

## Lacking Human Interaction

An essay based on *Station Eleven* authored by Emily St. John Mandel

I ask myself the following: Is it possible to live without anyone in my life? This concept would never be my choice because living in a world lacking human interaction will be devastating. I like many others, am a social human being.

Suppose there were an apocalypse. And further suppose this resulted in ninety-nine percent of the world's population to vanish. I might develop depression due to intense loneliness, and then feel even more isolated because of depression. A smile, the nod of a head, a wave of a hand, greetings such as "how are you doing" and "what's new"; are what I will miss most. Lacking human interaction I am alone.

After modern civilization ceases as I know it, I will realize I am one of a few humans alive. My personality will swing from fear, anger and guilt like waves. Bereavement, the process of grieving and letting go, will be so difficult without help from others. I will experience the greatest loss ever. How do I mourn the loss of my society without my society? Lacking human interaction I am sad.

Communication tools and technology which facilitate exchanging information, ideas and opinions between people and organizations of different places will disappear. No phones, computers, internet, television, radio or even old fashioned newspapers will be available. Not even daily delivery of junk mail will arrive. No radio or television announcers will remain. I will have no idea who or what might still be out there. Communication enables survival, but when deprived I will have no sense of my world and without authoritative people providing human interaction via some type of communication tools I am on my own.

Ultimately the bond of all human interaction is conversation. Not having someone to talk to and share my day with will be heartbreaking. I will go days, or weeks without speaking to another human being. Not even seeing another human being. Conversation is so much more than words; a conversation is eyes, smiles, and the silence between words. My time awake will be lonely, my time asleep very light. No one to converse with will cause my voice to become weak and unidentifiable even to myself. Will I ever smile or laugh again? Will I talk to myself, or carry on conversations with inanimate objects? If I see another human, do I approach them? Oh yes, I want to approach them. I want to shake their hand and say "How do you do". Will I laugh or cry? Should I trust them? Will they need me as much as I need them? Will I ever find someone to converse with again? Lacking human interaction I am lonely.

Living alone without anyone in my life is a near impossibility. I will not accept a life void of human contact. My need to find people and be acknowledged will drive my actions. If the sun rises every day, then I must believe civilization will be born again. I must think of how to aid in its renaissance. I look forward once again to human interaction, for a laugh break, a brief exchange of last night's stories, an extra set of eyes on my work, a creative collaboration, an ear to complain to, and for a palm to high five. I will find other human beings and work to foster human interaction. I will not be alone.