

What's your happy? *Imagine, believe, achieve...*

June 2016 Newsletter



Achieving relationships
that survive and thrive

This summer, take a
stress-less vacation

Disability etiquette:
a winning strategy

e-Thoughts —
We're already halfway
through 2016!



Do happy couples ever argue or disagree? **More...**

When was your last relaxing time off? **More...**

Respect and consideration go a long way. **More...**

It seems like a perfect time to stop and consider: Are you living the life and making the changes you planned six months ago? **More...**

Getting help

Confidential support, information and resource referrals are available for a variety of concerns — both work and personal. Call for assistance for you, your household members or your adult children under age 26, whether they live at home or not. Call or visit us online today!

Achieving relationships that survive and thrive

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Yes, happy couples do argue and disagree. Every couple has their ups and downs.

Why? Because life is full of change and challenge. Each “bend in the road” requires that partners communicate and cooperate. Each obstacle takes patience and hard work from both people.

Tips for keeping relationships strong

So how do couples survive — and even thrive — through good times and bad? Here are some tips¹:

- **Accept.** Differences often attract people to each other. We may be introverted and they’re extroverted; they hate confrontation and we’re always ready to stand up for ourselves.

Initially, we may be drawn to these differences in style and personality. Later, those same things can lead to conflict.

Remember that no two people are alike. Find ways your similarities and differences can contribute to a strong partnership.

- **Appreciate.** It’s easy to harp on things that annoy us about our spouses, partners or friends. How about the things we really like about them? Look for the positives. Express your admiration out loud to each other.

- **Support.** No couple lives in a vacuum. There are friends, family, jobs, money and daily routines to deal with. Try to see your partner’s point of view during stressful times. Decide together how to handle situations that affect you individually or as a couple.
- **Spend time together.** Shared experiences help cement relationships. Time together might include athletics, travel, physical intimacy or just sitting side by side to read the newspaper or watch TV. Nothing fancy required.
- **Play fair.** Relationships can’t thrive in unhealthy environments. Physical and/or emotional violence are never okay.
- **Communicate.** If you keep your feelings bottled up, you’re more likely to explode at some point. Make time to talk about problems and goals. Focus on finding solutions that meet everyone’s needs. Be willing to compromise. Remember to truly listen to each other.

Finding love may seem like luck or an act of fate. But keeping it alive and well takes commitment and ongoing effort.

¹socialworktoday.com

This summer, take a stress-less vacation

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A great vacation is time away from your usual routine that leaves you feeling energized and refreshed. It shouldn't be an experience that leaves you stressed out, exhausted or deep in debt.

Vacation don'ts

Everyone needs time off now and then. But did you know some vacations can be downright unrelaxing? Here's how:

- **When you don't do what you really want to do.** Many people fill vacation with things they think they "should" do. For example, they should go far away, they should sightsee for hours or they should spend all their free time visiting family. Vacations like these are just a list of demands.
- **When you spend too much.** People often feel pressured to spend large amounts of money on vacation. Hotels, travel, meals and attractions all add up. And coming home to bills and debt can dampen vacation memories fast.
- **When you plan too many things.** Part of the art of relaxation includes flexibility. Do make plans, but also leave room for spur-of-the-moment activities. Those are often the most fun.

Vacations can be staycations

For many people, it may be more relaxing to take vacation without leaving home at all. Staycations can include a variety of day trips, nearby activities and coming home to your own bed at night.

You might visit local museums, zoos or waterparks. Spend a day at a lake, pool or beach. Or have a picnic right in your own backyard. These are just a few ideas. You can probably think of many more. Staycations help save on pricey meals and hotels, while still providing recreation and fun.

It's up to you

Whatever you choose — vacation or staycation, high-flying adventure or a book and a beach chair — make sure it's right for you. It's your vacation, so create what you need most: a refreshing, recharging and — yes — relaxing time!

Disability etiquette: a winning strategy

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Do you ever wonder how to act around someone who has a disability? Do you worry you might say or do the wrong thing?

No one wants to hurt or embarrass anyone. Unless you know a person who has a disability, it's only natural that you may have concerns about the "right" things to say or do.

Here are some basic tips that may help you¹:

- 1. Use proper words and phrases.** Don't use demeaning terms like "cripple" or "retarded." Remember that a person has a disability – he or she is not the disability. So you'd want to say "John has epilepsy" rather than "John is epileptic."
- 2. Ask first.** People with disabilities are often independent. Ask before you assume someone needs your help.
- 3. Avoid judgments.** When you see people who use a cane, wheelchair or other device, don't presume they're ill or fragile. Chances are they're just like you in many ways.
- 4. Check out access.** If you're meeting someone who has a disability, pick a place that offers access. This means there are ramps, elevators and other ways for people with disabilities to get around safely and comfortably. Avoid taking friends with disabilities to places that don't offer access.

5. Respect personal space. If a person who has a disability needs your help, he or she will usually let you know. Never grab or touch people who are blind or have other disabilities without asking. You may surprise them or even get in their way.

6. Don't interfere. If someone is in a wheelchair or has a service dog, be respectful of boundaries. Don't pet the dog, lean on the wheelchair or interfere with the person's movement.

7. Speak to the person, not his or her aid. Sometimes an aid will accompany a person with a disability. If you want to ask or say something, remember to address the person, not his or her helper.

8. Don't rush. People with disabilities may need more time to walk, eat or do other things. Let them set the pace.

Remember: A disability is just one part of a person. Many people with disabilities are happy to be considered but don't want to be fussed over.

¹nationaldisabilitynavigator.org

e-Thoughts — We're already halfway through 2016!

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Our e-Thoughts feature provides close-up views on topics and areas of interest from everyday life.

Believe it or not, 2016 is almost half over. The end of June marks the six month point past the hoopla of the holidays — and New Year's resolutions.

It seems like a perfect time to stop and consider: Are you living the life and making the changes you planned six months ago?

- If the answer is yes, nice work!
- If the answer is no, have no fear: You still have six months to go!

For myself, I would say I'm on track with some of my resolutions but not all. I promised myself to walk more and I've done that. I'm up to two miles every other day. Not only do I feel better about myself, but I'm getting lots of quality time with my dog.

I also promised to stop biting my nails. That hasn't gone so well. In fact, I've made and broken that promise several years in a row. But, hey, there's always the next six months – or next year!

Remember, there's nothing magical about making resolutions on January 1. Any day in June will work just as well. You can call them "Mid-Year resolutions." Maybe you'll even start a new trend!

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