

Simple, practical steps to fall in love (and *make new connections*) with your city – your community

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In an article I wrote spotlighting how to fight what's known as the "loneliness epidemic," I encouraged readers to love their community and to give back. I asked: "What are you doing, and what CAN you do, to foster in-person community in your neighborhood, at work, and among friends who share interests in common?"

One of the most practical ways to feel more connected to your community is to *get to know your city*, town, or urban area where you live, work and play. When you feel connected to your city, it sets the stage for planting deeper roots and stronger human interpersonal relationships.

Here are six practical ways to fall in love with your city and feel more connected with your community.

1. Get to know your city's skyline, as if it were a treasured painting.

- ✓ Study the skyline from a distance – the different building heights, shapes and styles of the architecture.
- ✓ Notice the difference on a cloudy day versus sunshine. Take photos and share them!
- ✓ Then, get closer to the skyline. Ride an elevator to the top of a tall building where you can grab a majestic view.
- ✓ Observe and reflect: What are the tallest buildings in your city? Oldest and most historic? Most unique and funky?



2. Know the top 10 or so iconic places to visit, such as libraries, museums, government buildings, parks and places where public art is displayed.

- ✓ Name your personal favorite iconic places, and visit them regularly.
- ✓ Set up events at your favorite iconic places. Make these your go-to spots for entertaining out-of-town guests.



3. Develop a list of your favorite walking and bicycling paths.

- ✓ Then, get out there to stroll, bike and absorb the sights, sounds and smells at a slower pace.

4. Identify special outdoor places where your city's nature, beauty, and landscape feed your soul.

- ✓ For example, in New York City , it could be Central Park. In Phoenix, it could be one of many outdoor parks near mountains, or the Desert Botanical Garden. Every great city has great outdoor spaces. Find yours!



5. Know your city's top places where arts/culture is contributing to the story and vitality of your hometown.

- ✓ Visit these arts/culture venues regularly. Donate to support nonprofit arts/culture organizations of your choice, if your budget allows. Artists and local art/culture contribute to the economic vibrancy of your city.
- ✓ Make these your go-to spots for entertaining out-of-town guests.

6. Know and regularly experience your city's top local retail and food/beverage venues.

- ✓ Consult your city's downtown or chamber of commerce websites. Scout local food/beverage websites to investigate top attractions.



Once you know and *do* these six things, you will know your city and feel *even more* connected to your community. When you feel connected, you can better determine where and how to make a difference, creating your own, unique community legacy.