

THE TOOLKIT



10 minutes to  
**togetherness.**

2024 RESEARCH BY

TheLi.st  
BERLIN CAMERON

BSG  
RESEARCH > STRATEGY > IMPACT





**ANN SHOKET**

CEO, TheLi.st

You know that saying that it's "lonely at the top?" Well it turns out that it is lonely at every level of your career and in every white-collar workplace.

**80%** of women in white-collar careers have felt lonely ***because of*** their job

*according to new  
2024 proprietary research from  
TheLi.st, Berlin Cameron, and BSG*

The solution to loneliness is simple to say, harder to achieve: *meaningful togetherness*. Not transactional networking, cocktail meet-ups or corporate retreats, but communities and workplaces where people feel seen, heard and celebrated—free to show up as their full, authentic selves and truly supported in doing so.

**If we all spend 10 minutes a day intentionally cultivating connections and community, we could reduce a nearly 20-year decline in social engagement by 50%.**

And so for this tool kit, we have tapped the country's leading experts on social science, health & wellness, the future of work, networking & connection, and diversity & belonging in the workplace.

We've distilled decades of their experience and expertise into 10 bite-sized suggestions for how both employers and individuals can spend 10 Minutes of Togetherness a day so that we start to tackle loneliness in the workplace and build systems that make us all feel seen, supported and successful.

With gratitude,

- A.



# 10 WAYS TO CULTIVATE COMMUNITY AS AN INDIVIDUAL

## 1 Set aside 10 minutes to actively build and nurture your own professional network of relationships:

Set a calendar reminder to spend 10 minutes on LinkedIn every Monday morning to engage with updates from your network and send personal messages to reinforce real connections. Or send a check-in text to a colleague whose name came up in a meeting:

▶ *"Hey! You've been on my mind—How is your project going? Let me know one or two ways I could support you."*



## 2 Walk around the office:

One of the key micro-habits of The Community Cultivators is to spend in-person time with colleagues. The Cultivators are also more likely to make and deepen connections during the work day, so make the most of your in-office time by scheduling coffee breaks or lunch dates with colleagues. This time allows you to get to know your coworkers outside of their roles, catch up on personal happenings, and build community.



## 3 Use your commute:

The commute to and from work can be one of the loneliest times of day, but according to our research, calling a friend or family member from the car or even just listening to music that reminds you of the people in your life can make you feel more connected for the ride.

## 4 Celebrate your coworkers:

▶ **"It's those shared moments that matter. It's those celebrations. It's in thewelcomings and the exits. These are moments that matter in the employee life journey,"**

says Daisy Auger-Domínguez, author of *Inclusion Revolution: The Essential Guide to Dismantling Racial Inequity in the Workplace*. "It's about acknowledging your colleagues. It's about honoring them. It's about showing evidence of care."

## 5 Deepen loose ties:

▶ *"Ask meaningful questions of others so you can learn what their hopes and dreams are,"*

says Susan McPherson, founder and CEO of McPherson Strategies and author of *The Lost Art of Connecting: The Gather, Ask, Do Method for Building Meaningful Business Relationships*. "Oftentimes in conversations, we tend to focus on ourselves and this is about learning what your colleagues are working on and what they're excited about."



# 10 WAYS TO CULTIVATE COMMUNITY AS AN EMPLOYEE

## 6 Pour care into your community:

“As we’ve become more isolated, we’re living more siloed lives and we’re left to our own devices to solve some really hard things,” says Rebecca Parekh, co-founder and CEO of The Well. “That’s where coming back to community and collective care is really important.”

## 7 Nurture relationships outside of your industry:

When your network reaches beyond your company or your industry, you’re able to tap a broader set of expertise—and eliminate any competition you might feel within your own industry. “I foster my network by being open and vulnerable with the women in my life. I offer sincere compliments and make an effort to remember the small details that define each individual,” says Jennifer DaSilva, president of Berlin Cameron and founder of Connect4Women. “It’s through these subtle connection points and genuine openness that my network flourishes and expands.”

## 8 Spend 10 minutes together—with yourself:

“Having a relationship with yourself—where you actually enjoy sitting with your thoughts, finding hobbies and activities that bring you pleasure and joy, that disconnects you from some of the pressures society places on us—that’s beautiful and important,” says Parekh. “Caring for ourselves physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually—that’s where the easefulness comes from. If we’re uncomfortable with ourselves, then how can we show up in the workplace as a partner and as a support system for the people that we love?”

