

Workplace Well-Being: Get Connected

Find ways to increase employee connectedness and decrease isolation

When researchers refer to the concept of social connection, they mean the feeling of belonging to a group and generally feel close to other people. Scientific evidence strongly suggests that this is a core psychological need, essential to feeling satisfied with your life. Connection registers in our brains much like physical pleasure. We are wired to connect, reach out to, and interact with each other. Decades of research suggest that the quality of our social ties might be the single biggest predictor of our well-being. Social connections are good for our health and help us live longer (50% chance of more longevity). Strong social connections lead to lower anxiety and depression, and an increase in self-esteem and greater empathy.

On the flipside, social isolation and loneliness are bad for our health. People low in social connection are more vulnerable to anxiety, depression, antisocial behavior, and even suicidal behaviors, which tend to further increase their isolation.

Ideas (Choose one or more)

- Educate yourselves and your employees on how social connectedness impacts health; read and discuss the online article [Connectedness & Health: The Science of Social Connection](#). Share the infographic.
- Survey your employees to discover how best to support them; see [31 questions to ask](#) for possible survey questions
- Social connections practices to share with employees
- Practice Gratitude
- Recognize the people who have supported you
- Make a list of your 3 am friends – people you could call if needed; discuss it with them
- Share the gift of time and/or listening
- Other _____
- Set goals, identify solutions; create an action plan to address at least one issue

Resources

- Greater Good Science Center:
https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/social_connection/definition#why-practice-social-connection

- The Secret to Living Longer may be your Social Life:
https://www.ted.com/talks/susan_pinker_the_secret_to_living_longer_may_be_your_social_life
- A brief summary on research on loneliness and social connection by Julianne Holt-Lunstad:
<https://www.apa.org/members/content/holt-lunstad-loneliness-social-connections>

Videos

- A wonderful video about the benefits of connection, worth your time:
https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_waldinger_what_makes_a_good_life_lessons_from_the_longest_study_on_happiness?language=en
- Great video on trust by Brené Brown: <https://vimeo.com/160642750>

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