

# Hey TEENS! it's for YOU!



CHRISTIAN SCIENCE  
Sentinel



**TC** TEENCONNECT

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# Q & A

*Feeling lonely? You're not alone. Though we're more connected than ever (thanks, social media), many of us still feel isolated. Is there a spiritual solution to loneliness? TeenConnect's editor, Jenny Sawyer, asked Christian Science practitioner and teacher Curt Wahlberg.*

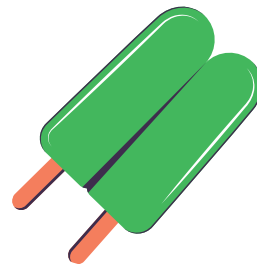
## So why isn't the answer to loneliness to just find some people to be around?

The world certainly provides lots of people to be around and opportunities to connect. But for me, actually solving this problem of loneliness comes down to a deeper issue: satisfaction. What makes us feel complete? And to answer that question, we need to look at identity—what we are beyond our personality, and our likes and dislikes. I've found that to deal effectively with loneliness, I need to get a spiritual sense of my identity.

## OK, but what does identity have to do with loneliness?

For so many of us, there's a strong feeling that to be satisfied, we need something outside ourselves to make us feel complete and worthy. If we just find this kind of friend, or this kind of relationship, then we'll be OK. So to pray about loneliness, first we've got to resist the pull to look for answers "out there," which unfortunately is a temporary solution at best.

The real solution involves taking a cue from Christ Jesus, who said, "The kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). That's a promise that whatever we've hoped to find "out there" is something that's already inherent in our identity. It's ours to share, and sharing it helps us make meaningful connections. We find it as we go on a journey to see ourselves differently—spiritually.



## Seeing ourselves spiritually—what does that mean?

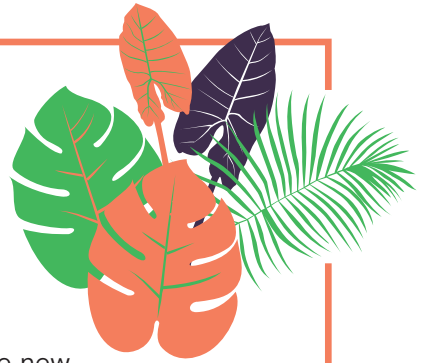
For me it starts with knowing God as the infinite source of our being, and that we're the expression of that source. That means two things. First, it means that we lack nothing. Our source is infinite! So our happiness, wholeness, satisfaction, even our humor, are God's gifts to us, and we can never be without them. They are aspects of our identity that we can express without limit and without fail.

Second, it means that we have something to contribute as God's creation. Something that is uniquely ours to give. As we understand more of our infinite source, we can actually rely on that source to draw more and more good out of us and help us see the light we *bring* to the room, the life we *bring* to the party. So instead of constantly looking for the party that will relieve our loneliness, we're getting more awareness of the God-derived life we can bring to it—and the happiness that comes from sharing that.

## Dig deeper!

Find the second half of this interview online at [sentinel.christianscience.com/teenconnect/loneliness](http://sentinel.christianscience.com/teenconnect/loneliness)

# The worst/best summer ever



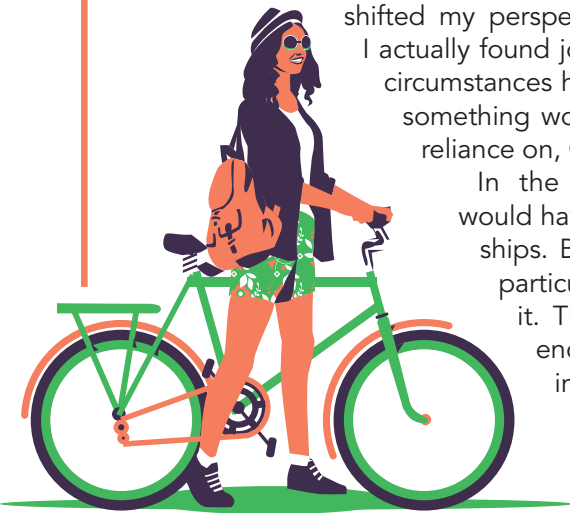
I couldn't stand anything that summer. The new city where my family had moved. Being away from my friends. And my job as a camp counselor for 16 six-year-old boys.

But there was one good thing about that summer. All through high school, if I'd needed something, I'd made it happen. Now I couldn't. I couldn't create enough patience to deal with my campers, or muster the joy to get through what felt like the worst summer ever. I had to get a new view of my life, with God as the "centre and circumference of being" (Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 204).

It wasn't easy. But as I reoriented my thoughts to make things less about me and more about God, I started to catch glimpses that God is the source of the patience I wanted to express toward my campers. He is divine Love, supplying all the love I needed to love them. When I shifted my perspective to a God-centric one, I actually found joy. Because even though my circumstances hadn't changed, I was feeling something wonderful: a closeness to, and reliance on, God.

In the summers that followed, I would have awesome jobs and internships. But when I look back on this particular summer, I'm grateful for it. The spiritual growth I experienced turned a terrible summer into one of the best I've had.

JENNY SAWYER



COVER IMAGE: CHRISTIAN COKER – STAFF | ILLUSTRATIONS: CHRISTIAN COKER AND LISA ANDREWS – STAFF

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# A healing at soccer camp

One year at camp, I dislocated my knee. I'd been shooting the soccer ball into the goal when a fellow cabinmate tried to block my shot. He missed the ball and cleated me right in the knee. Helplessly, I fell and watched the earth spin. When I tried to get up, I couldn't.

In a flash, all my counselors and fellow campers were surrounding me and showering me with love. They carried me to the cabin where there was a Christian Science practitioner, who helped me pray for healing. While I was there, I read this passage from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*: "Always begin your treatment by allaying the fear of patients" (Mary Baker Eddy, p. 411).

I realized that I was holding on to the fear of not being healed. So the first step I needed to take was to let go of fear. The passage goes on to say: "Silently reassure them as to their exemption from disease and danger. Watch the result of this simple rule of Christian Science, and you will find that it alleviates the symptoms of every disease. If you succeed in wholly removing the fear, your patient is healed."

Instead of being afraid, I realized I could trust God's power, and His love for me, which eliminates fear. Where God's presence is, there's no room for fear.

Two days later, I was back with my camp group, freely participating in all the camp activities again. The shift in thought to trusting God removed the fear. When that happened, my knee was healed. From this experience I learned that when we successfully remove fear, spiritual healing takes place.

MATHEW OMONDI

## Talk to us

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