

# **THE NEW SOCIAL REALITY OF HUMAN RELATIONS AND THE RESOURCES OF HAPPINESS**

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AND THE RESOURCES OF HAPPINESS**

*Humans are social animals*

Mark Aurelius

*Loneliness today is not only a consequence of chance,  
but also a conscious choice of millions of people in  
developed countries. This is the new social reality of  
big cities, the responsible decision of young  
representatives of the "creative class" and the elderly  
who wish to grow old in solitude.*

Eric Kleinenberg's "Life of Solo. New Social Reality"

Loneliness of life in big cities; lack of meaningful contacts at work; the distance that separates close friends and family - these and many other aspects of modern life exacerbate our emotional hunger. We often feel tired, unsure, experiencing frustration, failure. In such moments, we all need someone's sympathy. "Alienation is the fate of the individual under capitalism. What is the relationship of modern man with his brothers? It is the relationship of two abstractions, two living machines using each other. The employer uses the people he hires, the merchant uses the buyers. Nowadays, you rarely find love or hate in human relationships. Apparently, they are dominated by pure external friendliness and even more external decency, but under this visibility alienation and indifference are hidden. And there is a lot of hidden distrust here as well». (Erich Fromm "The Art of Love")

It is impossible to solve massively the problem of human loneliness, avoiding other problems of the social system. Hedonism, total commercialization of relationships, greed and nihilism - these elements of society have been around for a long time. But it is in modern society that they have grown to incredible size. Another significant context of today is digital technology. They allow us to communicate with almost anyone, anytime. The communication framework is being erased and opportunities for dialogue with each other are growing. However, sociologist Lynn Smith-Lovin conducted a study and found that the number of close friends in most modern people has dropped from three to two. We have hundreds of "friends" on social networks, but the real ones, really close ones, are getting smaller. Approximately one in ten participants in the study mentioned that they had no friends at all (3).

In June 2006, a study was published in the United States, according to which 25% of Americans admitted that they had no close friends or people they could trust privately or speak with. This is one and a half times more than at the end of the 20th century. According to the British Red Cross, every seventh inhabitant of the country suffers from loneliness. And it is not less than 9 million (1). For many, the standard of a happy and peaceful life is Swedish society. But loneliness in Sweden is one of the most serious social ills. Almost half of the country's families are single, childless adults. They are often visited by psychologists, but this is unlikely to radically solve the problem. A

similar situation is observed in many developed countries. "I need to talk and listen to no one. I can't talk to the walls, they yell at me. I can't talk to my wife, she only listens to the walls "(Ray Bradbury «451 degrees Fahrenheit»).

But why is this happening? We have a society and we are not in social isolation. However, we feel alone. These questions have yet to be answered by humanity. But sociologists already describe these trends as a major evolutionary experiment on planet Earth.

Relationships are a spiritual closeness. They manifest the intrinsic need of any person in safe emotional attachment. Just as, according to the theory of English psychiatrist John Bowlby, in children's affection for the mother. Only "affection in adulthood may be more reciprocal and less in need of physical contact, but the nature of emotional connection is no different for children. As for the power of love, it is able to miraculously heal the wounds that often inflict life on us "(2). And, accordingly, a sense of love is able to strengthen our connection with the rest of the world. Love and responsiveness are the foundations of a truly compassionate, civilized society.

In Buddhism, there is a concept of human interdependence at all levels: social, personal, subatomic. Being born and dying, we are totally dependent on others, and the independence that we seem to find between birth and death is relative.

So, each of us has the capacity for empathy. Scientists claim that man is inherently merciful. Unfortunately, in our culture, we have not yet paid enough attention to the development of competencies for emotional intelligence. And then the natural human qualities and potential remain unrealized. There is such a concept of human interaction with others as "stroking". The idea of stroking is to focus on the communication partner. Then, addressing him, the person signals that he recognizes his presence or himself as a person. At the same time, the partner feels certain emotions and feelings. There are the following types of strokes. By orientation: internal (strokes that a person gives himself. For example, cheer yourself up) and social (strokes that a person gives to others. For example, mom praised her son). By way of interaction: physical (stroking, including physical contact. Hug, kiss on the cheek, pat on the head) and psychological (stroking without physical contact. To tell a person a good word, smile, admire the success of the team). By way of receipt: unconditional (strokes obtained for being human as they are) and conditional (stroking received by human beings for doing or not doing something). There is an opinion that stroking is the same need as the need for food, water, air, warmth. Lack of strokes makes people emotionally vulnerable and prone to manipulation. The lack of strokes consumes a great deal of energy to satisfy their hunger for them.

Therefore, an important and urgent task for all mental health services is to develop programs for developing a culture of emotional literacy and competence; healthy foundations for building and developing relationships. Interest centers should be actively created and developed for people of different ages and social contexts who, at some point in their lives, find themselves or have chosen to be themselves.

The great soul is never alone. As if fate did not take away her friends, she, after all, always creates them for herself (Romain Rollan).

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