



# The DJC Newsletter

Inspiring  
Meaningful  
Workplace Cultures



## August 2024

### *Cultivating Connections*

### *The Power of Intentional Relationships*

**Welcome to the August Edition of the DJC Successful Thinking Newsletter!**

As we navigate the height of summer, this month's newsletter invites you to reflect on a crucial aspect of both personal and professional growth: Intentional Connections. In a world where rapid digital communication often overshadows deep, meaningful interactions, we're exploring how deliberately cultivating relationships can significantly enhance our well-being and success.

This edition is especially designed for you, our Impact Insiders, as we delve into the power of connecting with others—whether they are colleagues at work, family members, or friends in our community. Understanding and implementing intentional social interactions can transform routine exchanges into rich, supportive networks that promote mutual growth and understanding.

In our feature article, we draw on the poignant lessons from recent events, like the devastating fire in Chico, which remind us of the unpredictability of life and the enduring strength of community in times of need. We'll discuss how these principles apply not just in times of crisis but every day, in every interaction you have.

Furthermore, you'll find practical activities and thought-provoking insights that will help you put these ideas into practice, ensuring that your connections are not only maintained but strengthened.

Join us this month as we commit to building bridges, not just in our immediate circles but extending outward, fostering a culture where every interaction is infused with intention and care. Here's to a month of creating lasting impacts through the power of connection!

## Intentional Connections

Last week, tragedy struck close to home in the form of one of California's largest fires ever recorded, ignited intentionally in Chico's Upper Bidwell Park. In just seven days, the blaze expanded to nearly 400,000 acres, swallowing over 80 homes in its path. Among the chaos, stories of fear, loss, and heroism began to emerge from the ashes.

A close friend of mine was caught in this catastrophe, thinking their home had been devoured by the relentless flames, only to discover it had been narrowly saved by the courageous efforts of firefighting teams. Another friend chose to stay behind during the evacuation, battling the blaze that threatened his neighborhood. Others weren't as fortunate; without fire insurance, they faced the total loss of their homes and possessions. It's heart-wrenching to think about the sudden upheaval they must feel, the ground of their lives unceremoniously pulled from beneath them.

This disaster has deeply impressed upon me that connections—our relationships with friends, family, and neighbors—should not wait for a tragedy to be recognized or appreciated. It shouldn't take a crisis to remind us of the importance of reaching out, of weaving stronger social ties that not only enrich our lives but can also provide critical emotional support during unexpected challenges.

### The Imperative of Intentional Connections in the Workplace

In any organization, the relationships among team members can significantly influence not just the workplace culture but also the overall resilience of the business. In times of crisis, such as during economic downturns, organizational changes, or external disasters like the Chico fire, the strength of these relationships is tested. Just as families and communities rely on their bonds to

CONTINUED PAGE 3



navigate through difficult times, workplaces too must depend on the fabric of connections woven between colleagues, leaders, and stakeholders.

Creating a culture of intentional connections within the workplace involves more than just team-building activities; it requires a consistent commitment to fostering genuine relationships. This commitment means encouraging open communication, showing genuine interest in the well-being of colleagues, and creating an environment where support and empathy are the norms, not exceptions. When employees feel valued and supported, their engagement and productivity increase, and more importantly, they are more likely to support each other during challenging times.

### **Expanding on the Power of Intentional Connections**

The devastating fire in Chico serves as a potent reminder of life's unpredictability and the crucial role of community and strong networks in recovery and resilience. Such tragic events underscore the importance of having a support system, not only in our personal lives but also professionally. They highlight how essential it is to cultivate connections that go beyond superficial interactions, whether with neighbors or colleagues.

In practicing intentional connections, I've learned that it begins with the simple yet profound act of regular check-ins. These are not cursory greetings but meaningful engagements that allow for genuine exchanges about life's ups and downs. By setting reminders to reach out to people—whether they are friends, family, or coworkers—I am not just maintaining a network; I am nurturing relationships that could be crucial in times of need.

