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LIFESTYLE

Find new friends

Expand your social network to enjoy a healthier life

THE MORE SOCIAL ties people have, the better their health is during adolescence and the golden years of their lives, says a new study. "Based on these findings, it should be as important to encourage adolescents and young adults to build broad social relationships and social skills for interacting with others as it is to eat healthy and be physically active," said one of the researchers Kathleen Harris, professor at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, US. The study builds on previous research that shows that aging adults live longer if they have more social connections.

Specifically, the team found that the sheer size of a person's social network was important for health in early and late adulthood. In adolescence, that is, social isolation increased risk of inflammation by the same amount as physical inactivity while social integration protected against abdominal obesity. In old age, social isolation was actually more harmful to health



than diabetes on developing and controlling hypertension. In middle adulthood, it was not the number of social connections that mattered, but what those connections provided in terms of social support or strain, the study said.

"The relationship between

health and the degree to which people are integrated in large social networks is strongest at the beginning and at the end of life, and not so important in middle adulthood, when the quality, not the quantity, of social relationships matters," Harris said. For the study, the

researchers drew on data from four nationally representative surveys of the US population that, together, covered the lifespan from adolescence to old age. The study was published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. IANS

Muffler chic

Wrap it around the neck in style this winter



IT'S TIME TO amp up the style quotient with muffler this winter. Ditch the boring scarves for thick, chunky, faux fur or super wide wrap muffler with tassels. Aastha Bahl, designer of brand Mistletoe, lists out some trends in mufflers to make this winter super fashionable:

• **The cable knit muffler:** Thick, chunky and warm, these mufflers are a staple for the winter wardrobe as these are classic. Cable knit snoods are very versatile too. Wear these in off-white, beige or any pastel colour to up your style quotient.

• **The faux fur muffler:** These are super hot this winter. Available in a variety of colours like black, white, beige and dark brown, they can make a casual outfit look chic and look great with evening wear.

• **The pashmina reversible jacquard muffler:** This particular style looks great with ethnic or western outfits. Long lengths are popular. They are also great

as wraps for an evening out.

• **The knitted ruffled muffler:** This is perhaps the cutest style in mufflers. The muffler looks like a circular ruffle that is knitted and drapes incredibly well. These can be used as a centre piece accessory for a monochrome look.

• **The short narrow muffler/neck tie:** This particular style is reminiscent of the 1970s. These are super long (think till the ankles) in length and look best either in multi colours or solids. Due to their narrowness, they have a delicate feel and can make any outfit look super chic.

• **The super wide wrap muffler with tassels:** This is perhaps the most versatile muffler which also works like a wrap due to its width. The tassels give it a distinct boho feel. It's available in a variety of patterns like Aztec prints, Indian (American Indian) tribal prints, checks, and in solid colours which are hot this season. IANS

ALIGN YOUR LIFE

Stop Looking Start Living

Another year ends and a new one begins. As usual we will make a checklist of what remained pending and what was achieved; which goals were accomplished and which remain unfulfilled. The house will be cleaned and painted. New clothes will be bought. New things will be ordered to embrace this new year. Parties will be followed by elaborate dinners that will be followed by more parties. The year will end the same way it started - with hope of a better life and a new you!

But what if the life that you are leading now is the best life ever? What if you already had everything that you needed to be happy but never realised? You were so busy chasing the dream of a perfect life that you forgot what you had achieved and never celebrated what you had!

So here is my new year's wish - I am happy and content. I want to laugh and love whole-heartedly. May be this is what is needed. I don't need any more bags or shoes. I don't need to lose those extra pounds. I will eat a piece of chocolate cake without feeling guilty. I just want to embrace myself as I am, nothing more nothing less.

How about a New Year resolution - that you will laugh more. Let go of all the dark thoughts and embrace the light that comes along with 2016. No more brooding over how bad the traffic is or how hard life is. Instead how about listening to your favourite song and singing along when stuck in traffic. No more longing for things that only fill your wardrobe. Instead acknowledge the joy that already exists in your life and share it with people you love.

There will be times that will drag you down. There will be thoughts that are dark. But how about making a resolution about choosing the positive thoughts over negative ones. Enjoying the present moment instead of wondering what life could have been. Grabbing that moment of laughter instead of planning for the long-term future that is years ahead. Open a window. Let the fresh air in. Dance in the seasonal rain. Laugh at an odd joke. Share an intimate moment with your partner. Hug your kids. Love your work. Breathe in deeply. The moment is here and now. So stop looking and start living!

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