

# THE POWER OF HUMAN CONNECTION

The Future of Work is Human:  
Why Social Health is Your  
Greatest Untapped Asset.

**genwell**  
HUMAN CONNECTION MOVEMENT

X

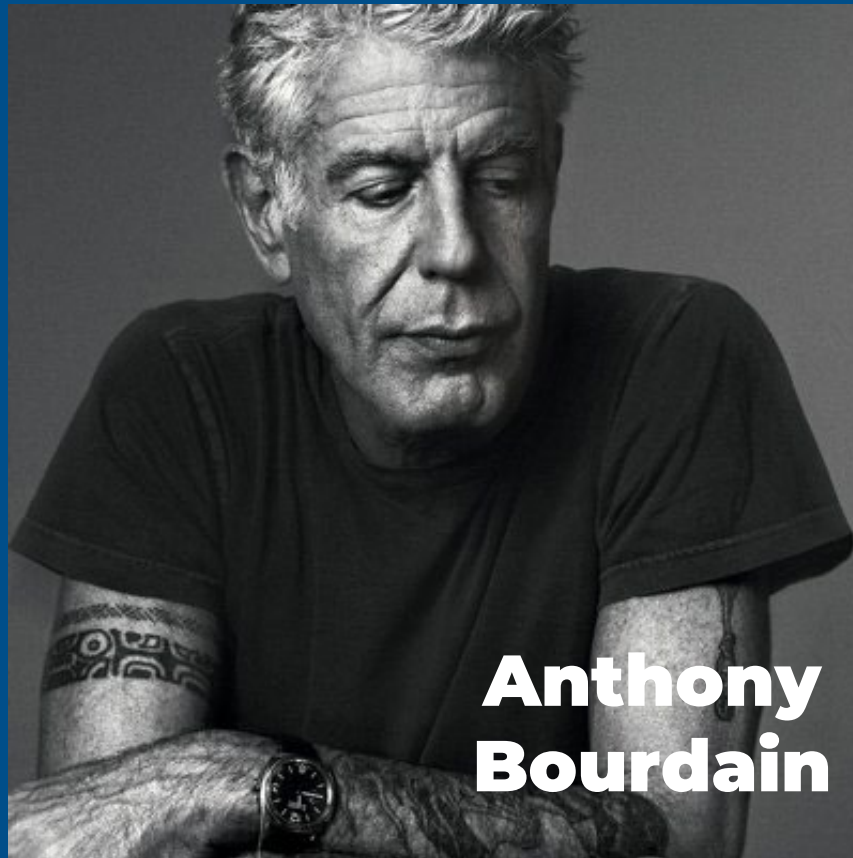
**alPHa**  
Association of Local  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
Agencies





52% of Canadians report being lonely on a regular basis.