## 9 Normalize the loneliness:

*“It’s really lonely being a CEO. When I became the CEO of Girls Who Code, it was the loneliest job I ever had,” says Reshma Saujani, founder of Girls Who Code and Moms First.*

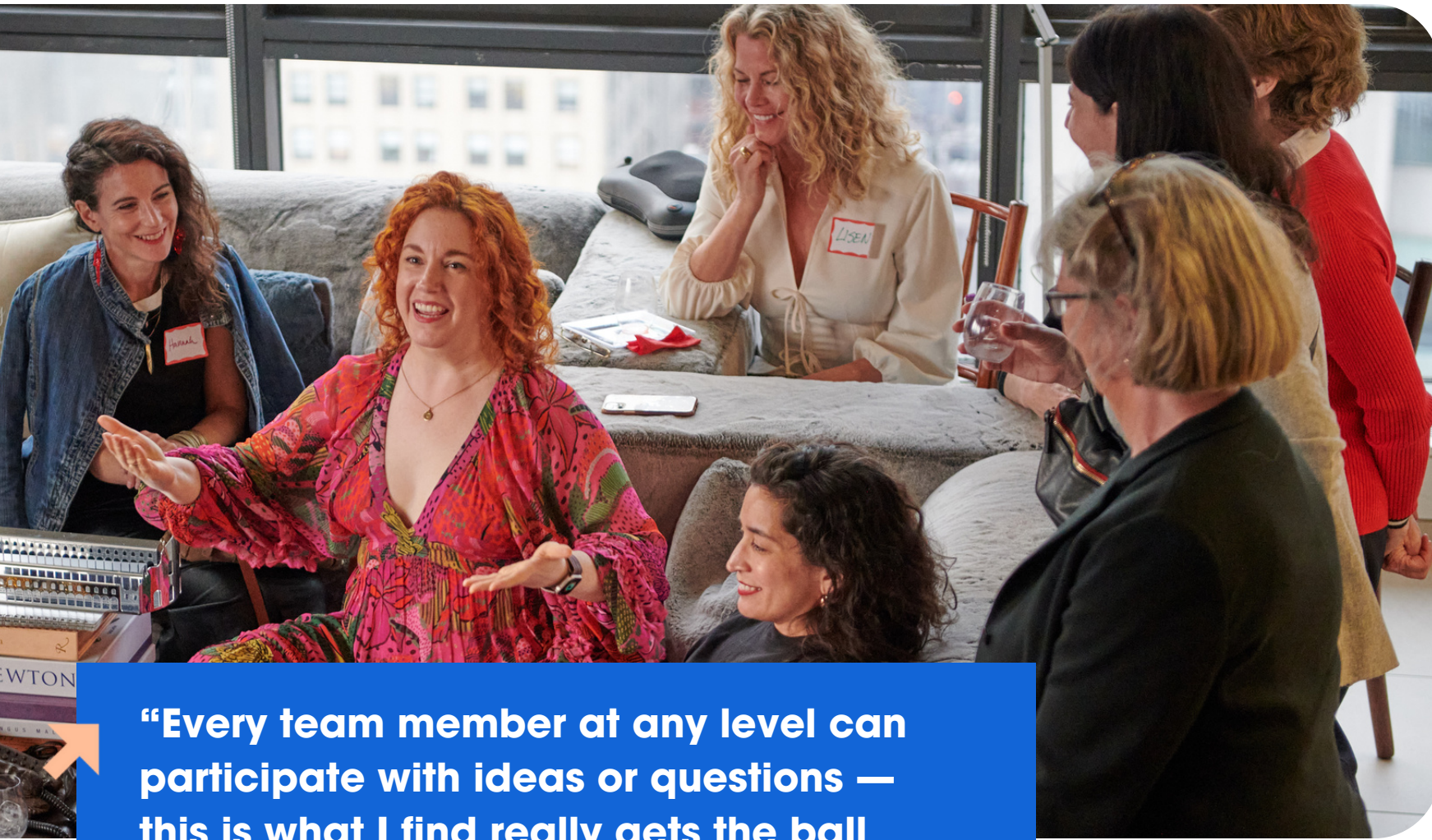
With 80% of people in white-collar jobs reporting that they are lonely because of their work—and for women, it gets worse as they get more senior—you are not alone. When you’re feeling lonely, chances are that someone else you know is too—and it’s ok to bond over that shared isolation or overwhelm.

## 10 Collaborate!

*“The reason why we come to work is because we know we can do something better together,”* says Auger-Domínguez. “I can create something better with you than I can by myself. But in order to do that, there’s got to be a sense of connection, of respect, of values, of understanding what you bring to the table, what I bring to the table and how do we make that a product, an experience, an idea?”







**“Every team member at any level can participate with ideas or questions — this is what I find really gets the ball rolling to foster some of the most innovative ideas,” says Adriana Carrig, founder and CEO of Little Words Project.**

## 1 **Make the all-hands meetings matter:**

“Our monthly all-hands is a great way to ensure everyone in the company knows the state of affairs. It allows different departments that may not touch base as regularly with one another to get on the same page and collaborate with new ideas and perspectives,” says Carrig.

