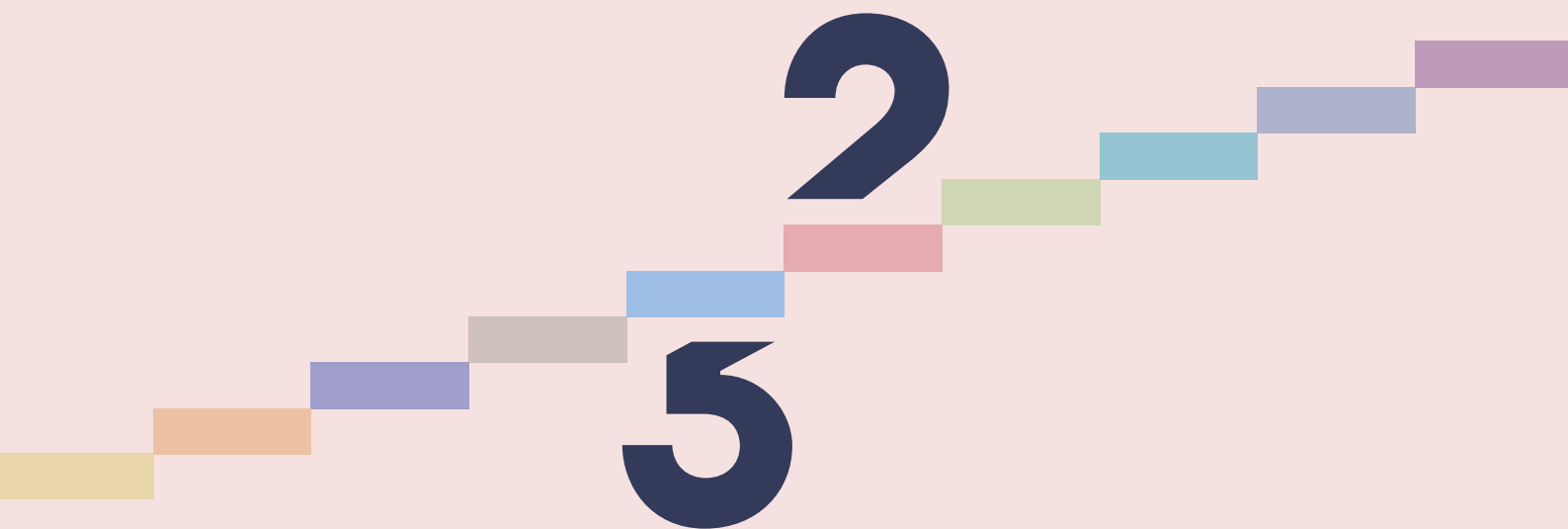




32 Steps to Togetherness

A 'manual' of 32 actions that we, as individuals, can take to build connections within and between our communities.



“

Here are 32 steps that you can follow to reduce your own feelings of loneliness, whilst doing your bit to make our society less divided.

We're building a grassroots, anti-racist movement around this 32 Steps to Togetherness 'manual', connecting civil society and faith organisations across the UK that are promoting connection in their own local communities.

”

Mark Ereira-Guyer -
Founder Director of Civil Society Consulting

About 32 Steps To Togetherness

Loneliness and social fragmentation are stopping us from being healthy and cohesive

In recent decades, we have witnessed transformative social changes in the UK, such as greater dependence on technology and weakened community ties. Modern life rarely enables us to form social connections in a natural way. This has resulted in an epidemic of **loneliness** and escalating **social fragmentation**, which has been further exacerbated by the pandemic.

The solution is connections within and between communities

The solution to both loneliness and social fragmentation is the same: we need to build connections among individuals **within communities**, as well as linkage **between communities**. Civil Society Consulting has developed 32 steps of practical actions that individuals and community leaders can take to build connections with others and a sense of togetherness more generally. The steps include: changing how we think about interactions; developing social relationships in our local neighbourhoods and workplace; and making small but significant changes to our habits and hobbies.

