HUMAN BEINGS NEED SOCIAL CONTACT TO THRIVE

A student’s college experience can be much more enjoyable with involvement in social activities. Students who may be struggling with shyness, lower self-esteem, anxiety, and/or depression may find being social more difficult. However, avoiding social activities can lead to isolation and loneliness.

Check out the following strategies to help you connect.

**Strategies for increasing my social connections:**

1. **Wildcat Link** has daily, weekly, monthly happenings on campus. There are links on student resources/activities for all of UNH. Campus clubs can be a very comfortable way to get to know other students, while doing an activity you enjoy/want to learn.

2. **Make a schedule** to call a friend, or another student in one of your classes, or make an inquiry about a certain group/activity on campus. Put these calls into your agenda and check them off when you follow through. This will make you feel good and get you moving in a social direction.

3. **Initiate conversations** with other students... in your dorm, in the dining hall, in classrooms. Who might be interesting to talk to? Meet with? Who seems friendly? Why not challenge yourself to ask a question, make a comment, or give a compliment to a new person? Maybe make a list of the current people in your life, in classes, in the dorm, who you see often at the dining hall or library or MUB and think “who might be open to conversation, a new friend?” Ask your RA or HD about groups in the dorm or activities in the dorm.

4. **Pick up the phone** at least one time per day and call someone from your contact list. Have a conversation.

5. **Utilize your positive self-talk** to power you through the uncomfortable feelings that might happen: “I can do this”, “Why not check that place out?”, “It might be fun.”
6. **Get outside for any reason.** Go for a walk at college woods, rent some snowshoes, visit one of the dogs at Hamel Rec Center; head over to the MUB to see what’s going on, watch a movie on campus, grab a coffee at Dunkin Donuts or Aroma Joe’s, take the bus to Portsmouth or Dover for music or an open mic night, check out Freedom Café’s entertainment like poetry slams/folk music night, volunteer, take a trip up to the White Mountains and hike, rent a bike downtown, go mountain biking at Doe Farm, in Spring, study outside on the library lawn. It’s easy. It’s fun. It’s a way to get outside of your head and into the world. Maybe you’ll make a new connection.

7. **Make a pact to yourself** to talk to at least 3 people/day. Chat people up. Smile at strangers. Have a conversation with a stranger at the grocery store. Talk to the person behind you in line at the dining hall. Think about making a new connection.

8. **Make a list of your current interests**... what you like to do for fun... what are your hobbies? What have you always wanted to try? There are groups out there for others who have the same interests. Are you a gamer? Do you like game nights? Movie nights? Dancing? What sports do you play? Do you work out? Or prefer walking outside? Do you like animals? Want to help people or volunteer? It is very easy to get socially connected around something you like to do. The Internet site, [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com), is a good resource.

9. **Join a faith community**, if you are interested. Social connections within the structure of a church or temple can occur effortlessly.

10. **Volunteering** can put you in touch with others who share your same interests. Maybe you’ll make a friend or two.

11. **Exercising** can be a way to connect with others and increase your energy. Go to Hamel Rec Center. Join Intramurals. Head over to drop-in yoga or meditation groups at Health and Wellness.

12. **Go to the library daily.** Even if you don’t have homework or papers to write, go. Check out their media area for movies. Stay and read a while. Grab a coffee and check the news websites. Don’t just study in your dorm room.

13. **Initiate, initiate, initiate.** Don’t wait to be invited. Challenge yourself to be courageous. Get out of your comfort zone. Push through fear. Invite someone out for coffee or to head to the dining hall. Ask someone new in your hall a question. You can do it. Just try it.

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