



Extension
Utah State University



The Sampler

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8 Tips to Overcoming Loneliness

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Did you know the Surgeon General of the United States, Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, declared loneliness a major health concern for individuals and society? He states, loneliness “is associated with a greater risk of cardiovascular disease, dementia, stroke, depression, anxiety, and premature death. The mortality impact of being socially disconnected is similar to that caused by smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day.” Studies have also shown that loneliness (distressing feelings of being alone or separated) and social isolation (lack of social contacts or interaction regularly) are associated with increased risk for health problems such as depression, heart disease, and cognitive decline.



Humans need social connections to survive and thrive. One report has found that one-third of adults aged 45 and older feel lonely and nearly one-fourth of adults 65 and older are considered to be socially isolated. Although loneliness is a very real challenge for many, there are many things we can do to combat loneliness. Consider the following tips to reduce loneliness:

- 1. Join a class or club.** Whether it’s an exercise class or book club, joining a class or club can help you find others who share at least one similar interest as you. Another way to find those with similar interests is to connect on Meetup or Facebook groups.
- 2. Invest in relationships.** Make an effort to reach out to those you already know to build deeper relationships, volunteer to connect with others who have similar goals, or even talk to strangers such as a cashier at the store to feel more socially connected.
- 3. Reduce distractions.** When you are with others, make a mental effort to make those you are with a priority by putting away your phone and focusing on the moment.
- 4. Adopt a pet.** Pets offer companionship, unconditional love, and can potentially provide ways to connect with others (i.e. while walking your dog).

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Practice self-care. When you are feeling lonely, be sure to take care of yourself. Eating nutritious foods, exercising, spending time in the sunshine, and getting enough sleep can give a boost to your mood.

Keep busy. Keep yourself distracted from negative feelings by working on a hobby or home improvement project that you've been meaning to do. Take time to invest in yourself and your interests while also keeping your mind occupied in the process.

Plan ahead. Make plans ahead of time for extra support from family or friends on holidays, anniversaries, or other times that may be particularly challenging.

Seek help. Sometimes getting out to meet people isn't enough. Seeking the help of a professional can help you to have the tools you need to combat the challenges you are facing. You can also call 988 or text HOME to 74174 during an emergency to get connected to a professional at any time.

While it can be tempting to just retreat into a corner and hide when you are feeling lonely, doing just one of these small tips can give a boost to your mood. ☞

~Naomi Brower, Extension Professor

References

- Murthy, V. H. (2023). *Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>
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- Scott, E. (2021). 9 ways to cope with loneliness. *Verywellmind*. <https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-cope-with-loneliness-3144939>

St Patrick's Day Fun Foods

Grasshopper Cheesecake Bites

- 1 package (16 oz.) cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon mint extract
- 2 eggs
- 1 package regular Oreos
- Green food coloring
- ½ cup semi sweet chocolate chips

Line a cupcake pan with baking cups. In medium bowl beat cream cheese until fluffy. Add sugar and mint extract; beat well. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Crush half the package of Oreos and gently fold them into the cheesecake mixture. Add green food coloring. Place a whole Oreo cookie in each cupcake cup. Scoop cheesecake mixture over cookies. Bake at 350° for 15 to 20 minutes, or until a toothpick in the center comes out clean. Refrigerate at least an hour before serving. After mini cheesecakes have cooled, top with crushed Oreos and chocolate hearts.

Chocolate Hearts:

Melt ½ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips and spoon into a plastic baggie. Cut a small hole in one corner, then pipe out heart shapes onto wax paper. Refrigerate until hardened, then lift off wax paper carefully.

St. Patrick Pancakes

- 1 cup flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ cups buttermilk
- 1 egg
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- Green food coloring
- Whipped cream
- Rainbow sprinkles

In a large bowl, mix together flour, sugar, baking soda, and salt. In a separate bowl, whisk together egg, buttermilk, and vanilla and 3 to 4 drops of green food coloring. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and stir until combined. Heat a griddle to medium heat and spray with cooking spray. Pour ¼ cup of pancake mixture onto the griddle. Once the sides start to dry and the top is bubbling, flip the pancake using a large spatula. Cook until both sides of the pancake are golden brown. Remove from heat and serve with whipped cream and rainbow sprinkles on top.

