

## The Six Points of Connection



Social connection is a key factor in your health, happiness and longevity. The United States Chamber of Connection created six points of connection to help people better understand and strengthen their social bonds. These points are based on research from fields like psychology, healthcare, sociology and urban planning. They focus on important parts of social connections like safety, emotional bonding and civic engagement. This research-based approach helps individuals and communities take action to create deeper social connections.

The Six Points of Connection:

- 1. Neighborhood contact.** Knowing your neighbors builds a sense of belonging and security. Building relationships with the people living around you strengthens your social connections and creates a safer, more welcoming home environment. These neighborly connections can contribute to your overall wellbeing and community strength.
- 2. Community of identity.** Joining a community with a shared identity creates deep, meaningful connections. Connecting with people who share similar backgrounds, interests or experiences builds safety, understanding and support.
- 3. One-on-one relationships.** Regular connections with family members or friends are a fundamental part of your social wellness. Mutually engaged and empathetic connections can provide mental and emotional support.
- 4. Third place.** The term 'third place' refers to a social environment that fosters casual social interactions. Third places are not home or work, but a place like a cafe, library, gym, community center or park where individuals can casually interact and build relationships with one another.
- 5. Community of play.** These activity-based communities gather around shared interests or hobbies and can help you build a shared sense of purpose with those around you. Connection in an activity-based group is built through doing something together like sports, crafts or volunteering.
- 6. Community service.** Engaging in community service like volunteering, mutual aid or civic organizations not only strengthens personal wellbeing but supports the broader community. By engaging in community service, you can foster meaningful relationships while contributing to the greater good.

Source: [Chamber of Connection](#)

### Finding Belonging in Your Community

Having a sense of belonging to a community is an important part of wellbeing. As social creatures, people regularly label themselves and others based on groups, communities and identities they are a part of. Everyone is a member of a family, a sporting team or fan base, a spiritual or religious group, a political party or a nationality, among others. Almost every aspect of your identity and daily life is shaped around belonging to something larger than yourself.

Feeling a sense of belonging in your community ensures you feel supported and less alone, and helps you better manage stress, anxiety and your overall emotional wellbeing. It also reinforces your own resilience and support systems, which can help you better cope with life's challenges.

Feeling lonely from time to time is a natural part of life, especially during major transitions like moving or changing jobs. When that sense of disconnection shows up, reconnecting with communities that matter to you can be a powerful step toward rebuilding a sense of belonging.

Source: [Mayo Clinic Health System](#)

## Strategies for Building and Maintaining Healthy Relationships

Healthy relationships are an important part of your mental and physical wellbeing, but creating and nurturing them can be challenging, as it's easy to let life get in the way. Here are some helpful tips for building new relationships:

- **Go to community-based events.** Look for groups or clubs centered around your interests or hobbies, such as a running club, trivia night or watch parties of your favorite sports teams or shows.
- **Give and accept invitations.** Invite a new friend to join you for coffee or a walk. When you're invited to an event, say yes even if you don't know the people very well.
- **Take up a new hobby or interest.** Find a shared space where you can learn a new hobby while meeting new people. For example, take a class at your local community college, join a fitness studio or gym, or enroll in an art class.
- **Volunteer in your community.** Not only is it a meaningful way to give back and feel good about your impact, but it'll also allow you to connect with like-minded people who share your interests and values.

Established relationships take maintenance. Here are some tips to support your relationships:

- **Get to know yourself.** Spend some time engaging in personal reflection. Being in touch with your own emotions will help you better express your feelings to others.
- **Put in the work.** Healthy relationships take effort and maintenance. A healthy relationship takes commitment and a willingness to accommodate each other's schedules and needs.
- **Set and respect boundaries.** Boundaries are an important part of any healthy relationship. Setting boundaries helps you communicate how you like to be treated by others, which can lead to a stronger relationship and connection.
- **Talk and listen.** Sharing your experiences and listening to others is foundational to any relationship. Express your feelings honestly and vulnerably and listen genuinely to others when they do the same.
- **Reflect and learn.** Reflecting on the relationships that are most important in your life can provide a good roadmap for you to build other relationships. Ask yourself what qualities these relationships have, why they work and how you can implement those strategies with others.

Source: [Mental Health Foundation](#)

## Fostering Connection Through Community Engagement

Connecting with others through community engagement not only strengthens your social ties and mental health, but it can also help you build a sense of purpose. Giving your time to local causes in your community can help you meet people outside your usual circle and gain new perspectives. These shared experiences create a resilient social network that supports everyone involved. Engaging with your community is a great way to build a larger sense of purpose and foster your local connections.

