

July 2021

Live. Life. Well.

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Recipe





SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Building Community Consciousness

People who feel connected to a community are generally healthier and happier. It is because having strong support systems makes it easier to move through life’s challenging moments. Feeling a sense of belonging is an integral component of wellbeing.

Communities are typically comprised of people with shared interests and values. Most likely, your community includes your family, neighbors, and a few others you interact with frequently. As you consider your own community, ask yourself this question: How connected are you?

One study conducted by the [Pew Research Center](https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2018/05/22/how-urban-suburban-and-rural-residents-interact-with-their-neighbors/)¹ found that only about 30% of Americans know all or most of their neighbors, and a similar study found that more than half of residents living in Toronto, Canada only know a few of their neighbors.

Community consciousness, which is [defined](#)² as a community’s “level of awareness of its current social, economic, and environmental situations,” requires a willingness to branch out and become more aware of what is happening beyond your own family and inner circle. It requires acknowledging and accepting the diversity among members of your community, and it involves actively seeking common ground.

One way to expand your community consciousness is through volunteerism. Volunteering enables you to connect more deeply with others in your community. Having conversations with people outside your usual networks can expand your perspectives and give you more insight into the challenges that others face.

What will you do to build community consciousness?

In connected communities, everyone benefits. The more connected you feel, the more support you can give to others—and the more support you will receive in return.



¹ <https://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2018/05/22/how-urban-suburban-and-rural-residents-interact-with-their-neighbors/>

² <https://www.shsu.edu/glt002/Outreach%20Articles/Theodori%202004%20community%20activeness%20consciousness%20matrix.pdf>



How to Ask for Help

Asking for help seems to come naturally for some, but for others, it is anything but easy. The need to feel independent is a highly valued virtue, especially in professional settings.

Even so, trying to do it all alone seldom produces the best outcomes. When you are chronically exhausted and overwhelmed, you are unable to deliver your best work, so knowing how to ask for help is vital.

To ask for help, you first need to know how to recognize when you need it. This may require you to pay more attention to how you respond in certain situations. How do you respond to stress? How do you know when you have reached your limit? The answers can help you understand when you need help.

Getting comfortable with asking for help can take time, but it can make your life a whole lot easier.

Here are some tips for when you need to ask for help:

Recognize when you need help

Know your limits and manage your energy wisely. When it comes to asking for help, the earlier the better.

Be clear about what you need

When you do ask for help, explain exactly how the other person can help you. What specifically do you need help with?

Ask the right person

Seek help from someone who possesses the specific skills needed for the task at hand. Otherwise, you might end up further behind.

Be helpful in return

Extend help to others when you see them struggling. Just remember to always get permission first. Your help may not be as needed or wanted as you think it is. Jumping in to “fix” other people’s problems for them without their permission can backfire.





Virtual Connections: Using Technology to Strengthen Relationships

Thanks to technology, staying connected is easier than ever. We now have a wide range of options, like live webinars, podcasts, video conferences, pre-recorded videos, instant messages, voice messages, and audio texts. No matter where we go, we can almost always plug in or tune in.

Despite the ease of connecting, many of us still feel disconnected. One study³ found that the majority of Americans feel lonely—and those findings were pre-pandemic. In the workplace, loneliness has been linked to lower productivity, poor quality of work, higher turnover, and more frequent absences.

The truth is meaningful relationships require deeper connections. Some experts believe technology can never replace the quality of in-person interaction, but when face-to-face visits are not possible, technology can help make communication easier.



To get the most out of your virtual connections, consider these tips for building stronger relationships:

Discuss shared goals

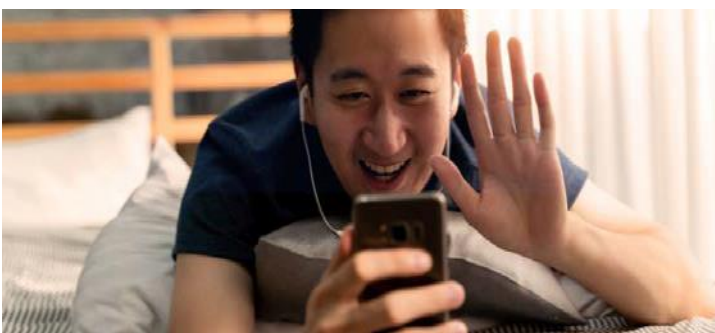
Relationships that are built upon a solid foundation of shared goals are stronger than ones that are more casual in nature. This is true of both personal and professional relationships. Taking time to check in on shared goals can help deepen your connection.

Be on time

Showing up on time for appointments, whether in-person or online, shows a level of respect that communicates to the other person you value their time. Respect can go a long way to building strong relationships.

Check in regularly

Technology makes it possible to keep in touch regularly with friends and colleagues. Add reminders to your calendar or schedule a standing meeting so you have dedicated time to nurture important relationships.



Virtual connections may fall short in some areas compared to in-person interactions, but leveraging technology to maintain relationships that are important to you is the next best thing.

Volunteering and its Surprising Benefits

Volunteering can help you make friends, learn new skills, advance your career, and even feel happier and healthier. Learn how to find the right volunteer opportunity for you.

Why volunteer?

