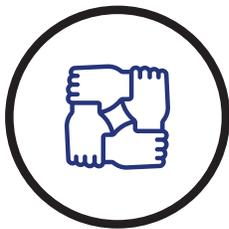


Renewing Relationships



Relationships take work — and do not operate well on autopilot. It will not flourish, if you do not put into your relationship what you would like to receive back from it. In both good times and bad, your active involvement is vital. Being fully present, listening, helping solve problems, and implementing the following tips can help keep your relationships revitalized and growing.

BE PRESENT

When you are in the company of others, everyone involved benefits most when you are present and focused. If you find yourself reaching for your cell phone or checking your to-do list, consciously redirect yourself to whomever needs your attention at the moment.



LISTEN WELL

Be mindful to listen without judgment. Listening as though you are hearing each person speak for the first time shows you care and keeps discussions fresh and open. Avoid anticipating what the person might say based on your past experiences. Listening with your eyes and keeping open body language can also speak volumes.

ADD AN ELEMENT OF SURPRISE

Bring a meal to a friend at their workplace, or schedule a spur-of-the-moment lunch date with them. Rarely does anyone receive a handwritten letter these days, so take the time to send one to show someone that he or she is on your mind. Leaving a loved one an affectionate note on the fridge or their pillow is another sure way to bring a smile.

MIX IT UP

Foster an opportunity to bond over a new experience together by planning a joint activity that neither of you has ever tried.

Think “outside the box” and get creative!

Go ahead and try that cooking class, dance lesson, or excursion into nature that has been in the back of your mind.

RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

If disagreements arise, strive to keep communication amicable, especially in the presence of impressionable youngsters. If you always feel that you need to win your battles, let go of the need to always be “right” by being the first to extend an apology — regardless of the circumstances. This can kick-start the healing and rebuilding process.

Ultimately, the most valuable gift you can give to others is your availability — to talk, listen, and collaborate. Accept that differences will arise and know that with trust and respect as a foundation, you can come to mutual understanding.

For more information on successfully navigating relationships, contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

The EAP is a voluntary and confidential employee benefit available to you and your family at no cost. Call any time, day or night.

800-222-0364

TTY: 888-262-7848

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