

Fostering Friendships

People seem to have a natural need for friends, and with good reason. Friends increase your enjoyment of life, relieve feelings of loneliness, and even help reduce stress and improve your health.

Strong friendships, based on trust and respect, will survive the test of time. But sometimes relationships can be taken for granted. Life is busy, and it is easy to forget to show friends appreciation.

Strengthen the Friendship

All it takes is a little effort and creativity to keep relationships alive and fun. Use these ideas to keep your friendships strong:

- Send a nice card for no reason other than to let a friend know how special they are to you.
- Do not shop for the holidays only in November and December. Purchase items you know a friend would enjoy, and save them for holiday gift-giving.
- Think of a fun event or trip you and a friend experienced together, and call them and reminisce.
- Arrange visits with a friend and reunions with groups of friends.
- Email, text, or use a social networking site to message each other, post photos, and share announcements and memories.

Workplace Friendships

You spend a lot of time with people at work. Try these ideas to indicate how much your relationships with your co-workers mean to you:

- Make their favorite foods as a surprise.
- Buy some low-cost, fun toys for co-workers to keep on their desks.
- If you see a television show or read an article that would interest a co-worker, share where to watch the show, or send them a link to the show or article.
- Take on a job responsibility that a co-worker does not enjoy doing.
- If someone helped you out, let his or her supervisor know with a quick email.

The Bottom Line

It takes time and effort to build and maintain a healthy friendship with mutual affection, trust and respect. Yet, nothing can add more to your life than having the care, love and support of a truly great friend.

Resources

- National Institute of Mental Health: www.nimh.nih.gov

- WomensHealth.gov: www.womenshealth.gov
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: www.samhsa.gov
- HelpGuide.org: <http://helpguide.org>

Here when you need us.

Call: 800-858-6715

Online: guidanceresources.com

App: GuidanceNowSM

Web ID: SeattleEAP

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