

Logged In, Left Out: Finding Real Connection Beyond the Screen

What to Know

In a world where you're constantly connected—through phones, social media, and online chats—it can feel like you're missing something. Maybe you're scrolling through endless posts, viewing 'likes' and receiving messages, but deep down, you still feel disconnected or alone. It's okay. You're not the only one who feels this way.

Sometimes, taking a step back and examining your online and offline connections is helpful. It'll help you think about the people in your life, how you interact with them, and what relationships make you feel seen and valued. Most importantly, it will help you reconnect with the most important person in your life—**yourself**. You can build deeper, more authentic connections that leave you feeling fulfilled, not drained. You deserve real and supportive relationships.

What to Do

List five people, whether the relationship is online, both, or offline (in person), and whether the connection feels close, neutral, or distant. Then, write down how you would like the relationship to be different.

Name	Online/Offline/ Both	How Does the Connection Feel?	What Would You Like to Be Different?

Social media often shows only the "highlight reels" of other people's lives—happy moments, achievements, perfect selfies. Seeing this can make you feel like your life isn't as good enough.

Write about a recent time social media made you feel sad, left out, or not good enough. What happened?

Reality Check: Write down two reminders about what you *don't* see behind those "highlight reels." Example: "I don't know their struggles or worries."

1. _____
2. _____

Reframe Your Perspective: Change how you view a situation to see it in a more positive or realistic light.

Original thought: "Everyone else is happier than me."

Reframe: "Everyone has ups and downs. My worth is not defined by their posts."

Now you try:

Your original thought: _____

Reframe: _____

What does connection mean to you? What do you value most in a friend or connection? Check all that apply and add your own!

___ Trust

___ Shared laughter

___ Honesty

___ Fun times together

___ Humor

___ Doing sports together

___ Loyalty

___ Other: _____

___ Feeling heard and understood

___ Other: _____

___ Shared interests

___ Other: _____

Which relationships in your life make you feel seen, valued, and happy? Why?

How can you bring these qualities into your relationships more often? Example: "I'll reach out to my friends with a message just to check in."

Choose one of these to try this week and write how you'll do it:

- Spend time with a friend or family member offline (for example, play a game).
- Text or call someone just to check in and say you're thinking of them.
- Talk to someone new or invite a classmate to lunch.
- Share how you're feeling with someone you trust.
- Start a group chat or activity where people can talk about a shared hobby.

How I'll connect this week: _____

Sometimes, the strongest connection starts with you. Write 3 things you like about who you are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Technology can be great, but taking breaks is important for your mental health.

Screen Break Plan: Pick one activity you'll do this week that doesn't involve screens. Circle it:

- Reading a book

- Drawing, painting, or writing
- Spending time outdoors
- Exercising or dancing
- Listening to music without distractions
- Other: _____

Why does this activity feel good for you?

What's one thing you'll do this week to strengthen your connections with others or yourself? Be specific!

How do you think taking small actions will improve the way you feel?

Choose one affirmation to repeat this week, or write your own:

"I am worthy of meaningful, authentic connections."

"I am seen, valued, and appreciated for who I am."

"I choose to connect with others in ways that make me feel good."

Your affirmation: _____
