

# WELLNESS CONNECTION

LIVE WELL. WORK WELL.

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## HEALTHY HARMONY - Supporting Wellness through Love and Connection



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*“Incorporating social support and connections is critical for overall health and for healthy habits to be sustainable.”*

February brings to mind matters of the heart. It is Heart Health Month and of course, there is Valentine’s Day where we celebrate romance and love. Love provides a support system for our own emotional wellbeing and the wellbeing of those around us. According to the National Institutes of Health, humans are wired to connect, and **the power of connection can improve our health and wellness.**

Research has provided significant evidence that feeling connected and supported can benefit our health in a number of ways. The benefits can range from improving our mood, managing a healthy weight, lowering blood pressure, supporting a healthy immune system, and helping us live longer.

It is important to remember the connection can be any kind of interaction that helps you feel close to another person (pets count as people, too!). It could be as simple as a conversation in person or over the phone, writing or receiving a letter or email, holding hands, petting your dog

or cat, or feeling welcomed or understood by another being. These interactions and others give us a sense of belonging. Physiologically, when these things happen our body releases the hormone oxytocin into our bloodstream and that is why we get that “feel good” feeling.

This time last year, we could not have foreseen the changes that would overwhelm 2020 and have an effect on all of our relationships. The way we engage with others has been affected by the pandemic and social distancing. It is important now more than ever to find ways to connect with those around us. Be creative and check out the National Institutes of Health’s social wellness [checklist](#). If you are thinking about someone, let them know. Send them a card or email, give them a call, or set up a video call (e.g., Zoom, Skype, FaceTime). Find some way to connect to those around you and enjoy the benefits of improved overall wellbeing.

