

THE HEALING POWER OF HUMAN CONNECTIONS

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Vivek H. Murthy, a former Surgeon General and author of *Thinking*, in his conclusion, the power of human connections and how that can prevent loneliness and improve our health. (1) **It certainly is a book worth reading!**

The greatest moments of joy involve other people – the birth of a child, finding love, reunions with dear friends. And our moments of greatest sorrow often involve separation and loss of those connections – the death of a loved one, a romantic breakup, and an irreconcilable dispute with a close friend.

The **great challenge** facing us today is **how to build a people-centered life** and a people-centered world. So many of the front-page issues we face are made worse by (and in some case originate from) disconnection. Many of these challenges are the manifestation of a deeper individual and collective loneliness that has brewed for too long in too many. In the face of such pain, **few healing forces are as powerful as genuine, loving relationships.**

What really matters in life? Strong relationships are what matters most. They improve our health, enhance our performance, and enable us to rise above differences of opinion and ideology to come together and take on big challenges as a society. **Human connection is the foundation on which we build everything else.**

Creating a connected life begins with the decisions we make in our day-to-day lives. Do we choose to take time for people? Do we show up as our true selves? **Do we seek out others with kindness, recognizing the power of service to bring us together?**

This work isn't always easy. It requires courage, the courage to be vulnerable, to take a chance on others, to believe in ourselves. But as we build connected lives, we make it possible to build a connected world. **We treat kindness and compassion as sacred values** that are reflected in our culture.

When Vivek H. Murthy thinks back on the patients he cared for in their dying days, **the size of their bank accounts and their status in the eyes of society were never the yardsticks by which they measured a meaningful life. What they talked about were relationships.** They talked about the relationships that brought them great joy and the ones that broke their hearts. In the final moments, when only the most meaningful strands of life remain, it's the human connections that rise to the top.

(1) Vivek H. Murthy, *Together*, (New York: Harper Wave, 2020).