

Time Lies

According to the National Institute on Aging, "Loneliness and social isolation are associated with higher risks for health problems such as heart disease, depression, and cognitive decline." People of all ages are struggling, in part, because of these two lies from the defeated enemy.

Lie 1: You don't have time for friends. Maybe children in school need friends, but you have work to do or you've worked hard and need a break. Being around people is just more work that rarely leaves you feeling productive.

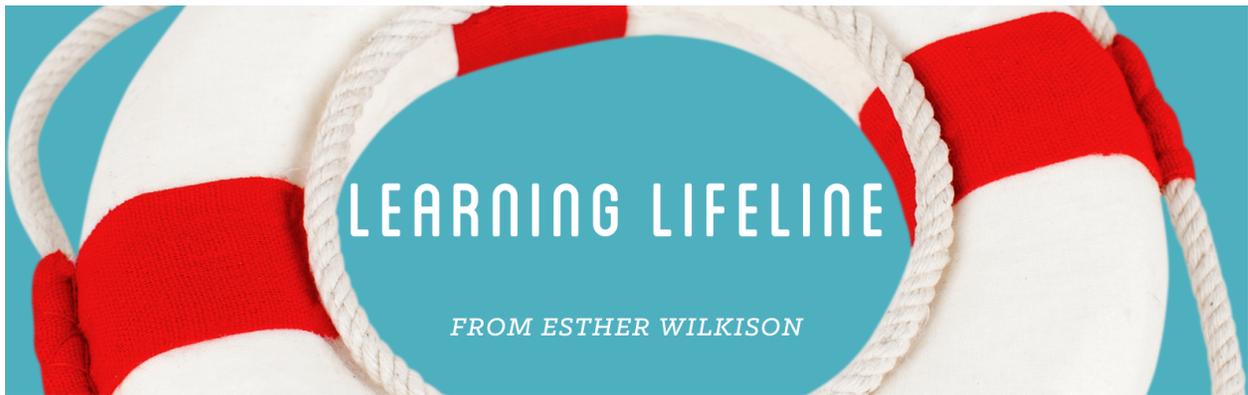
Lie 2: Other people don't have time for you. They have friends, family, and work. Their time is so valuable that you decide for them that time with you would be a waste of their time. After all, you don't want to bother them.

Notice the two sides—you are *too valuable* AND *not valuable enough*. Never expect a logical argument from the defeated enemy. He regularly uses two-sided lies telling us things like—we are *not enough* AND that we are *too much*. Or he tells us that *we need more time* to get ready AND that *it's too late* for us.

Here's Truth: You are valuable AND others are valuable. We all need deep connections for our mutual benefit. "God has placed each part in the body just as he wanted it to be." (1 Corinthians 12:18 NIV). Just as the parts of your personal body benefit from all that each part brings, even so, the body of Christ.

Every Christ follower is designed by God to function only with a bidirectional life-force connection with other Christ followers. The eye needs the hand because while the eye can see, it cannot reach out and touch. The hand needs the eye, or it could do more harm than good when it reaches out. If we avoid the vulnerable work of developing healthy relationships, that may be a sign that we need to agree with God about how valuable we are to others or how valuable others are to us. We devalue ourselves when we refuse to let others know our needs and meet our needs. Any body part that only gives is causing harm to self and to others.

Let's assume that your life does not often intersect with the lives of others. Here's an idea that can help: Download Voxer, Marco Polo, or some other communication app that allows you to easily carry on a two-way conversation at separate times.



Talk someone you know into downloading the same app and start talking to each other through the app. While a technology connection is not an in-person connection, these apps allow you to hear (or hear and see) another person whom you don't typically inhabit space with. You can leave a message that works on your schedule and they can listen to the message and respond whenever it works on their schedule.

We still need physical connection with others, but Voxer, Marco Polo, and Signal allow me to share life and gain wisdom from friends in radically different time zones and life stages. My friends and I take every opportunity we can to connect in person as well. Those in-person connections are richer because we are regularly sharing life through regular communication.

Don't let the defeated enemy keep you from the intentional effort of practicing vulnerability. You AND others AND the body of Christ are all well worth this effort.