

HOW TO HAVE



happy and healthy relationships

When we are in a happy relationship and have solid friendships our world is a better place. Unfortunately, there are times when we can get stuck in unhappy or unrewarding relationships. JANE JACKSON explores how we can build and maintain happy, healthy relationships.

Why do we stay in unhappy or negative relationships? Is it because we are afraid of taking action? For a happy, rewarding life we must have positive, uplifting relationships.

Do you spend the majority of your time in the wrong relationship, or on activities that take you away from good relationships? If so, you may be trapped in a cycle of temporary friendships and superficial romantic relationships that are briefly exciting but meaningless. Have you started to wonder, "Is this all there is and will be for me?"

How can we build positive, lasting relationships? Where are those friends who can be 'the wind beneath our wings' who love and support us through good times and tough times? What has to happen for us to meet the love of our lives? Here are a few things to consider:

Be at peace with your Self – It's impossible to have a healthy relationship with another if you are not comfortable with yourself. There is a great sense of freedom when you are aware of the joys of solitude, reading, writing, learning a new skill, and doing something you enjoy just for yourself. When was the last time you lost track of time because you were so absorbed in what you were doing and really having fun?

When you learn to enjoy solitude you won't need to have 'people' around just for the sake of not being alone. The fear of being alone is what often leads us to relationships and social situations that may not be good for us.

If you are fearful, you will have the desperate need to 'belong' whether or not it is the right situation for you to be in. The fear will prevent you from being your authentic self as you will be worried the real you is not good enough. The fear will make you crave external validation of who you are, that you are 'okay'. This can create a vicious cycle that takes you away from the feeling of peace that comes from accepting that you are 'enough'.

Next Steps – When you have built a solid personal foundation it will be time to reach out to the good people you know whom you have not kept in touch with regularly. They may be family members, old school friends, people you have worked with you have always thought were nice to be around. List those people with whom you wished you had kept in touch. Make contact!

This may sound too simple, however, when you reach out you never know the positives that will occur. The universe rewards positive action. To rebuild your life positively you just need to take those first steps!

Be Interested in Others – The best investment any of us can make is to take genuine interest in others. When you help others they will want to help you too. Kindness begets kindness. Who can you help today? Where can you be where your skills, knowledge and passions will be of benefit and appreciated?

Join a Group or Association – The easiest way to meet people who love what you love is

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to join an association or group that offers what you enjoy. Whether it is a sporting activity, book discussion group, cooking, spirituality, etc., identify what you enjoy and find a local group to join. This way you are feeding your soul, doing something for yourself that you enjoy and you will meet others who also share your interests and passion.

If you are at a loss as to where to find a group you would enjoy, go to www.meetup.com, a global site that lets you choose your location and interest and identify numerous groups that share your interest in your geographic area. It really is as easy as that, all you have to do is keep an open attitude to building new friendships!

When is a good time to start? Today, of course! Be brave and take that first step to make your life the one YOU want to live; enjoy happy, healthy relationships with like-minded people and have fun again! ■

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