We want to create a **grassroots movement** around the 32 Steps to Togetherness manual. To do so, we are growing a **network of civil society and faith organisations** that are promoting connection. We'll connect them with each other, celebrate and showcase their work to inspire others and disseminate the steps through their channels. We want to spread a spirit of togetherness to as many people as we can, so we're also actively seeking other partners to amplify the message. We welcome other social sector organisations to take 32 Steps and run with them - e.g. developing your own projects based on the 32 Steps manual!

Good things happen when we come together

Our dream is that when we experience society as a shared space, we can cultivate a shared vision for tackling various other societal issues. Our future may look discouraging given the complex challenges we're facing as a society, we feel powerless to bring about change. Lack of connection comes hand in hand with diminishing civic participation. Our driving belief is that, if we empower individuals to be more connected with one another, we can pave the way towards a happier and healthier democracy.

-²/₅-

Here are 32 steps we can consider taking towards togetherness, which fall across eight areas of our lives:

- Think well
- Change your habits
- Help out
- Join something
- Be a great neighbour
- Open up your workplace
- Support your local state school
- Get political



NOREENA HERTZ -
AUTHOR OF 'THE LONELY CENTURY -
COMING TOGETHER IN A WORLD
THAT'S PULLING APART'

Humans are creatures of Togetherness.... not being connected to each other has a profound, negative impact on our health... Our health is moulded not only by community and a feeling of being connected to others, but also by kindness. The kindness of friends and family, colleagues, employers and neighbours, but also by the kindness of strangers. As we rebuild our post-Covid-19 world, we need to remember this.

Think Well

Taking the first step to togetherness starts within: looking after your own mind and wellbeing helps you nurture better relationships with others, whether it's with strangers or existing close friends. Thinking well is also about cultivating a sense of openness to others and to yourself, as you embark on the 32 steps.

— 1. Assume the best:

When we're in conversation with others, we might not know about their experiences or where their viewpoints come from. So it's good to assume, unless proven otherwise, that there is a logical explanation why the person you're talking to thinks the way they do. Assume they are seeking to understand, not to argue - and do the same! Assuming the best in your conversation partner will bring out the best in you too.

Tip:

- If you and the person you're speaking to clash, try focusing on understanding the source of the disagreement, rather than on the point that you disagree with.

— 2. Accept other points of view:

Remember that we can accept other people's points of view without agreeing with them or even really understanding them. Try to imagine why someone might think a certain way, using empathy, and, if you don't succeed, remember it's not your responsibility to convince everyone to come to the same conclusion.

Tip:

- Keep your 'red lines'. Understanding where people's intolerance comes from doesn't mean you have to accept any views that are vitriolic or violent. Reject hateful views to protect your own and your community's wellbeing.



Photo kindly contributed by 4Wings CIC (Steps To Recovery)

— 3. Be honest with yourself:

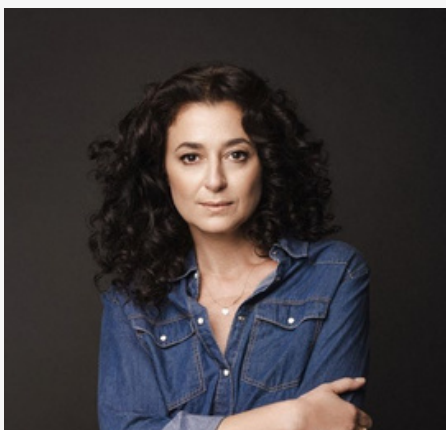
When you really think about it, when was the last time you connected with someone who has a really different perspective or life experience from you? Often, it is our own opinions that we hear and engage with the most, but, once you're honest with yourself about this, opportunities to have conversations with people different to you are likely to reveal themselves.

— 4. Make peace with awkward moments:

Having a conversation with someone you don't know that well may involve an awkward moment or two. You might stumble on your words, or there might be a moment of silence. This is normal! Research shows that interacting with others boosts our mood, even for people who are shy or reserved. Besides, showing vulnerability often brings people closer. Therefore, don't let the fear of awkward moments stop you from having meaningful interactions.

