

Developing and Utilizing Social Supports

When someone lacks emotional health they tend to withdraw from pleasurable activities and socially isolate. One important way to regain emotional health is to develop and utilize social supports.

We all need several good friends to talk to, spend time with and to be supported by with their care and understanding. For someone to be a part of your support system requires that you care for him or her and trust him or her. A partner or family member is a likely candidate for your support system. You may develop relationships with people through activities or interests that you share. These relationships could become strong enough to become part of your support system. Other resources could be clubs or other social group affiliations that you feel a part of and feel important to. Whoever the person is, it is necessary that there be a mutual care, positive regard and TRUST.

Characteristics of a supportive relationship:

Objectivity and open-mindedness. They let you describe who you are and how you feel. They VALIDATE you.

They support and affirm your individuality and recognize your strengths. They VALIDATE and encourage your goals.

They empathize with you. They understand your life circumstances and how you are affected by your life experiences.

They accept you as you are without being judgmental. You can ask one another for help and support.

You can laugh with them and be playful. You will both enjoy it.

They are at your side, supporting you to do whatever is important to you.