With busy lives, it can be hard to find time to volunteer. However, the benefits of volunteering can be enormous. Volunteering offers vital help to people in need, worthwhile causes, and the community, but the benefits can be even greater for you, the volunteer. The right match can help you to find friends, connect with the community, learn new skills, and even advance your career.

Giving to others can also help protect your mental and physical health. It can reduce stress, combat depression, keep you mentally stimulated, and provide a sense of purpose. While it's true that the more you volunteer, the more benefits you'll experience, volunteering doesn't have to involve a long-term commitment or take a huge amount of time out of your busy day. Giving in even simple ways can help those in need and improve your health and happiness.

Volunteering connects you to others

One of the more well-known benefits of volunteering is the impact on the community. Volunteering allows you to connect to your community and make it a better place. Even helping out with the smallest tasks can make a real difference to the lives of people, animals, and organizations in need. And volunteering is a two-way street: It can benefit you and your family as much as the cause you choose to help. Dedicating your time as a volunteer helps you make new friends, expand your network, and boost your social skills.

Make new friends and contacts

One of the best ways to [make new friends](#) and strengthen existing relationships is to commit to a shared activity together. Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, especially if you are new to an area. It strengthens your ties to the community and broadens your support network, exposing you to people with common interests, neighborhood resources, and fun and fulfilling activities.

Increase your social and relationship skills

While some people are naturally outgoing, others are shy and have a hard time meeting new people. Volunteering gives you the opportunity to practice and develop your social skills, since you are meeting regularly with a group of people with common interests. Once you have momentum, it's easier to branch out and make more friends and contacts.

What are your volunteering goals?

To find a volunteer position that's right for you, look for something that matches your personality, skills, and interests. Ask yourself if there is something specific you want to do or achieve as a volunteer. For example, you might want to:

- Improve your neighborhood.
- Meet new people with different outlooks or experiences.
- Try something new.
- Do something rewarding with your spare time.
- See new places or experience a different way of living.
- Try a new type of work that you might want to pursue as a full-time job.
- Expand on your interests and hobbies.

Protect Your Heart in the Heat



After coming out of another challenging year, many are looking forward to warmer weather, blue skies, and a chance to enjoy time with loved ones. Whether you plan on hosting small family cookouts, a short getaway with friends, or are planning to get active with a long walk, hike, or bike ride, it's important to remember to take care of yourself during all the warm weather fun. We all need to be a bit more cautious when it's hot out, but if you experience heart problems, it is wise to take some special steps. Certain medications can exaggerate your body's response to heat, but it's important to keep taking them. If you feel lightheaded, dizzy, or weak, move to a cooler place and cool down with a wet washcloth or fan. People over 50 may not realize they are thirsty. Keep a water bottle on hand and make a schedule to remind you to drink.

Some Tips for Everyone:

- Wear ventilated shoes
- Dress in lightweight, light colored, and breathable clothing
- Stay hydrated and avoid caffeine or alcoholic beverages
- Take breaks in cool places



If you are traveling this summer, a few simple precautions will allow for a much more comfortable and safer trip:

- Make sure you bring your medications and even a list of your medications.
- Inform your physician you are traveling. They might be able to recommend certain precautions, and they might know of reputable physicians or heart institutes in the area you are traveling to.



- Be mindful of your fluid and sodium intake, especially if you have heart failure or cardiomyopathy.
- If you have coronary artery disease, be mindful that high altitudes could trigger symptoms like shortness of breath.
- Be sure to get up when you can during a long flight to prevent blood clots, particularly if you have a history of vascular disease or heart failure.

Once you arrive at your destination, here are a few ways to help maintain your health:

- **Move more:** Opt to walk as much as possible and incorporate activities that are more physically active. Additionally, many hotels often have a gym facility available for all guests. (Be sure to pack some workout clothes too.)
- **Eat Smart:** Pack healthy snacks as often as you can, and if possible be mindful of what you order as you explore the cuisine of the area in which you are traveling. However, do not deprive yourself, just remember moderation is key!

- **Wellness:** Make sure to mentally unwind too! See if your hotel offers spa services or massage services. Take a few minutes to meditate and strive to remain present as often as you can; it is your vacation, maximize your enjoyment of it!



Source: American Heart Association heart.org/en/health-topics/consumer-healthcare/what-is-cardiovascular-disease/protect-your-heart-in-the-heat



Strawberry Banana N’ice Cream

INGREDIENTS

- 3 bananas, cut into chunks and frozen
- 12-ounce bag of frozen strawberries, about 2 1/4 cups
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup unsweetened almond, cashew or coconut milk (plus more as needed to achieve desired consistency).
- 4 scoops Vital Proteins Collagen Peptides (optional ingredient—omit for vegan-friendly)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place all ingredients in high-powered blender or bowl of a food processor. Blend/process until smooth, stopping to scrap down the sides and adding additional milk as needed.
2. Serve immediately.

Total Time

Prep : 10 minutes

Cook: 10 minutes

Servings: 6



NUTRITION INFO

(per serving)

Calories kcal	104
Carbs g	20
Fat g	0
Protein g	7
Sodium mg	52
Sugar g	10

Source:

<https://nutritionintheitch.com/strawberry-banana-nice-cream/>



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