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Keyword: Isolation

A Gentle Attempt on Defining "Isolation"

Perhaps as a concept of some sort of social positioning, *isolation*—in daily interactions the phenomenon of the absence of social contact or contact points (No Isolation, 2021)—is not too uncommon in adolescents and young adults' lives; transitions in early-stage childhood, single-parented family configuration is important.

There are other macro- and micro-level sociocultural factors which could possibly isolate people or let teenagers and young adults have the feeling of isolation, which often can lead to, and is accompanied with/by, loneliness, the emotional sensation of sadness from being alone and/or the human-psychological state of being without company (Merriam Webster). The term social isolation describes the social state of being an outcast to societal environment, losing self-worth (Rex, K., 2018); teenagers living in isolation do not have anyone to contact, and they are missing the social expectations and others' companionships (Sundqvist, A. and Hemberg, J., 2021).

The Concept of Isolation and Further Discussion

In reality, teenagers grew into young adults or adolescents while projecting their realities from what they perceived as facts, conjectures, and analogies from any literary, multi-media intake. In this regard, it is not surprising that young adults could likely be "lonely", some physically isolated such as those living in a single-parent or who were single-child's. For physical isolation, what fill the emotional gap would be those intake—it

could be good ones that direct adolescents to positivity, or it could be something that corrupt, such as materials and novels that are condescending.

I lived through those days of adolescence under "partial isolation": specifically, I was by myself a lot. I did reading, studying, enjoying the music, playing computer games—all by myself. Out of the experience I do not remember any significant downsides of that life style, whereas I did miss out a lot of possibilities in life—I could've, or would've, interacted with my peers and senior mentors more frequently, developing social skills and so on.

To critically explore the concept of isolation, the counterpart of the category of "loneliness" things is probably something that isolation "creates a space" for people. Even into adulthood, people often times live alone, spend time meditating by themselves, and reflect in solitude, etc. A relatively "lonely" adolescence shall not be, by any social or cultural standard, condemned to be "bad": it is just a condition, like a deck of cards, and it is up to the card-holder or player's will and mentality how to leverage the isolated condition and to, sometimes in a struggling fashion, strive to flourish in life.

Perhaps from an institutional or political viewpoint, isolation, along-side with illiteracy and other epidemiological phenomena, are inevitably considered a "major public health pandemic" (Fardghassemi, S. and Joffe, H., 2021) and therefore draws the attention of educators, policy makers, fiction writers, journalists, historians, psychological counselors, and many more. However, based on my lived experience and observations, what I would propose here for this new era of twenty-first century upon isolation is going to be a positive one.

In the basketball game, especially in professional settings, there are many "isolation players"; they sometimes messed up the offensive norm designed by their coaches, but

more often that not they are the "terminators" of a offensive play, in particular irreplaceable when the game "gets stuck". One of the lasting small forwards of the late 2000s National Basketball Association (NBA) league, Joe Johnson, acquired his nickname "Iso Joe" because of his specialty in ending the game with a last shot that many good defenders could not stop ("Joe Johnson", 2022). Such players are not necessarily "lone wolves" but usually rather collaborative if they switched to the team-game mode. By this analogy, what I might try to demonstrate is that arguably, in an inherently collaborative professional and educational environment of our era, young adults who live through or experience isolation have their precious gift in that those experiences would be an ingredient for them to become those special, individual *and* team "players" in their classrooms, collegiate-level studies, and later careers.

A good outlook to a redefinition of the concept of isolation, in my view, is essential for balancing our views toward growing young adults—not to "isolate" them because of our preconditioned perspectives, and instead try to understand their situations and advice them accordingly, and friendlily, with a historic lens that takes ownership of the twenty-first century mental, cultural, technical, and ethical faculties.

Isolation in Teen Literature and Media

In the Spider-Man stories the protagonist Peter Parker is portrayed as perhaps one of the most classic and unique isolated social characters. In the Spider-Man 2 movie, Spider Man (Peter Parker) had led a dubious double-life; he was an ordinary high school student who turned to become a college student, with regular friends and relatives, while at the same time he was Spider Man ever since he got bitten by a spider and acquired the super power. The agony of not being able to express his true feelings to people he love, as well as bearing

the pain of losing his beloved Uncle Ben, made the social isolation for him suffocating—even though he continued to help other people with strong aspirations for the goodness of people.

In the dark fantastic movie Hunger Games, good natures of people could shine out of desperation and extremely suppressing conditions of isolation. The character Rue's death for example signifies the haunting on protagonists in the story; as perhaps the only African American character who was given enough screen time, Rue lingers on in other protagonists' mind after she passed away. The spectacle here is that for some people, it is very hard to navigate through such traumas. Sometimes, how we perceive innocence has been racialized.

In the 2018 movie Eighth Grade, the protagonist Kayla is generally good-natured while she took relatively modern ways such as YouTube-channeling to move around in her life w/ the loneliness. She lives in a single-parent family without a mother figure, which could be one of the corners of her loneliness and isolation. "Do I make you sad," remarked Kayla once in the movie to her dad—a rhetorical question, perhaps because if "I had a daughter like this, …, I'd be sad." By saying so, worrying about if her presence worries her own father, the state of her social isolation is clearly demonstrated; she was able to view her role of being a daughter, and she apparently has deep sympathies and a desire for mutual understanding.

Unifying Statement about Isolation in Teens Literature and Media

Although isolation is pervasive and somewhat inevitable, and teenagers in general struggle and find alternatives through isolation and even delusionalize themselves, the protagonists

we see in those literary and media works approach their situations with perseverance and optimism. For Spider Man in particular, it was more likely that morality and social responsibility plus the love for life that sustain his mental strength living in isolation. Overall, it is common for teens to experience some level of isolation, but many people find their ways to thrive nonetheless.

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