

**say it
—now**

Let's Build Healthy Friendships



Developing healthy relationships is an important step in cultivating healthy habits that we can apply to our friendships and romantic relationships (now or later in life). Start with this question:

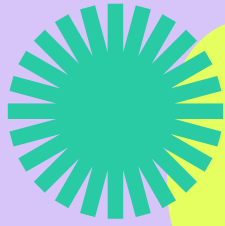
“What does a healthy friendship look like?”

Of course, there are more components to healthy friendships, but this list is just a jumping off point:

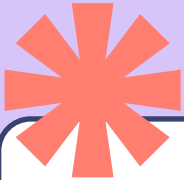
- **Honesty** – you can be truthful and candid without fearing how the other person will respond.
- **Respect** – you value one another’s beliefs and opinions, and love one another who for you are as a person.
- **Gratitude** – you are thankful and appreciative for each other, and provide comfort and support.
- **Trust** – you have confidence knowing that your friend won’t do anything to hurt you or ruin the friendship.

Discussion Questions

1. Think about one strong friendship you have with someone. This can be a friend from school, a neighbor or even a sibling. Why is this friendship special? Consider describing one moment when your friend showed you honesty, respect, gratitude or trust.
2. Conflict is an important part of all relationships, but it is important that we practice conflict in a healthy way. How can respect and non-judgment support healthy disagreements?



Take Action



- Relationships can be challenging and amazing. How can gratitude strengthen relationships? Set up a meeting with someone special and share your gratitude for them.
- Conflicts are unavoidable and can be healthy. It creates a learning opportunity to find a better way forward. How can gratitude help with problem-solving and overcome conflict?
- Find an article exploring the connection between gratitude and conflict, and share a social media post about it.

Idea: you can write a short message expressing gratitude to someone and tag them as well.



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Troubleshooting the Stuff of Life

It's a 100 percent guarantee there will be times that need an apology and others that call on forgiveness. This can be hard, so we'll keep it simple.



Talking points for difficult conversations

Here are a few things to think about when talk is tough. (If your needs are urgent, don't worry about these details — just seek help.)

Start Positive

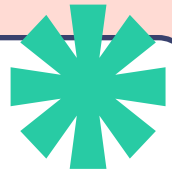
What are things you are grateful for towards the person and the relationship?

Plan Ahead

What can you and the other person take responsibility for?

Set an Expectation

What is the end goal of the conversation?



Add Boundaries

What actions are you not comfortable with during the conversation?

Take a break and return back if any of these boundaries are broken.

Pace Yourself

What strategies can help you stay calm and present?

Listen to Ask Questions

Take time to hear the other side. Don't make assumptions, but ask for clarity.

Write down a few questions you would like to ask.

Write a Letter

If having a conversation in person is difficult, try writing a letter to the person.

Don't forget to begin and end with gratitude for the relationship.

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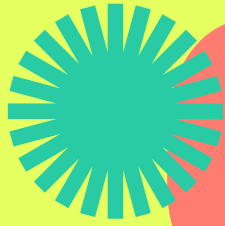
Oxytocin + Connections



Physical distancing does not mean social isolation. A friendly text message, a phone call with a loved one or a gesture of gratitude releases oxytocin, the hormone that helps us build healthy relationships. When we connect with others, oxytocin reduces cortisol levels, the stress hormone, in our bodies.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1.** *Why is it important to maintain connections even if there is a physical distance?*
- 2.** *How do you like to receive gratitude?*
- 3.** *Why is it important to show gratitude to others and yourself?*



Take Action

What is one way you can commit to showing gratitude to someone else in your day-to-day life? Here are some examples to get you started:



- Reconnect with an old friend and share what you are grateful for about them.
- Write a list of thank yous to everyone who has impacted your life.
- Say thank you to an acquaintance or someone new.
- Post on social media of what gratitude means to you and tag a few people who you are grateful for.

