

MAY

2025

Mental Health Awareness Month

If you want to be happier, studies suggest that you should focus on your relationships and social connections.

Humans are profoundly a social species. From the days of the caveman, we have evidence that humans lived in groups that worked, ate, played and raised their families together. When scientists refer to “social connection,” they’re referring to a feeling of belonging to a group of people. We have long known that social connection is a physiological need of humans, but it is becoming even more clear now that your relationships may be the key to overall happiness in your life.

So how do we cultivate social connections and happiness in our lives?

1. Visualize what an ideal relationship or friendship would look like for you.

Take the time to think about or write out what kind of friend or partner you are looking for. Be specific about the type of characteristics you desire or value in a relationship. By doing this, you will have a better idea of what to look for – and what to avoid.

2. Be a good listener.

Connect better with people by showing empathy and understanding in response to their stories, hardships and passions.

3. Practice gratitude.

Appreciate all of the social connections you have today, as well as those in the past, that have had an influence on your life.

By implementing these three practices in your life, you will be well on your way to cultivating a life of happiness through your relationships and social connections!

Source:
Greater Good Science Center at the
University of California – Berkeley

