



## How (and Why) to Nurture Relationships

Relationships—whether they’re with romantic partners, friends, or family members—aren’t always easy or convenient. Healthy relationships, though, are important for us all, both emotionally and physically.

As humans, we’re wired to crave connections with other humans. Those relationships have helped us survive and thrive as a species. That’s one reason the feeling of loneliness exists. It’s a signal to our brains, much like hunger, that tells us about an unfulfilled need for connecting with those around us.

Left unchecked, loneliness can cause physical damage as well as emotional. Chronic loneliness causes inflammation to spike which can elevate the risk of cancer, heart attack, stroke, and other conditions.

### Variety is important

No single relationship can (or should) fulfill all of our needs. That’s why maintaining a variety of relationships is important. Focus on building a network of different kinds of relationships—friends, romantic, even work—to meet your needs.

### Listen without judgment

Relationships require give and take. You can give by truly listening to what the other person tells you, showing them that you understand, and holding back any judgment.

### Set and respect boundaries

In a healthy relationship, both people adhere to the other’s boundaries—or what you’re each willing to accept from the other. Setting your own boundaries and respecting the other person’s can help you both feel fulfilled.

### Pay attention to your loneliness

The next time you feel lonely, don’t go down a rabbit hole of sadness and self-doubt. Instead, use the feeling as the reminder it is—that you need to reach out to others and reconnect.

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## Dealing with Difficult People

Interacting with a “difficult” person can be draining—and sometimes downright maddening. While you can’t change the other person, you can change how you interact with them. Keep these suggestions in mind the next time you have to deal with someone who’s extra-challenging.

### Seek first to understand

Try to decipher what is driving this person to behave the way they do. Are they feeling out of control? Disrespected? Anxious? Having a better idea of what’s behind their behavior may help you decide how to best interact with them.

### Look in the proverbial mirror

Is there a reason this particular person’s behavior is getting under your skin? Is it hitting an emotional hot-button for you? Identifying this—and altering the way you respond, if needed—may help take some of the steam out of your frustration.

### Have compassion

You never really know what’s going on in someone else’s life. Keep that in mind when dealing with difficult people. They may have bigger challenges than you realize. This doesn’t excuse their bad behavior, but it may help you feel more empathetic toward them (and less enraged).

### Know when to walk away

If a situation is escalating and the other person doesn’t seem willing or able to turn it around, it may be time to leave. Continuing the interaction will likely only lead to more conflict—not resolution.

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## Making Virtual Interactions More Meaningful

More and more of us connect virtually these days. Whether it's a video meeting for work, texts from a friend, posts on social media, or FaceTime with family, much of our social interaction is done electronically.

These virtual interactions are convenient, but sometimes they are not as fulfilling. After all, having someone “send” a hug is nowhere near as comforting as an actual hug.

Fortunately, there are ways you can make those virtual interactions more meaningful. Keep these tips in mind:

- **Be your real self.** Virtual connections make it easy to present a certain image of ourselves. This perceived “perfection,” though, may make others more hesitant to reach out to you out of fear that they won't measure up to your standards. It prevents you from connecting with the kinds of people with whom you truly have things in common.
- **Use platforms that reflect your interests.** The internet has communities for every unique interest—from astrology to zebras. Finding online communities centered on your interests will help you find people who share your interests.
- **Be kind.** Kindness always wins the day. Being critical will only serve to push people away from you.

### Go from online to in person

Obviously, nothing can replace face-to-face interaction. When you can, make plans to get together in person. It will give you something to talk about online the next day!

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# WALNUT CRUSTED MAPLE SALMON

Prep Time	Cook Time	Servings
10 minutes	15 minutes	8

## Ingredients

- 2 pounds salmon
- salt and pepper
- 2 Tablespoons Maple Syrup
- 1 Tablespoon Dijon Mustard
- 1 cup Fisher Nuts Walnuts chopped

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil and spray with cooking spray. Lay the salmon skin side down and salt and pepper.
2. In a small bowl whisk maple syrup and dijon. Spread evenly on top of the salmon.
3. Press the walnuts onto the top of the salmon. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until the salmon is lightly browned and flakes easily.



## Nutrition Facts

Calories	271
Total Fat	17g
Sodium	72mg
Carbohydrate	5g
Total Sugars	3g
Dietary Fiber	1g
Protein	25g