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✓ About social health

## Social health...

*“It is an individual’s ability to handle and act based on different social conditions”.*

We humans are the social animals. We are meant to have relationships and connections for our health and wellness. So, in this developing world of 21<sup>st</sup> century, being socially healthy is now emerging as the new necessity to survive in current society. So before starting this journey of social health let’s understand this general fact that social health is more than just the prevention of mental illness and social problems. Also social health might seem ignorable and difficult to address yet it stands as one of the pillars of health. So, let’s dive a more

deeper in this river full of knowledge about social health and self-care....



## What is social health?.

- Social health can be defined as individual's ability to interact with other people and form good relations with them.
- It can be understood as the level of comfort we feel while coming in different social situations.
- Ability to change one's own behaviour according to changing social situations is an important characteristic of social health.
- So what we can conclude is that it's the ability of the people to be free from want of basic necessities and to coexist peacefully in communities with opportunities for advancement or well-being stands for absence of negative conditions and feelings and if not the total absence then presence of more positive feelings than negative ones.



## First let us understand the need of a social health:

Everyday we come in contact with various new and old faces. The quality and quantity of relations we maintain with them affects our well being greatly. So maintaining social wellness let's us create a strong bonding with various people around us which we meet in our day to day life. So it's a smart choice to maintain a good social health along with physical and mental health. Also:

- Having healthy relation involves good communication, empathy, and care for family, friends and colleagues which creates a better and comfortable atmosphere around us.
- Being self-centred, violent and alone have ill effects on health causing stress and depression which are a threat to self and others.

- The social health can be considered as cause behind the cause. So we should maintain it.
- Social isolation and social exclusion, both are causes of poor chances of survival with a decreased degree of quality of life. And maintaining social health is a good solution to overcome these problems.

It has been proven with relevant incidence that those who are well integrated in the society have longer and healthier life. A review published in PLoS Medicine indicates **that good social relationships are were associated with 50% increase in survival chances**. Also in a study on social flourishing, showed that psychologically healthy people have hopeful perspectives on issues related to social conditions and their future, whereas unhealthy people are in despair about these issues. Whereas, married ones have higher social health than single ones.

So issues we can have by poor social health are:

- Poor mental health
- High blood pressure
- Mobility issues
- Anxiety and depression
- Chronic disease



## Factors affecting social health

- Basic needs of a person like food, clothing, etc.
- Your personality also plays a major role in your social health which includes various other factors like your behaviour, the way you talk to people, etc.
- People around you also affects it which includes your relatives, family members and also your friend circle have an effect on your social health.
- How you use your alone time also matters a lot so for a better social health you should involve yourself in some good works.

- The amount of trust you do on others and respect for others.
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## Factors which can damage your social health

- Mental stress
- Addiction
- Being in wrong company of people who influence you in wrong way
- Being lonely can also affect your social health in a negative way
- Being in a toxic relationship



## How to you can improve your social health?

- Firstly, you should be willing to:
  - Sacrifice some time, effort and energy
  - Establish self-identity
  - Develop new relations
  - Spend money with friends
  - Adjust in new environment
  - Not complain about little things
- Making friends by doing good conversations, keeping in contact from time to time, etc.
- You can spend your time by doing some good activities like:
  - Developing new hobbies by joining groups of reading, drawing, writing, yoga etc.
  - Learning new skills like art, dance, cooking, swimming etc.
  - Volunteering at schools or events outside.
  - Travelling and meeting new people.
- Improving your social wellness by following a healthy lifestyle and understanding the reason behind your stress and not letting it affect you.

- By maintaining good relationships with people around you by making them feel valued.by:
  - Ask for help in need.
  - Listen to others without being judgmental.
  - Compromise and work on agreements.
  - Avoid conflicts and anger.
  - Disagree but respectfully.
  - Protect yourself from bad company and set boundaries.
  
- By working on your communication skills as the way you communicate affects your social health greatly.
- Balancing your social and personal time properly is also important for your social health.

## ✓ Dimensions of social health

### 1. Social Integration

*“Integration is a basic law of life; when we resist it, disintegration is the natural result, both inside and outside of us”.*



#### What is social integration?

- Social integration refers to the extent to which people are related to a social group.

- Social integration does not mean forced assimilation.
- One should willingly include themselves to a social system.
- This can only be achieved when an individual is provided a comfortable environment where people are able to cooperate with each other.
- One should not lose its individual identity in the process of social integration.