Tip:

- Awkward moments happen to all of us. If you're assuming the best in others, then, when an awkward moment happens, try to have faith that others are assuming the best in you too.



" The joy and meaning of life is togetherness "

ECE TEMELKURAN

AUTHOR OF 'TOGETHER - 10 CHOICES FOR A BETTER NOW'

* Now titled 'A Manifesto Against the Heartless World' - paperback April 2022

Change Your Habits

Habits rule most of our daily lives, from what we eat to how we approach others. The great thing about habits is that we can change them and new behaviours can become normal to us. Because we default to our habits all the time, making small changes to those habits can have a big effect. The not-so-great thing about habits is that changing them requires active effort, but the more you get used to kicking habits, the easier it becomes. Start small and work your way up. Here are some suggestions for how you can tweak your habits to foster connection.

— 5. Say hello:

It's not always possible to say hello to every person you pass in the street, but when there is an opportunity to acknowledge someone and spread some warmth, take it. Small interactions like these are a great way to broaden your frame of reference, without too much effort. It can also elevate your mood as well as the other person's. Once you do it once, the next time will be easier.



— 6. Use TV and screens as an opportunity to connect:

Screens are often thought of as things that divide us, but TV can actually be very powerful tools for connecting us. And let's be fair to ourselves, we live in an era of great television!

Tip:

- Talk to others about the TV you watch, it's an easy, guaranteed conversation starter.
- Share memes with people you don't usually share memes with!
- Instead of watching TV alone, try planning a movie night (or TV or gaming night) with your household.
- If your loved ones are far away, many streaming services now have the option of watching films simultaneously on different accounts in different places, have a movie date with your long-distance pals!

– 7. Be aware of how you influence yourself by choosing who to follow on social media:

Just like “*you are what you eat*”, your world is who you follow: we get our sense of the world from the people we interact with. With algorithms designed to show content similar to what you want to see, it is easy to get stuck in an ‘echo chamber’ and only see opinions that reinforce your own. Don’t underestimate how much what you consume influences how you feel about the world around you, and remember you have the power to choose. Consider how social media could be an opportunity for you to open your mind and change how you feel about the world around you. For example, Social Media can be a tool for connecting with your local area and activities happening in your community.

Tip:

- Follow some new people, maybe someone in the public eye whose views don’t fully align with yours, or someone from a different background or culture. If you apply some of your new thinking styles, you may be able to understand different viewpoints and see the word differently!
- See Social Media as a way to connect to what’s going on in your community: follow the Facebook page or Instagram account from your community centre or join your community’s online groups.

– 8. Go somewhere you wouldn't normally go, or encourage others to:

We are naturally drawn to certain places within our neighbourhoods. We avoid others that we don’t think of as being ‘for us’, but often, we are more welcome there than we think. Where possible (and safe) take a different route, and explore different spaces in your area, like a new coffee shop or park. If you feel intimidated, bring a friend. We can also act as a bridge for other people: invite people along to places they haven’t been to before. And they can do the same for you!



Help Out

Helping other people releases endorphins (the happy hormones), just like exercise, and strengthens our ties to them. What's more, it's contagious; people who receive help are more likely to give help! Although rising living costs make it difficult to volunteer as much of our time as we might like, even small actions can go a long way to building community connections, like taking out the bins for your neighbour one morning.

— 9. Volunteer for a cause that you care about:

Volunteering can be a win-win – you learn, feel connected and empowered, and valuable organisations get your help. Consider that in today's world, volunteering can take lots of different forms. For example, you might have graphic design skills, and you could support a charity by producing materials for them for free.

Tip:

- Try to find an opportunity that makes the most of your strengths or aligns with your interests (some volunteering opportunities could help you to develop skills that might be valued as you work towards your future career goals).
- Commitment can be a bit scary. But it's often more possible than you think to find a volunteering opportunity that complements your time constraints: if you don't ask you'll never know whether you can have more flexible working arrangements.
- Other volunteering roles might be possible to do with a friend, and it's a good way to make sure you get time together on a regular basis.