# Celebrities



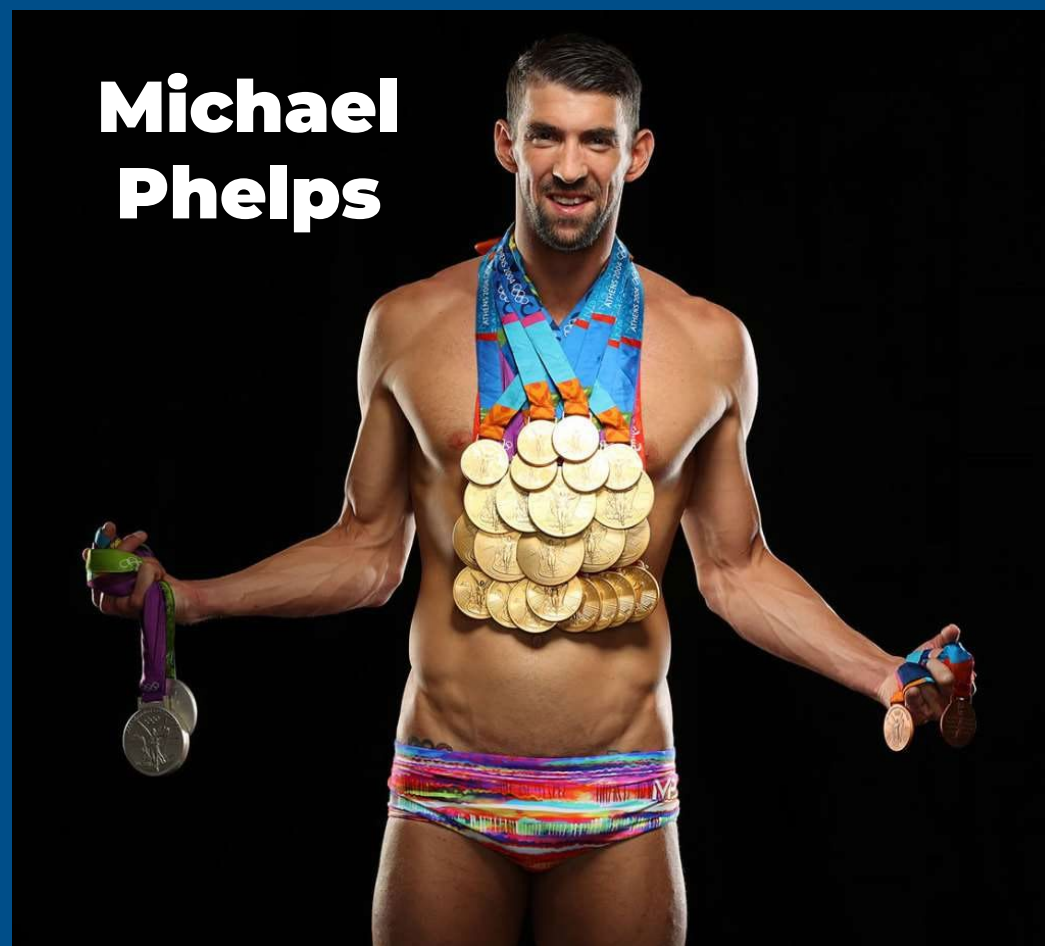
# Athletes



**Simone  
Biles**



**Clara  
Hughes**



**Michael  
Phelps**



**Joe  
Thornton**



**DeMar  
DeRozan**

# Business Leaders

**Howard Schultz**



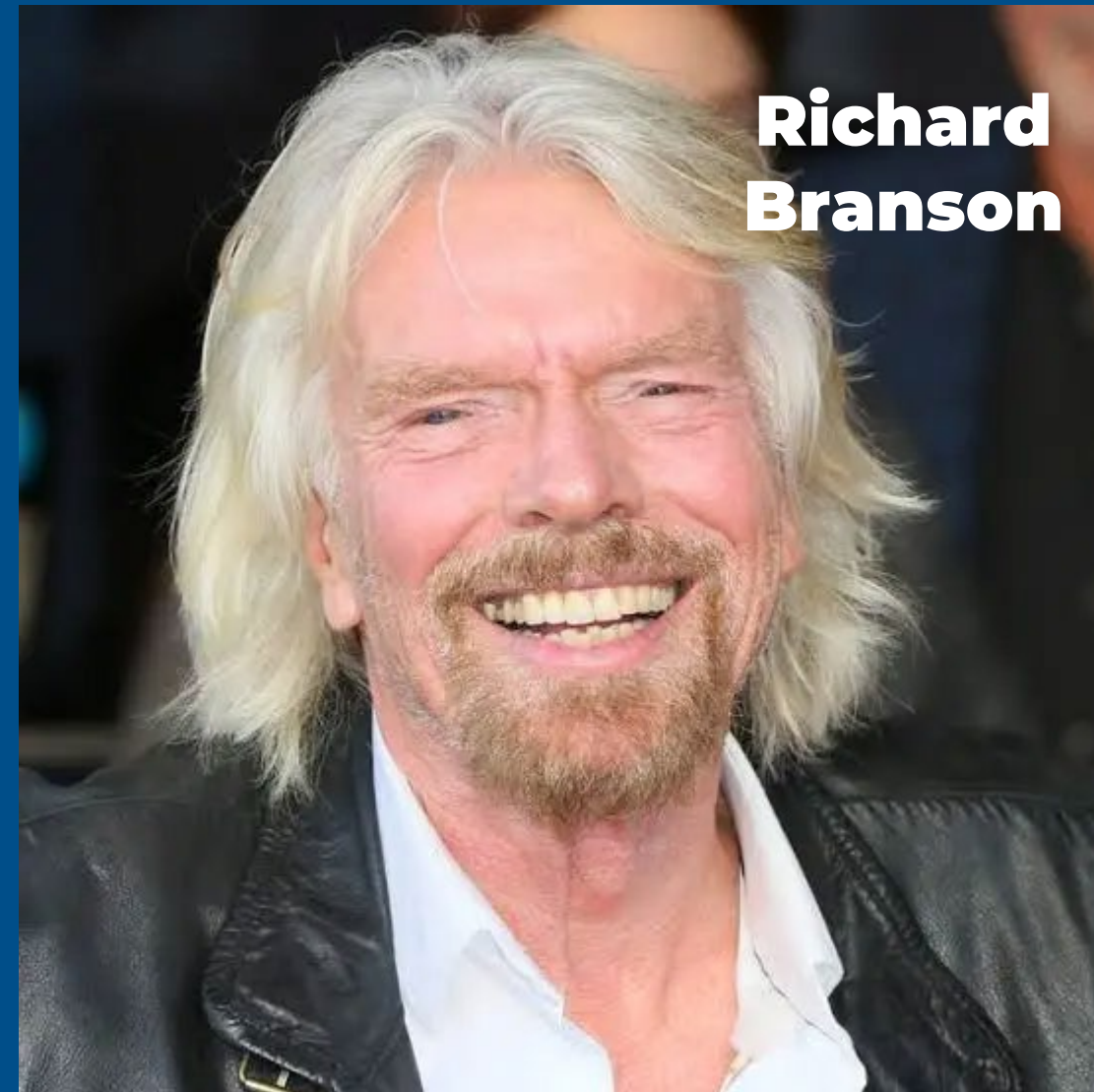
**Heather Reisman**



**Michael McCain**

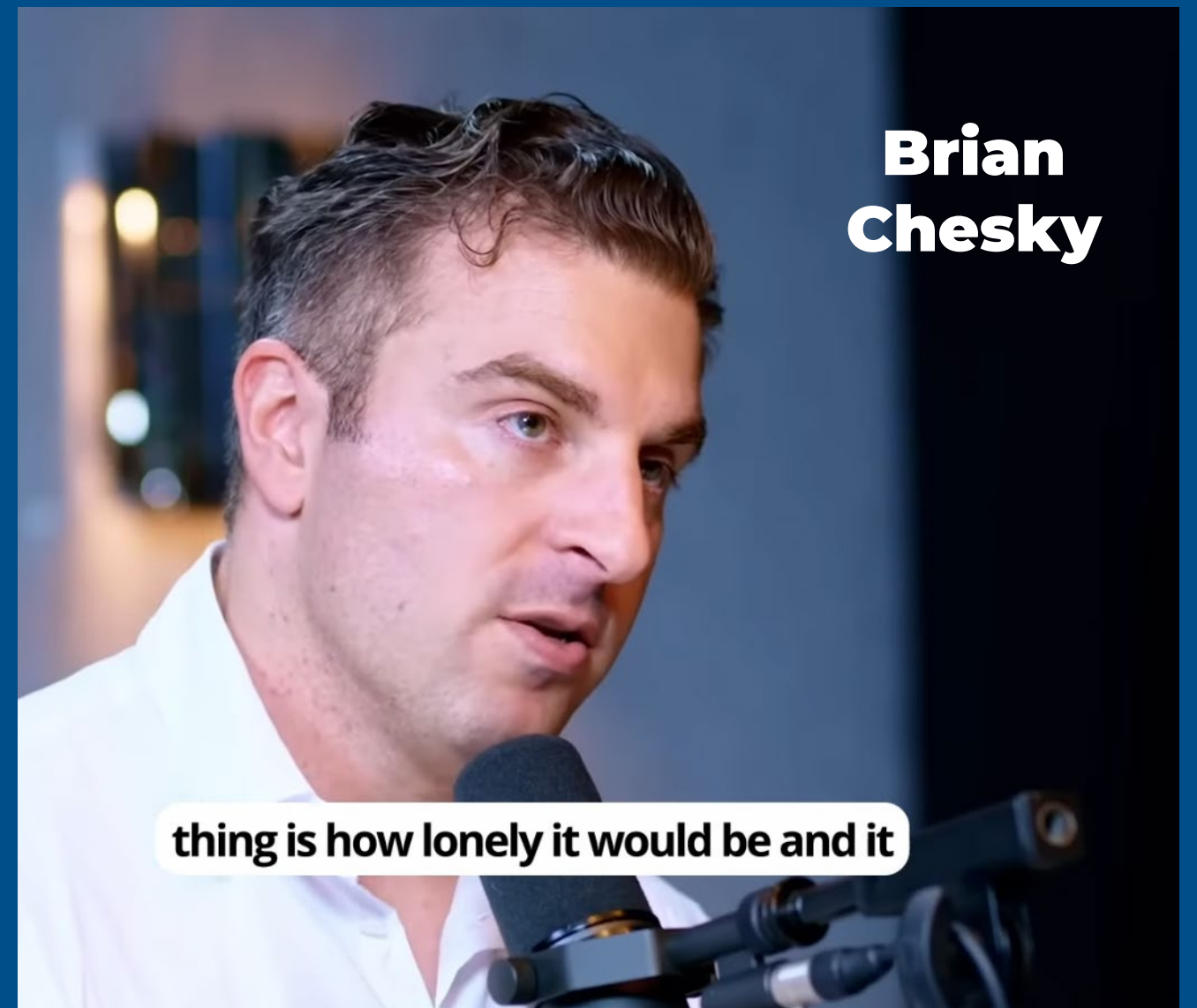


**Richard Branson**



**Brian Chesky**

thing is how lonely it would be and it







# WHAT WE HAVE TOLD PEOPLE



**PARTICIPATION**



**SLEEP  
8 HOURS**

12 fl oz of regular beer	=	8-9 fl oz of malt liquor (shown in a 12 oz glass)	=	5 fl oz of table wine	=	1.5 fl oz shot of 80-proof distilled spirits (gin, rum, tequila, vodka, whiskey, etc.)
						
about 5% alcohol		about 7% alcohol		about 12% alcohol		40% alcohol

The percent of "pure" alcohol, expressed here as alcohol by volume (alc/vol), varies by beverage. Although the "standard" drink amounts are helpful for following health guidelines, they may not reflect customary serving sizes. In addition, while the alcohol concentrations listed are "typical," there is considerable variability in alcohol content within each type of beverage (e.g., beer, wine, distilled spirits).



