

ENSURING CONNECTION NEEDS ARE MET

SOCIAL CONNECTION NEEDS

Social needs have more to do with perception than facts and more to do with "sense" and "feeling." Therefore, only you really know if you are getting your social needs met. Without enough connection we experience painful symptoms like anxiety, loneliness, shame, depression, and self-criticism.

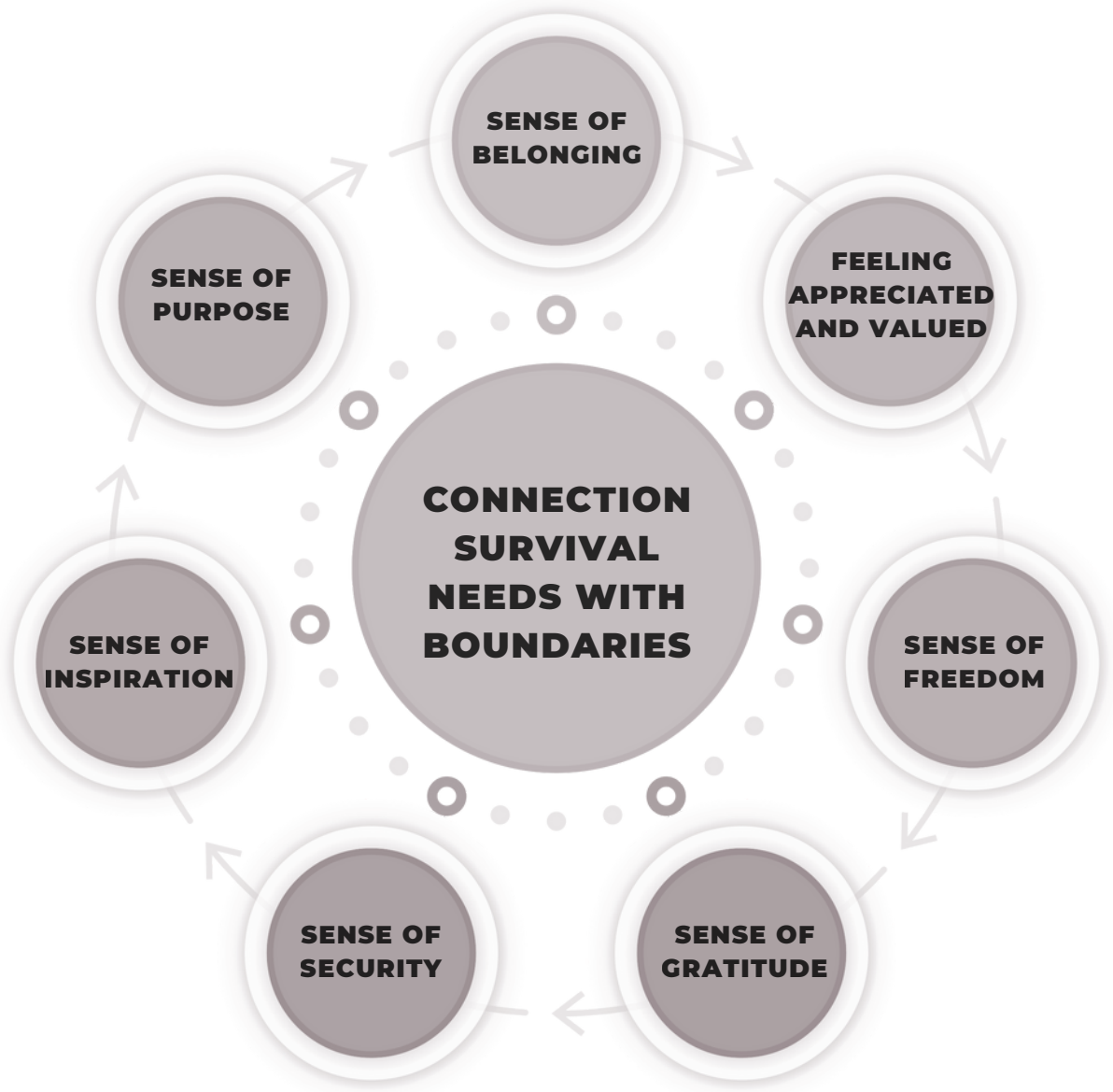
Social needs, like our need for food and vitamins, require a daily intake. Even though social needs require others, as adults our social needs are 100% our own responsibility to be aware of and to take action (or plan for action) in order to get your needs met.



Why do we need a sense of belonging? Because it is in our DNA to belong... belonging helps us survive. Your belongingness to a group boosts self-esteem. When you feel you belong, it comes with feelings of being wanted and loved, and this makes you feel more valuable. Ideally, we embrace our need to feel valuable by living aligned with how we want to be valued.