— 10. Get involved with youth initiatives:

Young people are the future. Therefore, during the critical window that is our youth, we need to nurture and support each other. Connecting with other like-minded young people will make the world feel safer, friendlier and more stable in what can be an overwhelming time in history. What's more, together our voice is louder: as young people, it often feels like we have to 'wait our turn' before we can shape the world, but if you have the opportunity to engage in youth initiatives, you have the opportunity to start shaping the future now.

Tip:

- Participate in youth-led initiatives around a cause you believe in (e.g. environmental activism or a political group) or an identity you share (e.g. your cultural heritage).

– 11. Socialise with older people:

Young people may be the future, but older people are still part of that future too - and they have wisdom and experience that can help build the kind of world we want to create. Lots of tension can arise between generations who are often culturally quite different. However, we are often more similar than we think, and the differences aren't as scary as we think they might be; remember to assume the best (and remember why - refer back to Step 1). Moreover, with difference comes complementary strengths, so young and old have much to learn and gain from one another.

– 12. Help out at a food bank or food poverty project:

If you're short on ideas for how and where to volunteer, foodbanks are always in need of an extra pair of hands no matter what your skill set.

Tips:

- Take time to chat with elderly relatives or neighbours and encourage them to share their stories about life. You can also make a powerful difference by volunteering with a befriending charity.
- Show older people your world; show them how to use technology to make their lives easier (starting with whatever's manageable for them).
- Often we think of spaces or events as being for particular ages only, but ask yourself why and double check if it's really necessary - if appropriate, think about inviting an older family member or neighbour to join at an event that you're involved with.
- To find out more about other ways of connecting with older people, contact your local residential care home and ask about opportunities to help out.



Join Something

Shared activities can build a sense of trust, belonging and common ground between people from very different backgrounds. This means they're a great way to lay the foundations for lasting friendships. On top of that, developing your skills and interests in a group setting can bring about positive changes in your life, which are otherwise hard to make on your own.

— 13. Join a club:

There are lots of clubs out there that you might not know about. If you are already doing a hobby alone, see if there are groups where you can meet others to work on it. If you'd like to learn a new skill or hobby, doing it in a group makes taking on a new skill or hobby less daunting, it also motivates us to stick with it, because we show up for the rest of the group. With regular attendance, we can build connections with other club members which might keep going outside of the club setting.

Tip:

- If you're hesitant about making a commitment, explore a club that doesn't require weekly commitments. For example, try joining a community, cultural or civic centre that offers free day trips or visits to museums.

— 14. Join a class:

Learning side-by-side allows us to build connections organically by uniting us on a common task, so why not take up a class to broaden your skill set or improve your confidence whilst meeting new people at the same time. For example, learn a new language or a new style of dance.

Tip:

- Say hello and be friendly to other people in the class - you might even consider suggesting a social activity outside of the class, for example visiting a local gallery with the people in your art class or going for food/drinks after the session.

at Neighbour:

undaries with your neigh

th your neighbours

and give help to your neighbo

al holidays as

ty to connect

ur Workp?

is dive

ns bet

ssi

15. Start a book group or film club:

The nice thing about books and films is that they're readily available and you don't need specific skills to enjoy them with others. They're also great drivers for conversation; they can open up debates on wider issues and provide opportunities to share personal experiences, helping us get to know others on a deeper level.

Tip:

- If you're not into books or films, consider what other activity you could use to bring people together. Watching football? Playing cards?

16. Visit a place of worship:

If you are a person of faith, your place of worship is a natural meeting point, where you can build connections or deepen existing links with others. If you're not, finding out more about the beliefs, cultural practices and traditions of different religious communities can make us feel more connected to the worlds around us.

