



How to Develop Effective Positive Relationships

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Effective Positive Relationship means a relationship between two people who support, encourage, and help each other practically as well as emotionally through listening, communicating openly and without judgement, trusting and respecting each other.



Importance

Positive social relationships are not only an important facilitator of resilience, but they also keep us happier and healthier. So, in this article, we are going to outline how to recognise them and how to make them stronger.

Connecting and spending time with the people we have positive relationships with acts as a buffer against stress and helps to build positive emotions. Those people allow us to share our successes and will celebrate them with us. And when we are in challenging times they help us to analyse our problems and find a solution. Relationships that have a negative impact on us can leave us feeling drained, and are often a waste of time, energy and emotion.

How to tell if a relationship is a positive one

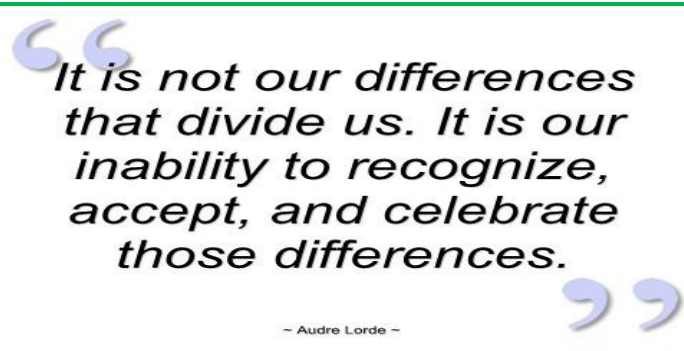
It is a good idea to review your social and work network every once in a while to consider whether all of your relationships are beneficial to you and working as they should. For some of your relationships this may be glaringly obvious depending on how they make you feel, but if you are unsure ask yourself these questions:

- When you need support who do you know will provide it?
- Who do you find yourself offering support to?
- Is there a good balance of giving and receiving of support in the relationship, or does it all seem to be one-sided?
- Are you both able to honestly express your thoughts and feelings?
- Do you accept and value each other as you are?
- Do you try to see things from each other's perspective, without judgment?

One of the most profound experiences individual can have in our lives is the connection we have with other human beings. Positive and supportive relationships will help us to feel healthier, happier, and more satisfied with our lives. So here are a few tips to help you to develop more positive and healthy relationships in all areas of your life:

1. Accept and celebrate differences. One of the biggest challenges we experience in relationships is that we are all different. We can perceive the world in many ways. Certainly a stumbling block that we come across when we try to build relationships is a desire or an expectation that people will think like we do and, in this way, it is so much easier to create a

rapport. We feel more comfortable when we feel that people “get” us and can see our point of view. Life, however, would be very dull if we were all the same and, while we may find it initially easier, the novelty of sameness soon would wear off. So accepting and celebrating that we are all different is a great starting point.



2. Listen effectively. Listening is a crucial skill in boosting another person’s self-esteem, the silent form of flattery that makes people feel supported and valued. Listening and understanding what others communicate to us is the most important part of successful interaction and vice versa.

Active or reflective listening is the single most useful and important listening skill. In active listening, we also are genuinely interested in understanding what the other person is thinking, feeling, wanting, or what the message means, and we are active in checking out our understanding before we respond with our own new message. We restate or paraphrase our understanding of their message and reflect it back to the sender for verification. This verification or feedback process is what distinguishes active listening and makes it effective.

3. Give people your time. Giving time to people is also a huge gift. In a world where time is of the essence and we are trying to fit in more than one lifetime, we don’t always have the time to give to our loved ones, friends, and work colleagues. Technology has somewhat eroded our ability to build real rapport and we attempt to multi-task by texting and talking at the same time.

Being present in the time you give to people is also important, so that, when you are with someone, you are truly with someone and not dwelling in the past or worrying about the future. The connection we make with other people is the very touchstone of our existence, and devoting time, energy, and effort to developing and building relationships is one of the most valuable life skills.

4. Develop your communication skills. Communication occurs when someone understands you, not just when you speak. One of the biggest dangers with communication is that we can work on the assumption that the other person has understood the message we are trying to get across.

Poor communication in the workplace can lead to a culture of back stabbing and blame, which, in turn, can affect our stress levels, especially when we don’t understand something or feel we have been misled. It also can have a positive effect on morale when it works well and motivates individuals to want to come into work and do a great job.

5. Manage mobile technology. By now, pretty much everyone has a mobile phone and many people have two or more. While they are a lifesaver in an emergency, and an effective tool for communication, they also can be a complete distraction when people exhibit a lack of mobile phone etiquette.

6. Learn to give and take feedback. Feedback, in my opinion, is the food of progress, and while it may not always taste great, it can be very good for you. The ability to provide constructive feedback to others helps them to tap into their personal potential and can help to forge positive and mutually beneficial relationships. From your own personal perspective, any feedback you receive is free information and you can choose whether you want to take it on board or not. It can help you to tap into your blind spot and get a different perspective.


7. Learn to trust more. A long time ago, my brother and I had a philosophical debate about what was more important in a relationship—love, trust, or passion. I was a lot younger and more naive then and caught up in the heady rollercoaster of sensation seeking. I have grown to understand, however, that trust is hugely important in any relationship. Years later, I bought my brother a photograph of a little girl who was smiling and staring confidently at the camera with an elephant’s foot just above her head. The caption was: “To trust is more important than love.” I believe that sentiment is true because no love will last without equal amounts of respect and trust.

8. Develop empathy. There is a great expression that I learned a long time ago: “*People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.*”

Empathy and understanding builds connection between people. It is a state of perceiving and relating to another person’s feelings and needs without blaming, giving advice, or trying to fix the situation. Empathy also means “reading” another person’s inner state and interpreting it in a way that will help the other person and offer support and develop mutual trust.

Conclusion

Every relationship which individual have can teach us something, and by building positive relationships with others, we will be happier and more fulfilled and feel more supported, supportive, and connected. Healthy, positive relationships are vital for our emotional and physical well-being. From the moment we are born, human beings form relationships with others: the baby bonds with its parents, a pre-school child places its trust in the nursery teacher and a primary-age pupil makes friends in the school ground. Every day children and young people mix with others with whom they must form relationships – parents, siblings, other pupils, team mates, boyfriends/girlfriends, etc. There are the interactions with the other adults in their lives too, e.g. teachers, religious officials, sports coaches, careers advisors and eventually colleagues and employers. The majority of these relationships will be positive, enriching their lives and helping them learn and develop as individuals. Others are not ideal, but are fleeting with no real harm done, e.g. a first romance.



**A good relationship is
when someone accepts your past,
supports your present,
and encourages your future.**

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