

## Self-Healing Newsletter

For People Who Enjoy Helping Themselves

October 2006

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### IN THIS ISSUE

#### Loneliness

#### HI EVERYBODY!

Chicago Tribune columnist, Mary Schmich, recently wrote a humorous column about her resolution to take back Sunday as a day of rest and relaxation by foregoing activities like shopping and answering emails. She describes the challenge of abandoning modern habits that “seem to give pleasure but in fact create stress.” My clients often describe days filled with activities that result in stress rather than pleasure. While all of us have obligations and responsibilities, we owe it to ourselves to reserve time for relaxation. Even if you’re not ready or able to give yourself an entire day of rest, take at least an hour or two to do whatever you want. For myself, I’ve resolved to spend part of each Sunday in October taking a walk or riding a bike in a nearby forest preserve - even if it means setting aside paperwork or other chores. I hope you will make a concerted effort to do something that helps you relax or unwind – whether it’s spending some time outdoors enjoying the fall colors or sitting on the couch watching a football game!

#### New Approaches to Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

Starting in October, many of my clients begin mentioning that they feel sadder and less energetic and focused. They often link these feelings to the decrease in sunlight. The standard view of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is that it is strictly a physical phenomenon in which decreased sunlight causes brain chemicals, especially serotonin, to decrease. Some people are thought to be more sensitive to this decrease than others. An alternative view now gaining credibility is that SAD is caused or intensified by an accumulation of negative experiences, such as death, divorce, or sexual abuse, that occurred during the darker months of the year or that occurred in actual darkness. During the late fall and winter when there is less natural light, people begin to subconsciously associate increased darkness with these negative experiences.

For the last five years, I have used Emotional Transformation Therapy (ETT) to quickly treat Seasonal Affective Disorder by relieving sadness and other feelings related to negative experiences. Emotional Transformation Therapy often resolves SAD in six to twelve sessions unless the SAD is complicated by severe trauma. In these cases, it can take longer to resolve.

For those of you who have not yet experienced Emotional Transformation Therapy, it involves looking at colored light that shines from a specialized light box while talking about one's concerns. This process creates a state of calm that neutralizes stress, anger, and anxiety, as well as many other negative emotions arising from abuse, illness, trauma, and unresolved loss. The positive emotional changes that occur are almost always long lasting and lead to improvements in many areas of a person's life.

### **Pat's Story**

For years, my client, Pat, had noticed that she would begin to get mildly depressed around the end of October and remain mildly to moderately depressed until spring. She felt that she had Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and stated that she didn't expect this pattern to change since it was "probably biological." When I asked whether she'd had any bad experiences during the winter months, she recalled that several deaths had occurred in her family in October and November when she was a child. She also noted that she had divorced and lost her job during the winter months. When we talked about these issues, she was surprised to discover the pattern of losses that had occurred during the winter months. She was equally surprised that she still felt varying degrees of upset about all of these events.

Over the next few sessions, Pat talked about these experiences while sitting in front of the light box. As she gained insight into the source of her sadness, I worked with her to release the upsetting feelings associated with her losses. By the beginning of December, Pat was surprised to discover that in spite of decreased daylight she felt energetic and focused. This was particularly welcome since she usually began the holiday season feeling exhausted. I assured Pat that this would probably be a permanent change as most of my clients report that their Seasonal Affective Disorder doesn't return once they've used Emotional Transformation Therapy to treat the underlying issues.

## Take Care of Yourself!

With Emotional Transformation Therapy, difficult emotional concerns that used to require lengthy therapy now can be resolved in a relatively short period of time. There is no need to suffer if you are experiencing emotional upset. If you or someone you care about is struggling with Seasonal Affective Disorder or depression, please call me at 630-960-2887 or email me at [dlippmann@att.net](mailto:dlippmann@att.net) to schedule an appointment. To learn more about Emotional Transformation Therapy, please visit my web site at [www.wellness-innovations.com](http://www.wellness-innovations.com) where you can download a free booklet on this innovative technique.

Also, if you would like to read a professional journal article on using Emotional Transformation Therapy to treat SAD and depression, please [click here](#).

Finally, since research has shown that full spectrum light boxes can be an adjunctive therapy for reducing Seasonal Affective Disorder and even major depression, I have contacted a company that makes full spectrum light boxes. After talking at length with the president of the company, I have been able to arrange a 10% discount on their light boxes for anyone who mentions my name when ordering. You may contact Light for Health at (800) 468-1104 or visit their website at [www.lightforhealth.com/](http://www.lightforhealth.com/). Please be aware that I do not profit in any way from the sale of these light boxes.