## 2 **Cultivate your managers:**

“Managers are strong drivers of togetherness, so giving managers the tools they need to succeed in an organization’s people strategy is critically important,” says Natalie Lupiani, vice president, BSG. “People don’t automatically develop skills to be great managers while they develop the professional skills required in their industry. Managers need to be trained on tools and strategies to support the

people reporting to them, and they need opportunities to practice these skills.

▶ *“Managers also need permission, encouragement, and examples of showing and respecting vulnerability with colleagues and direct reports at work.”*

## 3 **Take a togetherness audit:**

Understand where your company is currently by examining individual performance metrics to get a better understanding of team health (and trust). Ask your employees what they

need; listen to their responses and act accordingly. “It’s important to gather feedback, and *then* take action,” says Dr. Angela Jackson, CEO, Future Forward Strategies and director, Future Forward Institute. “For companies, that means you’re going to have to go slow to go fast.”

## 4 **Demonstrate authenticity, transparency and vulnerability:**

Employees need to feel confident their employers and managers communicate fully and honestly with them about pay, promotions, and career paths. “Workers want to be told the truth,” says Jackson. “What will separate the companies that do okay and companies that will thrive in the future of work will be the ones who can better manage employee expectations.”

## 5 **Nurture a culture that is collaborative and supportive in nature:**

▶ *“Transparency and opportunity to practice togetherness are necessary elements in the workplace. But it’s equally important to make sure that toxic competition and toxic resilience are absent,”* says Lupiani. “Create



# 10 WAYS TO CULTIVATE COMMUNITY AS AN EMPLOYER

disincentives for these things by intentionally examining individual and group performance metrics and policies being used across the organization. Are the metrics and targets creating a culture of winners and losers? Are the targets more individual than shared? Are there implicit or explicit expectations that employees work on PTO days, or minimize the PTO they take in the first place? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, some of your policies need to be restructured to create those disincentives for toxic culture.”

## 6 **Build in time and space for meaningful check-ins:**

Our research also shows that Community Cultivators are most likely to nurture their community while on the clock. Set aside five minutes at the top of team meetings and 1:1 check-ins to ask how everyone is doing, suggests Jackson. You can prompt team members to share anything they’d like to celebrate, as well as any challenges they may be currently facing. Feeling supported by coworkers and managers helps to create a sense of community in the workplace.

## 7 **Create formal opportunities for employee resource groups and mentor-mentee relationships:**

Provide incentives (and funds) for the relationships to be maintained and nurtured over time, such as company-sponsored mentor-mentee lunches and special events, such as volunteering (without counting that time against PTO or billable hours, etc.).

## 8 **Make community part of the onboarding process:**

Provide new hires with an organizational chart and set aside time to explain who’s who and what they do (as it relates to their role). Take it a step further by introducing them to colleagues (both in-person and via email), as well as pairing them with a more senior employee who can show them the ropes, advises Auger-Domínguez.



## 9 **Showcase employee recognition:**

“I’m a big believer in praising in public,” says Adriana Carrig, founder and CEO of Little Words Project. “I didn’t build my company alone and I’m adamant about giving my team the kudos they deserve, so they feel valued and supported.” You can do this during all-hands meetings; spotlight employee wins in a monthly newsletter; and/or create a Slack channel specifically to celebrate employee wins.

## 10 **Provide opportunities for both personal & professional development:**

“Personal life and career go hand-in-hand, which is why I want our team to have the resources they need in each of these areas,” says Carrig.

“We offer a range of mental health therapy resources as well as leadership and communication coaching. This allows us to each put our best self forward and really level-up both personally and professionally.”

## ADVISORY BOARD



**Daisy Auger-Dominguez**

Workplace strategy expert and  
Author of *Inclusion Revolution*



**Adriana Carrig**

Founder and CEO, Little Words Project



**Jennifer DaSilva**

President, Berlin Cameron and founder  
of Connect4Women



**Dr. Angela Jackson**

CEO, Future Forward Strategies and  
Director, Future Forward Institute



**Natalie Lupiani**

Vice President, BSG



**Susan McPherson**

Founder and CEO, McPherson Strategies and  
Author of *The Lost Art of Connecting*



**Rebecca Parekh**

Co-Founder and CEO, The Well



**Reshma Saujani**

Founder, Girls Who Code and Moms First



**Ann Shoket,**

CEO, TheLi.st

**10 minutes to  
togetherness.**

For more information or to talk to us about partnerships, speaking and workshops, please reach out to us at [Connect@10minutestotogetherness.com](mailto:Connect@10minutestotogetherness.com)