## I'M PETE, YOUR...

- Ten years leading Canada's Human Connection Movement
- On the Board of Directors for the Global Initiative for Loneliness and Connection
- 20 years in marketing and sales roles in beverage alcohol
- Five years leading Movember Canada and raising \$142M for men's health



# AGENDA

- Topline the negative impacts of a disconnection and the positive impact of human connection.
- Why might we still be struggling to connect post-pandemic?
- Where might connections be for us?
- How social connection can support us and our workforce.
- Q&A

## 3 TAKEAWAYS

1

The turmoil we continue to be under make many of us vulnerable.

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2

We have never educated people on social connection and social health and most don't recognize its critical importance to our individual and societal well-being.

## 3 TAKEAWAYS

- 1 The turmoil we continue to be under make many of us vulnerable.
- 2 We have never educated people on social connection and social health and most don't recognize its critical importance to our individual and societal well-being.
- 3 When we understand social health we begin to recognize that it a key solution to many of the downstream individual and societal challenges that we face.



**“THE MOST CONNECTED SOCIETY IN  
HISTORY IS NOW THE MOST  
DISCONNECTED EVER.”**



**HUMAN CONNECTION TRANSCENDS  
ALL ILLNESS, CAUSES AND CRISIS.**

# WE CAN ALL EXPERIENCE LONELINESS

THIRST



HUNGER



LONELINESS





# WHAT ARE WE WORKING TO OVERCOME?

## WHAT IS SOCIAL ISOLATION?

Social isolation is a lack of social contacts and having few people to interact with on a regular basis.



## WHAT IS DISCONNECTION?

Disconnection is the lack of belonging. The human emotional need to be accepted as part of a group or community.




## WHAT IS LONELINESS?

The difference between the relationships you have and the relationships that you desire.




# HOW WILL WE OVERCOME IT?

## HUMAN CONNECTION

 Is the energy exchange between two people that are paying attention to one another. As simple as a smile, a head nod or a hello at the very least.

# HOW WILL WE OVERCOME IT?

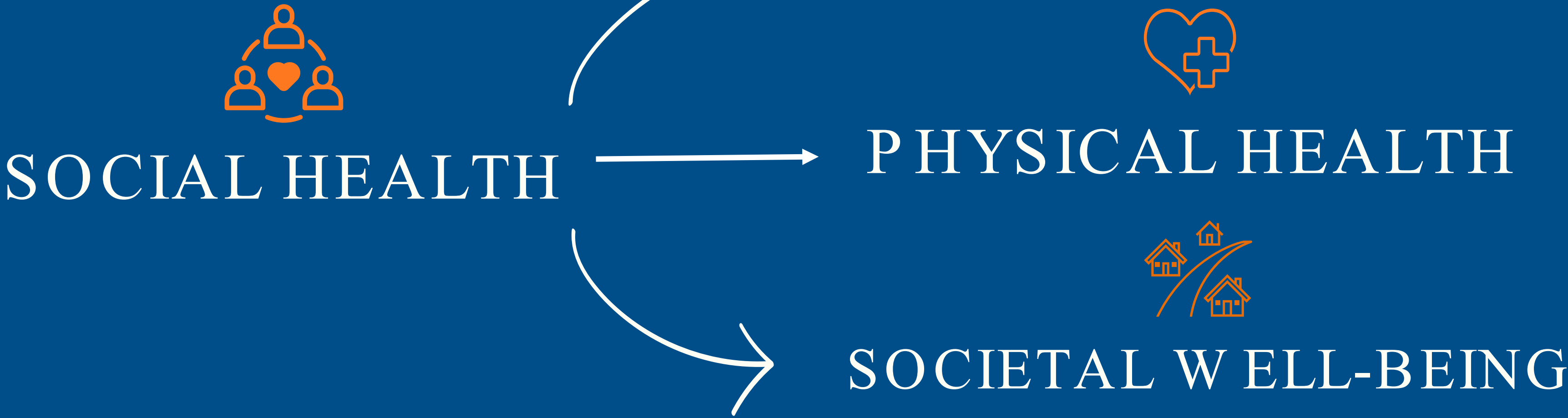
## HUMAN CONNECTION

 Is the energy exchange between two people that are paying attention to one another. As simple as a smile, a head nod or a hello at the very least.

It includes:

- Deep meaningful connections
- Casual collisions
- Connecting with strangers

# WHAT WE ARE SPEAKING ABOUT IS:



# IMPACTS OF CHRONIC LONELINESS ON ADULTS



**+50%**  
risk of early  
onset  
dementia



**+29%**  
risk of heart  
disease

**+32%**  
risk of stroke



higher rates of  
depression,  
anxiety, and  
suicide



**2X**  
risk of Type 2  
diabetes after  
age 50



**+68%**  
risk of  
hospitalization

**+57%**  
risk of emergency  
room visits

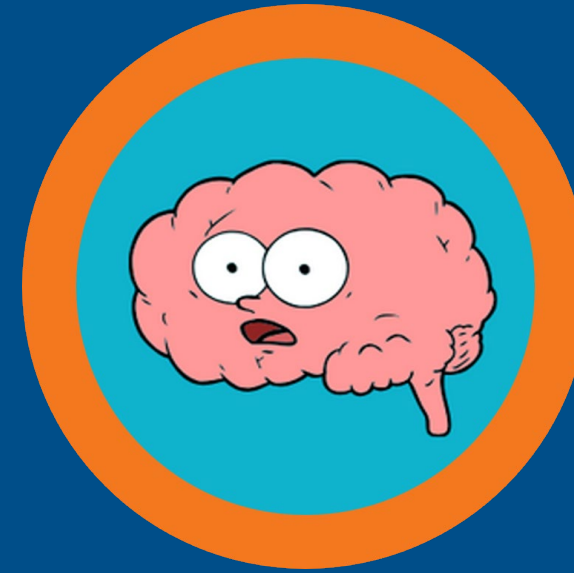
# IMPACTS OF CHRONIC LONELINESS ON YOUTH