Family and Consumer Science Events

Tai Chi for Health

Every Wednesday
Through August 2024
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Pleasant Valley Library - So. Ogden
Free

Tai Chi uses slow, controlled movements to regulate breathing and build stamina. By focusing the mind on moving through a series of poses, a state of mental calm and clarity can help improve coordination, relaxation, and general health. Call Pleasant Valley Library at 801-337-2691 to sign up.

Tai Chi for Health Outdoors

Every Thursday
May 9, 2024 through August 29, 2024
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Ogden Botanical Gardens - Ogden
Free

Come and enjoy the great outdoors in the beautiful Ogden Botanical Gardens while doing Tai Chi. To register please call 801-399-8207.

Virtual Diabetes Cook Along

March 12, 19, 26, and April 2, 2024
6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Free

Join us from the comfort of your own kitchen as we make delicious and diabetes appropriate meals together. Each week in this series we will discuss specific topics about diabetes to help you better manage your symptoms. You will receive an email to tune into the live class or a link to watch whenever you can plus a shopping list and recipe for each class. To register call 435-695-2542,

Date Nights . . .

Creating a Marriage Masterpiece Date Night

Friday, March 22, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Baugman Wood and Crafts, Layton
\$70 per couple

Learn tips to creating a marriage masterpiece while expressing your inner talent through creating a work of art with watercolors alongside your



sweetheart. Cost includes activity costs, refreshments, and prizes! [Click here](#) to register.

“Preserve” Your Relationship - Swaner Preserve and Eco Center Date Night

Friday, April 12, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Swaner Preserve and EcoCenter, Park City
\$25 per couple

Discover strategies to preserve and fortify your relationship while immersing yourselves in the scenic beauty of the Swaner Preserve and EcoCenter in Park City. Enjoy awe-inspiring views, explore permanent displays, take a leisurely walk on the discovery trail, and delve into the current exhibit: “Tiny Crystals, Global Impact.” Cost includes activity costs, refreshments, and prizes! [Click here](#) to register.

Making Your Relationship Sweet Chocolate Tasting Date Night

Friday, May 10, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Aggie Chocolate Factory, Logan
\$25 per couple

Make your relationship a little sweeter while enjoying a decadent evening of flavorful single-origin chocolate. Taste and feel the difference among our various single-origin chocolates and try to decide which one is your favorite. Cost includes activity costs, refreshments, and prizes! [Click here](#) to register.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training

In 1985 the Los Angeles Fire Department saw a need to recruit and train individuals to help with response efforts in the event of an emergency. The importance of that training was confirmed when, just two years later, Whittier Narrows experienced an earthquake. FEMA recognized the value of the program and in 1992 formalized what is now known as the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. CERT's are now seen throughout the nation.

What is taught in a CERT course?

CERT training is a 20-hour course that teaches individuals light search and rescue, how to treat injuries, fire safety suppression, disaster preparedness, and more.

What is the purpose of CERT?

The purpose of CERT training is to teach individuals emergency preparedness and response skills that will help them better care for themselves, their family, and their neighbors in the event of an emergency.

How can CERT trained individuals help their community?

Under the direction of local emergency responders, a CERT trained individual can help provide critical support by giving immediate assistance to victims, providing damage assessment information, and organizing other volunteers at a disaster site. In the event of a disaster, when resources are likely to be overwhelmed and professional response may be delayed, a CERT trained individual can help "bridge the gap" until professional responders are able to arrive on scene.

How does CERT help the community?

In addition to supporting emergency responders during a disaster, a CERT train individual can also help the community year-round by helping with community emergency plans, neighborhood exercises, preparedness outreach, fire safety education, and workplace safety.

How do I get CERT trained?

