

Shasta Nelson

**FRIENDSHIP
EXPERT AUTHOR
OF
3 BOOKS**

 ShastaNelson.com
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61%

Cigna, "Loneliness in the Workplace" January 2020

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**"We're not lonely
...to **know** more people,
But to feel more **known**."**

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**LONELINESS
IS WORSE THAN...**

- **SMOKING 15 CIGARETTES A DAY**
- **LIFELONG ALCOHOLIC**
- **NOT EXERCISING**
- **OBESITY**

Analyzed Data From 148 Previously Published Longitudinal Studies Brigham Young University Study Published in Journal Plos Medicine

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**THE PHYSICAL HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF
INSUFFICIENT
CONNECTION:**

29%	32%	50%	60%
Increased Risk Heart Disease	Increased Risk Stroke	Increased Risk Dementia	Increased Risk Premature Death

"Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation," Dr. Vivek Murthy, 2023

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DR. DEAN ORNISH

WORLD-RENOUNDED PHYSICIAN
NY TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR



“
I am not aware of any other factor [than intimacy and love] in medicine— not **diet**, not **smoking**, not **exercise**, not **stress**, not **genetics**, not **drugs**, not **surgery**—that has a greater impact on our quality of life, incidence of illness, and premature death from *all* causes.
”

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“Feeling Supported” Changes Our Biology



~40% Stress Response



**Faster Recovery after
Stress**

Heinrichs et al., "Psychological Science"

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High Perceived Social Support = Better Mental Resilience

63%

Decreased Risk
for **Depression**

52%

Decrease in
Poor Sleep

Grey et al., Psychiatry Research, 2020

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70%

RELATIONSHIPS = HAPPINESS

"The 100 Secrets of Happy People," David Niven, Ph.D.

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#1

**FACTOR FOR JOB SATISFACTION
CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK**

The Institute of Leadership and Management

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Friendship Increases Psychological Safety by 50%

**No Best Friend
at Work**



**Best Friend
at Work**



Shasta Nelson, Team Assessment for Fortune 100 Company, Nov 2025

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EMPLOYEES WITH A BEST FRIEND AT WORK

7X

MORE LIKELY TO BE ENGAGED

Gallup.com "Why We Need Best Friends at Work"

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Lonely Employees Are More Likely

5x

TO MISS WORK

4x

TO BE LESS PRODUCTIVE

2x

TO THINK ABOUT QUITTING

Gallup.com, "Increasing Importance of Best Friends at Work", August 2022

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Loneliness is hurting our people
and our performance.

Here's how we fix it.

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HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

P

+

C

+

V

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THE 3 RELATIONSHIP REQUIREMENTS

← POSITIVITY
(ENJOYABLE EMOTIONS) →

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Positivity

The pleasant emotions we feel that
makes the relationship rewarding
and satisfying.

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POSITIVITY: ENJOYABLE EMOTIONS

CONSIDERED
MOTIVATED
INSPIRED
HOPEFUL
PROUD
GRATEFUL
EXCITED
PRIORITIZED

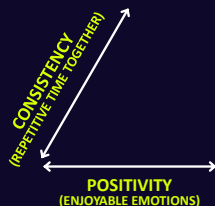
AMUSED
AWE
AFFECTION
VALIDATED
ADMIRE
ENTHUSIASTIC
LOVED
ENGAGED

TAKEN CARE OF
EMPATHY
HAPPY
GIFT-GIVING
CURIOUS
SAFE
SPECIAL
ACCOMPLISHED

ENJOYMENT
ACCEPTED
TRUSTING
SUPPORTED
RELAXED
SERENE
APPRECIATED
SILLY/FUN

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THE 3 RELATIONSHIP REQUIREMENTS



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Consistency

The repetition of time and behavior that makes the relationship feel reliable and safe.

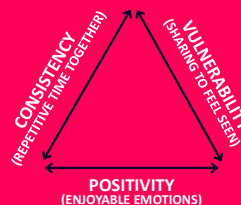
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CONSISTENCY: REPETITIVE TIME TOGETHER

- PROVIDING TIME
 - PROVIDING SPACE
 - "EXCUSES" TO GATHER
 - PRIORITIZE "MEMORABLE"
- CHANGING THE GROUP SIZE (2'S, 4'S)
 - CLEAR EXPECTATIONS/GUIDELINES
 - PRACTICE CONSISTENT BEHAVIOR
 - SHOWING IT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU

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THE 3 RELATIONSHIP REQUIREMENTS



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Vulnerability

The mutual sharing and listening that leaves both people feeling known and seen.

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VULNERABILITY: SHARING TO FEEL SEEN

- INVITING, INCLUDING, INITIATING
 - EXPRESSING OPINIONS
 - BRAINSTORMING
 - PROBLEM-SOLVING
 - ASKING FOR HELP
 - APOLOGIZING & FORGIVING
 - CREATIVITY
- EXPRESSING EMOTIONS: PRIDE, EMPATHY, JOY,
 - PERMISSION TO BE AUTHENTIC
 - INITIATING TOUGH OR AWKWARD CONVERSATIONS

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HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

BOTH PEOPLE FEEL SEEN AND SAFE
IN SATISFYING WAY

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THE 3 RELATIONSHIP REQUIREMENTS



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The Connection Path

NAME IT

Give
Permission; talk
about
connection
being a goal
and priority

NORMALIZE IT

Everyone
experiences
loneliness;
everyone
wants to belong.

NURTURE IT

-Check-in 1:1
-Provide
connecting time
during meetings
-Plan group
activities

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MORE OF SHASTA FOLLOW ALONG

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