

Your Employee Assistance Program is a support service that can help you take the first step toward change.

Friendships and Your Well-Being

Friendships contribute to our sense of emotional well-being and overall good health. During hardships and trauma, good friends can be a source of comfort and strength to get you back on your feet.

How Your Health Benefits

Getting together with friends, even for just a short while, offers a powerful connection. This can increase your sense of belonging, self-esteem and drive, and can also act as a boost to your mental health.

- Good friendships contribute to emotional well-being, which makes us less susceptible to illness.
- People with a strong support network are less prone to clinical depression.
- Time spent with friends helps relieve stress.
- A strong support network can help to fight serious illness and speed recovery.

Setting Healthy Examples

Spending time with healthy friends can increase your likelihood of staying healthy as well. Here are some ways that you and your friends can share a healthy lifestyle:

- It’s easier to eat healthy foods when your friends do.
- Your level of activity increases when you spend time with active friends.
- When you start a diet or fitness initiative with a friend, you are more likely to stick with it.
- If your friends consider regular medical checkups as part of life, you are more likely to include them in your life as well.

Providing Support

Having close relations with your friends can also provide a sense of comfort in times of need. Close friends will offer compassion and support, and you can also take comfort in knowing that your friends count on you for the same level of support. Here are some ways to maintain your support levels among friends:

- Focus on supportive friends who talk to you honestly and are always there for you.
- Another person’s point of view can often help to clarify your own decisions about important issues.
- When you feel tense or upset before challenging or important events, chatting with a friend can help reduce stress levels.
- Never be afraid to ask for help in times of need—that’s what friends are for.

Social Benefits

Without close friends in our lives, we would lack social development and the personality needed to succeed in a communication-driven world. Here are some ways that having close friends can foster your sociability:

- Socially adept friends can help build your own social skills.
- Friends introduce you to other friends who may become part of your support network or add to your career network.

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- Socializing helps stimulate us, and keeps us feeling part of life.
- Even a five-minute social chat on the phone can help get you through a bad day.

Having close friendships is about much more than late-night parties and cross-country road trips. Having reliable friends can help to develop your sociability and keep you in good health. Amid your busy schedule, be sure to make time for your friends, even if it means just going out for coffee once in a while to catch up. Having friends close by can give you comfort in a troubling time, and will provide you with a support network to get you through any rough patches in your life.