

## Building a Social Network

Human beings are social creatures. Being socially connected can ease stress, anxiety, and depression, boost self-worth, prevent loneliness—and be especially helpful during stressful times.

### Your Social Support Network

A social network is made up of friends, family, and peers. If you want to improve emotional well-being and your ability to cope with stress, surround yourself with at least a few good friends and confidants. A coffee break with a friend (even virtually), or a phone call to a family member are good ways to develop and foster lasting relationships. Here are a few other ideas:

- **Volunteer.** Pick a cause that's important to you and get involved. You'll meet others who share values.
- **Join a fitness class.** Not only can you make friends, incorporating physical fitness into your day is an important part of having a healthy lifestyle.
- **Take a class.** A community education course puts you in contact with others who have similar interests.

### Successful Relationships

Maintaining a positive bond with someone involves active participation. Here are some suggestions for nurturing your relationships.

- **Stay in touch.** Answer phone calls, reciprocate invitations. Let people know that you care.
- **Be a good listener.** Listen when your friends are talking. Find out what's important to them.
- **Show gratitude.** Take the time to say thank you and express how important they are to you.
- **Give back.** Be available for the people in your network when they need support.

Taking time to build a social network is a good investment, not only for emotional well-being, but for physical health. You may find that some can become trusted friends you can rely on in good times and bad.

Sources: Mayo Clinic, Healthy Lifestyle (August 29, 2021), Mental Health America

## 構築社交網絡

人類是社會性的生物。我們需要他人的陪伴，才能活得生機勃勃。社交關係可以紓解壓力、焦慮和憂鬱，增強自我價值感，給予人心安撫，抵抗孤單寂寞——特別處於壓力境況，社交關係帶來的支持尤其有用。

### 支持你的社交網絡

社交網絡由朋友、家人和同道中人等構成。如果你想提升自己的精神健康水平和抗壓能力，起碼得讓自己周圍有幾個好友或知己。與朋友喝一杯咖啡（哪怕在網絡上虛擬一下），或者給家人打個電話，都是培育天長地久的親情關係或友情關係的好辦法。下面，還有些其它辦法：

- **做志工。** 選擇一件對你很重要的事並參與其中，你將遇見志同道合者。
- **上課進修。** 這不僅可以交友，而且，將健身融入日常生活，本來就是生活的一部分。
- **上個課。** 去當地的大學或社區大學找個課程學習，你可以接觸到相同志趣的人。

### 成功的人際關係

維護與他人的正向性的關係，是需要頻繁而積極的投入。下面，是些如何培育人際關係的建議：

- **保持聯繫。** 接聽電話，回應邀請。讓人們知道你在意他們。
- **做個好傾聽者。** 當你的朋友在說話時，你要傾聽，了解他們在想什麼是很重要的。
- **流露感激之情。** 花時間表達感激之情，展現友情對你的重要。
- **回報。** 當你社交網絡中的人需要你支持時，你願意付出。

花時間建立一座社交網絡是很值得的投資，它不僅使你有幸福感，而且對你的身體健康和長壽都帶來積極的意義。你可能最終發現，無論順境還是逆境，在你以為幾乎都是陌生人的人群中，卻有一位，或者更多位，是你值得信賴的朋友。