persistent and cumulative detrimental effects on adult health



higher rates of stress, anxiety, and depression



impairs the development of the brain's structure



can have a negative impact on academic performance

# IMPACTS OF LONELINESS ON SOCIETY

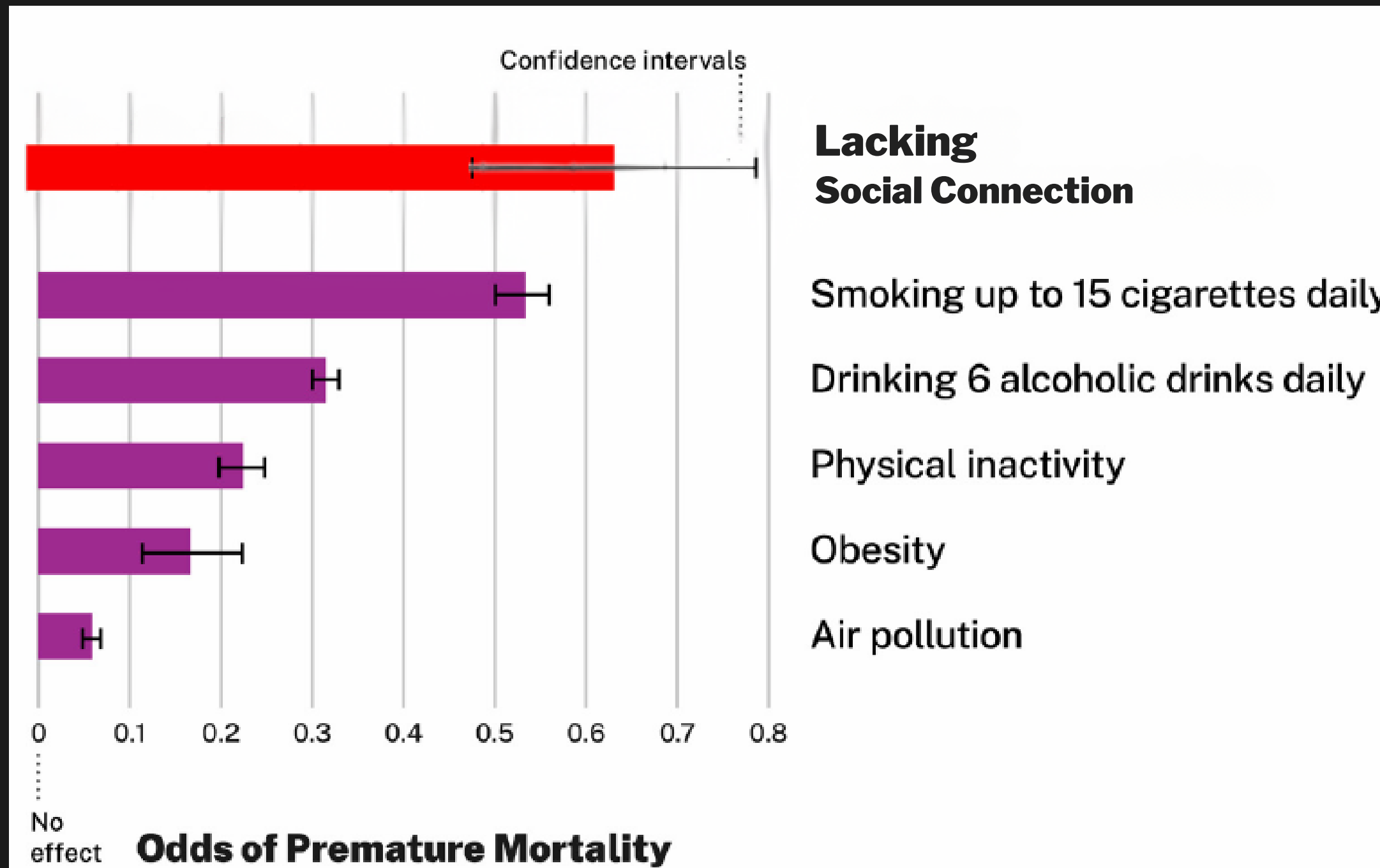


Research finds that lacking a fundamental need, meaningful connections, and normative structures is associated with violent extremism.

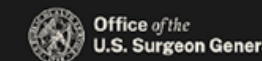


Researchers have found that long-term chronic isolation causes the build-up of a chemical in the brain that increases stress, aggression, and fear.

# HOW BAD CAN LONELINESS BE?



Source: Holt-Lunstad J, Robles TF, Sbarra DA. Advancing Social Connection as a Public Health Priority in the United States. *American Psychology*. 2017;72(6):517-530. doi:10.1037/amp0000103. This graph is a visual approximation.



# LET'S TAKE A MOMENT PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

## WHO ARE YOU CONNECTING WITH?



Who would benefit from  
your outreach?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Who have you been meaning  
to connect with?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What is your first action step to start  
focusing on your social health?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

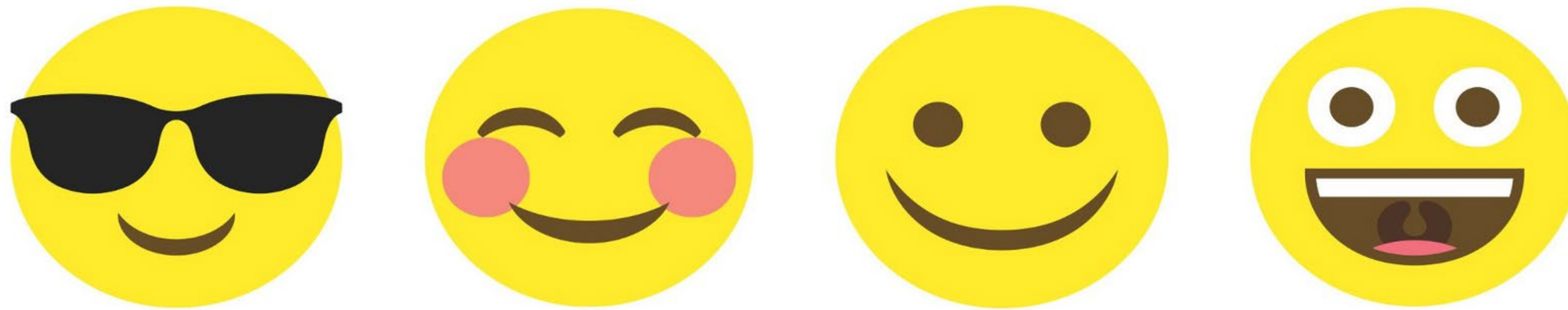
### Idea box:

- Family
- Friends
- Neighbours
- Classmates
- Extended family
- Old friends
- Old colleagues

### Idea box:

- Elderly
- Young
- Digital distraction
- Loss of loved one
- Overworked
- Job loss
- Homeless
- Financial pressure
- Divorce
- Any life challenges

SPECIAL **TIME** EDITION



# THE SCIENCE OF HAPPINESS

*NEW DISCOVERIES FOR A MORE JOYFUL LIFE*

RELATIONSHIPS • EXERCISE • INNER LIFE • DIET • MEDITATION

# BENEFITS OF HUMAN CONNECTION: INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- Single largest indicator of happiness in our lives
- Reduces anxiety & depression
- Increases empathy & compassion
- Builds resilience
- Strengthens your immune system
- Increases your self-confidence
- Reduces prejudice & discrimination
- Increases your chances of living longer by up to 50%
- Single largest preventative action to avoid depression



WHAT ABOUT

COMMUNITY?

