



CONNECTION

With Ourselves. With Others.

Connection Defined

Deep connection happens when we are both *familiar* and *comfortable*. But, it can occur in any and all relationships to some degree. When we are Connected with ourselves, it is much easier for us to be accepting of ourselves and understand our boundaries. When we are Connected with others we're better able to accurately assess what is happening in any given moment with curiosity rather than judgement and communicate our boundaries lovingly. Feeling at ease with ourselves and those around us fosters an environment ripe for creativity, joy, peace and peaceful productivity.

Increasing Connection with Ourselves

Time and attention. I remember one particular point in my life I allowed myself to become consumed with the stress, trauma and challenges of my life to the point that I was fairly detached from myself. I felt like I was spinning with no particular purpose, reacting to everything that was happening and feeling entirely overwhelmed. Sound familiar? A friend suggested I spend some time loving myself and recommended a yoga practice in which I spent time connecting with, even hugging myself. It felt weird at first but I found myself crying tears of relief while I finished the session due to Connection I gained that had been missing.

What do you do that helps you feel like YOU? There's no wrong answer here. Engaging with our bodies is often a helpful place to start. When we are disconnected from ourselves, our thoughts are often unproductive and even abusive. It helps to move our attention out of our head and toward our bodies. How do you like to connect with yourself?

EXAMPLES:

- Yoga / Stretching
- Walk / Jog / Run / Hike
- Lotion your body
- Massage & Moisturize your Feet / Hands
- Play a solo sport: Tennis, golf, lifting, racquetball, etc
- Time with animals – petting, care, training, riding (horses)
- Get lost in Creating!

Increasing Connection with Loved Ones

Connection supports our ability to work together more peacefully. When we and those we're interacting with feel Connected with one another there is a positive undercurrent which supports easy movement through whatever life presents. We are much more productive together when there's a feeling of trust and understanding. When we feel SEEN.

Engaging with our loved ones in fun and mutually pleasurable activities supports Connection. Experiencing pleasure and enjoyment together supports bonding. When we are feeling bonded and connected to one another, we're motivated to maintain this feeling and much more likely to be helpful and supportive. When we are feeling detached, it's easier to ignore another person and their needs. The later often resulting in conflict and unproductive interaction patterns.

When supporting an increase in Connection with another person it helps to start with FUN! What is something you both enjoy doing together? Connecting in Nature often amplifies the positive impact of any activity. LAUGHING together supports a feeling of connection and releases positive hormones for all parties. MASSAGE and stretching together also support connection as each person connect with themselves as well. There's no wrong way to Connect with those we love so long as both parties are enjoying the engagement.

What changes with Connection?

When we're living life in Connection with ourselves and those around us, productivity increases naturally because all parties are motivated to maintain the positive interactions. We find ourselves in a natural flow which allows us to expend energy where we would prefer rather than battling to complete the required tasks of life. We can collaborate with the other people more easily because it feels much less vulnerable to address challenges when we are in a place of trust with another person. Connection breeds TRUST and with trust we can communicate more openly and address sticky feelings as they arise rather than waiting for an issue.

Problem Solving through Connection is more about Collaborating with all parties than trying to solve the problem ourselves. We often cannot fully resolve any issue solely by ourselves, yet we try all the time. By discussing a current challenge when we are connected, all parties are more motivated to work together toward collaboration. For Example, when I have ensured that my kiddos and I are Connected with one another before we try to get out of the house, everyone is much more helpful in the process. Rather than it feeling like I am a zookeeper with a bunch of unruly animals to round up, I feel more like a conductor supporting each member to play their part in time. We leave the house excited for whatever adventure is to come rather than annoyed with one another and already ready to come back home and go to our separate corners.

Communication is much more productive when we're in Connection. It feels easier to approach a conversation about current challenges from a place of collaboration rather than control when we are flowing together. Language changes from "you need to..." to "we need to..." and each person is trusted to follow through with their responsibility. Again, trust is increased through connection. And we are much more motivated to maintain connection that is already present rather than do the hard work of repairing connection that has been broken. It is also easier to repair connection with less effort when we catch ourselves in the disconnect prior to its perpetuation into an interaction pattern. Being Aware of ourselves and others while we all engage in ways that best for us create the space for Connection.

Connection is Key