

Avoiding Boredom & Loneliness, and Getting Engaged in the Community

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1. Explore Community Resources

- ▶ Explore your local library, local Community Mental Health agency, or even your neighborhood Facebook page to find community groups to join.
 - i. Filter your search to include in-person clubs, online groups, classes that match your interests, or even volunteer opportunities
 - ii. This may be a great way to get to know some new people outside of your everyday circles and build some added supports in your life.
 - iii. Being around people who share your interests will place you at an advantage on making new connections as you already have a common ground.
- ▶ Find a faith-based organization where you can deepen your spirituality and engage with others in activities and events.
- ▶ It's amazing how big of a difference it can make to have a couple of things on the schedule each week that you can look forward to and get out of the house!

2. Identify hobbies you may want to explore

- ▶ Create opportunities for self-exploration.
- ▶ Ideally, identify a couple of hobbies you can do by yourself and a couple of hobbies you can share with others.
- ▶ It may take a concerted effort to start a hobby because it is so much easier to scroll on your phone or watch TV but being an active participant in an activity can improve your mental and physical health.

3. Schedule regular times to spend time with family members you enjoy

- ▶ Pin down dates and times for quality engagement and commitment.
- ▶ Don't get stuck in the talking stage as many people have busy schedules so it is key to put something regular on the calendar otherwise it will never happen.
- ▶ An example may be to have dinner with a grandparent the first Monday of every month.

4. Get outside and move your body

- ▶ Fresh air, sunshine, and moving your body can help improve your mental and physical well-being and it costs no money.
- ▶ Exercise does not mean you have to run a mile or exert yourself to the point of breaking a sweat. Exercise can be a commitment to walking for 30-minutes twice a week.
- ▶ Again, don't get stuck in the talking stage, it may help to schedule regular times of movement with others so that you can motivate and encourage one another.

5. Volunteer

- ▶ By nature, boredom is when an individual is focused on themselves.
- ▶ You may feel physically surrounded by other humans and yet still feel lonely if your connections do not satisfy your need for a meaningful life.
- ▶ It can be helpful to get out and focus on someone besides yourself. Many people who volunteer leave feeling better about themselves.

Many of these recommendations will take some time to develop, but once you get started you will feel less bored and more connected with others. It does take more energy than looking on your phone or watching TV, but all these activities are life giving and can help you feel more connected and supported to others around you! Breaking through loneliness to build connections can enhance your overall well-being.