

Reconnecting with someone you haven't talked to in a while

The COVID-19 pandemic shrunk our social circles to include family and the closest friends. As a result, we may have lost touch with the people outside of those circles who we still miss and care about. Now that the world is returning to normal, how do we revive those relationships?

If you're worried that your social skills are rusty after years of isolation, you're not alone. But it shouldn't stop you from reconnecting with the people you care about. People like to be remembered, thought of, and reached out to. In fact, most people are really appreciative to hear from an old friend!

Things to Keep in Mind

The guide below offers tips and real-life scripts to help you reconnect with the people you've lost touch with over the past couple of years. To make the most of the conversation guide, here are some things to keep in mind:



Reframe negative thoughts.

The biggest barrier to reconnecting is our own flawed perceptions and insecurities. The little voice in your mind might be telling you that it's been too long, that this person has enough friends, or that they're too busy to spend time with you. A better and more realistic approach, however, is to assume this friend still wants you in their life and will be happy to hear from you. It'll motivate you to reach out—and chances are it's truer than you might think.



Don't wait to reach out.

After a couple years without face-to-face interaction, it's natural to want to wait for the 'right' time to reconnect. But the longer you delay, the longer you go without that special person back in your life. You can even set yourself calendar reminders to check in.



Have clear expectations.

Consider this a small leap, a way to let someone know you're thinking of them. Don't expect this to be immediately life changing or even responded to right away. Send a message and let it go!



Use social media.

If you're feeling nervous about reconnecting, use social media or a text to make it easier. Try sending a funny meme or share an old photo that makes you think of your friend to initiate the conversation and spark good memories. This can help break the ice before you jump right into a conversation about reconnecting.





If the person you're worried about reports feeling suicidal or is engaging in self-injury, encourage them to access emergency mental health support.

For immediate help, call 911 or 988, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

These resources are free, confidential, and available for everyone.

➔ **Express your sincere desire to reconnect.** Be honest about why you're reaching out. It will show that your efforts are meaningful.

"You crossed my mind recently, and I wanted to see how you're doing."

"I've missed you over the past couple years."

➔ **Start the conversation.** What you say doesn't matter as much as simply making the effort to reach out. Getting in touch shows that you value the relationship.

"I saw your post on Facebook and it made me miss you."

"I was in your neighborhood recently and thought it would be nice to catch up with you sometime."

➔ **Blame any awkwardness on the pandemic.** After two years of isolating at home, most of us feel more socially awkward than before the pandemic began. Be patient and go at a pace that feels comfortable for both of you.

"I'm sorry it's been so long since I reached out. The past couple years really took a toll on me."

"Hey, I've been cooped up. I recently learned about a fun activity. Would you like to join?"

➔ **Ask how they're doing.** Showing genuine interest in the other person will help re-spark your connection. Ask questions to show that you remember and care about what was going on in their life.

"How is your family doing?"

"What's been keeping you busy lately?"

➔ **Make plans.** When you end the conversation, make a plan for your next meetup. A great way to boost connection after so much time apart is to find a shared activity you can do together, like going for a hike or having a picnic in the park.

"Want to take the kids to the park for a play date?"

"I'd love for you to join me on a walk."

"There's a new class I've been wanting to take. Want to sign up with me?"

Download additional information on how to reconnect with someone here:
mentalhealthtx.org/check-in/HHS_Guide_Reconnecting_with_Someone_MoreInfo.pdf

