

## Emotional Hygiene: A Closer Look



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### Opinion

When I started practicing Psychology, I began to notice how much we value our body instead of our mind. I was recently at a friend's house, and his 5-year-old daughter was playing when she slipped and hurt herself, she started crying and cried for a little bit. After a while she got normal and got back up and straight away went to get a plaster for the scratch. A kid of this age could barely tie her shoe laces, but she knew how to cover her wound, so it doesn't get infected. We all know how to maintain our physical health or practice dental hygiene or reduce weight. But what we don't know how to maintain our psychological health. We do nothing to teach our children about emotional hygiene. This question that keeps popping in my head is "Why our physical health is so much more important for us than our psychological health?". We sustain emotional or psychological injuries more often than physical ones, like failure, rejection or loneliness. We tend to ignore all of them and pay no attention to the profound impact they make on our lives. There are many scientifically proven techniques that can be used to treat these kinds of psychological injuries, but we don't.

"Oh! You are feeling depressed", Just shake it off its all in your head" that's our attitude towards these psychological injuries, can you imagine telling somebody to walk off a broken leg or an arm. It's high time we start thinking about our psychological health also. Loneliness creates a deep psychological wound that distorts our perceptions and muddles our thinking. It makes us believe that people around us care much less than they actually do and in turn making us afraid to reach out as we are already experiencing rejection and heartache. People that are in a relationship and could be surrounded with people throughout the day and still experience deep, pervasive loneliness. Loneliness can have a serious detrimental effect on one's mental and physical health. Chronic loneliness increases your likelihood of an early death by 14%. Behavioral Scientist have said that chronic loneliness poses a significant risk on long-term health and longevity as much as smoking cigarettes.

Cigarette packs come with a warning "Smoking kills", but loneliness doesn't. Therefore, it is important that we practice emotional hygiene, we can't treat a psychological wound if we are not even aware that we are injured.

Loneliness isn't the just a psychological wound it can also manifest itself physically. Failure is another common emotional wound, it can result in us convincing ourselves that we are not capable of doing a particular thing and believe it too. We begin to feel helpless and this may further cause us to stop trying too soon or not at all. This may cause our functionality to be below our true capability. Our mind is a difficult thing to change once we become convinced of something, feel demoralized and disheartened after we fail. We have to fight these feelings of helplessness and gain control of the situation and break the negative cycle before it begins. Rejection is another psychological wound that's extremely painful. One would never want to make a physical injury worse by enacting the accident over and over again would they, similarly one of the unhealthiest and most common result of rejection is "Rumination" that is thinking about the rejection over and over again in your mind and trying to think what you could have done differently. The need of the hour is taking action when you're lonely, by changing our responses to failure, by protecting our self-esteem and controlling our negative thinking, this won't just heal our psychological wounds and build emotional resilience, we will thrive.

Everyone in the world becomes psychologically healthier if there is less loneliness and depression and people know how to overcome failure. If people feel better about themselves and more empowered, then they start becoming more aware and informed and change few simple habits. To become Psychologically/emotionally healthy it is important for us to stop and take notice when we feel emotionally hurt or a failure and try to recognize that feeling or emotion so that we can address it. It is advisable to stop the "emotional bleeding" by avoiding negative automatic thoughts so that we

can clean those thoughts coming in our mind. We should also try to reach out to someone else when the wound is profound. When we're not hurt, build up your self-confidence to develop protection

for the future. Don't leave these types of injuries untreated, because they'll just keep getting worse, just like the real thing.



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