

ENGLISH: *SELECTED POEMS OF EMILY DICKINSON*

Belonging is an innate human yearning that can be achieved by disregarding autonomous values in socially constructed identities. Through this rejection of society, individuals mature, realising that connections to society are unnecessary and become self-actualised. Both *The Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson* and Eckhart Tolle's speech *Loneliness* demonstrate how the initial desire to belong to society is harmful, and that through rejecting society, self-actualisation and true belonging is achieved. Hence, both texts validate that through this maturation process can only then a true sense of belonging be attained.

Initially, interactions with society are perceived to be necessary due to an innate yearning but however, they are upturned when an individual becomes dissatisfied with such connections and proceeds to dissociate. Dickinson explores how belonging is perceived to be a necessity due to an intense yearning and desire to be connected with society in "I had been hungry all the years". By stating explicitly and reflectively in the "I had been hungry all these years", Dickinson, through the hyperbole and gastronomic imagery, emphasises the fulfilment that is anticipated through belonging, which leads to interactions with society. Similarly, in "This is my letter to the world", an individual's pursuit of a relationship with society is made due to a belief that fulfilment will be gained as a result. The personal desire to connect to the "world", metaphorical of the literary canon, through the avenue of literature via the metonymy of a "letter", is established through utilising first person in the opening line "This is my letter to the world". However, dissatisfaction and rejection ensues as Dickinson proclaims in a dejected tone "that never to me", which results in the persona disconnecting from society to fulfil her yearning for belonging in a different way. Hence, Dickinson effectively conveys that despite the desire of an individual to connect to society, the individual is unable to truly belong and as result will disconnect.

Similarly, Tolle, in *Loneliness*, recounts the pain he experienced as a result of alienation from society when attempting to connect with society to fulfil his yearning. Initially, Tolle expresses his innate desire to affiliate with society through his envious tone in "I don't have anybody in my life...everyone else has somebody..." However, upon attempted interactions, he expresses the extent pain of rejection from society as "loneliness extremely painful that is almost intolerable", where the stress placed on "intolerable" highlights this pain with a long pause that followed afterwards to reflect upon his anguish. Moreover, by drawing connections between a negative sense of self and the fundamental instinct to seek connections with society for survival, this upturned perception of rejection is highlighted in the historical analogy, "identity was very tribal...being expelled...meant not just physical but psychological death." Here, the repetition and hyperbole of "death" signifies Tolle's new perception, where his rejection from society is very much like death, and so like Dickinson's persona in "This is my letter to the world", he disconnects from society. As demonstrated, while interactions with society were initially sought after, a disconnection from dissatisfying society is imminent if an individual wants to attain a sense of belonging.

Upon choosing to remove one's self from society, an individual is able to find a true sense of belonging within self and thus become self-actualised. In "I had been hungry all the years", Dickinson conveys her deliberate dissociation from societal values in favour satisfying her "hunger", being her yearning for a sense of belonging. In disregarding societal values, the persona realises that conformity hinders her ascension towards self-actualisation through as ironically, "entering takes away" her ability to attain a true sense of belonging. Through this, the persona is finally able to find satisfaction in belonging, but to one's self, as she discovers in anastrophe, "nor was I hungry, so I found". Furthermore, Dickinson reinforces this notion in "The Saddest Noise, The Sweetest Noise". Following her attainment of self-actualisation from rejecting society, the persona advises that forming connections with society may be perceived as satisfying, but highlights the paradoxical pain accrued, as revealed through "an ear can break a human heart", where the "ear" is metaphorical for the innate perceptions of belonging to society. Hence, it becomes clear through disregarding society, a state of self-actualisation is achieved and from this, the innate yearning for belonging is too.

In a similar sense, Tolle, upon becoming self-actualised, explains that a genuine sense of belonging is attained when one is alone, upturning the need to interact with society. Extending off Dickinson's "I had been hungry all the years", in which the persona realises society limits the attainment of a sense of belonging, Tolle also matures upon disconnecting from society, and criticises society is a metaphorical "prison" preventing one from achieving fulfilment from belonging. Moreover, the satisfying of the innate yearning to be affiliated can be attained by belonging to self, rather than society, as paradoxically expressed in "solitude means being alone – it's quite beautiful", illustrating his maturation. Furthermore, by utilising a historical reference and anecdote of Buddha who "through his own decision, he made himself an outsider – he left", Tolle validates his claims that fulfilment is gained from "solitude", as Buddha had also favoured his own seclusion to be self-actualised and thus gain fulfilment. It is also through this rejection of society that belonging can be genuinely attained. Hence, Tolle, upon rejecting society, matures and expresses that a true sense of belonging is fostered only when one is alone or in solitude.

Ultimately, as true belonging can only be achieved through self-actualisation stemming from rejecting society, individuals will strive to attain this through disregarding autonomous values in society, and is clearly demonstrated in The Selected Poems of Emily Dickinson and Eckhart Tolle's speech Loneliness.