SOCIAL CONNECTION NEEDS



CONNECTION IMPACTS OXYTOCIN PRODUCTION



When oxytocin levels get low without enough connection or with relationship or social stress, our nervous system detects a survival threat, triggering fight-or-flight and stress neurochemicals, hormones, anxiety, panic, shame and loneliness.



Similar to how we have nutrition needs, we have various Connection Needs. Without food, we get hunger pains. With vitamin deficiencies we have symptoms. Without fulfilling connection needs we feel 'hunger pains' like shame, anxiety, irritability, depression.

FULFILLED LEVELS
WHEN OUR MIND
FEELS CONNECTION
NEEDS ARE MET
ENOUGH




LOW LEVELS
FIGHT-OR-FLIGHT
SURVIVAL RESPONSE

VERY LOW LEVELS
FREEZE RESPONSE
FEELS LIKE DEPRESSION, ADD,
PATHOLOGICAL LONELINESS, 'I
AM BAD' OR 'UNLOVABLE' TYPE
BELIEFS & FEELINGS (SHAME)

FULFILLING CONNECTION IS ABOUT HAVING A 'SENSE' AND A FEELING

Connection starvation pain feels like anxiety, emptiness or shame. It can make us 'give up' as in Freeze Mode, dropping us into symptoms of clinical depression. It is important to realize we have many layers of connection needs, similar to nutrition.

The key is to be aware of our human connection needs and ensure we are fulfilling as many as possible on a daily basis or have an intentional plan to do so long-term. You will notice connection needs have more to do with "SENSE" and "FEELING" connection than actual facts. For example, **you could be surrounded by 100 people but feel zero connection** (in fact that can cause more anxiety than connection). Whereas, enjoying time in nature by yourself can make you feel a true Sense of Belonging with nature.



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Self-esteem is positively associated with belongingness.

Research suggests that actual belongingness creates self-esteem; those who are accepted by others experience enhanced self-esteem, whereas those who feel rejected experience reduced self-esteem.

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Jessica Cameron, PhD

SENSE OF BELONGING

We need to belong to something greater than ourselves, a group, family, friends, co-workers, religion, belief system, community, interest group, advocacy, traditions, celebrations, or something else.



Why do you think this is a need? What does it feel like to have this need fulfilled?

What fulfills this need for you? Do you have enough?

How can you ensure you feel enough on a daily basis?

SENSE OF PURPOSE

Know your values and live in alignment with your values. Explore and cultivate your interests. Have meaning in what you do or plan to do, that contributes to your group, family, or the greater good.



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SENSE OF INSPIRATION

Explore, learn from others work or art. Transcend ordinary experiences and limitations.

Discover new interests and mentors. Sight-see, Pinterest, view vlogs, appreciate creativity or new ideas, learn about someone or something new.



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SENSE OF FREEDOM

We need a balance of closeness and freedom with boundaries. In family, we need belonging and a unique sense of Self. In relationship we need interdependence, balance of partnership and Self (our own wants, needs and limits).



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SENSE OF GRATITUDE & RECEIVING

Receiving help, gifts, compliments, etc. is essential so others can love you and this allows for a Sense of Belonging. Daily gratitude journaling and saying thank you also boosts your sense of gratitude.



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FEELING RESPECT & APPRECIATED

Words of appreciation feel like love and respect. It strengthens our bonds and fills our hearts. It helps satisfy our longing for connection. If we are in a relationship, this is especially important for both parties. Respect provides security and worthiness. Respect is honest and forthright. Others may be nice to you, but do they feel safe being honest with you? Feel respectable by appreciating others' perspectives.



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FEELING SEEN, HEARD AND VALUED

We feel seen, heard and valued when loved-ones say, "I hear you" without defending, correcting or judging. Words of appreciation also make us feel seen and valued. Along with valuing time together without saying a word. Feeling valued leads to trust. Trust is essential, especially in relationship. We boost this by communicating our wants, needs and limits. We feel heard and valued when we work together to try to meet our genuine wants, needs and limits.



