

What Individuals Can Do

- **Understand the power of social connection and the consequences of social disconnection** by learning how the vital components (structure, function, and quality) can impact your relationships, health, and well-being.
- **Invest time in nurturing your relationships** through consistent, frequent, and high-quality engagement with others. Take time each day to reach out to a friend or family member.
- **Minimize distraction during conversation** to increase the quality of the time you spend with others. For instance, don't check your phone during meals with friends, important conversations, and family time.
- **Seek out opportunities to serve and support others**, either by helping your family, co-workers, friends, or strangers in your community or by participating in community service.
- **Be responsive, supportive, and practice gratitude.**^{314,315} As we practice these behaviors, others are more likely to reciprocate, strengthening our social bonds, improving relationship satisfaction, and building social capital.
- **Actively engage with people of different backgrounds and experiences** to expand your understanding of and relationships with others, given the benefits associated with diverse connections.
- **Participate in social and community groups** such as fitness, religious, hobby, professional, and community service organizations to foster a sense of belonging, meaning, and purpose.
- **Reduce practices that lead to feelings of disconnection from others.** These include harmful and excessive social media use, time spent in unhealthy relationships, and disproportionate time in front of screens instead of people.
- **Seek help during times of struggle** with loneliness or isolation by reaching out to a family member, friend, counselor, health care provider, or the 988 crisis line.³¹⁶
- **Be open with your health care provider** about significant social changes in your life, as this may help them understand potential health impacts and guide them to provide recommendations to mitigate health risks.
- **Make time for civic engagement.** This could include being a positive and constructive participant in political discourse and gatherings (e.g., town halls, school board meetings, local government hearings).
- **Reflect the core values of connection** in how you approach others in conversation and through the actions you take. Key questions to ask yourself when considering your interactions with others include: How might kindness change this situation? What would it look like to treat others with respect? How can I be of service? How can I reflect my concern for and commitment to others?