Weber County offers CERT training. The course consists of online instruction and in-person skill development. The on-line portion of the training teaches basic disaster preparedness concepts. The online training is free, takes approximately 9 hours to complete, and can be done at your own pace.

After completion of the online training, participants take the knowledge they learned during the on-line portion of the course and use it in the classroom to gain hands-on experience. For adults, there is a fee associated with the hands-on portion of the course in the amount of \$35.00 which helps to cover the cost of personal protective equipment and other class expenses. For youth participating in the Utah State



University Extension MyPI program, there is no cost for the equipment.

The hands-on portion of the training takes approximately 11 hours and will be offered through the Weber County Sheriff's office **April 20, 27, and May 4, 11, 6-9 p.m.** Participants must attend all four days of hands-on training to receive their CERT certification.

If you have questions, please contact your city emergency manager or CERT Coordinator. If you live in Weber County contact the Weber County Council Chair, Jeff Stark, at jeffs@weberhs.org, or you can contact Weber County Emergency Management at 801-778-6682 / lschwartz@webercountyutah.gov. Visit http://www.webercountyutah.gov/sheriff/homeland/cert_training.php for more information

CERT & MyPI Emergency Preparedness Training for Youth

Youth need to be prepared for emergencies just as much as adults do. Therefore, Utah State University Extension is offering a MyPI training to teens 13-18 years old this spring. This is a rare opportunity. During the course, youth can get Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) certified. Personal protective equipment will be included for each participant of the program.

Participants will also learn about smoke alarm maintenance, NOAA weather radios, social and smartphone apps, HAM Radios, and more. By the end of the course, students will assemble emergency supply kits, develop family communication plans, and help their household and others prepare for an emergency.

Students will also have the opportunity to become CPR and AED certified.

For more information, contact Kirsten at the Weber County Extension Office at 801-399-8202. ☞

~Stephanie Carlson, Extension Assistant Professor

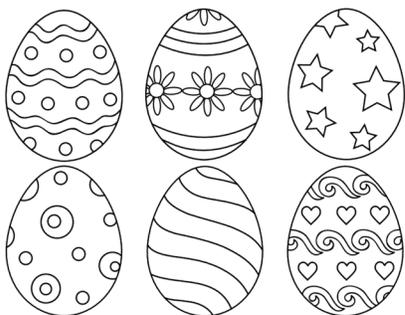
Fun Easter Activities to do with Your Kids

Easter Egg Suncatchers

- Black acrylic paint
- Elmer's white glue
- Clear plastic, from an empty plastic container, a plastic folder or any clear hard plastic you can find
- Sharpies– the more colors the better

Find easter egg designs such as the ones below and print them. Slip under the piece of plastic and tape it to the plastic piece to keep in place. To make the lead part of the sun catcher you will use one part Elmer's glue and one part acrylic paint (1:1). Take the Elmer's glue bottle and pour the excess glue into an empty container (with a lid so you can use it later with it other projects). Now take the black acrylic paint and pour into the Elmer's glue container and shake the bottle of glue for about one minute to mix. Squeeze a little bit on a scrap piece of paper to get rid of the white glue that could have accumulated in the nozzle. Draw the outlines in the egg design. (You can influence the boldness of lines by how hard you squeeze the bottle. Sometimes you don't need to squeeze at all, but just guide where the line goes. Let the finished piece dry overnight or for about eight hours. Once dried take the different colored Sharpie markers and color in the blank spaces. After you're done coloring, cut the egg shape out. Since the surface painted on is translucent, you don't need to cut very close to the lines. Use a double-sided tape and stick the suncatchers onto the window.

Source: Pinch of perfect



Color Changing Slime

- 1 tablespoon corn syrup
- 1 tablespoon borax
- 1 cup hot water (hot from the faucet is fine, do not boil)
- 1 bottle of Elmer's blue color changing glue
- 1 bottle Elmer's yellow color changing glue
- Bowls
- Spoons

Mix in a bowl, 1 cup hot water with 1 tablespoon borax. Stir the solution. Set aside. In another bowl, empty one color of the glue and add 1 tablespoon corn syrup; stir. Add 1 teaspoon at a time of the borax solution to the glue mix. Stir in between. The slime will immediately start to form and pull away from the sides. It usually takes 5-10 teaspoons of the borax mixture. When the slime has reached the consistency you want, continue to knead the slime with your hands. Once it isn't sticky, it's ready to be played with. To see the slime change colors take the slime outside in the sun and watch the colors change as you squeeze, stretch, and twist the slime to see the two different colors.

