

# The Power of Human Connection Beyond the Crisis

Building a culture of human connection for the benefit of all.

**THRIVE** *Prince Edward County*





# Your presenter – Pete Bombaci



- Six years leading a Global Human Connection Movement.
- 20 years in marketing and sales roles in beverage alcohol.
- Five years leading Movember in Canada and leading the team that raised \$142M for men's health.
- Sit on Board of Directors for the Global Initiative for Loneliness and Connection, working to address social isolation, disconnection and loneliness in the world.
- Husband, father and hockey lover, former Elvis impersonator.



# The Power of Human Connection

- ❑ The history of human connection & how we got here.
- ❑ The negative impact of a disconnected world and the positive impact of human connection.
- ❑ Why is it more difficult, but the greatest opportunity ever.
- ❑ Where might I find my human connections?
- ❑ Wrap it up with a video
- ❑ Head off to the reception for more human connection.



# Three Key Takeaways

- ❑ Human connection is the unknown super-power that we all have and which most people have no idea about.
- ❑ The work you are doing will be even more important to society as we move forward.
- ❑ More people will begin to engage in your work more deeply, because in times of crisis we need each other more than ever.



A group of people are gathered around a long outdoor table, smiling and eating. The table is set with various dishes, including bread, fruit, and vegetables. There are orange and yellow cups, and a small pumpkin decoration with a bow. The background shows trees with yellow leaves, suggesting an autumn setting. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR  
HIGHLIGHT MOMENTS SINCE  
THINGS HAVE RETURNED TO SOME  
SENSE OF NORMALCY?**

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**“THE MOST CONNECTED SOCIETY IN  
HISTORY IS NOW THE MOST  
DISCONNECTED EVER.”**

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A diverse group of people, including men and women of various ethnicities, are gathered around a campfire at night. They are smiling and clapping, creating a warm and joyful atmosphere. The background is filled with out-of-focus lights, likely from a Christmas tree or other festive decorations, adding to the celebratory mood.

**HUMAN CONNECTION TRANSCENDS  
ALL ILLNESS, CAUSES AND CRISIS.**

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GENERATING WELLNESS THROUGH  
THE POWER OF HUMAN CONNECTION

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**EDUCATE**



**EMPOWER**



**CATALYZE**



# SOCIAL CONNECTION GUIDELINES ARE COMING!

CANADIAN SOCIAL  
CONNECTION SURVEY  SONDAGE SUR LES  
CONNEXIONS SOCIALES AU CANADA

## The 2nd Annual Canadian Social Connection Survey

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CANADIAN SOCIAL  
CONNECTION SURVEY  SONDAGE SUR LES  
CONNEXIONS SOCIALES AU CANADA

## Canadian Social Connection Guidelines

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# WHAT ARE WE WORKING TO OVERCOME?

## What is social isolation?

Social isolation is a lack of social contacts and having few people to interact with on a regular basis.

## What is disconnection?

Disconnection is the lack of belonging. The human emotional need to be accepted as part of a group or community.

## What is loneliness?

The difference between the relationships you have and the relationships that you desire.



# DEFINITIONS

## What is Human Connection?

Is the energy exchange between two people that are paying attention to one another. Like a smile, a head nod or a hello at the very least.

### It includes:

- ❑ Deep meaningful connections
- ❑ Casual collisions
- ❑ Connecting with strangers



# THIS IS ALL NORMAL

Thirst



Hunger



Loneliness





# THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF LONELINESS



50%  
increased  
risk of early  
onset  
dementia.



29%  
increased  
risk of heart  
disease and  
a 32%  
increased of  
stroke,



Higher  
rates of  
depression,  
anxiety and  
suicide.



Doubles  
your risk of  
Type 2  
diabetes  
after age  
50.



68% increased  
risk of  
hospitalization  
and 57%  
increased risk of  
emergency  
room visits.



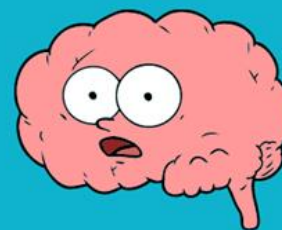
# THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF LONELINESS



Persistent  
and  
cumulative  
detrimental  
effects on  
adult health



Higher  
rates of  
stress,  
anxiety and  
depression.



Impairs the  
development  
of the brain's  
structure.



Can have a  
negative impact  
on academic  
performance.



# THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF LONELINESS



Present research finds that lacking a fundamental need, meaningful social connection and normative structure—is associated with violent extremism



Researchers have found that long term chronic isolation cause the build-up of a chemical in the brain, that increases stress, aggression and fear.





QUESTION

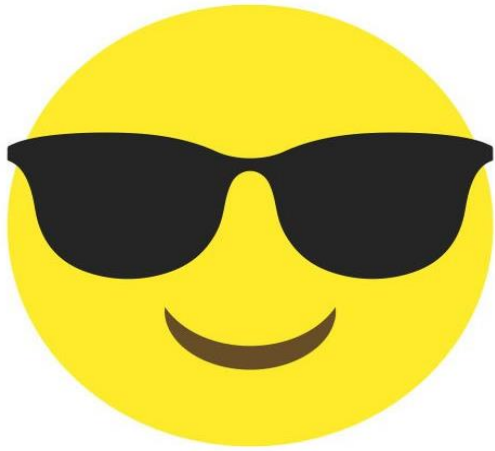
ANY  
SURPRISES?



SPECIAL

TIME

EDITION



# THE SCIENCE OF HAPPINESS

*NEW DISCOVERIES FOR A MORE JOYFUL LIFE*

RELATIONSHIPS — EXERCISE — INNER LIFE — DIET — MEDITATION





Single largest indicator of  
happiness in our lives.

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**Reduces anxiety  
and depression.**



Increases empathy,  
compassion and resilience.





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**Strengthens your  
immune system.**





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Increases your  
self-confidence.



Increases your chances of  
living longer by up to 50%.



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One of the most powerful actions we  
can take to prevent and treat anxiety.



A close-up photograph of two hands playing a board game. The hands are positioned over a blue board with circular holes. One hand, wearing a gold ring, is moving a white pawn. The other hand, with red nail polish, is moving a yellow pawn. Several other pawns in green, red, and yellow are visible on the board. The background is blurred, showing a red object and other people.

Single largest preventative  
action to avoid depression.





# Question

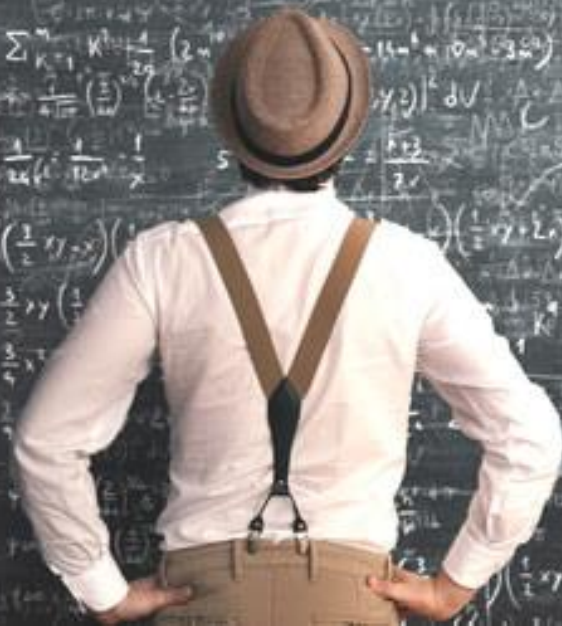
## ANY MORE SURPRISES?

