

Social Wellbeing

Emotions are infectious – they spread quickly from one person to the next. Our emotions influence one another throughout the day. Not only do the people directly around us influence our wellbeing, so does our friends' independent network of relationships. Our wellbeing is dependent on our entire network.

People are embedded in social networks and the health and wellbeing of one person affects the health and wellbeing of others.

Our social connections influence our habits, behaviours and health – we inherit as much if not more from our friends than from our family.

- Second-hand obesity : our diets and exercise habits mimic those of our friends
- We have stock in others' wellbeing
 - Wounds heal slower for people in a hostile relationship
 - A friend who lives near you has more influence on your wellbeing than one living far away
 - Mutual friendships can lead to higher levels of wellbeing
- Every hour of social time keeps stress away
- Having a friend at work increases work engagement
- Don't expect one friend to do it all
 - Those with at least 3-4 close friendships are healthier, have higher well being and are more engaged in their jobs
 - Absence of close friendships can lead to boredom, loneliness and depression.

Three Recommendations for Boosting Social Wellbeing

1. Spend 6 hours a day socialising with friends, family and colleagues (this time includes work, home, phone, email and other communication)
2. Strengthen the mutual connections in your network
3. Mix social time with physical activity. Eg take a long walk with a friend so you can motivate each other to be healthy.