# BENEFITS OF HUMAN CONNECTION: COMMUNITY LEVEL

- Can prevent & overcome homelessness
- Can prevent & reduce food insecurity
- Can prevent & support those living with addiction
- Creates safer & stronger knit communities
- Increases civic engagement
- Strengthens interpersonal & institutional trust
- Strengthens interpersonal & institutional trust
- Can reduce family & domestic violence
- Can assist in developing emergency preparedness



# LET'S TAKE A MOMENT PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

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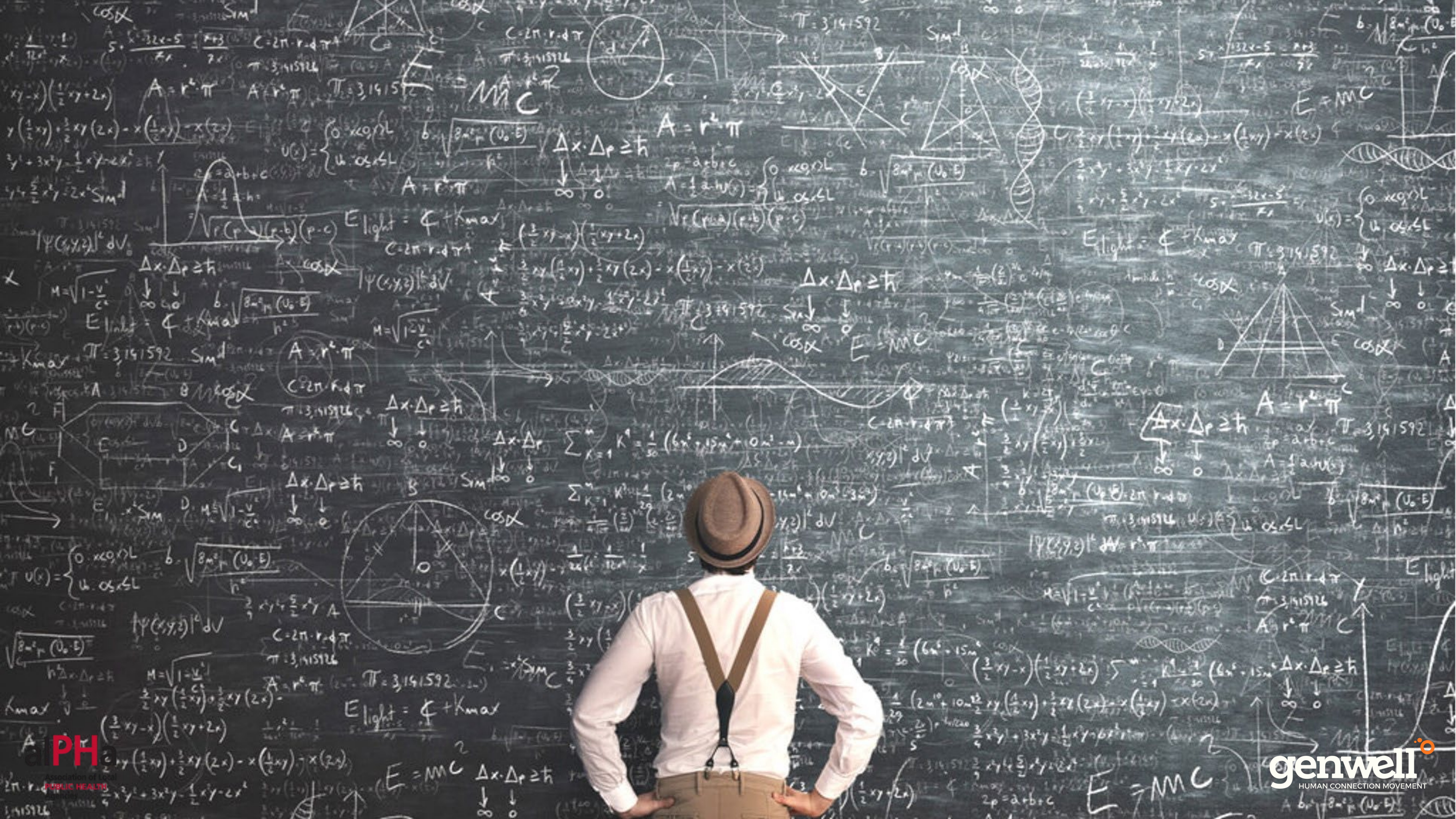
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# TECH IS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO MANAGE.



7 hours per day on net  
2 hours on social media  
Touch our phones 2600 times

# TECH IS A REAL ISSUE

## Daily screen time:

The average is around 7 hours per day , factoring in time spent on smartphones, computers, televisions, and tablets.

Yearly screen time: 106 days per year .

Lifetime screen time: **11 years in total** .



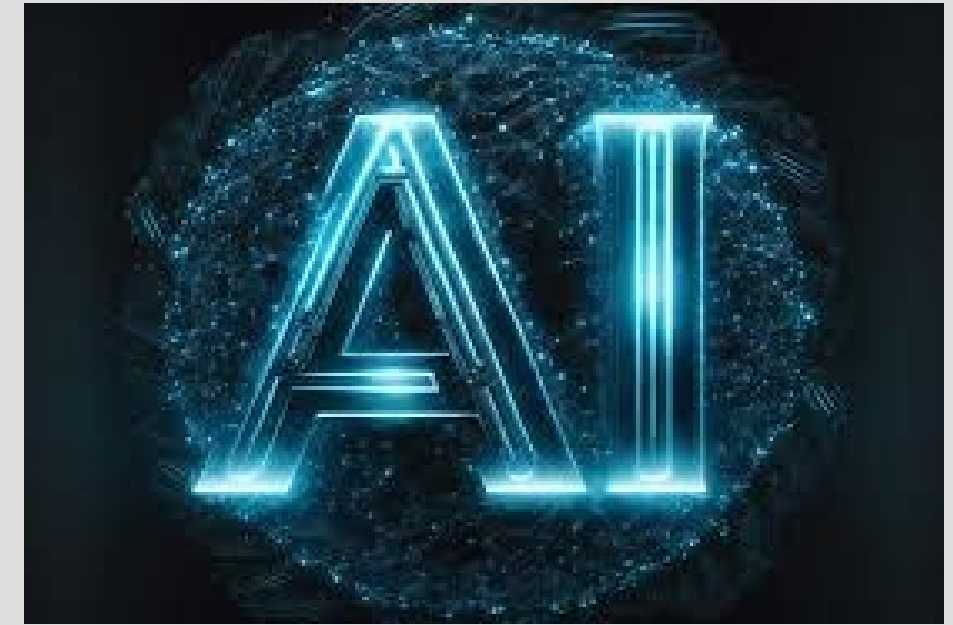
# YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE - DOCUMENTARY

## Tristan Harris

- Former Google
- CEO, Center for Humane Technology

In 2013, while working at Google, Harris authored a presentation titled “A Call to Minimize Distraction & Respect Users’ Attention. He suggested that Google, Apple and Facebook should "feel an enormous responsibility" to make sure humanity does not spend its days buried in a smartphone.

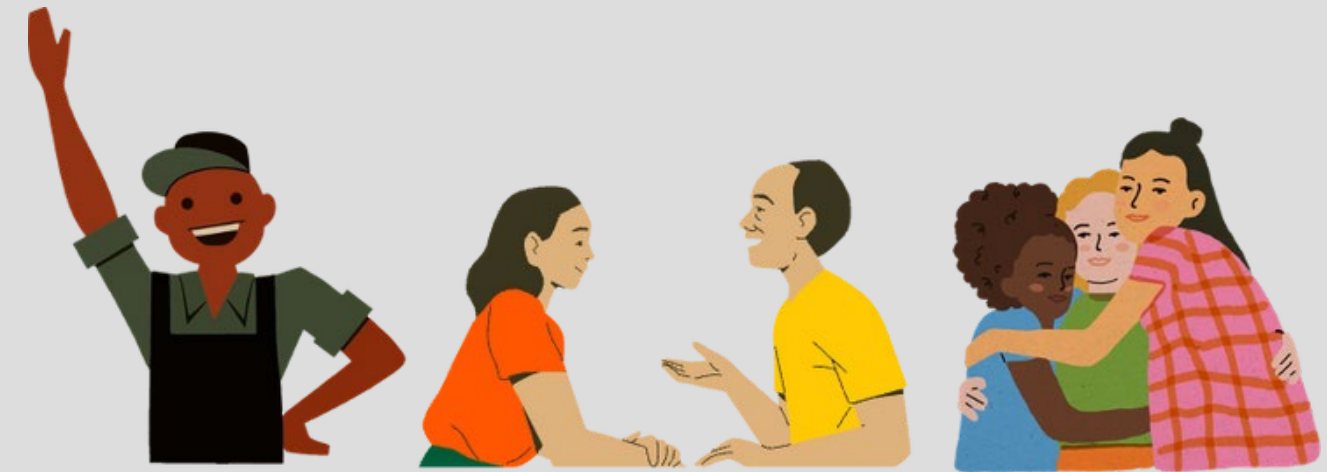
# TECH IS INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO MANAGE.