Tip:

- If you are already a person of faith, look into joining the social activities or volunteering at your place of worship, if you aren't already involved, and contribute ideas about how to make activities more appealing to a wider range of people.
- If you're not a person of faith, but there is a local church, mosque, temple or another place of worship that you're curious about but have never been inside, try to find an opportunity to visit.



Be A Great Neighbour

We often don't make the most of the fact that we are connected to others simply by living on the same street or in the same building, but why miss out on the potential social connections that can be found right next door? Chatting or simply exchanging a 'hello' with neighbours as you pass on the stairwell can brighten up everyone's day - and strengthen the support system you have in your immediate vicinity. Even where there are language barriers, small acts of kindness can make the world around us seem like a safer place.

— 17. Lower your boundaries with your neighbours:

Beyond saying hello or a friendly nod, you can also stop to ask a bit about your neighbours' life. You can create common ground to form the basis of future conversations. Since you're likely to be running into your neighbours a lot, feeling connected to them should help you to feel more comfortable in and around your home.

"I grow fruit and veg in my small garden and have taken down physical fences with some neighbours to share tools and composting. When we end up with a glut we have a harvest festival and invite other families in the street too."

— 18. Share food for your neighbours:

Food brings people together, it's also a great way to share something from your culture and learn about other cultures. If you're cooking for a special occasion, offer any extras (leftovers) to your neighbours as a starting point for conversation (you don't have to leave it to chance either, you could add a little more ingredients especially!)

Tip:

- If you have leftover chocolates from a religious festival or fruit or vegetables from your garden, share them with your neighbours.

– 19. Ask for and give help to your neighbours:

Creating reciprocal relationships with your neighbours is a great way to foster a sense of togetherness. People feel good when they can help others, so create that opportunity for your neighbours even if you don't really need much help. Opening yourself up to giving and getting assistance with those near you will deepen your bonds with them. If this doesn't feel like it will work with your immediate neighbours, what about that friend of a friend on the next street?

Tips:

- Ask your neighbours when you need some advice with home improvements or to borrow something; and reciprocate it when they are in need. "I got locked out recently and my first instinct was to call a family member who lives quite far away; then I suddenly thought why not use this as an opportunity to create a relationship with my neighbour." – Mireia, from Barcelona.
- Take the first step! Sometimes we forget how nice it is to feel useful and be able to help someone. Therefore don't be afraid to be the first one to ask a favour. It should set a precedent for your neighbour to ask for small favours from you anyway. You can ask your neighbour to receive a package for you if you're going to be away - a great excuse to go round and start a conversation!
- It's important to remember that people don't want to feel dependent or like a burden - they want to feel like they can return the favour. Try to actively appreciate their strengths and take them up on small ways they can offer you help too. This will remove any shame they may have around asking for your assistance and helps to make for a more balanced relationship. In Albania there is a culture of Subbotnik, which are 'working Saturdays' when people in the same building help one another out; this is the perfect opportunity!

– 20. Use seasonal holidays as an opportunity to connect:

Religious holidays and special times of the year can be an opportunity to connect with your neighbours. Get informed about what holidays your neighbours might be celebrating so that you can greet them on and around the holidays they celebrate, when you get the chance. Similarly, letting your neighbours know that it's a special occasion for you will spread some warmth.

Tip:

- Get informed about what holidays your neighbours might be celebrating using the multi-faith calendar or a quick online search. Wishing someone Eid Mubarak or It's a handy way to start a conversation.
- Sharing something you have cooked to mark a holiday that you celebrate will often be appreciated.
- You could even use holidays as an opportunity to visit one another's houses. "In Albania, for every celebration we visit one another's houses - even if we don't belong to the same religion. It's fantastic! Even if you're not religious you tend to enjoy the opportunity." – Klaudjo from Albania.

Open Up Your Workplace

Work is an opportunity to bring together people who might not normally come together, together. Plus, we spend a lot of time working, so even small changes to the work environment have a big impact on our lives. If you are in a position of authority, take steps to actively bring in people together from different backgrounds, build connections between colleagues, and ensure everyone feels valued. If you're not in a managerial position, you can still contribute to a more socially-connected professional environment by applying our other steps in this document to your work life.

