

# ***SIMPLE WAYS TO IMPROVE CONNECTION***

Our screens and technology often keeps us from fully engaging with people right in front of us. Human connection boosts our mental health. Feeling well connected to other people promotes positive mental health, physical health, and helps to give life meaning.

Below are some tips you can implement in your daily life to improve connection with individuals in your life.

## **EMBRACE MICRO-MOMENTS**

As humans, we miss out on a lot of potential happiness by not engaging with others. Micro-moments provide a pause that allows mental recovery and improves our overall well-being. They also can offer significant health benefits, including increased emotional resilience, and greater immunity. Creating moments of mindful awareness can be a great first step in implementing mindfulness into daily life.

## **SHARE A SMILE**

Whether you are passing a stranger or greeting a loved one, smiling triggers the release of feel-good hormones. Moving the muscles in your face stimulates the nerves and activates your nervous system, helping you to feel calm and safe.

## **BE SILENT AND LISTEN**

Not everyone is wired the same way or wants to engage in the same amount of talking as another individual. Some people may have sensory needs that make certain sounds, scents, or types of touch difficult to experience. Try using simple gestures like the nod of a head, indicates you understand, are engaged, and present in the conversation. Being present and picking up on social cues or fully listening to an individual can strengthen a connection.

## **SPEAKING & COMMUNICATING**

Even among strangers, if it feels comfortable, try saying something. Make an observation that falls within the context of the environment. Conversation is a vital part of connection, it's where individuals develop empathy and understanding for individuals. When we communicate, we experience the joy of being heard. Speaking and communicating with others is also an important part of receiving help if you are struggling with your mental health.

## **MAINTAIN EYE CONTACT**

Maintaining eye contact between two people activates the parts of the brain that allows us to process another person's feelings so we can empathize with them. It's a valuable form of nonverbal communication that indicates attentiveness to what the other person is saying.

## **ASK QUESTIONS AND FOLLOW UP**

Asking open-ended questions shows interest in what the other person has to say and it also increases the potential for strengthening a social bond. Remembering what the other person said - and following up - shows that you care, which helps to improve connection.