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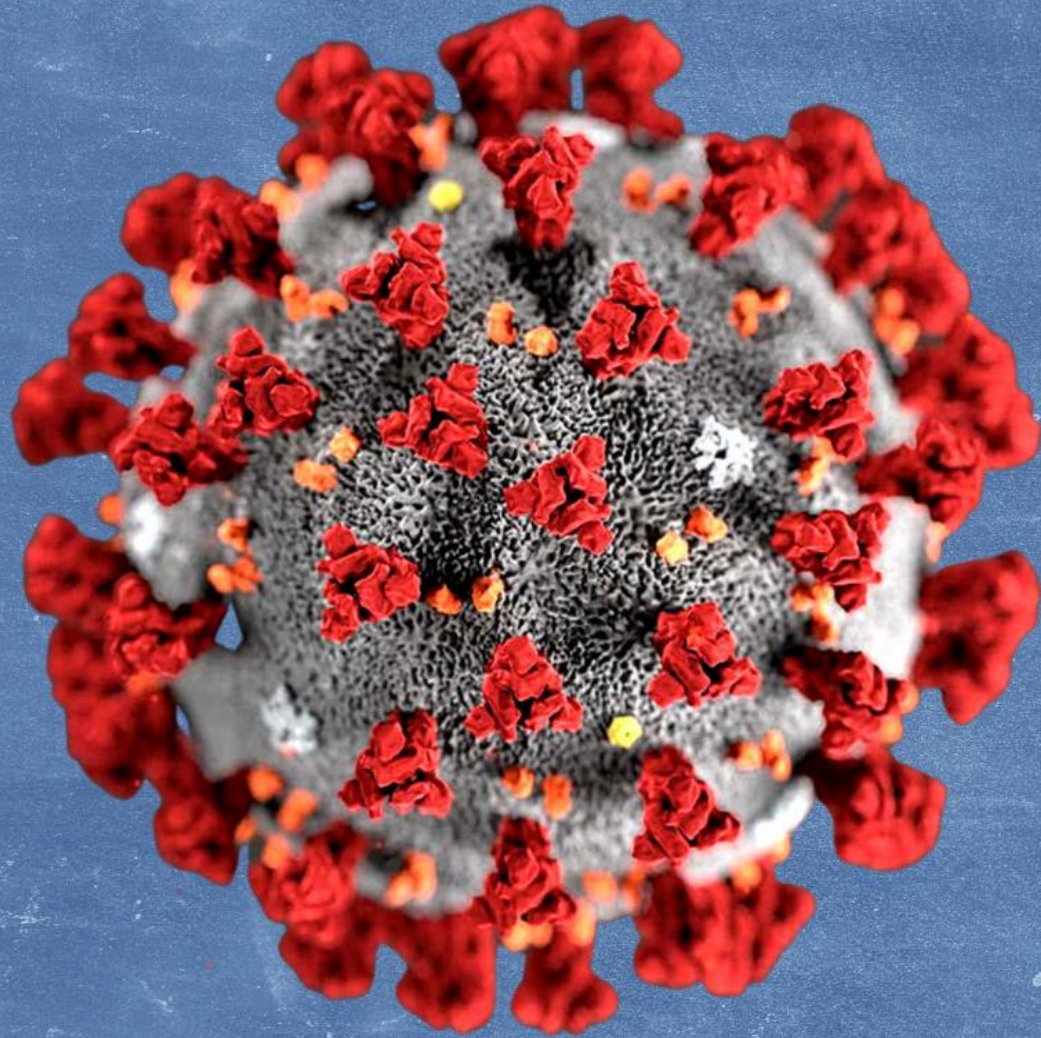


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# Why might I not be feeling myself?

Many of us have lived in a stressful state for much of the last 3 years.

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Our bodies and minds are tired and we are still working to adapt to the new world that we are waking up to.



And the connections  
that fill us up are not  
back yet...

Our casual collisions are not there.

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+ 60%

Over 60% of the people we saw each  
day pre-pandemic were not in our  
calendars.



Technology is only  
a supplement.

Digital connection is only a supplement

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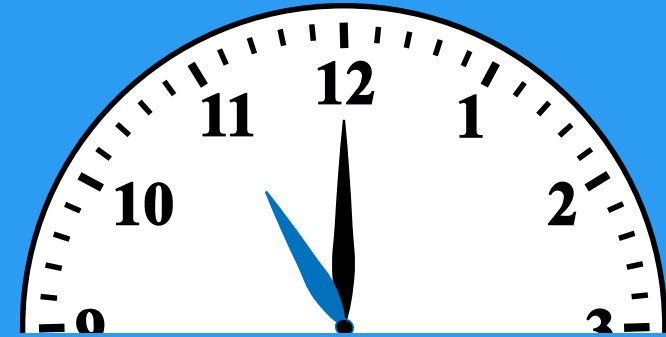
9 to 1

Researchers have observed nine important  
“cross-brain links” between participants  
during in-person conversation, compared to  
only one link during the virtual chat.



People may not  
be ready.

This will take time.

