

Good interpersonal relationships bring us joy, comfort and hope, while friendlessness makes us lonely, depressed and bored. To develop good interpersonal relationships, you need the appropriate social skills to help you get along with people harmoniously and to gain friendship. Therefore, you need to achieve the following:

(1) Understand yourself

The first step in gaining friendship is to have a good understanding of yourself. You can then make good use of your strengths and improve your weaknesses.

The simplest way to have a better understanding of yourself is to listen to the sincere comments made by people you trust.

You may also read more, think more and participate more in social activities, so as to cultivate your interest and potential.

(2) Accept yourself

When you do not accept yourself, you may become over-critical of yourself. You may hate people that are better than you, or compare yourself with others too often.

Accepting yourself means accepting your uniqueness, trying hard to overcome your weaknesses and keeping up your strength. The methods include:

- set realistic and achievable goals to improve ourselves step by step
- avoid unnecessary comparison with others
- record your good deeds. Give yourself a hearty cheer and build up a positive self-image

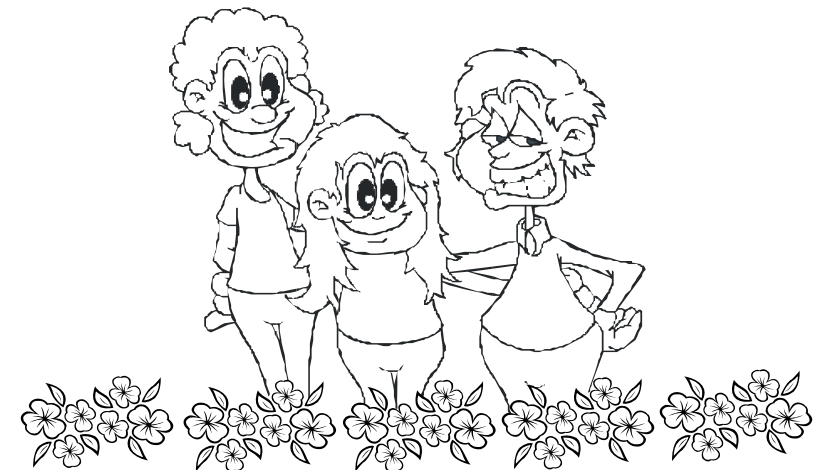


(3) Accept other people

“My friend is not perfect nor am I, so we suit each other admirably.” (Alexander Pope)

To increase the capacity to bear with other people’s shortcomings, you can try the following:

- get along with people sincerely and learn to respect others
- pay concern to others actively and offer help readily
- try to understand and sympathize with people because they may have reasons behind their behaviour
- avoid making judgements about others too early so as not to hinder yourself from having a real understanding of them
- do not expect too much from others because no one is perfect
- learn to appreciate people’s strength. Avoid focusing on their faults only
- pay more attention to and praise people’s good deeds



(4) **Be sensitive in social situations**

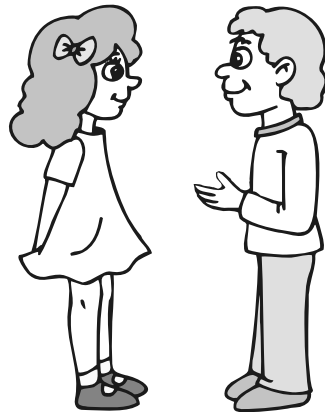
This is the ability to recognize your own and others' emotions. To practise, you have to

- listen to what people say
- try to empathize with them
- acknowledge their feelings
- actively invite them to express themselves

(5) **Social expression**

This is the ability to express your opinion, standpoint or feeling verbally and nonverbally. To practise this:

- you have to maintain appropriate tone and eye contact. Use body language whenever applicable
- speak honestly. Do not disguise or do not be shy
- remain rational and calm when you express emotions such as anger, discomfort or fear



LET US BECOME FRIENDS



Human interaction and friendship building is a knowledge as well as an art. There is no simple formula nor end point to making friends. Through personal development and continuous learning, interpersonal relationships become our precious assets. What people bring us will then be happiness and pleasure. Otherwise, interpersonal relationships can become a burden and bring us trouble and conflicts.