

So, I recently asked Google,

“Hey Google, give me a list of things that are supposed to be alone...”

And the only answers she could give me were:

- 1. Activities you could do so you didn't feel so lonely;**
- 2. Activities you could do alone, but only by choice.**

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU FIND YOURSELF ALONE – ISOLATED, NOT BY CHOICE?

Driving the car that suddenly breaks down after you've paid all your bills,

Being told, you're getting let go because the company is downsizing after just learning you're expecting a new child,

Receiving a call from the doctor explaining that you need emergency surgery your insurance doesn't cover.

My friend who is a writer had to leave L.A. because her computer crashed. She couldn't afford a new one and her job required that she have a laptop.

I cried once when my friend gave me \$200 to make my rent. When he told me, “Bro, it's ok to be human, to ask for what you need.”

ISN'T IT IRONIC THAT HALLOWEEN IS THE ONLY TIME WHEN WE HAPPILY GIVE TO STRANGERS? I IMAGINE IT IS THE ONLY DAY IN AMERICA WHERE PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS WOULD RATHER BE MONSTERS INSTEAD OF GHOSTS...

There's a saying – when we judge it is only because we have forgotten the muffled screams that remind us what it means to be invisible, what it feels like to deteriorate quietly.

If we continue to view people first through the lens of their condition instead of through the lens of their humanity, we will continue to be guilty of trying to end poverty on the same faulty foundation of isolation it was birthed from.

*I AM CONVINCED WE ARE POOR WITHOUT ONE ANOTHER
THE GRANDMOTHER WHO SENT YOU THE RENT,
THE FRIEND WHO COSIGNED ON YOUR LOAN,
THE SECRETARY THAT PASSED YOUR RESUME THROUGH.*

Anne Lamont said, “My mind is a scary neighborhood. That's why I never go there alone.”

**What if, when we said “we are ending homelessness” we understood it to mean,
“We are ending people being away from each other in the moments we need someone to be there for us the most.”**

But if we continue to view people first, through the lens of their condition instead of through the lens of their humanity, we will continue to be guilty of trying to end poverty on the same faulty foundation of isolation it was birthed from.

I RECENTLY READ A 2019 STUDY WHERE SCIENTISTS LEFT A GROUP OF PLANTS IN A DARK ROOM AND HOW 100% OF THE CONTROLLED PLANTS GREW TOWARD THE LAST PLACE WHERE THEY FELT LIGHT.

I'D LIKE TO THINK HUMANS ARE THE SAME WAY. AFTER WE'VE BEEN LEFT ALONE LONG ENOUGH, WE GROW TOWARD THE LAST PLACE WE FELT HOPE,

**For most of us here, that space...
Was home.**

Alone

BY MICHAEL NELDER