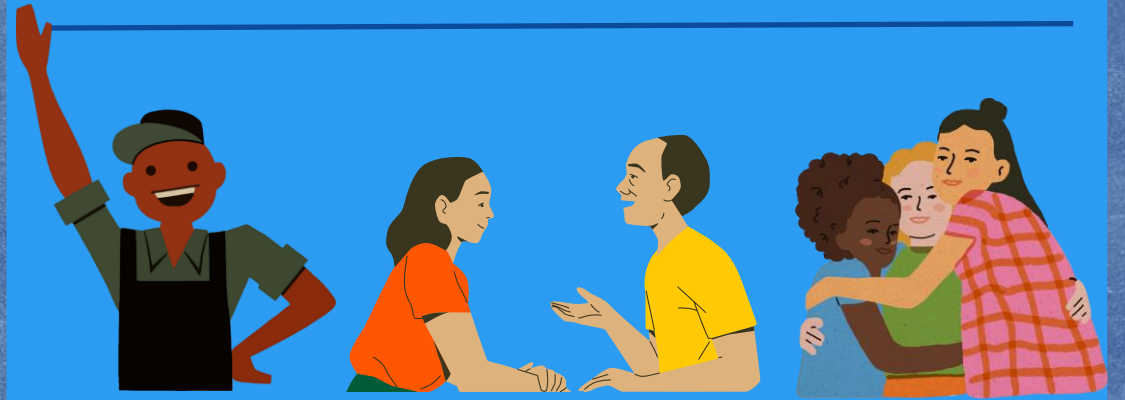


33% claim introversion  
28% fearful of Covid  
22% are socially anxious  
21% are shy



We are in this  
together.

We need a new normal



We are out of the habit of social connection,  
and we need each other to help re-build the  
social health that make us happier and  
healthier.



So where might we  
find our connections?



# The 2nd Annual Social Connection Survey

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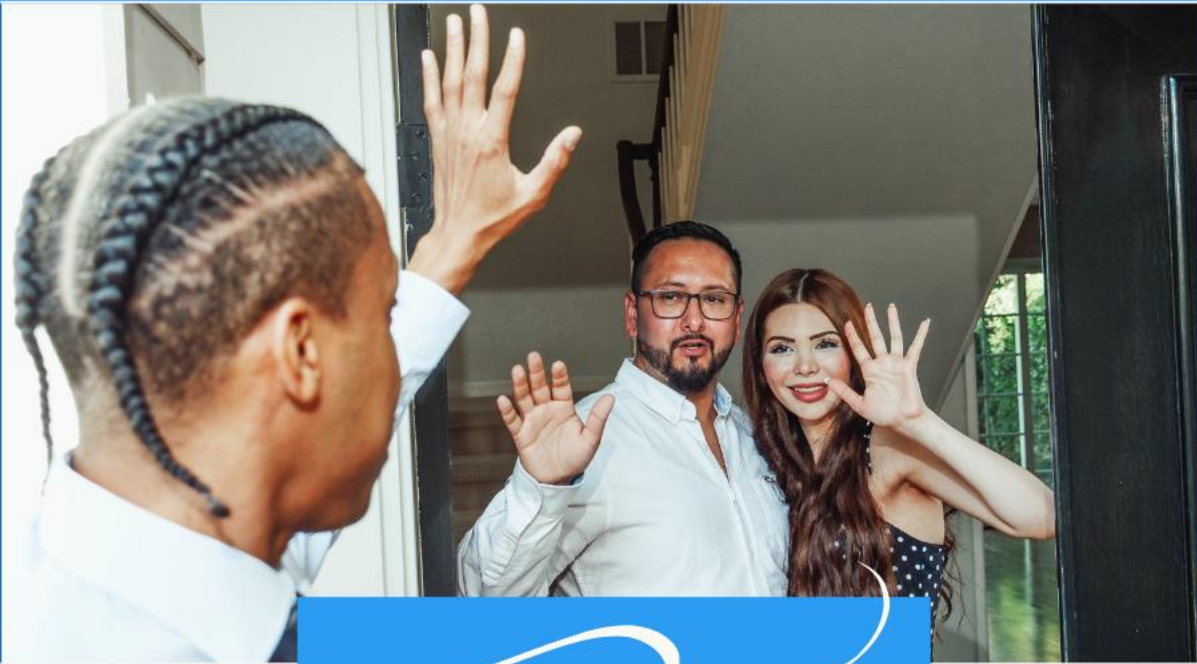


# The Power of Strangers



**Those who greeted strangers at least once per week were nearly 3x more likely to be happy.**





**Those who spent 1 to 4 hours  
with their neighbours in the  
past week were 3 times less  
likely to be lonely.**

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# The Power of Neighbours





**Those who spent between 1  
and 4 hours per week  
socializing with family  
members were 1.47 times  
more likely to be happy.**

