Ways to Improve Your Social Wellness

It is Social Wellness Month, a month dedicated to encouraging people to care for the health of their relationships and social behaviors. You may be surprised to learn that the health of your relationships have a significant impact on your physical health, mental wellbeing, and overall quality of life. That’s why, this month, we want to teach you new ways to care for your social wellness.

# **What is Social Health?**

Social health pertains to the health of your interpersonal relationships and social abilities. It can pertain to your ability to develop healthy and happy relationships with other people, as well as your behaviors and comfortability in social situations. The better shape your [social health](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3150158/) is in, the better your overall health and wellbeing are likely to be, according to research.

# **Signs of Good Social Wellness**

Considering the fact that your social health has such a significant impact on your quality of life, understanding what it means to be socially healthy can be incredibly valuable to living your happiest and healthiest. A few signs of optimal social health include:

* The ability to have fun in social situations
* Having a strong support system in your family and friends
* the ability to engage with and partake in your community
* having a healthy balance between social activities and alone time
* the ability to be assertive and set healthy boundaries when needed
* being respectful of others
* ability to communicate effectively
* turning to loved ones for support
* the ability to develop lasting friendships and social networks
* the ability to be yourself in social settings

# **Why Your Relationships Are So Important for Your Health**

As we noted before, your social health and wellness play a significant role in your overall quality of life. One of the reasons for this has to do with the fact that we tend to have to interact with other people on a daily basis. Developing healthy social behaviors and habits will allow one to develop healthy relationships, a necessity in a high-quality life.

Socially healthy people don’t just report a higher satisfaction with their life; they also experience a lower risk of many ailments and diseases. Research has found that those struggling with their social health are at a higher risk of ailments like:

* heart disease
* chronic illness
* weakened immune functioning
* high blood pressure
* increased stress hormone
* depression
* anxiety
* mental illness
* poor relationships
* mortality

# **Ways to Improve Your Social Wellness**

Just because your social wellness isn’t thriving now does not mean you are incapable of being socially healthy. As a matter of fact, healthy social behaviors are something we all learn! If you would like to improve your social wellness, a few ways you can get started include:

## **Improving Your Relationship with Yourself**

Before you start trying to improve your social behaviors and interpersonal relationships, you must first grow and nurture your relationship with yourself. The more comfortable and loving you are with yourself, the more comfortable and loving you can be with the people in your communities.

To begin improving your relationship with yourself, you can start with little acts of self-care. Take care of your health by eating healthy, exercising, and getting enough sleep. Take care of your joy by making time to do the things you love. Take care of your stress levels by setting healthy boundaries with the things that stress you out, like social media or work.

## **Building New Relationships**

We can all feel nervous about meeting new people- no matter how confident we are. However, the more practice you get with meeting new people and building new relationships, the easier it will become to reach out to new people.

## **Nurturing Old Relationships**

When we are struggling with our social health, many of us find ourselves falling into the habit of waiting for others to reach out. Unfortunately, this habit can cause friendships to dwindle and relationships to fizzle out. Every relationship requires effort in order for it to thrive. So, give your mom a call. Ask that old friend if they want to hang out. Be there for your loved one who is hurting. Celebrate your cousin’s newest promotions. Let the people you care about know just how much you love them.

## **Find Some Groups that Match Your Interests**

With the internet, it is easier than ever to find groups of people who share similar niche interests as you. Knowing that you share an interest or passion with a group of people can make building a connection easy and leave you feeling like you belong. There are tons of ways to find groups of likeminded people in your community, including through:

* Facebook
* Community bulletin boards
* Church
* School
* Work
* Friend meet-up sites
* Volunteering
* The gym or workout classes
* Art, music, or cooking classes

## **Practicing the Art of Small Talk**

Starting a conversation with a stranger can be incredibly intimidating, especially when you feel like you have no idea what to say. However, making small talk with others is a critical social skill that can help you build and grow new relationships. There are millions of topics you can engage in small talk about, but if you have no idea where to begin, a few small talk topic ideas include:

* Compliments
* Family or pets
* Career or jobs
* Favorite books or hobbies
* Sports
* Travel
* Music
* Food
* The day
* The weather

## **Get Out of the House**

When you’re feeling tired or burnt out, it can be easy to fall into the habit of going straight from work to home, preventing us from having any sort of fun social interactions in our days. If we work from home and fall into this habit, we don’t have in-person social interactions at all. Social isolation will take a serious toll on your social health and overall wellbeing. That is why it can be so important to push past your desire to stay home and binge-watch your favorite show alone in bed. Make a goal to leave the house for fun social interactions at least three times per week. You can go on a date. You can have a friend’s night out. You can go to a class to learn a new skill. Whatever you decide to do, just get out of the house.

## **Make Time for In-Person Connection**

Technology has made some amazing advancements in our social lives. We now have greater access to loved ones all over the world. We are also able to form online communities and get to know people we never would have met otherwise. There is nothing wrong with using technology to build, nurture, and grow relationships. However, it is important to remember that technology will never replace in-person human interaction. So, while it is great to FaceTime Grandma and send memes back and forth with your significant other, you must also make time to see and connect with your loved ones in the real world.

# **We Are Here for You**

Sometimes, we fall into unhealthy relationships, find ourselves struggling with social anxiety, or develop toxic social behaviors. Maybe you struggle with communicating effectively. Perhaps jealousy or insecurity has begun to erode your relationships. No matter the reason your relationships are struggling, we are here for you. Through counseling, we can work together to get to the bottom of your social struggles. Our therapists are highly educated and compassionate professionals who would like to help. [Contact](http://michiganpsychologicalcare.com/contact.php) us today.

**References**

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3150158/>

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