

Can I be an island unto myself?

No one can really be that *Island unto themselves*. As much as we may wish to be independent when trying to deal with the burdens of life, there comes a time when help needs to be sought. An unbendingness and overwhelming desire to not want to share our problems and burdens can eventually lead to us becoming difficult to deal with. Thinking that we can always *handle it* alone can lead to a huge inner struggle. Confiding in someone you can trust can lead to a sense of great relief when the burden is shared and it can be seen, that maybe our problem wasn't quite as bad as we thought.

Depending upon one's belief, a form of confession takes place when we trust and unburden our selves. Some people can be very hard on themselves and self punishing.

We are also in danger of losing the broader picture; becoming very narrow in our focus. After a traumatic event in their life, some people can become so narrow about the way they view life, that they can become bitter and angry. When you hear their story one can understand why they have become that way but it does not have to be that way. Things that are beyond our understanding can happen, and coping may be quite difficult. Putting emotional trauma behind us is not that simple but it can be done with openness and guidance. But the will to do this has to come from within. There needs to be a desire to forgive and to stop seeing oneself as a victim.

For some it is difficult to see that everyone else is not responsible for what happened to them. The old rule of logic needs to be seen as useful in overcoming the self.

All tigers are cats but not all cats are tigers. How does this help me? Well if you have been a victim of bad behaviour from certain individuals within an organisation, for example, then it helps to understand that only those people who behaved badly toward you are responsible for their actions, not necessarily everyone else.

On the TV news, we often see images of perpetrators of armed hold-ups wearing “hoodies,” and therefore it is likely that a lot of people will associate the “hoodie” as a symbol of “bad,” and that all people who wear one will behave badly. We know that the garment in question is an item of fashion worn mostly by younger people. Some people wearing this garment may behave badly but not all people wearing that garment will behave badly. People tend to generalise about issues and we therefore need to change the way we view the world if we are to live in it successfully.

TOMNET counsellors are available to you at any time. Full confidence is assured in any discussions about any issues. You do not even have to come to the office, in most cases we can arrange to come to you.

Vince Little.