

Let's Talk: It's all about connections

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Hi, my name is Deanna and today I wanted to talk with you about connections. Connecting with other people. I'm going to talk with you a little bit about the importance of connections and also give you some ideas on ways to connect with other people.

Visual cue: Research shows isolation may lead to unhealthy habits

There were some studies conducted in the 1970's by Dr. Bruce Alexander. His findings indicated that isolation and the lack of social connections with other people, was highly correlated with who would go on to develop addiction or abuse problems. Well, that was pretty surprising. The idea goes, that if we're not connecting and bonding with other people, we will find something else to bond with, like drugs, alcohol, gambling, food, etc.

Visual cue: Studies have also shown that connections with others are important to our health

More recent studies indicate that connections with other people is highly correlated with an increased life satisfaction and even increased lifespan. This is amazing. It turns out that our connections with other people are just as important to our health as eating healthy and exercise. How can we use this information to our advantage? I have a couple ideas. The first idea is to just remember the importance of social connections. Regular connections with other people make us happy and healthy.

Visual cue: Quality versus quantity

If you feel like you need some practice in this area, then make it a personal goal of yours to try to connect more with other people. Second, is the idea of what I call, falling into the social media trap. Now, don't get me wrong, making friends and connecting on social media is a lot of fun. But, I just want you to remember that sometimes quality is better than quantity. What I mean is, just think of all the social connections you have, hundreds, thousands sometimes of social connections on social media. Seems like you have a lot of connections, right? But, of all those people, how many people could you really count on and call on in a personal emergency? That number changes significantly, doesn't it? Just remember, quality not quantity.

Visual cue: Connections are important at all ages

My next idea is to just remind you of again how important social connections are. This is not wasting time. This is valuable connections we can make with other people that make us happy and healthy. Then, there's one last idea that I have. That is the idea of teaching children the importance of social connections. Sometimes kids need some extra help to learn social skills that can help them to connect with people in the future. Don't forget to practice what you

preach. Children watch what we do. We have to lead by example. If we are having healthy connections with other people, children will see that and understand its importance.

Visual cue: Try this quick exercise

Now, I'd like us to try an exercise. For this exercise you'll need some pen and paper. If you need to pause the video for a moment, go ahead and do that. Okay, good. Now that you have some pen and paper, I'd like you to divide the paper into three columns. In the first column, I would like you to write down at least five hobbies or things that you like to do. You could also include hobbies that you use to do in the past, but maybe aren't doing currently. Finally, you can include some things that you've never done yet, but you've always wanted to try. Take a few minutes to do that and again, if you need to pause the video, go ahead and do that.

Great, okay. In the second column, I would like you to try to write an activity or two that you can pair with each hobby. For example, if you wrote down cooking as one of your hobbies, an activity that you can do that pairs with that, that can help you to connect with other people, might include hosting a dinner party, or even trying a cooking class. Again, if you need to take a few minutes to jot down your ideas, go ahead and do that now.

Great, okay. Then in the third column, I would like you to try to write down a name or two of someone that you might be able to invite along with you to this activity. If you can't think of someone that you might want to invite to go on this activity with you, that's okay. This activity might be a way that you could meet some new people. Okay, there's one last thing I want you to do. I'd like you to go ahead and put a star next to the activity that you would be interested in doing in the next two weeks. Great. Thanks for doing that activity.

Visual cue: Remember: Connections can improve your health and happiness

To summarize, I just would wanted to remind you of the importance of connecting with others. Connecting with other people make us happy and healthy. The other thing I wanted to remind you of is using the idea of hobbies or things that you like to do as a way to try to connect with other people. Thanks for talking today and I hope you have a great time increasing your personal goal of connecting with other people.