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Want to Live a Long & Satisfying Life?

In this newsletter I want to share two very compelling TED Talks that I think you will find interesting and motivating. The talks are succinct (about 18 minutes in length) presented by knowledgeable experts. My goal in sending a periodic newsletter is to share things that I believe are educational and life enhancing. As a therapist, I am particularly interested in human relationships. The theme for this newsletter is ...

Wake up! Become a Positive Force for Change!

Create Strong Connections!!

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### The Secret of Living Longer May Be Your Social Life



TED Talk by Susan Pinker

Social isolation is a public health risk. Women live 6-8 years longer than men all over the world in part because they foster close relationships and are more socially integrated into day to day life. Women interact more during the day with others, not only with close

relationships. They have more face to face contact with others.

Susan Pinker went to Sardinia, Italy, where there are more centenarians than any place else in the world to find out what contributes to their long life. She found that what reduces the chances of dying early are two features of their social life. One of those factors is close relationships, folks you can count on. The second finding is social integration, how much one interacts with folks throughout the day with either weak or strong bonds.

She reported that out of every day a year ago in the United States, we spent 10 hours on line. Today we spend 11 hours on line, more than anything else we do, even more than sleep. She reports that face to face contact matters a lot. It releases a whole cascade of neurotransmitters that protect us now and well into the future.

Eye contact, shaking hands, high 5's release oxytocin which increases levels of trust and lowers cortisol levels, our stress levels. There are all kinds of good things that happen when we are connected. Face to face contact matters the most. Real social interaction matters. Sharing texts and facebook offerings fall short, no matter how many you send in a day. Social interaction matters a lot. Women are more likely to prioritize their relationships. We all need to be conscious of lowering our stress level in order to live longer and healthier. We are better protected health wise by **social contact**. Having **three stable relationships** is life giving. Social contact provides stunning benefits. It is a biological imperative to know that we belong.

## What Makes A Good Life? Lessons from the Longest Study on Happiness

TED Talk by Robert Waldinger

This study called the Harvard Study began in 1938 with 724 men. There are currently 60 in their 90's still being studied. Be sure to check the link to learn more about the stunning benefits of being connected.



### A summary of the findings is as follows:

- Social connections are really good for us.
- They keep us happier & healthier.
- Social contact provides stunning benefits for us.
- It's a biological imperative to know we belong.
- Those who are socially connected live longer & live well.
- One in 5 Americans report being lonely.
- Loneliness is toxic for our immune system, brain, and overall health.
- High conflict marriages are not good for one's health.
- The quality of our close relationships matters. General satisfaction in our relationships buffers us against illness and protects our brain. It's not that we won't have illnesses, but with connections to others we manage the ups & downs of life with more ease.
- Securely attached relationships (ones you can count on) are good for your health.
- Leaning into relationships, consciously fostering relationships is "Good Medicine."
- In retirement, replace workmates with playmates.

In our fast paced, technologically altered life, it takes awareness, intention, & effort to foster good relationships. Face to face contact matters most!

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I strongly encourage you to check out these two **TED Talks**. **Please don't just rely on my summaries.** The information in these two **TED Talks** will help you become better informed about the importance of connection and, hopefully, will stimulate more conscious intention on your part.

Information without action is fruitless!

The good life is built with good relationships of all types.

Lean into Relationships!

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