The newsletter topic for this month, written by my colleague, Tony, is entitled **LONELINESS**. It explains how our beliefs can hinder us from initiating contact with others and stresses the importance of overcoming these beliefs and reaching out to people.

## LONELINESS

We are all lonely sometimes.

One of the best things we can do for ourselves is to arrange our lives to be sure it doesn't happen regularly.

Everyone needs regular doses of attention every day.

## DAILY LONELINESS

Daily loneliness comes from ignoring our natural impulses to make contact with other human beings.

When we ignore these impulses we say something like this to ourselves:

"She'd probably be too busy."

"He might be in a bad mood."

"I'd better not go out. I don't look my best today."

Whenever you catch yourself saying such things, you need to know that your impulse to talk to someone is far more trustable than this self-talk inside your head.

Even if you decide not to talk to a certain person for some reason, remember that your impulse to make contact is still there.

So talk to someone else,

spend time with your kids,

or take a deeper interest in someone you've known casually...

but do something with somebody.

Or be lonely.

## **WEEKLY LONELINESS**

Weekly loneliness refers to all the temporary, short term ways we create loneliness in our lives.

These usually have to do with screwed-up priorities.

We say:

"I'd like to go to see him BUT..."

"... I need to clean out that closet,"

"... this project at work is all I can think about now,"

or "... it's too early (or too late, or too sunny or too cold, or.....)."

We think something is more important than the human contact we crave, and we are almost always wrong.

## **LONELINESS AS A LIFE PATTERN**

When Weeks Turn Into Years:

Some people have always been lonely and expect that they always will be. They think "that's just the way I am" and that they can't change.

Many people make loneliness into a way of life by continually thinking the way the "weekly" people do.

They say, and somehow keep believing, that "the rush will soon be over."

They are always shocked to look back a few years and find that they've been thinking this way regularly, habitually, continually.

## **I'm Just Not Good Enough:**

People who were neglected and demeaned in childhood believe they are destined to be alone.

Some were so neglected by the adults in their house that they believe they aren't worth our time.

Others were shamed and ridiculed so much that they assume we will look down on them.

From their point of view, they are doing us a favor by not making us "bother" with them.  
From our point of view, they are robbing us of their presence in our lives.

### **People Are Just Too Scary:**

People who were abused in childhood believe they were destined to be hurt by everyone they meet. From their point of view, they are just protecting themselves by staying away from us. From our point of view, they are grossly insulting us by thinking we are so cruel.

Everyone who has a lonely life pattern thinks that something is more important than their need for human contact. And they are wrong 99.9% of the time!  
(Only our physical needs - like food, air, and water - are more important.)

### **REGULATING THE RISK**

When we examine all of the reasons we have for avoiding each other, they all come down to what therapists call "fear of intimacy."

Here's what we can do when we feel this fear.

We can regulate the degree of contact we allow. When we are lonely, we don't need intense human contact. We just need some human contact. Period.

We can decide whether to look people in the eye, and how long to keep the eye contact.  
We can decide whether to talk to the mailman and the sales clerk, and how much to say.  
We can decide how big of a psychological risk we are willing to take with each person we meet today.

Once we know we can regulate the amount of contact we have, we can go get what we want and need:  
CONTACT with the rest of the human race.

If you have trouble connecting with others, I can help you understand your feelings and experiences and move forward in your life.

Wishing you an enjoyable autumn,

**Dan Lippmann, LCSW, BCD**

Director, Counseling & Wellness Innovations

445 W. Jackson Ave., Naperville, IL 60540 / (630) 355-7250

1000 Maple Ave., Downers Grove, IL 60515 / (630) 960-2887

Email: [dlippmann@att.net](mailto:dlippmann@att.net)

Website: [www.wellness-innovations.com](http://www.wellness-innovations.com)

P.S. I want to thank all of you who have recently referred friends and family to me. If your friends would like more information on my services, have them visit my website at [www.wellness-innovations.com](http://www.wellness-innovations.com). Please forward this newsletter to anyone who is experiencing loneliness, stress, or emotional upset.



*Dan Lippmann has more than 25 years of individual and marital counseling experience. In addition to being licensed, he is a Board Certified Diplomat in Clinical Social Work. After facilitating his own recovery from a chronic pain condition in 1987, Mr. Lippmann began collaborating with experts in the field of mind-body health to develop innovative stress reduction and wellness techniques. He has been cited as a "Master Practitioner" in the book, Light Years Ahead, and in July 1999 his work on stress reduction was featured in the Chicago Tribune. He has also been interviewed about his work on radio and television. To receive this free monthly email newsletter, visit [www.wellness-innovations.com](http://www.wellness-innovations.com).*