

## From the Planners' Bookshelf...

### ***Better Together, Restoring the American Community.***

Robert D. Putnam and Lewis M. Feldstein, Simon & Schuster, Inc., New York, 318 pages, 2003.

FROM <http://robertdputnam.com/better-together/>

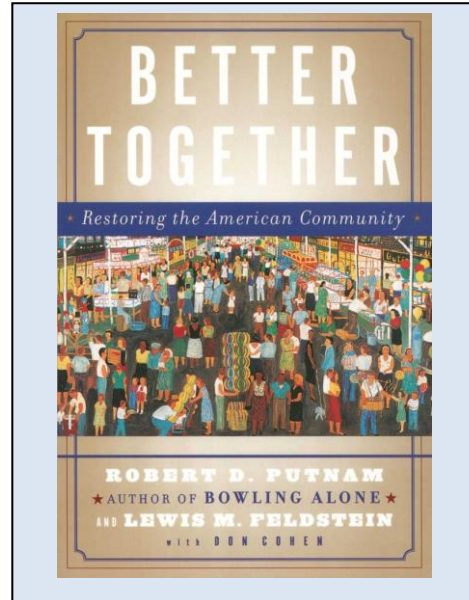
“In his national best-seller [Bowling Alone](#), Robert Putnam decried the collapse of America’s social institutions. But while traveling to promote the book, one question came up at every appearance: what can we do to end the atrophy of America’s civic vitality. What can bring us together again?

“Seeking an answer to this question, Putnam, a professor of public policy at Harvard, with the assistance of coauthor Lewis Feldstein, who has a long and distinguished career in civic activism, visited places across the country where individuals and groups are engaged in unusual forms of social activism and civic renewal. These are people who are renewing their communities and investing in new forms of “social capital.” *Better Together* describes a dozen innovative organizations from east to west and north to south that are re-weaving the social fabric of our country, and brings the hopeful news that our civic institutions are taking new forms to adapt to new times and new needs.”

#### **Excerpt from Simon & Schuster...**

LINK: <https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/Better-Together/Robert-D-Putnam/9780743235471>

“In his acclaimed *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam describes the United States as a nation in which we have become increasingly disconnected from one another and in which our social structures have disintegrated.



But in the final chapter of that book he detects hopeful signs of civic renewal. “In *Better Together* Putnam and coauthor Lewis Feldstein tell the inspiring stories of people who are reweaving the social fabric by bringing their own communities together or building bridges to others. *Better Together* examines how people across the country are inventing new forms of social activism and community renewal.

“As our society grows increasingly diverse, say Putnam and Feldstein, it's more important than ever to grow “social capital,” whether by traditional or more innovative means. The people profiled in *Better Together* are doing just that, and their stories illustrate the extraordinary power of social networks for enabling people to improve their lives and the lives of those around them.”