Importance of social connection and support

Having strong connections with others isn't just nice to have; it's important for managing stress and keeping both your mind and body healthy. We are hardwired to need each other!

Take a moment to think about who in your life offers you support. Who recently heard you out, without offering unwanted advice or judging you? Think of two or three people you might be able to turn to when you need support and write those down in your phone.

If you don't have those support people, what could be the reason? Is it because you're dealing with some emotional issues that make it easier to withdraw from people? Are you feeling lonely? Are you in a new place or a new school?

Social ties are important to your mental health. Lots of studies show that having strong social connections makes people healthier and happier.

Try finding ways to seek more support and build relationships. Joining groups, like clubs, can be a fun way to meet new people and make friends.

Think about what kind of support you need. For example, do you like smaller groups or bigger groups? Smaller groups can provide a more intimate setting where you can form deeper connections with individuals. They also can be less overwhelming and easier to navigate for some people.

If you prefer small groups, you could attend board game nights, book clubs, hobby groups, or even small group exercise classes.

On the other hand, larger groups offer opportunities to meet a variety of people and do many different activities. You can also blend into a crowd and observe rather than actively participating. Look for group-based activities like team sports, theater, volunteering projects, or dance groups.

You may prefer one-on-one conversations where you can fully focus on one person and one conversation at a time. For more personal interactions, think about finding a mentorship program, study groups, or casual coffee chats. These can help you build stronger individual relationships.

Remember that you can give support too! Volunteering and helping others can help you form meaningful connections. Helping others not only benefits them but also makes you feel good.