



FOSTERING SOCIAL CONNECTION: A GUIDE FOR COLLEGE ADULTS

Strong social connections can significantly enhance our happiness & overall health. Social isolation & loneliness can lead to poor health, including increased stress hormones, artery hardening, & cognitive decline. As social beings, we need real-life interactions to stay healthy & live long. While having access to community online is wonderful, maintaining close, face-to-face relationships is also essential for engaging our biological systems in healthy ways.

Here are some ways to foster social connection in your life:



LISTEN WELL
AND PAY
ATTENTION TO
OTHERS

START GROUP
AND/OR
INDIVIDUAL
THERAPY



JOIN A CLUB OR
ORGANIZATION
ON OR OFF
CAMPUS

GET INVOLVED
WITHIN A
COMMUNITY, OR
VOLUNTEER WORK



BE CURIOUS ABOUT
THOSE AROUND -
ASK QUESTIONS OR
INTRODUCE
YOURSELF!

BE PATIENT:
CONNECTIONS CAN
DEVELOP OVER DAYS,
WEEKS, & MONTHS



It's not uncommon to feel alone, socially insecure, or even like you don't fit in with others even as an adult. It may be helpful to think through what kind of connections you value in life and how you can work towards fostering those connections in your life.

- When have you felt a strong sense of connection with others? Were you with specific people, involved in a particular activity, or in a special place?
- What are some things you are proud of yourself for doing in the past to create a stronger sense of belonging?
- Are there friends, loved ones, or pets who make you feel understood? What about those relationships feel good?
- What are some experiences or groups that gave you a sense of belonging?
- Comparing your social life to others can sometimes lead to feelings of loneliness or insecurity. Instead, let's shift the perspective. Putting aside what you notice in others' lives, what kind of social life do you truly want for yourself?

Reflecting on how you explored connection earlier, what is one goal you can set to make your social life feel better?

What are 3 steps you can take to meet that goal?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Imagine yourself one year from now: What would your future self be proud of you for doing to build a stronger sense of belonging?



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A CONVO MENU

Research shows that in social interactions, quality outweighs quantity. Meaningful conversations that go beyond small talk and involve sharing personal details foster emotional intimacy & a sense of connection. For introverted individuals, these high-quality interactions are particularly important for mental well-being

APPETIZER

What's been the highlight of your week so far?

What are you enjoying about your life at the moment?

What are you looking forward to in the future?

ENTRÉE

Do you have any goals you're working towards right now?

I'd love to hear more.

What's a personal challenge or obstacle you're currently facing?

Have you had any interesting insights about yourself recently? What are they?

DESSERT

What's the most interesting thing you've read or learned about recently?

What would you like to learn more about in the future?

What's a new experience we could share together in the future?



LET'S
TALK

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