About half of daily AI users  
report using AI for emotional  
or social support.

WE ARE IN THIS  
TOGETHER.

WE NEED A NEW NORMAL.



We are out of the habit of  
human connection, and we  
need each other to help re-  
build the social health that  
makes us happier and  
healthier

SO, WHERE MIGHT I FIND MY  
CONNECTIONS?

CANADIAN SOCIAL  
CONNECTION SURVEY

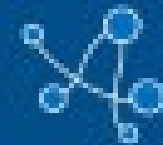


SONDAGE SUR LES  
CONNEXIONS SOCIALES AU CANADA

# The 2nd Annual Canadian Social Connection Survey

genwell<sup>o</sup>  
HUMAN CONNECTION MOVEMENT

SFU



CASCH  
Canadian Alliance for  
Social Connection and Health

# The Power of STRANGERS

Those who greeted strangers at least  
once per week were nearly

**3x more likely to be happy.**



# The Power of NEIGHBOURS

Those who spent 1 to 4 hours with their  
neighbours in the past week were

**3x less likely to be lonely.**



# The Power of FAMILY

Those who spent between 1 and 4 hours per week socializing with family members were **1.47x more likely to be happy.**



# The Power of FRIENDS

Those who spent 5 or more hours with  
friends in the past week were

**1.62x less likely to be lonely.**

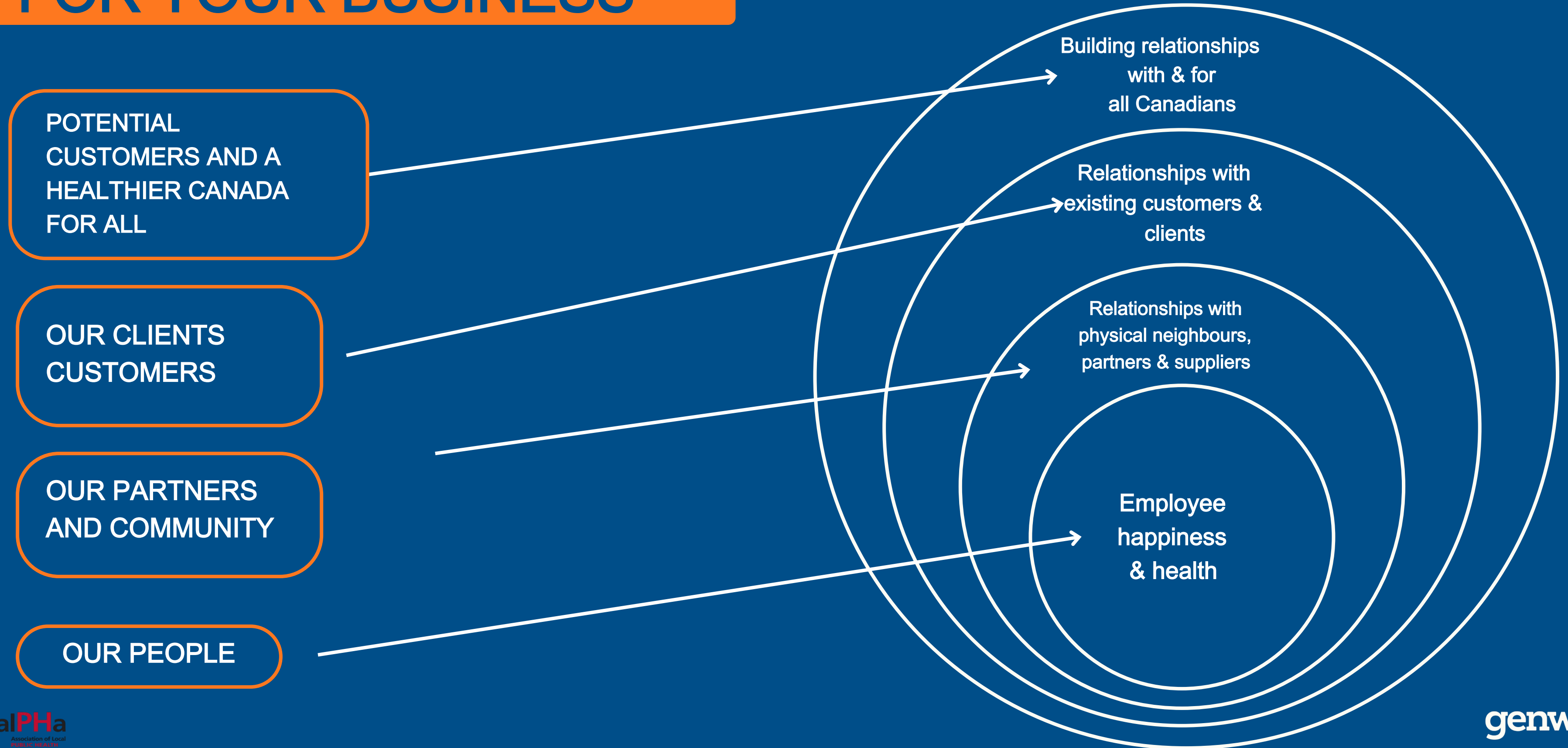


# WHAT ABOUT WORKPLACE BENEFITS?



# LEVERAGING HUMAN CONNECTION

## FOR YOUR BUSINESS



# The Power of COLLEAGUES

Those who spent 5 or more hours with  
coworkers in the past week were

**1.73x less likely to be lonely.**



# The Power of COLLEAGUES

Those who spent at least 5 hours per week socializing with coworkers were  
**1.51x more likely to be happy.**



