



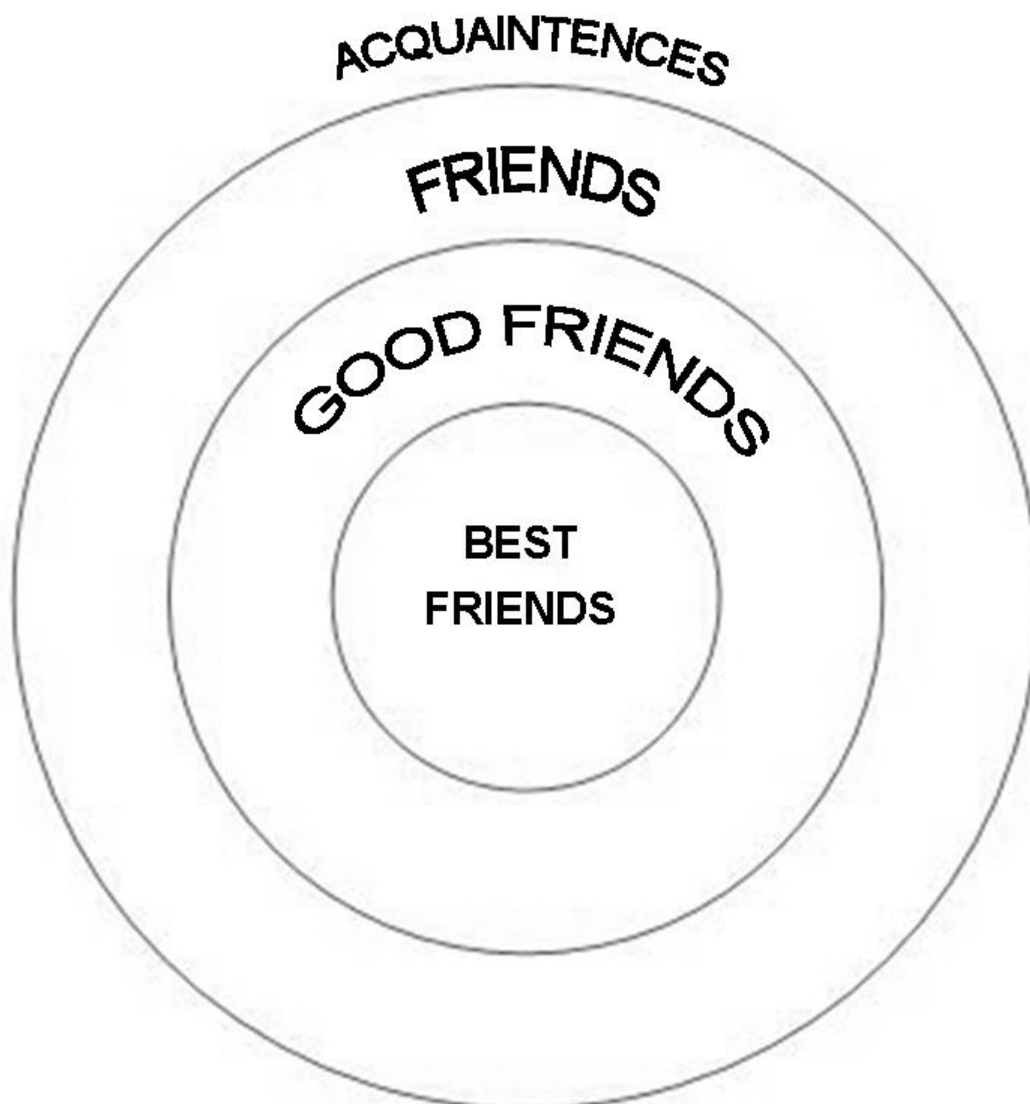
Connect

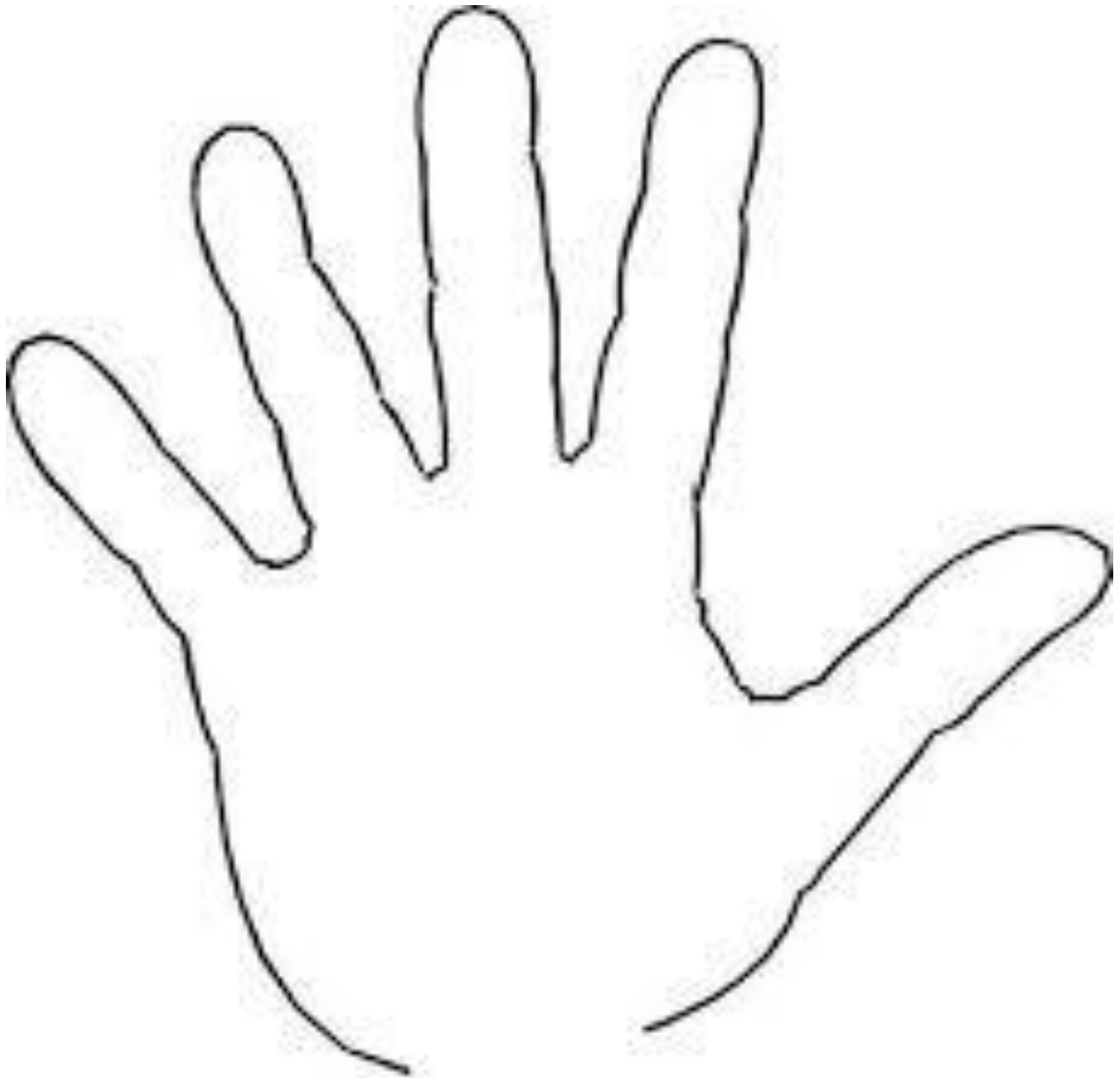
Connecting; With Yourself, With Family, With Friends, With the Space & Environment you Inhabit

Connect with Others

When times are tough, it can be handy to have a go-to support crew. These are the people you can be yourself around and who have your back.

Who will you add to yours and how will you keep connected?





Write the names of your friends and/or family on each finger

Note ways to keep connected in the palm – such as: Write a letter, share a song, send a photo, text, email

Connect through Storytelling

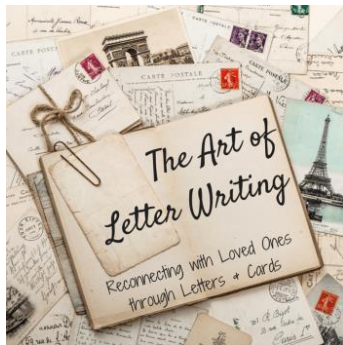
Somerset Libraries have been running online Storytime sessions for families on their library Facebook pages with some excellent videos from staff.



<https://www.facebook.com/TauntonLibrary/videos/554751088578687/>

Connect through writing

Write a letter or send a card to a family member or friend sharing your experiences of now, the past, fond memories or future plans.



You could include photos or draw a picture or poem.

You may wish to share it later or **If you post it – do this on your daily exercise!**

You could write a letter to yourself, how do you feel during this time, what are your experiences, hopes or intentions for the future?

