

In 1990, Pico Iyer went to his first retreat at a Benedictine Hermitage monastery in Big Sur, California. Since then, he has made more than 100 retreats to the monastery.

He finds that the quiet time alone helps him to remember what he loves and what he wants to do with his life. In addition, by connecting with himself during these retreats, he feels that he is better about to connect with others.

"But essentially, every time I go there, I remember what I really love, whom I really love. And I also remember what I should be doing with my life."

"I find it wholesome to be alone the greater part of the time. To be in company, even with the best, is soon wearisome and dissipating. I love to be alone. I never found the companion that was so companionable as solitude." (Thoreau, *Walden*)

Solitude and Self-Reflection

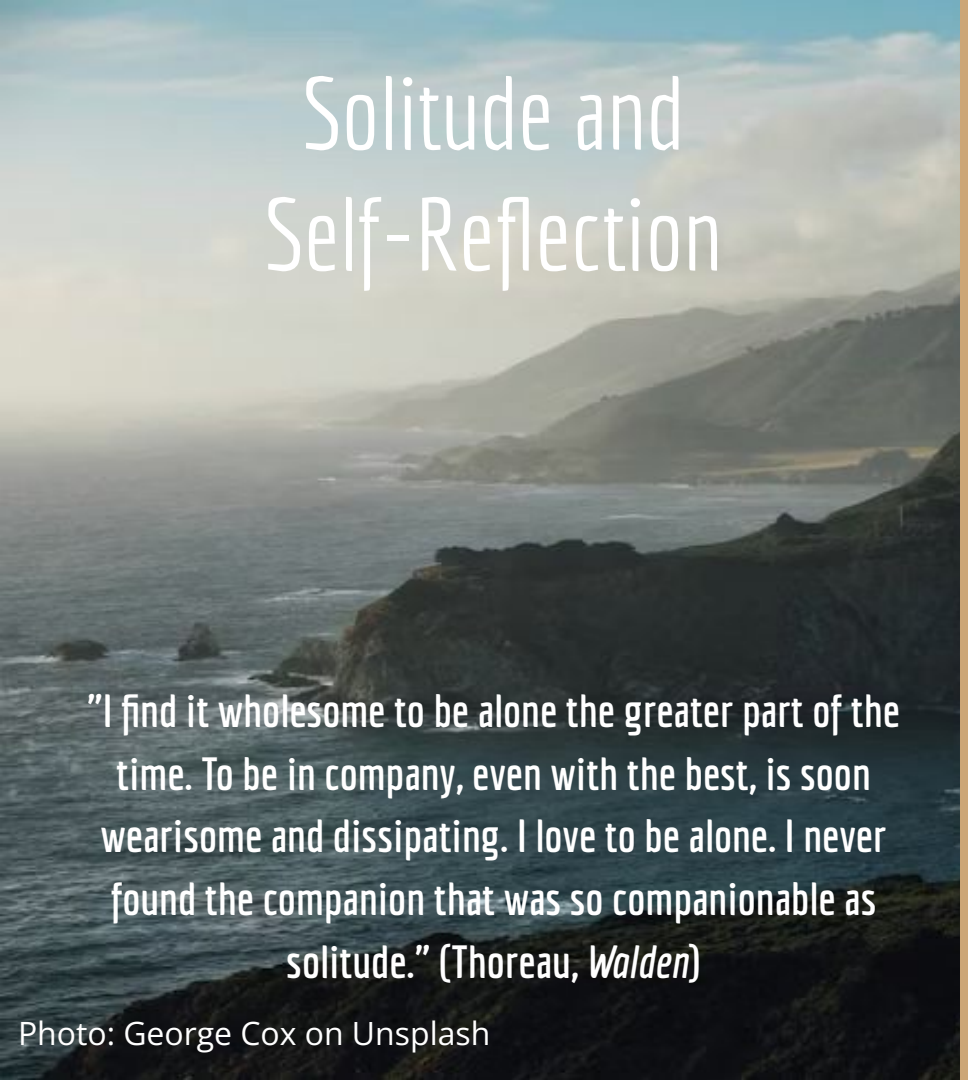


Photo: George Cox on Unsplash

- 1990: Went to first retreat to at a monastery in Big Sur, California, which changed his entire life
- Has made more than 100 retreats to the monastery
- Appreciates the quiet time and being alone
- "But essentially, every time I go there, I remember what I really love, whom I really love. And I also remember what I should be doing with my life."