– 21. Make sure your team is diverse:

At work, people sit side-by-side and build bonds by working towards common goals, no matter what their cultural background. What's more, diverse organisations outperform less diverse organisations, because they can call on a wider range of perspectives and strengths. So make your workplace as equitable and inclusive as it can be! When we talk about diversity, race/ethnicity, gender and sexuality are often what first spring to mind. But remember, diversity also includes age, socio-economic, cultural or religious backgrounds, as well as different abilities and personality types.

Tips:

- Reach a broader range of potential colleagues by advertising somewhere new.
- Also, review your job adverts: replace jargon with more accessible language, e.g. asking for a 'digital native' can put off people of different ages (we recommend watching *The Intern!*) Before advertising, get a range of different people to look over the advertisement and give feedback on what type of person the description conjures up in their mind.

– 22. Encourage connections between your team:

People tend to work better together when they feel connected to and accepted by their colleagues. Your team might need a helping hand coming together, especially if some are working remotely.

Tips:

- Depending on the nature of your workplace, you could:
- Ritualise personal check-ins – e.g. by allocating time at the beginning of meetings.
- Block out time for the team to celebrate birthdays.
- Organise social activities or lunches together.
- Sports can be a good activity to bring people together, specially when you are working remote or hybrid. Example: suggest beach volleyball or table tennis once a week, you might even become a professional team!
- Encourage communication to be 'little and often' – e.g. rather than writing long emails, try and find an instant messaging platform your team feels comfortable with.
- Create spaces and time for people to gather naturally. Consider a 'drop in', informal atmosphere, e.g. by establishing a lounge area and bringing refreshments out at a particular time each day.
- Emphasise how everyone contributes to the organisation's purpose.
- Lead by example!

– **23. Broaden your reach:**

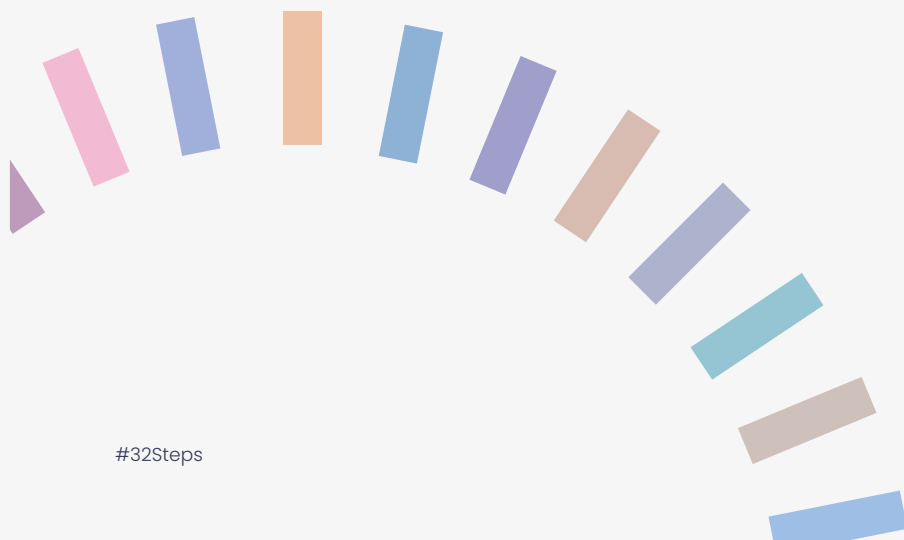
A work place is also a meeting place. If your team already have good bonds with one another, what about widening this network of people? We tend to separate our professional and non-professional worlds, but, if appropriate, softening the line between our two worlds can foster a friendlier atmosphere in both.

Tips:

- If appropriate, consider letting your staff know that they are welcome to bring partners, family or friends to work events.
- You could also consider integrating yourselves better into the community where your office space is: invite neighbouring businesses or residents to your work events, or consider hosting shared social events; think about how your organisation can contribute more to the wider community (e.g. through supporting local businesses).