What messages would you tell your future self? Have you enjoyed spending more time at home, exercising regularly, reading, baking or meditating? Put it out of the way and set a reminder for 6 months or a years' time to re-read and reflect.

Connect through Play

Revisit old toys and games.

Talk with your child about their play, ask about the feelings of characters in their pictures or models. This will open opportunities for you and your child to talk about how you are feeling during this time, helping your child to share their worries or fears.



Connect through Listening

Truly listening to another has a huge impact on relationships and supports feelings of being loved, respected, valued and listened too!

In listening, our minds will naturally wonder, and each time you notice this, return your attention and focus to listening.

- Be curious and listen to understand
- Show respect and suspend judgment – don't jump in with your own stories

Active Listening Skills

 Eye Contact Eye contact during the conversation shows the speaker that you give him your attention and that you really care about what he says.	 Avoid Distractions There are so many examples of distractions such as our thoughts, mobile phones, gadgets, music, side activities, other people and more. Learn to avoid these distractions otherwise they can destroy your conversation.
 Body Gestures Body gestures and language are a whole science. Your body gestures tell the speaker whether you listen carefully or not.	 Give Feedback Ask questions to clarify certain points, tell your opinions, summarize the speaker's comments.
 Show That You're Listening Use facial expressions such as smile, note your posture, encourage the speaker to share and to continue.	Listening allows you to learn, to have relationships, to plan, to develop, to be the part of something, to create, to think.... and much more! www.businessphrases.net

Accessed 28/04/20

(https://www.google.com/search?q=Active+listening+skills&safe=strict&tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1&fir=C6JxvVApnEe3cM%253A%252CKVXt3sQaC_sKaM%252C_&vet=1&usg=AI4_-)

Connect with Yourself

Hand Reflexology for yourself



This video shows how to carry out a hand reflexology sequence to support relief of stress and tension.

Have a go at practicing these techniques for yourself

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKiQxGylHTs>

Self-Compassion

Research has shown that increased levels of oxytocin strongly increase feelings of trust, calm, safety, generosity, and connectedness.



Center for Mindful Self-Compassion

Oxytocin gives us the ability to feel warmth and compassion for ourselves and reduces fear and anxiety.

Self-compassion can help stimulate oxytocin

Try this Soothing Touch exercise -

We are less likely to receive physical expressions of kindness in isolation, but we can still comfort ourselves with touch.

Don't be shy about offering yourself a hug, or by gently placing a hand over your heart, when you need it the most.

This may seem a bit silly at first, but your body doesn't know that. Your body simply responds to the physical gesture of warmth and care. (Just be mindful about touching your face, please.)

Check out this website for more self-compassion tips

<https://centerformsc.org/10-self-compassion-practices-for-covid-19/>

Visualisation

Try a visualisation to help you calm, relax and find some space for freedom within your mind.

We've chosen this Falling Leaves one below to help get you started

<https://youtu.be/DXvZ1sbE2gM>



Connect with your Environment



Lifehacks – Our lifehacks have been re-created to support you during Covid -19.

Try Covid-19 Lifehack No 2 - Create a safe place

Make a cosy space in your home to retreat to when things get to much, you can use it as a calm down space if emotions are running high. Think about what makes you feel safe and who can support you to feel safe. You can use lights, cushions and blankets to make it feel snuggly, and decorate it with things that make you smile. Think about your five senses, maybe include some nice smells or some tasty treats to keep in your space just for you.

Check out our website for more Covid 19 Lifehacks - <https://www.cypsomersethealth.org/>



Take a Look

Around your home, what kinds of objects, words, and images surround you in your environment? How many of these are related to social connectedness?

This could include pictures of people interacting, words, such as 'together' 'friends' 'family' images, objects or even two ornaments or toys facing one another in a chair or on a shelf.

Notice spaces where you could add or alter objects, designs, images, words that are related to connectedness.

How is the furniture in your room arranged? Do chairs face together encouraging connection? Are there areas which promote conversations?

Connect with Nature

Make a connection to the earth and grow

Grow a plant to nurture and care for – observe its growth and share this with others.

Consider the plant's needs – light, shade, water, soil, where do these elements come from? The plant survives by you giving what it needs? Sometimes it can take trial and error to help plants grow to their best.



National Open Garden Scheme are offering virtual tours, helping us to connect to nature even if we are not able to go outdoors. Be Inspired by Seaside Gardens and explore beautiful gardens from the comfort of your home.

https://ngs.org.uk/virtual-garden-visits/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIsLfb5-T-6AIVIOR3Ch1sygRGEAAAYASAAEgJXnPD_BwE