

Are you an Island Girl? by John Kuypers

Elton John sang his famous song, *Island Girl* in the 1970's, idolizing the women of sun, sand and surf. But there is another kind of Island Girl. These are women (and men) who share a common and often unspoken challenge: fear of intimacy. People who are afraid to let other people get too close to them often have this deep-seated fear. They protect themselves from emotional hurts by creating an island of safety around themselves. Yet this same island leaves them feeling isolated and lonely. Here are some of the characteristics of an island girl or boy:

- ✚ Gives in too easily, in order to avoid conflict
- ✚ Asks for nothing, in order to avoid feeling dependent or obligated
- ✚ Blames others, and avoids taking responsibility for own feelings
- ✚ Dislikes being noticed, which they perceive as unwelcome criticism
- ✚ Cautious and a perfectionist, in order to avoid the risk of criticism and blame

Fear of intimacy robs people of living full, satisfying, loving lives. If you think you're a bit of an island person, learning how to live in the present is an antidote. Being present teaches people how to reveal their true thoughts and feelings and feel safe and secure without fear or shame. True intimacy is borne of the capacity to give and receive love, something that happens when all of your body, mind, heart and soul are focused on this present moment!

John Kuypers is the director and founder of Present Living & Learning, Inc, an organization dedicated to helping people with low self-esteem and a negative self-image to find more love from within, one present moment at a time. He can be reached at www.presentliving.org



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