

Why We Struggle to Make Time for Solitude

How often do you take time to go out for an hourlong walk? To just sit out in nature doing nothing but contemplating and enjoying the silence?

I'm sure there are a few of you who indulge in this luxury regularly, but most of us don't make time for solitude on a daily basis.

For some, it's too much of a luxury: the struggle of daily existence is too close to survival level to even think about an hour alone in nature.

But for many of us, the main reason is that our brain rationalizes staying busy. We are filled with uncertainty all day long, and that drives us to try to do more, to get control of everything, to cram more into our lives, to stay addicted to technology and distraction.

The main driver of our busyness and distraction is uncertainty.

Uncertainty is woven into every hour of our lives. We are uncertain about what we should do, who we are, whether we're good enough, what is going to happen, what's going on in the world, and how to deal with the overwhelmingness of life. We don't often acknowledge it, but we feel uncertainty all day long.

To deal with that feeling of uncertainty, of the groundlessness of not having stability in our lives ... we cling to comforts and distractions, we procrastinate and put off the habits we want to form, we are constantly busy and messaging and more. And if we get a little downtime, we will pick up our phones or jump onto our favorite video site to watch something.

The idea of being in solitude, of having quiet in our lives and time for contemplation, might seem nice to many of us. But when it comes time to actually do it, we cling to busyness because of our feeling of uncertainty. "I can't because I have too much to do!" "Just one more email. Just one more video."

And yet, this constant busyness and distraction is draining us. We are always on, always connected, always stimulated, always using energy.

What would it be like to disconnect every single day for an hour? To remove ourselves from TVs, books, devices, and just go out for a walk? To not be productive, but connected to nature?

We could use the downtime. We could use the time to let ourselves recharge and be replenished by nature. We could use the movement, the quietude that gives our brains a

chance to rest, the space for contemplation and nothingness.

To do this, we have to stop letting the uncertainty rule our lives. It can be with us, a constant companion, and we can learn to be comfortable with it and even love it as it is. But it doesn't have to drive us.

The way to shift this is to create the space for solitude, even just half an hour ... and then make it happen. Watch your mind try to rationalize why you shouldn't do it, or have an urge to put the solitude off for just a little longer. Then don't give in to that urge, but instead go to the solitude and be with your urges, your rationalizations, your stress.

See what happens when you give these things some space. They air out. They calm down. And you get nourished by the space and life around you.