## What are the benefits of social integration?

- Social integration plays their role in creating close relations among social groups which results in peaceful relations and productivity for an individual as well as society.
- A better social integration leads to reduced mortality risks, and to a better state of mental health.
- Lack of social integration leads to estrangement from society and individual feels socially rejected.
- Better social integration is associated with strengthening the bond with other individuals which create a better environment and hence have a good impact on one's body.



## How to achieve social integration?

- We have to create a state of collective consciousness by our norms and values, which binds individuals and creates social integration.
- In simple words we can achieve social integration by creating a strong bonding with other individuals.
- We should create an atmosphere where people should feel comfort in our company.
- We should make other individuals feel valued.
- It can be achieved by developing a society in which we share the socioeconomic and cultural life.

## 2. Social contribution

*“As per Erikson, midlife is the period adults can contribute most to the society and shape the coming generation into productive members of society”.*



### What is social contribution?

- It is feeling of an individual's value in society.
- It's a feeling of social force from inside your mind which binds you to do something for the society.
- A kind of responsibility which an individual should have to give something valuable to world.
- In other words, the work you do everyday will give what outcomes for the society is what the social contribution you can make.



### What role does social contribution plays in one's social health?

- One's contribution determines his value in society which is responsible for good social health.
- Your contribution helps you in strengthening your bond with other people in society which results in good social health.
- Giving contribution helps in making someone realise his own importance in society which can give self-satisfaction and hence a good social health.

- If an individual is not able to contribute to society then one may feel alienated from society which affects social health in a negative way.

### How can we socially contribute to the society?

We can make contributions to the society on by various ways and up to various extent. So, following are some general ways by which an individual can easily contribute to the society:

- Listening to people in daily life and showing them empathy.
- Getting a good education that one can use to help others after he/she is graduated.
- Helping out people during everyday life whenever you have the opportunity.
- Sharing your specialized knowledge to give back to your local community.
- Volunteering at a community organization to help others in society.
- Mentoring a young person in your community to build their character.

## 3. Social coherence

*“In the evolution of mankind there has always been a certain degree of social coherence”.*



What is social coherence?



- It is a state where an individual or a group interact with each other.
- In other words, it can be defined as a relationship where each individual is stably and harmoniously aligned with each other.
- Social coherence means creating a sense of collective purposeness, positive emotional connection and overall well-being among individuals.
- Better communication can be considered as a key factor for a better social coherence.
- Interaction among people give rise to new ideas and ability to maintain coherence when faced with undesired and stressful life events.



## How can we establish social coherence?

- Basic requirement of a social coherence is that all the community members must be attuned and are emotionally connected with each other.
- Social coherence can be established by the smoothness or flow in social interactions which depends largely on spontaneous synchronization between individuals.
- Social coherence can be attained by understanding the importance of developing skills and behaviors and being able to successfully connect, cooperate and collaborate with others.
- We humans are hard-wired to seek social connections and secure attachments, independent of maturational stage, and culture which is basic step of social coherence.
- Kindness and cooperation among individuals, improved communication, and decreases in social discord and adversarial interactions.



## Importance of social coherence

- Creating a social coherent environment can lift others and bring out the best all the individuals in a community.
- Social coherence decreases the social discord and increase positive emotional connections.
- Social coherence at personal level can improve the sense of self-regulation among individuals.
- Social incoherence not only affects the way that how we feel, relate, and communicate with others but it also affects physiological processes that disrupt good health.
- When it comes to public health, social coherence and connection may be one of the most important public health priorities.

## 4. Social actualization

*“Realizing your abilities makes your life easier and better....*

*also implementing self-actualization beautifies your character”.*



## What do we understand by social actualization?

- It can be defined as a positive comfort level an individual finds with other individuals.
- Social actualization is the social and emotional contagion that connects all individuals with each other.

- In social actualization there is openness to respect other's ideas, efforts and experiences to grow continuously.
- In social actualization one realises that he/she has the ability to make society better and healthier and in turn, they play their part in the social growth.



### How can you become a “social-actualizer”?

- An individual's focus should be on collective good rather than, just personal good.
- A social actualizer is the one which think before saying something publicly and imagine the ripple effect they can leave on others.
- A “social-peaker” (self-actualizer) focuses on social gain and systematic effects in establishing social actualization.



