

Introduction

The Three Pillars of Loneliness

We are conceived in connection. We are suckled in the security and warmth of connection from the very moment that our mothers holds us against their breast. We cannot perceive the difference between our mother and ourselves, so it is *then*, in that state of oneness, that we are the closest to who and what we really are. So close that we don't even bother to ask the question, "Who am I?" There's no need to do so because we are not *differentiated*.

In the ecstasy of connection, there is a profound stillness of being. Our movement through life is not motivated by the angst of having to earn something that we are lacking. Instead, *doing* is simply a natural expression of *being*. It's this state of being that is most natural to us. And it's this state of connection that has been *corrupted* in us.

This book explains how that happened, through no fault of our own, and what you can do about it. Your loss of natural connection has caused deep loneliness and desperate pain, but there is a way through it to a renewed feeling of sublime connection, which after all, *is your birthright*.

The loneliness epidemic

We live in a world with billions upon billions of people. And yet the feeling shared by most of the people walking the planet today is that deep down, each one of us is completely alone. Over the course of the years that I have been travelling around the world, teaching different demographics and leading a spiritual movement, it has become painfully apparent that if most people share this feeling of being alone, loneliness is

more complex than meets the eye. It is more complex than just being around other people, and it is this deep sense of isolation that needs a remedy. But at the time that I became aware of this epidemic, I didn't have that answer. I didn't have the answer because I felt exactly the same way.

The word loneliness never seems adequate to describe the torment of starvation for closeness. My life had been plagued by loneliness. And fame, which came as a natural accessory to my career, only served to accentuate it like a magnifying glass. I had spent my life never feeling seen, heard, understood or wanted. Fame made finding that closeness that I craved so desperately even harder to attain. To the outside world it seemed that everyone valued and wanted me, but nothing could be further from the truth. People saw me, felt me and understood me less than before. I was surrounded by people but I was nothing more to them than the projections they placed on me. The only value I had, and the only reason they wanted me, was for what they could get through me.

When you're facing a problem without a solution, you are left with one option and that is to look for the answer yourself. I had found myself in the position of being a pioneer in uncharted territory. I saw all too clearly that loneliness was the number-one source of suffering on our planet and also what we are all trying to avoid through a multitude of different coping strategies. But you cannot avoid something and learn about it at the same time. So, I made the decision to do the opposite. The spiritual teachers of the old world were known to go into the desert or into a cave in an attempt to understand something about the universe. I decided to take the same approach. Only instead of disappearing into a cave, I disappeared into loneliness by shamanic journeying in Central America, where I decided I would look the devil in the face. It turned out to be a little more than a year-long process. Seeing loneliness for what it was, and its anatomy, allowed me to understand its opposite. By seeing loneliness clearly, I saw connection clearly. And so, I emerged into the world again ready to teach people about their loneliness and about connection. And it was with this new-found understanding in my heart, mind and body that I wrote this book.