– **24. Unionise or join a professional body:**

Unions have been on the decline, but are important places where peers from the same sector can convene to achieve common aims and to uphold your rights and dignity at work. If unions aren't for you, or don't exist in your country, consider joining a professional body so that you can feel part of a wider community of professionals.



Support Your Local State School

School experiences stay with us for life, so we all have a lot to gain from strengthening the schools that shape us, because schools shape the children of the future! Schools are also key in striving towards a fairer society where children can access equal life opportunities regardless of their background. In many countries, schools are important social hubs, where parents and children can come together for a more connected community, which means schools have a role to play in encouraging an inclusive social culture and institutionalising positive social practices amongst students, parents and teachers alike.

— 25. Help out at your local school:

Schools are always looking for ways to enrich their students' overall learning experiences. Because schools are on tight budgets, volunteering your time can have a real impact.

— 26. Involve school children in community action:

Engaging children at a young age in different social teaches them how to help others. Organisations are often open to receiving the help of schools and their pupils, whose energy and new perspectives can be a refreshing force for good. If it's appropriate, consider which social causes are happening locally and whether you could connect your local school with.

"Children have a natural impulse to explore and manipulate their surroundings, but increasingly in contemporary life this impulse is suppressed. ...As children, and let us not forget it, as adults too, we need to dream, we need to do, and we need to have an impact on our environment. These things give rise to a sense of optimism about our capacity to shape our own lives."



SUE STUART-SMITH
— AUTHOR OF 'THE
WELL GARDENED MIND'



— **27. Ask about school linking:**

School is a great environment to foster social connection, especially between students from different backgrounds. These connections can enrich the experiences of students by bringing different traditions, skills and perspectives to the table. If you're a student, teacher or parent, investigate whether your school is or could be linked with another school in the country or on the continent!

— **28. Encourage your local school to teach civic participation:**

It is easy to lose touch with younger generations and minimise or misunderstand their problems. However, it is important that children learn that they have a voice and they can use it to bring about positive change. We need to foster a sense of civic participation in new generations. If you're a student, teacher or parent, consider whether pupils at your school practise democratic decision-making at school, such as voting on how the school should go about recycling? Encourage your local school to set up a student committee or to elect student representatives on specific issues so that children can have a say in school matters.

Photo kindly contributed by Faiths Forums for London



“Society is not just a top-down initiative. We create society too. So if we are to feel less lonely and reconnect with each other, taking personal responsibility on a daily basis will be crucial. ...some of this is about taking small steps that may not seem much at first glance, but over time will accrue meaningful impact. Things like bringing biscuits into the office to share with colleagues, or putting our phones away and being more present with our partners and families. Inviting a neighbour over for coffee or committing to buy more at our local shops and show up to events at our local community centre.

Other steps will demand more of us, whether it's campaigning for a political candidate who speaks to cohesion not division, standing in solidarity with a group that is being unfairly demonised or discriminated against... More generally it's a shift in mindset that is needed.

We need to recast ourselves from consumers to citizens, from takers to givers, from casual observers to active participants.”



Noreena Hertz - Author of 'The Lonely Century - Coming Together in a World that's Pulling Apart'

**NOREENA
HERTZ**



**THE
LONELY
CENTURY**

Coming **Together** in a World
that's Pulling Apart

Get Political

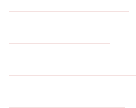
Being political might mean supporting local businesses, engaging with specific campaigns, or simply using the power of your vote. In actual fact, every decision you make is political (even what you don't do is a political decision!) There is also political potential in friendship: inadvertently or not, we share the values, issues and ideals that are important to us, every time we make new friends or spend time with existing ones. By broadening our social network to include people who are different from us, we broaden our minds and start acting in line with everyone's interest - rather than just what's good for people like us.

— 29. Write to your local politicians:

Community responses are critical in tackling big issues like social divisions and climate change. Local politicians' duty is to represent the needs of your local area and speak up on the decisions that affect your community. They are also often quite easy to contact! By being in touch with them, you can contribute to decision-making processes.

