

## The link between health and belonging to a community

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Our need as a species to cultivate social bonds is undeniable. Indeed, we were biologically engineered for human interaction. This connection helped us throughout times: initially to survive in hunting tribes and nowadays to go through the ups and downs of life.

It has been proven that good, face-to-face relationships are important for our health and wellbeing. Something that I often describe to my patients is the value of understanding health as not only the absence of disease but as a much wider dynamic concept. Health is also based in thriving, in living a life that is worth living and having a self-sense of purpose and belonging.

Scientific research has shown that people who engage in community activities increase their sense of belonging. This in turns builds resilience, improves immune and cardiovascular function, and lowers the prevalence of mental health issues and poor health habits. Conversely, a lack of social integration is linked to isolation and poor health. In fact, most people felt at some point in their lives

that facing adversity was better tolerated when social interaction was stronger.

Let's therefore take advantage of the coming festive season and enjoy the connection and presence of those people that you value.

Finally, I invite you to connect with all of Mytree tribe in the activities and workshops throughout the year. Join us for a cup of tea and see you soon in front of the fireplace.