



JUNE

Building Strong Social Support Systems

Overcoming Mental Health Obstacles & Achieving Wellness

Research has repeatedly proven that people are social beings. We want to be celebrated, supported, and comforted by the members of our social circles. When life becomes difficult, leaning on meaningful relationships eases feelings of anxiety, burden, and pressure. If problems arise, problem-solving as a group can introduce fresh perspectives and allow you to reach an agreeable solution faster. Simply feeling connected vastly improves your mindset and disposition.

SPARKING NEW RELATIONSHIPS

Having a dedicated support group can improve coping abilities, self-esteem, and healthy lifestyle choices whilst reducing emotional distress and cardiovascular risks. However, formulating close bonds takes time. Here are a few ways to meet new people:

- **Join a class or club.** Use your hobbies as a way to meet people with similar interests.
- **Use social media.** There are plenty of groups online for all different circumstances: new parents, newly divorced individuals, those with chronic illnesses, and more. The internet can be a useful tool when making connections.
- **Volunteer.** If you enjoy giving back to the community, volunteer your time. Volunteerism is a great way to build social relationships with others who value generosity and compassion.
- **Branch out at work.** You spend a vast amount of time working, which means you likely work with or around the same people each day. Relationship building may come more naturally if you are in an office setting, but virtual connections for those working remotely can prove to be just as valuable.

NURTURING BUDDING CONNECTIONS

Once you meet new people, begin forging a deeper connection. Here are several important questions to consider:

- Do you feel good about yourself when and after you are with them?
- Is it easy to communicate with them?
- Do they enhance your life and lifestyle?
- Are they willing to offer the same amount of support and friendship you provide them?
- Do you want them to be a constant presence in your life moving forward?

Depending on your answers, you may realize you have found a genuine friendship. Actively work on the relationship and provide mutual support to one another to maintain this bond.

PRUNING SUPERFLUOUS CONTACTS

On your journey to building and strengthening relationships, there are times when you must consider ending the relationship altogether. Some relationships are not meant to grow beyond the acquaintance phase. Then, there are times when you and an old friend grow apart, and the relationship is no longer sustainable. Either way, it is important to understand that holding on to what does not serve you saps your time and energy. Gardeners will often prune the dead stalks of a plant so they can focus their energy on what's blooming. Similarly, you want to divert your attention to what benefits you.

Having a number of close friends and family members that make up your social network increases the odds that your needs are being met. A solid support system supplies you with a sense of security that help is never out of reach.

As 2022 continues to unfold, Creative Benefits, Inc. will send you valuable information and resources to help you prioritize your mental health and wellbeing.