Source: Adventures in a box



Create Better Health News Corner

Why You Should Plant a Garden This Year

Have you gone to the grocery store recently and thought, “Wow! That was so expensive!” If you have felt that way, you are definitely not alone. Did you know that growing your own food can help you not only save money, but can also have many more life changing benefits? In this article we will discuss 10 reasons why you should take the plunge and grow your own garden this year.

1. It Saves Money

The prices of food these days are outrageous. A single pint of cherry tomatoes can cost \$5.00, but a single tomato plant can cost as little as \$3.00 and can produce up to 30 pounds of fruit in one growing season! While you may need to invest in a few startup costs like soil, fertilizer, seeds and starter plants, or planters, the long-term cost savings can definitely be worth the investment.

2. It's Convenient

Nothing is more convenient than having your own food source right in your backyard. Skip the long line and crowded grocery stores and visit the fresh produce aisle in your pajamas (located in your very own garden).

3. It's Healthier

According to Harvard Health, fruits, vegetables, and herbs that ripen in the garden have more nutrients than some store-bought vegetables that must be picked early.

4. You Decide What Kinds of Fertilizers and Pesticides Come in Contact with Your Food.

If you want to go spray-free and organic, you can control everything that goes into your food when you grow it at home. You can't always be confident in what's been sprayed on your veggies when they're shipped here from halfway around the world. No need to worry about mystery chemicals.

5. It Helps You Eat More Fruits and Vegetables and Try New Ones

Diversifying your diet is great for your health because every plant has its own unique composition of antioxidants and nutrients, often indicated by its color. For example, purple cauliflower and carrots have cancer-fighting antioxidants, and sweet potatoes and tomatoes have high Vitamin A, and bell peppers contain Vitamin C.



6. You'll Be More Self-Sufficient

Food prices and availability aren't always predictable due to global supply chain issues, droughts, floods, and other factors. One step towards being self-sufficient is learning to grow your own food. When you've got a steady supply of food at home you gain food security, peace of mind, and a huge sense of accomplishment!

7. It Supports Local Pollinators

Fruit trees and vegetable plants need to be pollinated, and the pollinators need food to survive. Everybody wins!

8. It Gets Young Kids Interested in Vegetables

If your kid plants a seed, watches it sprout and develop into a huge thing they can eat, it will blow their minds! They are also more likely to try it since they grew it themselves.

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1.800.221.5689 or visit online at <http://fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/coalition/map.htm>. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture's policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity

9. It Makes Your Yard Prettier

Vegetable plants and fruit trees have plenty of ornamental impact—especially if you're growing lots of colorful varieties! Blooms always precede fruits, so you'll get pretty flowers as well as tasty edibles.

10. You'll Spend More Time Outside

The best-known benefit of sunshine is its ability to boost the body's vitamin D supply. It also helps boost serotonin and that can give you more energy and help keep you calm, positive, and focused.

If you are now convinced to try your hand at gardening, let me leave you with a few helpful tips. Start small and plant things you'd really like to eat. Pick a spot with at least 6 hours of good daytime light and access to water. Consider using a raised garden bed, which allows you to control the soil and nutrient blend. Talk to farmers or call USU Extension to find out what grows well in your region. Attend our free gardening classes. We will be happy to share our love of gardening with you. Happy planting! ☘

~Katte Watson, Create Better Health Ambassador

Here are some recipes to use with your home grown garden bounty.