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# The Power of Family



# The Power of Friends



**Those who spent 5 or more hours with friends in the past week were 1.62 times less likely to be lonely.**





**Those who spent 5 or more hours with coworkers in the past week were 1.73 times less likely to be lonely.**

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# The Power of Colleagues





**Those who spent at least 5  
hours+ per week socializing  
with coworkers were 1.51  
times more likely to be  
happy.**

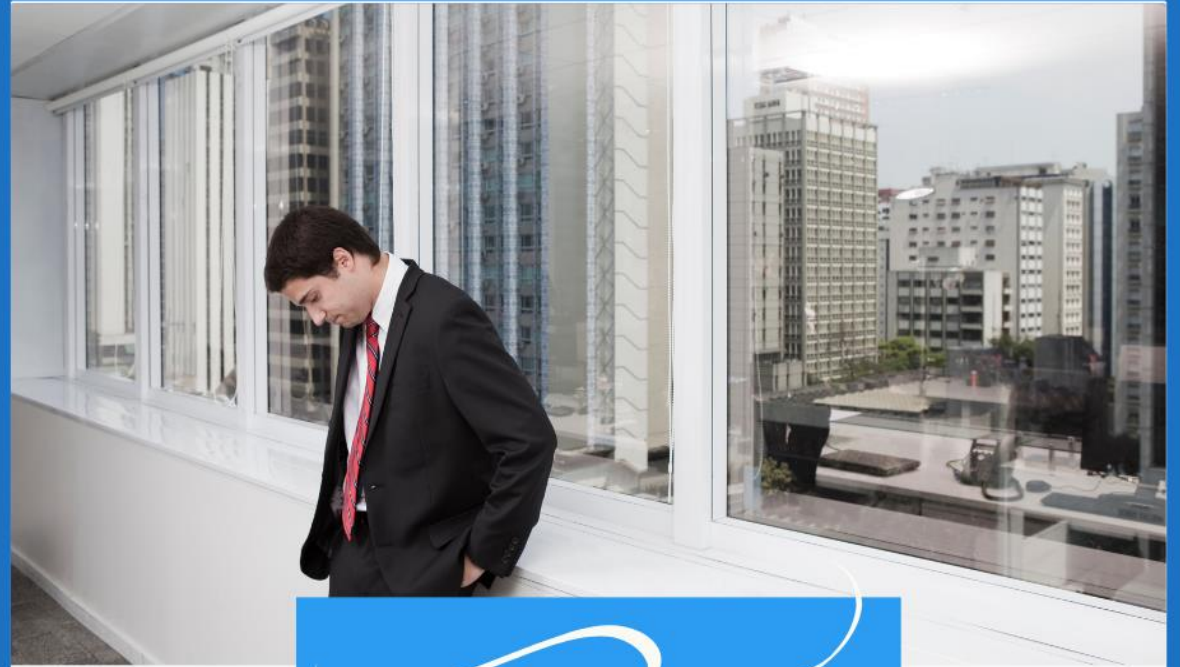
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# The Power of Colleagues