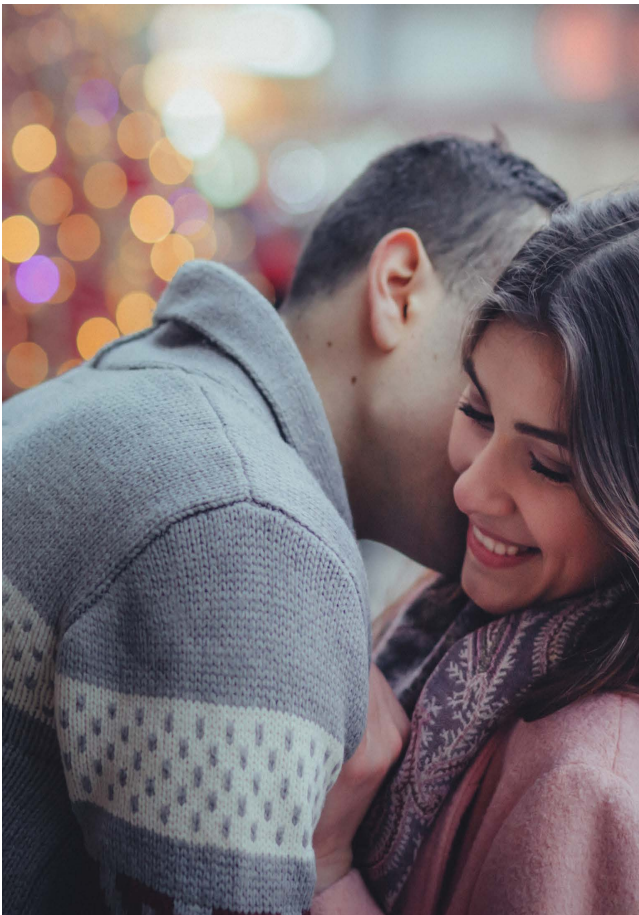
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SENSE OF SECURITY

Safety is part of feeling security. We need a partner, friends, and/or loved-ones that we know we can count on to stick with us through the ups and downs of life. We also feel trust and security by sharing imperfect aspects of ourselves and our experiences with trusted loved-ones and vice versa, while we honor these imperfections.



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A painful false belief that wrecks havoc on our core sense of worthiness - is the idea that we can somehow control how others view us. In truth, no matter how good-looking, nice, or smart we are, how others view us is 100% in their realm of perception and control.



The #1 cause of depression is a sense of powerlessness. Railing against depression by grappling to get power, validation and control over others (an impossible task) results in deeper depression and more powerlessness.

You have the power to climb out of the confusion, anxiety, depression and low self-worth by focusing on where you have power, which is taking 100% responsibility for realizing how you WANT to be seen and what you WANT to be valued for, and then live your life in alignment with this the best you can.

We cannot control how others view us, nor what they value in us. Not even our family, partner, or best friends. This can be a painful realization at first.

However with acceptance you will get to realize how freeing this is. It frees you from trying to control how others see you. And empowers you to focus on and create how you WANT to be seen and valued.



Create yourself.

Realize and choose how you want to be seen and what you want to be valued for.



When we let go of the false belief that we can control how others see us, we gain freedom, and responsibility over what we can control, which is how we WANT to be seen and what we WANT to be valued for.


When you see it from this perspective, you realize that this is enough of a responsibility in itself and holds all the power you need to live your life aligned with a sense of purpose, worthiness, and empowerment.

This realization also helps resolve codependent thinking. Allowing others to perceive you the way they automatically do or how they choose to. They may say things like "You are mean" or "You keep disappointing me." Their words help you understand their opinion of you, but they do not tell you the truth about you.

Keep your focus on how you WANT to be seen and what you want to be valued for... as this has the power to provide a sense of purpose, worthiness and self-worth.



Create your worth.



**If you adjust your level of
perception you will discover
the seeds of serenity within the
seeming chaos that surrounds us.**

Peter Patrick Berreda


If you could control how other people see you and what they think about you, what would you want them to see? What would you want them to think? What would you want them to value about you?

List the people that you care about the most in terms of how they view you? How do you want these people to see you? What do you want them to truly know, understand, value or be proud of?

Who's opinion of you do you care about the most? They may be alive or passed, or a spiritual figure.

How do you want this person to see you? What do you want them to love and value about you?

If you're in a place in life where you do not care about how anyone sees you, this is okay and empowering in it's own way. From this clean slate, imagine what you WANT to prioritize. How do you want to see yourself? Envision what you WANT to value, in travels, in experiences, in life overall.

A group of people are shown from a high-angle perspective, holding hands in a circle. The image is bright and soft, with a focus on the hands and forearms. The people are wearing various colored shirts: a red and white striped shirt, a green shirt, a grey shirt, and a white shirt. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white rectangular background in the center of the image.

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**Human Connection
is the most vital
aspect of our
existence, without
the sweet touch of
another being we
are lonely stars in an
empty space waiting
to shine gloriously.**

-
Joe Straynge



MEDICAL DISCLAIMER

Content provided and presented in this document or otherwise is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Content is intended for educational purposes only. It should not be used as a substitute for medical or psychiatric advice, cannot diagnosis or treat any medical or psychiatric condition and does not replace care from your physician. Always consult a healthcare professional if you suspect you require medical or psychiatric treatment.

If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, in danger of hurting yourself or others, feeling suicidal, overwhelmed, or in crisis, you can access the following resources to find help.

If you are experiencing an emergency dial 911

Crisis Text Line www.crisistextline.org

Suicide Prevention 988lifeline.org

National Domestic Hotline www.thehotline.org