Veggie Pasta Primavera

1 lb. whole-wheat pasta
2 cups fresh broccoli florets
2 cups asparagus spears, trimmed and cut into 2-in pieces
1 large sweet pepper, diced
1 medium onion, diced
4 cloves garlic, minced
3 tablespoon olive oil
1 cup fresh spinach, roughly chopped
1 cup frozen peas
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
¼ cup lemon juice
2 tablespoons minced fresh basil
Salt and pepper to taste
Grated Parmesan cheese for topping

Cook pasta according to package instructions. Set aside. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, sauté broccoli, asparagus, pepper, onion, and garlic in olive oil until veggies are tender crisp, 8-10 minutes. Stir in spinach, peas, and tomatoes and continue cooking and additional 5 minutes. Remove cooked veggies from heat and stir in pasta, lemon juice, and basil. Season with salt and pepper to taste and top with Parmesan cheese. Serve warm.

Roasted Veggies

Nonstick cooking spray
2 cups potatoes, cubed
1 large onion, chopped
3 cups carrots, peeled and sliced
2 cups parsnips, peeled and sliced
2 cups sweet potatoes, cubed
2 tablespoons olive oil or canola oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 teaspoons dried Italian seasoning
½ teaspoon black pepper
½ teaspoon salt

Spray a baking sheet with the nonstick cooking spray. Place potatoes, onion, carrots, parsnips, and sweet potatoes on the baking sheet. Combine oil, garlic, salt, pepper, Italian seasoning in a small bowl. Drizzle oil mixture over vegetables and mix until coated. Roast at 400° for 30 to 40 minutes or until browned and vegetables are soft

Chicken and Vegetable Almond Fried Rice

2 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon canola oil
2 large eggs, beaten
1 bunch broccoli, chopped
1 large onion, chopped
2 large carrots, sliced
½ teaspoon salt
½ cooked chicken breast, diced
1 small summer squash, diced
1-2 tablespoons garlic, minced
2 ½ cups long grain brown rice, cold*
Low-sodium soy sauce
1 cup chopped or slivered almonds

Add 1 teaspoon oil to a large skillet along with the beaten eggs and cook in a thin layer. Transfer the cooked eggs to a plate, and then cut the eggs into small pieces. Wipe the skillet clean and return to high heat. Add 2 tablespoons oil, coating pan. Add broccoli, onion, carrots, and salt and cook for 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Add chicken, squash and garlic. Turn heat down to medium and stir-fry for another 3 minutes, until the vegetables are all tender-crisp. Add rice a little at a time and mix. Add peas, green onions, and eggs and shake in about 20 good shakes of soy sauce; stir until the soy sauce is incorporated in all the ingredients. Stir in the almonds and serve hot.

***Note:** To make the best fried rice you should make the rice the night before or make it earlier in the day so that it is cold.

Free Classes

CREATE SNAP-ED
BETTER HEALTH.

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
OGDEN

Learn how to grow a vegetable garden!



Junior League of Ogden **Oasis Community Garden**

2445 Monroe Blvd. Ogden, UT

Community gardeners and the public are invited to attend monthly workshops taught by nutrition educators and horticulturists.

Tuesday, April 30
6:00 PM

Planting and Irrigation

Learn the timing for planting in the garden and appropriate irrigation for plant establishment and/or seed germination.

Tuesday, May 28
6:00 PM

Weeding and Fertilizer

Learn the importance of reading herbicide labels and the fertility needs of plants and can apply fertilizer appropriately when

Tuesday, June 25
6:00 PM

Diagnosing Plant Problems and Pest Control
Learn the difference between beneficial insects and pests in the garden.

Tuesday, July 30
6:00 PM

Fall Planting

Calculate fall planting dates based on the average first fall frost and which crops that can be planted for fall cropping.

Tuesday, August 27
6:00 PM

Compost and Sustainability

Learn about "organic matter" and the difference between "brown" and "green" compost materials and the proper ratio between materials for successful composting

Tuesday, September 24
6:00 PM

Harvest, Storage, and Clean-up

Learn the reasons why proper fall clean-up and sanitation are important in the garden and the importance of crop rotation.

For more information contact: oasis@juniorleagueogden.org

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