



FAMILIES TACKLING TOUGH TIMES TOGETHER



FAMILY

YOUNG ADULTS

We Care About Each Other! Connectedness

COVID-19 has left so many of us cut off from our social networks and supports. Even for those of us that are with immediate family members, the way we are connecting with our friends and extended family members may be very different than what it normally is. Relationships and human connections are important during these difficult times. There are ways we can be proactive about connecting with others so that, even in uncertain times, we can get the support we need.

Social Connections and Health

[Recent neuroscience research](#) actually suggests that humans are hard wired for social connection. Throughout history humans were more likely to survive if they lived in social groups and worked together to face obstacles and shared tasks. Being connected with other people who care about us remains a very important human need; a need as important as safety, food and shelter.

Strong social connections are linked to longevity, good health, recovery from disease, self-esteem and our sense of personal control. In addition, solid relationships with others appear to serve as a buffer against anxiety, depression and stress. Remember — it is not necessarily the number of friendships we have, but rather the quality of those connections. We should consider taking a “wise risk” and introduce ourselves to someone new.

Resources for Improved Connections and Social Interactions

Connectedness in the Face of Uncertainty

[The Human Skills We Need in an Unpredictable World](#), a TED talk by Margaret Heffernan, focuses on the skills needed to address uncertain times.

What is striking about this talk is Heffernan’s emphasis on the **importance of relationships and human connections in the face of all that is unknown**. She stresses that dealing with the unknown requires creativity and experimentation; the unknown cannot be addressed through a focus on efficiency. Focus more on the real situation we find ourselves in and adjust to changes, count on trusted others, and use our resourcefulness — to approach the challenges we may be facing.

Our current situations may be very different from those of others and we could not have predicted them. We cannot plan for the unknown—and cannot plan for the unknowns to come. But we can approach the future with a sense of imagination and steadiness in our ability to be connected and move forward together.

Video Resources

- [What Makes a Good Life? Lessons from the Longest Study on Happiness](#)
- [5 Ways to Create Stronger Connections](#)

Internal Actions

- Take some time to think about what makes you feel connected and supported by others. Are there ways you can offer that same support to yourself?

External Actions

- Consider reaching out — via email, phone, video, or even in an old-fashioned letter to folks who are an important source of support for you. Even if it's just to say thanks or to tell them you're thinking about them, they'll likely appreciate it and feel less isolated. Use this connection time to use encouragement to support your friends, family and community to help them through the challenges ahead.