

Many of the leaders of communism who proved to be so diplomatically skillful—Lenin, Stalin, Marx, and many others—spent time in jail, where they could, without distraction, plan their future moves.

Leading universities require professors to lecture as few as five hours per week so that the professor has time to think.

Many outstanding business executives are surrounded all day by assistants, secretaries, telephones, and reports. But follow them around for 168 hours a week and 720 hours a month, and you discover they spent a surprising amount of time in uninterrupted thought.

The point is this: the successful person in any field takes time out to confer with himself or herself. Leaders use solitude to put the pieces of a problem together, to work out solutions, to plan, and, in one phrase, to do their superthinking.

Many people fail to tap their creative leadership power because they confer with everybody and everything else but themselves. You know this kind of person well. He's the fellow who goes to great lengths *not* to be alone. He goes to extremes to surround himself with people. He can't stand being alone in his office, so he goes prowling to see other people. Seldom does he spend evenings alone. He feels a compelling need to talk with others every waking moment. He devours a huge diet of small talk and gossip.

When this person is forced by circumstances to be physically alone, he finds ways to keep from being mentally alone. At times like these he resorts to television, newspapers, radio, telephone, anything that will take over his thinking process for him. In effect he says, "Here, Mr. TV, Mr. Newspaper, occupy my mind for me. I'm afraid to occupy it with my own thoughts."

Mr. I-can't-stand-to-be-alone shuns independent thought.