

Building Relationships

“The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.” ~ Theodore Roosevelt

By Liggy Webb

One of the most profound experiences that we can have in our lives is the connection we have with other human beings. People in supportive, loving relationships are more likely to feel healthier, happier and more satisfied with their lives and less likely to have mental or physical health problems or to do things that are bad for their health.

People in supportive, loving relationships help each other practically as well as emotionally. Supportive partners share the good times and help each other through the tough ones.

A loving friendship can halve the troubles and double the joys and, by doing so, can make life's journey all the more enjoyable. So, when relationships work well, it can be a joyful and positive experience. However, as I am sure we have all experienced, when relationships break down and we find ourselves in a conflict situation or we simply do not connect with someone, it can be draining and disappointing and have a detrimental effect on our self-esteem.

Celebrate Differences

One of the greatest celebrations in life is that we are all different. However, one of the biggest challenges we experience in relationships is that we are all different.

We can perceive the world in many ways. Personality profiling indicates how diverse peoples' personalities are and, unlike behaviours, personalities tend to be pretty fixed. We can, however, make choices about the way that we behave around other people.

One of the stumbling blocks 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, whilst we may find it initially easier, the novelty of sameness would soon wear off.

So, whilst we may have different personalities, the first step to building relationships is to accept that we are all different.

We will all have our own unique set of strengths and limitations. It is indeed better and more productive to spend more time concentrating on improving our own limitations than criticising those of others. It would be much more positive to focus on peoples' strengths and accept that, for every strength they have, there is bound to be a weakness. Also, it is important to recognise that sometimes, what we don't like in others is something that we don't like in ourselves!

Don't compare

Certainly, comparing yourself to others is a pointless exercise as we will always find people who are worse or better off than us which in turn will only promote two emotions: one is vanity; the other is bitterness. Neither is a good look!



“The most important ingredient we put into any relationship is not what we say or what we do, but what we are.”

Stephen R. Covey

Focusing on peoples' better qualities and celebrating and feeding back their strengths is a way to reinforce future positive behaviour. Many relationships break down because more time is spent eroding each other's self-esteem through negative criticism and trying to get each other to shrink fit into something or somebody that they are not.

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 very 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 into developing and building relationships is one of the most valuable life skills.

Building Relationships - Useful Tips:

- The relationship you have with yourself is the most important.
- Actively listen to what other people have to say.
- Adapt your behaviour to create rapport.
- Focus on peoples' strengths and give positive feedback.
- Be constructive with any feedback that may be perceived as negative.
- Be empathetic and put yourself in others' shoes.
- Do not punish others for your own insecurities.
- Be present when you are with people.
- Invest time and make an effort.

Treat people as you would like to be treated yourself.

Life is what YOU make it!

The above article is an extract from *The Happy Handbook - A Compendium of Modern Life*



Skills by Liggy Webb which is out now.

Liggy Webb is widely respected as a leading expert in the field of *Modern Life Skills and Workplace Wellness*.

As a presenter, consultant and author she is passionate about her work and improving the quality of people's lives. She is the founding director of The Learning Architect a consortium of niche industry experts. Liggy has developed a range of techniques to support individuals and organizations to cope more effectively with modern living and the demands and challenges of life in the twenty tens and beyond.

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