# The Power of COLLEAGUES

**65% of respondents** felt that others were either “definitely” or “probably” not aware of how lonely they felt.



# CONNECTION IS

## VALUABLE TO EVERYONE

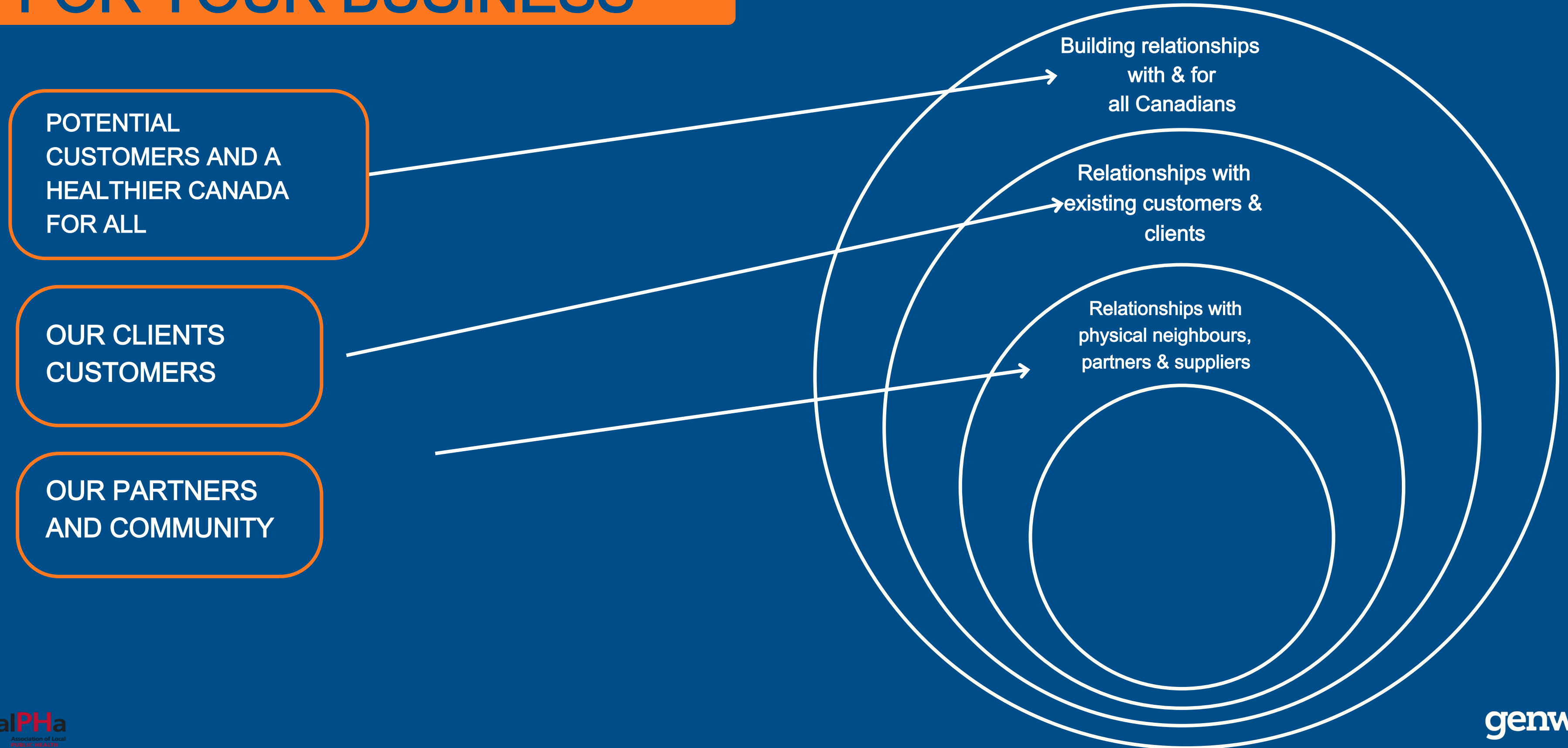
- Mentorship
- Life and skills hacking
- Career development
- Friendship, passion, play
- Empathy and compassion
- Psychological safety
- Increased efficiency
- Inclusion
- Reduced stress
- Job satisfaction

# THE BUSINESS BENEFITS OF CONNECTED WORKFORCE

- Increasing productivity (up to 22% increase)
- Increased collaboration and innovation (+10%)
- Stronger engagement, loyalty and trust
- Decreased absenteeism (up to -41%)
- Increased profits (up to 21% )
- Attraction of the newest and brightest employees

# LEVERAGING HUMAN CONNECTION

## FOR YOUR BUSINESS



## SO HOW DO WE GET THERE

- This takes time.
- It takes a strategy and plan.
- It takes an investment of time and resources.
- It takes everyone being part of the solution.
- It starts with people understanding how this is all connected.

LET'S TAKE A MOMENT...

WORKPLACE CONNECTIONS

## HOW CAN YOU BUILD A MORE CONNECTED WORKFORCE?



### Personal actions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Team actions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Organization actions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Idea box:

- Schedule time to outreach
- Recurring connections
- Daily check-ins
- Weekly coffee
- Weekly meeting
- Gratitude circle
- Birthdays and anniversaries
- Monthly social activity
- Monthly learning/growing activity
- Sport activities



**CANADA'S HUMAN  
CONNECTION MOVEMENT**

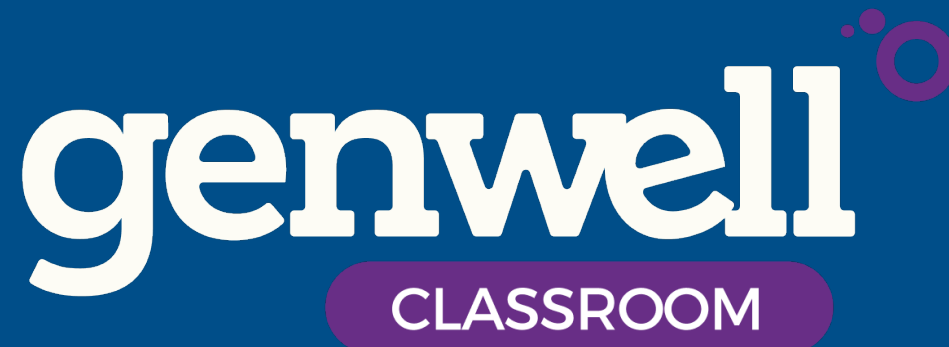
**genwell**<sup>o</sup>  
HUMAN CONNECTION MOVEMENT

# GENWELL SOCIAL HEALTH FRAMEWORK



# GENWELL SOCIAL HEALTH WORKSHOPS

Social health begins by educating people on the importance of human connection and its impact on our mental and physical well-being.



# YEAR-ROUND EMPOWERMENT TOOLS



# ANNUAL CATALYTIC CAMPAIGNS



## Face -to -Face February (Feb. 1-28)

A month-long integrated campaign that focuses on getting students to build healthy connection habits.



## GenWell Weekend (Sept. 18-20)

Catalytic weekends that encourage people to connect with family, friends, neighbours, classmates, and colleagues.



## GenWell Weekend (May 1-3)

Catalytic weekends that encourage people to connect with family, friends, neighbours, classmates, and colleagues.



## Talk to a Stranger Week (Nov. 23-29)

A week-long habit-building campaign focused on engaging Canadians in the many benefits of talking to strangers.



## Seniors Loneliness Awareness Week (June 15-21)

A campaign specifically focused on building more connection for seniors.



## GenWell Digital Detox Days (First Monday of every month)

Days focused on providing tips, tools and inspiration for Canadians to better manage their digital distractions.

# CANADIAN SOCIAL CONNECTION GUIDELINES

Learn more about our guidelines and their development. [Read →](#)

## Did you know social connection is the key to living a **happier, healthier, and longer** life?

Like food and exercise, social connection is a fundamental determinant of our health, happiness, and longevity. Our recommended public health guidelines for social connection provide evidence-based guidance for fostering healthy social lives at the individual and community levels.

[Individual guidelines](#)

[Community guidelines](#)



**GENWELL IS NOW A REGISTERED CHARITY**

fondation  
**genwell**<sup>o</sup>  
fondation



# LET'S REVIEW ...



# AGENDA

- Topline the negative impacts of a disconnection and the positive impact of human connection.
- Why might we still be struggling to connect post-pandemic?
- Where might connections be for us?
- How social connection can support us and our workforce.
- Discussed the role that GenWell can play in helping you, your teams and your communities get connected.

