encounter worldly vicissitudes or conditions of ups and downs you should not waver nor entertain sorrow but you should harbour mental serenity and be dispassionate on sense objects. These are fourfold highest blessings".