### What is the importance of social actualization?

- In this era of 21<sup>st</sup> century, collaboration is essential for both personal and social success which comes under social actualization.
- Most of the society is focussing on solving the world's collective problem rather than individual's which can be done by social actualization.
- when we're in the orbit of a social-actualizer, we feel drawn to a higher calling and one that can create a sort of "collective effervescence" of a group.
- People who can envision this potential of social-actualization in themselves are socially healthy.

## 5. Social acceptance

*“Social acceptance starts with yourself and ends with yourself and your ability of social behaviour acts as a bridge in connecting you to society”.*



### What is social acceptance?

- It is the ability of an individual to accept the good things and to tolerate the bad things in society.
- It is an aspect of social behaviour and the extent to which an individual is actively brought into social interactions.
- To be able to fit in a community, a person might behave like others around him/her.
- Individuals exhibit this behaviour to enjoy that level of comfort to a great extent.



### How can we achieve social acceptance?

- We communicate to connect with each other which leads to social acceptance.
- it can be said that the self-acceptance is necessary for social acceptance of others.
- An individual with good understanding of self and who can accept both good and bad in self is known to have a good social and mental health which is responsible for social acceptance.
- Prejudice and stigma are barriers to social acceptance.



### What are the advantages of social acceptance?

- Being accepted is necessary for us to grow emotionally.
- Social acceptance prevents us from isolation.
- The pain of being excluded is similar to physical injury which can be prevented by social acceptance.
- Social acceptance is important for an individual's social and emotional development.
- Social acceptance provides a wide range of learning opportunities which includes companionship, recreation skills building and social skills, participating in group solving problems and managing competition, and conflicts.

## ✓ Social health for students and youngsters

### ■ For students

*“Be strong, you can keep up with pace of daily life*

*Know your ability, your mind is sharper than blade of knife”.*

### ✚ Why is social health important for students?

- For students it's important to have good social health as it helps them in learning how to balance their social life with their academic and professional lives.
- Maintaining an optimal level of social health allows students to build healthy relationships with others.
- Having a supportive social network allows students to develop assertive skills and make students in various social situations for who they actually are.
- For students surrounding themselves with a positive social network increases their self-esteem.

### ✚ Factors affecting social health of students:

#### 1. Mental stress:

- Due to the increasing population of world competition has also increased which gives mental stress to students.
- Due to increasing trends of nuclear families, children often feel loneliness and thus develops mental stress.
- Students sometimes get involved in bad activities like addiction which is a major cause of mental stress and results in poor social health.

## 2. Modern technology and communication media:

- Students spend most of the time of cell phones results in poor social health of students
- This use of modern technology is also emerging as a new sort of addiction among students which is major cause of damaging social health
- Using modern technology has reduced the physical interaction among students which is an important factor for poor social health.
- Some of the applications on cell phones are extremely time consuming and create physical and mental problems too which affects our social health in a negative way.
- Due to misuse of communication media students are often directed into wrong direction and gets sometimes get involved in cyber-crime which is major cause of lack of social health.



## How to improve your social health of students by relieving stress?

- Establishing communication with friends, peers, cousins, teachers and more importantly parents.
- Noting down your feelings when you can't focus helps in relieving stress and indirectly improves your social health also.

- Involving yourself in some creative activities like painting, cooking, photography, etc also helps in improving the social health of students.
- Playing outdoor games drives away your loneliness and create a tendency of unity.
- Meditation helps the students to improve concentration and also improves their social health.
- Deliberating inculcation of characters like time management, proper planning and decision making also helps in improving the social health of students.

### ■ For youngsters

*“When youngsters talk about their feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, less scary and thus leads to good social health”.*

### Why is social health important for youngsters?

- Having good social health for youngsters helps them in creating strong relationships which can offer support during their difficult times.
- Social health enables youngsters to create boundaries that encourage communication, trust, and conflict management.
- During the journey of social health, youngsters will discover that they have the power to enhance their personal relationships.
- Having a good social health is important factor in building the emotional resilience.
- Maintaining social health allows youngsters to practice empathy and active listening.

- Social health for youngsters also includes balancing the unique needs of romantic relationships with other parts of their life.



## Ways to achieve social health for youngsters

- Reflect yourself on your social needs.
- Ask questions to yourself like, what aspects of social life do you enjoy? What parts would you like to improve?
- Make efforts to stay in touch with your colleagues, supportive friends, spouse and family members.
- Practice self-disclosure.
- Participate in group discussions and practice active listening.
- Join a club or organization.
- Participate in group fitness classes.
- Participate in social events or gatherings.
- Understanding their responsibilities and giving something valuable as outcome.