Your wellbeing thrives when you focus on something larger than yourself. Helping others has proven to release stress and boost your mood in ways that solo activities cannot. By participating in local events, you invest in the community where you live and work. This active involvement fosters a culture of belonging and mutual respect.

You can build these relationships through simple activities. Consider these options as opportunities for you to foster connection through community engagement:

- Volunteer at a local food bank to support neighbors.
- Join a neighborhood cleanup to improve shared spaces.
- Mentor students to share your professional skills.
- Participate in a charity run to promote fitness and giving.
- Donate supplies to schools or shelters in your area.

Source: [Chamber of Connection](#)

## Easy Grilled Shrimp Tacos with Mango Avocado Salsa



These grilled shrimp tacos are ready in just under 30 minutes and are a great weeknight dinner recipe throughout the summer months!

**Makes 4 servings.**

### Ingredients:

For the Shrimp:

- 1 pound medium raw shrimp, peeled and deveined with tails removed and patted dry
- 1 tablespoon avocado oil or olive oil
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon onion powder
- ¼ teaspoon ancho chili powder (can sub with regular chili powder)
- ½ teaspoon salt

For the Mango-Avocado Salsa:

- 1 medium avocado, diced
- 1 cup fresh mango
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- ¼ cup red onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced or grated
- ½ small jalapeno, finely minced
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- Salt to taste

For serving:

- 8 corn tortillas
- 1 cup shredded red cabbage or coleslaw mix
- ¼ cup crumbled cotija cheese

### Directions:

1. Preheat the grill to medium-high heat (375-400°F).
2. In a medium bowl, toss shrimp with oil. Set aside.
3. In a small bowl, combine chili powder, cumin, garlic powder, onion powder, ancho chili powder and salt. Sprinkle over the shrimp and toss to coat.
4. To make the salsa, combine the avocado, mango, cilantro, onion, jalapeno and lime juice. Gently fold to combine. Taste and season with salt as desired. Refrigerate until ready to serve.
5. Thread the shrimp on skewers and place skewers on the grill grate. Cook for 2-3 minutes on each side or until shrimp are cooked through.
6. Remove the shrimp from grill and divide among the tortillas. Top each taco with shredded cabbage, Mango-Avocado salsa and cotija cheese.

### NUTRITION INFORMATION

Calories per serving	315
Sodium	650 mg
Fat	10 g
Saturated Fat	1 g
Carbohydrates	38 g
Protein	21 g
Total Sugars	9 g
Fiber	7g

Source: [Real Food Dieticians](#)

# The Importance of Social Connection for Mental & Physical Health



By nature, people are social creatures. Your relationships with family, friends, coworkers and community members are an important part of your life and wellbeing. Social connection refers to the bonds you have to your community, peers and other individuals around you. It also refers to the size and diversity of your social networks. These social connections provide you with both emotional, social and physical support in your daily life.

Social connections play an important role in improving your wellbeing, yet social isolation and loneliness have become common issues across the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) Commission on Social Connection conducted a global report which found that one in six people worldwide are affected by loneliness. In the United States specifically, the report found that one in four adults feel lonely or don't feel they have a strong emotional or social support system. This loneliness, according to the report, has significant impacts on people's health and wellbeing.

Being socially disconnected or isolated can increase the risk of illnesses like heart disease, stroke, anxiety, depression and dementia. On the other hand, having healthy relationships and strong social connections can help people live longer, healthier lives. Strong social connections are proven to help people:

- Lower the risk of illnesses like heart disease, stroke and dementia
- Strengthen their mental health
- Manage stress and anxiety more effectively
- Improve sleep quality

People with healthy relationships are more likely to make healthy choices that lead to better mental and physical health. Social connections and healthy relationships are an important part of your overall wellbeing.

Sources:

[Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)

[World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)

# JULY 2026



## DISABILITY PRIDE MONTH

July is the anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is a time to celebrate the disability community, promote inclusion, and raise awareness about the experiences and contributions of individuals in our country with disabilities.

Learn more: [ada.gov](https://ada.gov)

## SLEEP AWARENESS

Sleep is an important part of your overall health. Get more information about healthy sleep habits.

Learn more: [thensf.org](https://thensf.org)

## UV SAFETY

The summer brings with it more time in the sun. Take time out to learn techniques to minimize the risk of sun exposure.

Learn more: [cdc.gov/skin-cancer](https://cdc.gov/skin-cancer) and [cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic\\_info/sun-safety](https://cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic_info/sun-safety)

## SOCIAL WELLNESS MONTH

Social wellness refers to how you interact with others, express yourself and build connections in your community. Healthy social habits help you build support systems and enhance your physical and mental health.

Learn more: [nih.gov/health-information](https://nih.gov/health-information)

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