## 3 KEY TAKEAWAYS

1

None of us knows what is going on in another life, but we can help people cope with their challenges through connection.

## 3 KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 None of us knows what is going on in another life, but we can help people cope with their challenges through connection.
- 2 Everyone in this meeting is a Superhero and each of us can use our understanding of social health to change our lives and others.

## 3 KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 None of us knows what is going on in another life, but we can help people cope with their challenges through connection.
- 2 Everyone in this meeting is a Superhero and each of us can use our understanding of social health to change our lives and others.
- 3 We are in this together and human connection is the foundation for happy, healthy homes, streets, workplaces, classrooms and communities – it's up to us.

# 5 TIPS FOR IMPROVED SOCIAL HEALTH

- 1 Make time to connect a priority in your workplace, home and community.
- 2 Educate the people you lead and love about the importance of human connection for their well-being, business and life.
- 3 Make it regular and put it in the calendar.  
What is the right cadence for you and others?
- 4 Recognize the impact that you do have on others.
- 5 #GoFirst

# FOLLOW US ON OUR SOCIAL PLATFORMS



@genwellproject



@genwellproject



@genwellproject



@genwellproject



@thegenwellproject

**Let's connect on LinkedIn!**  
**[www.linkedin.com/in/petebombaci](http://www.linkedin.com/in/petebombaci)**

# GENWELL MOMENTS OF CONNECTION CARDS



## Moments of Connection

- An opportunity for every person in Canada to be part of building a more connected Canada.
- Order your cards at

[MomentsofConnection.ca](https://MomentsofConnection.ca)

# GENWELL WEEKEND MAY 1 -3 & SEPTEMBER 18 -20



A catalytic weekend when GenWell wants to give all Canadians the excuse, reminder and permission to reach out and get connected.



Friday: Workplaces and Classrooms

Weekend: Friends, Family, Neighbours and Community



Register your intention to get connected and be part of the solution to a more connected Canada.



# LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK JUNE 15 -21, 2026



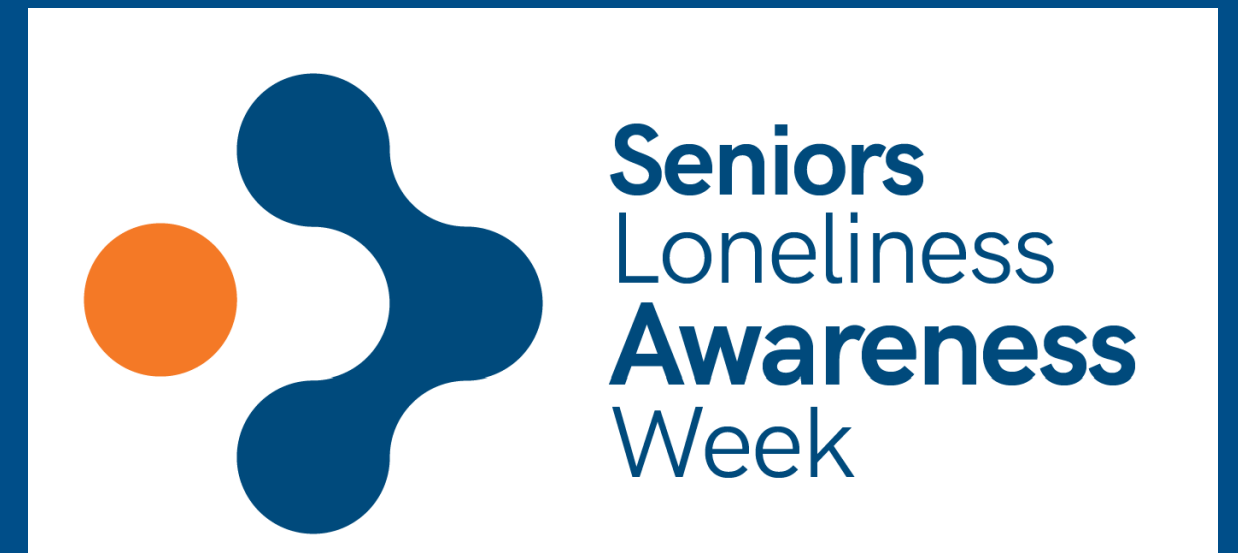
A week when we want to inspire all Canadians to be more conscious of the growing issue of social isolation, disconnection, and loneliness experienced by seniors.



The goal is to get all Canadians to think about taking one of the following actions to get seniors connected.



Every one of us has the opportunity to be part of the solution to seniors' loneliness by reaching out and building connections that make our seniors happier, healthier, and live longer.



# HUMAN CONNECTION CONFERENCE



## Coming back in 2027!

- A national conference bringing together the smartest minds in social connection and social health from across all sectors.



WE NEED EACH OTHER  
MORE THAN EVER



# INTHIS TOGETHER



THE BEST MEDICINE FOR  
PEOPLE... IS PEOPLE

# LEVERAGE OUR DIGITAL SOCIAL HEALTH TOOLKIT



The image shows two overlapping documents. The left document is the cover of the 'genwell WORKPLACE SOCIAL HEALTH TOOLKIT'. It features the GenWell logo, the title 'SOCIAL HEALTH TOOLKIT', and 'WORKPLACE EDITION'. Below the title is the tagline 'Helping create cultures of human connection that help business and employees thrive.' and the logo for 'alPHa Association of Local PUBLIC HEALTH Agencies'. The right document is a page titled '10 Tips for a More Connected Community'. It contains a list of ten numbered tips, each with a brief description. The tips are: 1. Be more conscious and intentional about your social connections now that you understand their importance. 2. Become a human connection champion in your community by initiating connections with others you know, and don't. 3. Book weekly catch ups in the calendar with industry peers and close friends so connecting isn't always an effort. 4. Find some activities that you love to do and others who love them too. Then create the occasions that bring you together - exercise, music, learning, volunteering. 5. Consider setting up weekly random coffee chats with industry peers to build connection, understanding and resilience. 6. Create spontaneous celebrations for on a regular basis. Recognizing small wins can strengthen social bonds. 7. Start talking to new industry peers...all of them. It will become a habit and you will lead the new culture of human connection. 8. Instill a habit of gratitude by sharing gratitude publicly with at least one person everyday. 9. Lead by example. 10. Start today.

- A list of additional suggestions on how you can build a culture of human connection.
- Resources to better understand the impact of social isolation, disconnection and loneliness on you and your people.
- A selection of ongoing opportunities to leverage GenWell for your organization.

# FEES FOR THIS WORKSHOP SUPPORT GENWELL

Your support helps fund education programs for:

- Students
- Seniors
- Equity deserving communities

Your support also funds the growth of our national campaigns



And other tools and programming that supports the well-being of all Canadians

- Moments of Connection Cards
- Volunteering Program
- Canadian Human Connection Conference and more...

THANK YOU

genwell<sup>o</sup>  
HUMAN CONNECTION MOVEMENT



LET'S STAY CONNECTED



FEEDBACK, TOOLKIT  
NEWSLETTER,  
BOOK A FOLLOW UP  
AND YOUR CHANCE TO WIN!