

Category 2: Act together

The pandemic showed us just how profoundly interconnected we are. As individuals and communities, our welfare depends on one another. But to face new challenges, we need to learn to work together better. And that means overcoming some deep existing divides. As US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy explains, this requires the patient work of relationship-building.

Transcript

When you look at the divisions that have developed over decades in society, and that have deepened, those present a clear and present threat to our ability to respond not just to pandemics but to other threats we face, whether that's climate change or whether it's racism or other systemic inequalities.

If we recognise that we are truly interconnected and our welfare depends on one another, that means that we have to strengthen our ability to act together, which means we have to be able to talk to one another - and right now the truth is, it's not easy for people to talk to one another. It's much easier to get siloed in social media rooms where people have the exact same beliefs you do and to hate the other side.

You don't build dialogue by throwing people in the same room who have different views and telling them to talk and find common ground. Rather, you build dialogue by building relationships first. The reason we can have family members over during the holidays - people who we may have significant disagreements with on political issues, faith issues, all kinds of issues - is because we have built a relationship with them, and we know that they are more than their view on a single subject - we can see them in their broader humanity. That's what we have to come to do with one another now.

Supporting partner:



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