— 30. Write to your representatives in Parliament

Sometimes speaking to your local politicians is not enough when it comes to issues of national concern - social policy such as immigration or education policy. In that case, contact the member of parliament for your area.



31. Use your vote, and vote with your wallet:

Voting is an opportunity for you to have a say in local, regional and national issues, but not everyone has the ability or confidence to vote. You can bring about positive change by voting for what's good for everyone in your community, not just people like you. This said, make sure you are informed about your political decisions - if you're not much of a reader, talk to someone who you trust to get their opinion. Whatever you do, use more than one source!

Consumer decisions are also a way of 'voting'. What you choose to spend your money on - or not spend your money on - is also an opportunity to be political and show what you believe in. You can think of this as voting with your wallet!

Tips:

- When an election is on, register to vote with plenty of time in advance, clear time on the day, and let people around you know that you're voting.
- If you don't feel represented by any of the candidates on offer, you may feel like you're picking the best of a bad bunch. Voting remains worthwhile: you can still use your vote to try and eliminate your least preferred option - use your vote like a veto!

32. Understand the politics of all your social interactions and share these ideas:

Everytime we interact with someone, inadvertently or not, we exchange the values, issues and ideals that are important to us. Therefore, having a friendly chat with someone that is different to you and trying to understand their perspective (and share yours) is political. In doing so, we broaden our minds and may act (and vote) more on behalf of that person's interest - rather than just what's good for people like us. Understand the politics of your social interactions - including the social interactions you don't have.

Moreover, share these ideas. 32 Steps to Togetherness is all about building connections within and between communities so that we can thrive as individuals and as a collective. The more people we have following the 32 steps the bigger the impact for society and for Politics.

Tip:

- Send people you know a copy of this booklet or share it across your social media. Spark conversation about the points of interest to you.

32 Steps to Togetherness

Think well

- Assume the best
- Accept other points of view
- Be honest with yourself
- Make peace with awkward moments

Change your habits

- Say hello
- See TV and screens as an opportunity to connect
- Consider who you follow on social media
- Take a different path, act as a bridge

Help out

- Volunteer for a cause that you care about
- Help with young people
- Socialise with older people
- Help out at a food bank or food poverty project

Join Something

- Join a club
- Join a class
- Start a book group or film club
- Visit a place of worship

Be a great neighbour

- Invite your neighbours round
- Cook or bake for your neighbours
- Ask for and give help to your neighbours
- Do seasonal cards

Open up your workplace

- Make sure your team is diverse
- Encourage connections between your team
- Broaden your reach
- Join a trade union

Support your local state school

- Help out at your local school
- Support community activity
- Ask about school linking
- Support young people to be heard

Get political

- Write to your councillor
- Write to your MP
- Use your vote, and vote with your wallet
- Share these ideas



“ *The need to restore a sense of community is everywhere I look. At Civil Society Consulting, we are lucky to work with an incredibly wide range of organisations, on a hugely wide range of issues – from loneliness and mental health, to children and young people, to community resilience. The absence of community – which has been key in our evolutionary history – is at the root of them all. Wherever I turn, it feels like people are craving connection to a community.*

”

Natasha Ereira-Guyer – Founder Director at Civil Society Consulting

The 32 Steps on Togetherness manual was first developed by Civil Society Consulting (CSC), a UK-based non-profit organisation that aims to promote health, equality and cohesion by strengthening civil society. The 32 steps build on the actions identified by Jon Yates’ in his book *Fractured*, and are informed by loneliness theory, social cohesion theory and academic literature from notable authors who participated in Civil Society Consulting’s bookclub during the pandemic.

The manual has already been published and widely distributed in the UK, receiving positive reception. Inspired by the manual and rationale, the European Network on Religion and Belief (ENORB) is spearheading an expansion of the Togetherness initiative in mainland Europe, in partnership with the European Network Against Racism (ENAR), led by a group of young Europeans.

