Introduction (5 mins): Start this month’s Get-Together on RELATING by asking everyone to share their name and one action they’ve taken recently to bring happiness to themselves or others.

TUNE IN to our experience with mindfulness and gratitude

Mindfulness Exercise (5 mins): Who am I connected to?
Take a moment to be mindful of all the people involved in your life. We each have connections to so many others who have helped us develop into the people we are now. And every day we depend on the actions of others in so many different ways. Let’s take a few minutes to remember them.

Gratitude Exercise (10 mins): Someone who I’m grateful for
Bring to mind someone who you feel grateful for in your life. It could be a loved one or mentor - or simply the bus driver who kindly waited when you were in a hurry recently. Feel into the gratitude that comes up when you think of them and turn to someone next to you to share how that felt.

CONNECT with others to help us deepen our understanding

Group Discussion (30 mins): Connected to others
Ask a volunteer to read out the text below and suggested questions for discussion in small groups. Remember, this is an opportunity to listen and learn from people’s real life experiences, so allow each other space and try to share real feelings rather than getting caught up in thoughts or ideas.

While our close ties are really important for happiness, our more casual (or ‘looser’) connections matter too. Building our connections where we live can positively impact how we feel, increasing our sense of security and well-being. When people know and trust their neighbours they feel safer and have a greater sense of belonging. This doesn’t mean you have to be best friends with everyone. Even just recognising neighbours’ faces, smiling or saying hello makes a difference and means people are more likely to look out for, and help, each other. And making these small connections can pave the way for closer ones.

Find out more in 10 Keys to Happier Living (Chapter 2): www.actionforhappiness.org/book

Questions for discussion:

- Which relationships are most important to you right now?
- What do you do to stay close to the people who matter - and what else could you do?
TAKE ACTION in practical ways to apply what we learn in our lives

Action Setting (10 mins): Reaching out to others

Think of one small practical thing you can do to carry a bit of what you’ve explored today into your life. You might like to try one of the suggested actions below. By going around the group and each sharing our action we make ourselves more likely to complete it and inspire each other also!

1) Gratitude letter. Make time to get in touch with someone you really care about but haven't had time to contact recently and let them know how much they mean to you.

2) Positive balance. Aim to say at least 4 positive things to people for each 1 negative judgment, complaint or criticism you share (yes, even the helpful ones).

RESOURCES

- Calendar: Friendly February. Simple daily actions you can take: www.actionforhappiness.org/friendly-february
- Video: The Empathic Civilisation. Jeremy Rifkin investigates the evolution of empathy and the profound ways that shapes our development and society. https://youtu.be/l7AWn1FRC7g
- Book: Non-Violent Communication. Marshall Rosenberg’s groundbreaking work on how to communicate pleasantly and effectively with other people.

RESEARCH

- Contrary to the ‘selfish-gene’ theory, groups that care for each other are most successful in evolutionary terms - even if their genes are unrelated. Source: Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being. New York: Free Press.

"For happiness, remember... other people matter"

~ Dr Chris Peterson

Want to know more about how to host a Get-Together and why we invite people to Tune In, Connect and Take Action? Visit: www.actionforhappiness.org/get-together