Active and empathetic listening forms the core of these interactions. When people feel heard and understood, it deepens the trust and strengthens the bonds between them. This skill is invaluable, particularly in the workplace, where clear and compassionate communication can often preempt conflicts and misunderstandings.

CONTINUED PAGE 4



Moreover, fostering an environment of openness, where sharing and vulnerability are encouraged, has proven to be beneficial. In the workplace, this openness can transform the organizational culture, fostering a sense of belonging and loyalty. It also helps in recognizing the challenges others face, allowing for more supportive and collaborative solutions.

Practical support, whether through acts of kindness following personal losses or professional mentorship and guidance, solidifies these connections. Such support reassures individuals that they are not alone, reinforcing the strength of their network.

Lastly, thoughtful use of technology to maintain connections has become a cornerstone in today's increasingly digital world. Whether facilitating remote work or keeping in touch across global offices, technology, when used wisely, ensures that physical distance does not turn into emotional distance.

### **A Unified Approach to Life and Work**

The lessons from the Chico fire are clear: life is unpredictable, but the strength of our connections can make a significant difference in how we face its challenges. These principles are universally applicable, from how we interact with our neighbors to how we engage with our colleagues. As we move forward, let's carry the commitment to intentional connections into every sphere of our lives, ensuring that when the next crisis hits, we are prepared—not just in resources, but in relationships that endure and empower.

THE MOST BASIC AND POWERFUL WAY TO  
*CONNECT*  
TO ANOTHER PERSON IS TO LISTEN. JUST  
LISTEN. PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT  
THING WE EVER GIVE EACH OTHER IS OUR  
ATTENTION. A LOVING SILENCE OFTEN HAS  
FAR MORE POWER TO HEAL AND CONNECT...  
RACHEL NAOMI REMEN

CONTINUED PAGE 5



# August Reader Activity

## Connection Cards Building Bridges in Personal and Professional Life

This simple yet impactful activity is designed to help you strengthen your relationships both at home and in the workplace. By creating “Connection Cards,” you’ll have a tangible way to reach out and deepen your interactions, fostering a culture of empathy and support.

This activity not only provides a moment of joy to the recipients but also acts as a reminder for you to continually nurture the relationships that enrich your life. “Connection Cards” serve as a physical manifestation of your intent to foster stronger bonds, reminding both you and your recipients of the importance of supportive relationships. By taking the time to create and deliver these cards, you are taking proactive steps to enhance your network of connections, enriching your social and professional life with meaningful interactions.

### Materials Needed:

- Index cards or small pieces of cardstock
- Pens or markers
- Optional: stickers or other decorative items to personalize the cards

### Steps:

#### Prepare Your Cards:

Take an index card or a piece of cardstock and cut it into a size that feels manageable, typically about the size of a standard business card.

Decorate each card in a way that resonates with your style. This could be as simple as a colorful border, a sticker, or just keeping it plain.

#### Identify Your Connections:

Think of the people in your personal and professional life with whom you’d like to strengthen your connection. Aim for a diverse mix of individuals, including family members, friends, colleagues, and even acquaintances you wish to know better.



### **Write Personalized Messages:**

On each card, write a short, personalized message expressing your appreciation for the person or your desire to connect more deeply. It could be as simple as, “I really appreciate your hard work and dedication,” or “I’ve been thinking of catching up with you, let’s have coffee soon.”

### **Plan the Delivery:**

Decide how you will deliver these cards. You might hand them directly to the person, leave them in a place they will find, or mail them if the individual works remotely or lives far away.

### **Follow-Up:**

After delivering your cards, make sure to follow up. If you invited someone for coffee, arrange the meeting. If you expressed appreciation, engage them in a conversation the next time you see them. This follow-up is crucial in genuinely deepening the connection.



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UPCOMING  
**EVENTS!**

*I'm*  
**SPEAKING!**