**Don't forget.**

Your social connections  
are important  
everywhere

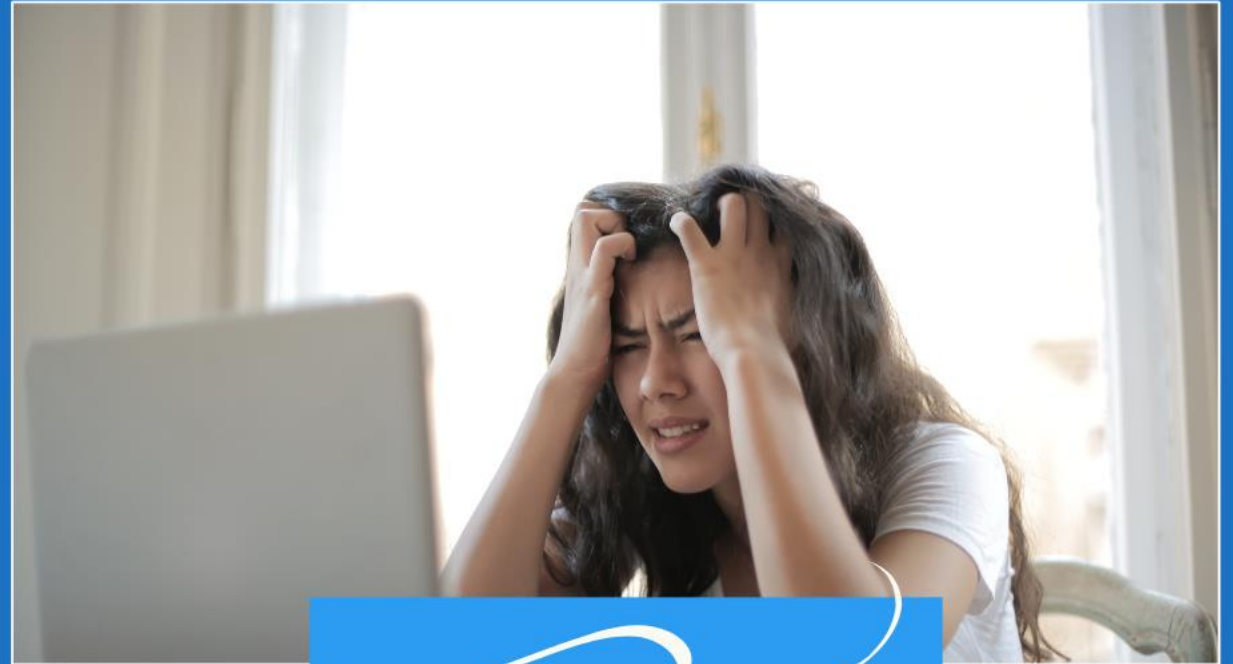


**Being lonely is the  
largest contributor  
to burnout.**



# Burnout

We are still recovering  
from the challenge of  
the last three years.



**Among Canadians who are  
most burnt out, 92% are  
lonely.**





What about benefits  
of connection in the  
community?



# THE BENEFITS OF A CONNECTED COMMUNITY

- ❑ Vital social connection and engagement....
- ❑ Community belonging boosts physical and mental health...
- ❑ Resilient communities come together and adapt...
- ❑ Assuring support, safety and well-being...
- ❑ Share, learn, grow, save money...





It's time  
to wrap

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# So, do you believe?

- ❑ Human connection is the unknown super-power that we all have and which most people have no idea about.
- ❑ The work you are doing will be even more important to society as we move forward.
- ❑ In a world that is struggling with so many challenges, people will need human connection and community more than ever before in our lifetime.



# 5 Tips For Improved Social Health

1. Share this information each day to awaken those you hope to inspire to connect.
2. Don't let the first "NO" deter you from inviting people again. Change takes time.
3. Start small or grow from where you are.
4. Put it in your calendar to make it a priority.
5. Don't stop believing....



**"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed individuals can change the world. In fact, it's the only thing that ever has."**

***Margaret Mead***



WE NEED EACH OTHER  
MORE THAN EVER.



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#INTHISTOGETHER



A photograph of four people (two women and two men) standing on a grassy hill, hugging each other from behind. They are looking out over a vast, hazy landscape under a warm, golden sunset sky. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong lens flare effect. The overall mood is one of connection, support, and hope.

**THE BEST MEDICINE FOR  
PEOPLE...IS PEOPLE.**

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# Looking for more tips and tools?



**@thegenwellproject**



**@genwellproject**



**@GenWellProject**



**@thegenwellproject**



**thegenwellproject**



**Our website: [GenWellProject.org](https://GenWellProject.org)**

**Email:**

**Pete@ [GenWellProject.org](mailto:Pete@GenWellProject.org)**

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'WORLDS APART'



# Small Neighbourhood Grants



Dominique Jones  
Executive Director,  
The County Foundation



# GenWell Weekend

## GenWell Weekend

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**May 5, 6, 7**

Register your plans to get connected and be part of the solution. Make GenWell your excuse to make it happen.

[www.GenWellProject.org](http://www.GenWellProject.org)

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# NEIGHBOURHOOD Small Grants

A micro-grant of \$50 to \$500 to support Prince Edward County residents who want to make their communities better places to live

**Applications open from  
March 25 to June 17, 2023**

**Apply online at  
[thecountyfoundation.ca](http://thecountyfoundation.ca)**



**Celebrate  
Diversity**



**Share  
Skills**

**Organize  
Neighbourhood  
Activities**

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 **The County  
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THANK YOU.

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# LET'S GET CONNECTED

## Q&A

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