

# Positive Pulse

Your monthly dose of advice on healthy living

## July 2018

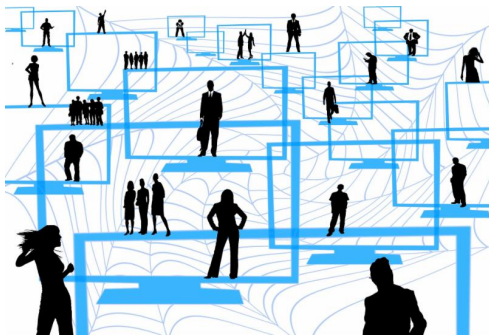
# Friendship and Socializing



July is here and the beautiful summer weather is the perfect time to spend with those close to you. To coincide with World Friendship Day on July 30th, here are some tips on friendship and its relation to healthy living.

- There are many types of friendship that we all encounter in our everyday lives, all with different roles to play.
- Good friends are good for your health! Friendship provides benefits to your well-being and quality of life.
- Making friends can seem a difficult task, but there are ways to make this process easier.

# Types of Friendship



Friendships often blossom in stages. Everyone starts out as strangers until they are introduced. Most people will settle in at a certain stage and stay there, some will rise to a higher stage and others still may lose touch or fall out of favor and go down a stage or more. A rare few will make it all the way to best friends!

## Strangers

- Lowest level of friendship.
- Have never met before.
- *Example:* Someone you see while out shopping.

## Acquaintance

- Occasional contact with very general knowledge.
- Conversations are about very general topics.
- *Example:* Someone you went to school with but don't keep in touch.

## Casual Friends

- Common interests and activities.
- Meet more frequently than acquaintances.
- Not serious emotionally.
- *Example:* A coworker you are friendly with.

## Close Friends

- Share similar values, ideals, and world views.
- Many mutual interests and meet frequently.
- Work together to achieve life goals.
- *Example:* Friends you've known for years and get along with very well.

## Intimate Friends/Best Friends

- All the qualities of Close Friends.
- Mutual responsibility of openness and honesty.
- Feeling of a strong connection.
- Are there for the important moments in your life.
- These types of friends are rare! Hold on to them.
- *Example:* Friends you consider family.

## Other Types of Friendship

### • Mentors

- People who share their knowledge and experience with us.
- It is not unusual for a mentor to be older, and as a result look at life a different way.
- Mentors help us navigate our career and personal choices, as well as introduce us to new people.
- A mentor can become a friend at some point, especially when both people are more on the same level. However, a mentor may sometimes never be a real friend due to their position or stage of life. They are nonetheless an important part of our lives.

### • Online Friends

- People that you know solely through the Internet in some way (forums,



Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

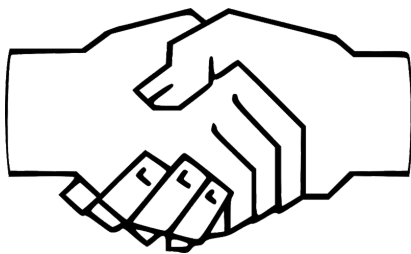
- Online friends can feel as if they are "always there" because you interact with them through the Internet, where Facebook pages and forums are available round the clock.
- Online friends are great, but they cannot replace one-on-one interaction with a real-life friend.
- However, more and more sites are helping people meet online and then continue their friendship in the real world. These friends may become real, in-life friends if both parties choose to do so.
- Remember to practice online safety! Check out our previous edition of Positive Pulse for more tips on this topic.

SOURCE: [www.humans.media](http://www.humans.media), [www.LiveAbout.com](http://www.LiveAbout.com)

Animals are our friends too! [Click this infographic](#) to read more about the human-animal bond in relation to the health of adults and seniors.



SOURCE: [www.IFA.org/humans.media](http://www.IFA.org/humans.media)



## Benefits of Friendship

### Friends Improve Your Quality of Life

- They increase your sense of belonging and purpose.
- They boost your happiness and reduce your stress.
- They improve your self-confidence and self-worth.

### Friends Stick Around During the Bad Times

- Friends help you cope with traumas such as divorce, serious illness, job loss or the death of a loved one.

### Friends Encourage Good Choices

- They encourage you to change or avoid unhealthy lifestyle habits, such as

excessive drinking or lack of exercise.

## Friends Make You Healthier

- Adults with strong social support have a reduced risk of many significant health problems, including depression, high blood pressure and an unhealthy body mass index (BMI).
- Studies have found that older adults with a rich social life are likely to live longer than their peers with fewer connections.

SOURCE: [www.MayoClinic.com](http://www.MayoClinic.com)



# Making New Friends

## It Can Be Difficult

- Many adults find it hard to develop new friendships or keep up existing friendships.
- Friendships may take a back seat to other priorities, such as work or caring for children or family. You and your friends may have grown apart due to changes in your lives or interests. Or maybe you've moved to a new community and haven't yet found a way to meet people.
- The enjoyment and comfort friendship can provide, however, makes the investment worthwhile.

## What's a healthy number of friends?

- Quality counts more than quantity.
- While it's good to cultivate a diverse network of friends and acquaintances, you also want to nurture a few truly close friends who will be there for you through thick and thin.
- Don't focus on the number or compare yourself to others. Do what feels right for you.

## How to Make Friends

- **Attend community events.**
  - Look for groups or clubs that gather around an interest or hobby you share. These groups are often listed in the newspaper or on community bulletin boards. There are also many websites that help you connect with new friends in your neighborhood or city. Do a Google search using terms such as [your city] + social network, or [your neighborhood] + meet-ups.
- **Volunteer.**
  - Offer your time or talents at a hospital, place of worship, museum, community center, charitable group or other organization. You can form strong connections when you work with people who have mutual interests.
- **Extend and accept invitations.**
  - Invite a friend to join you for coffee or lunch. When you're invited to a social gathering, say yes. Contact someone who recently invited you to an activity and return the favor.
- **Take up a new interest.**
  - Take a college or community education course to meet people who have similar interests. Join a class at a local gym, community center or fitness facility.



- **Take a walk.**

- Go alone or grab your pet and head outside. Chat with neighbors who are also out and about or head to a popular park and strike up conversations there.

**Stay positive!**

- You may not become friends with everyone you meet, but maintaining a friendly attitude and demeanor can help you improve the relationships in your life and sow the seeds of friendship with new acquaintances.

SOURCE: [www.MayoClinic.com](http://www.MayoClinic.com)

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# Stay Healthy and Be Social!



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Looking to learn more about healthy living?  
We can hold a Healthy Lifestyles Workshop at your  
location!

The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project has partnered with The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey to help you learn more about health, wellness, and being the best you! We are happy to tailor our presentation(s) to suit the needs of your group. The New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project Team will visit your location and provide free workshops on the following topics:



Don't see what you're looking for? We'll make it for you!  
E-mail [NJSAP@ArcNJ.org](mailto:NJSAP@ArcNJ.org) or call 732-749-8514 to schedule a training at your location!



The Healthy Lifestyles Project (HLP) is a program of The Arc of New Jersey and receives funding through a grant awarded by The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey.

For more information on HLP and NJSAP  
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# New Jersey Self-Advocacy Project

A program of The Arc of New Jersey since 1983

Promoting Advocacy and Independence for People  
with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities