

Getting along with the opposite gender

Our society consists of both male & female. We study and work together, and we join social activities together. In order to build up a healthy & harmonious relationship, adolescents should develop a proper concept towards the opposite sex, learn their special characters and how to get along with them.

Reflect on the following:

1. Does making friends with the opposite gender means you are dating or falling in love?.

- As puberty begins, teenagers develop interest in the opposite sex, and they dream of romantic love. However, relationship between opposite sexes is not restricted to dating or falling in love. It also includes normal friendship which is part of normal social life.
- True friendship makes life more complete, makes you feel good about yourself, and you can also learn how to share, forgive and support each other.

2. What is the significance of making friends with the opposite gender?

Establishing a good interpersonal relationship is a step towards normal social life in the future.

You should adopt the following attitudes:

- you can learn more about yourself through friends of the opposite sex
- making friends with the opposite gender can widen your vision and enhance personal development
- learn the different characteristics of the opposite gender in order to improve communication with each other
- understand the differences and similarities of both genders, and learn how to get along with each other
- establish good interpersonal relationships, enrich your social life

3. Differences between friendship and love

FRIENDSHIP	LOVE
Target at friendship where you feel comfortable sharing feelings	Target at love & marriage
Friendship welcomes more people to join in	Love is a one-to-one relationship, any third party is not welcomed
Friends have individual or group activities	As the relationship develops, two people usually spend time alone together
One can choose friends sensibly, and show friendliness in a more natural and relaxed manner	It is difficult to explain love in terms of reasons and logic. People fallen in love often get anxious about gain and loss
Friendship develops gradually, and you can meet different friends in different occasions. People do not feel insecure about this	Partners adore each other and care about each other thoughtfully. Both parties need a sense of security

How to get along with the opposite gender?

1. Understand each other

Traditionally, male is assumed to be tough, independent, calm, sensible and strong while female is assumed to be gentle, mild, thoughtful, sensitive and fragile.

However, social values are changing, and the image and role of modern men and women are becoming more flexible. Therefore, do not stereotype. Instead, you have to understand the individual's personality in order to enhance communication.



2. Accept each other

Everybody is unique. Everyone has different background, personality and thoughts. If you understand the basic differences between both genders, then learn to admire each other's strengths and accept each other's shortcomings, you will get along well and harmoniously.

3. Look for similarities

Look for each other's similarities, for example, interests, hobbies, characters, etc. You can join activities which you are both interested in, sharing each other's experience & feelings. If you have similar opinions, it is easier to establish rapport and develop precious friendship.

4. Learn from each other

You can learn from each other's characteristics and strengths. Boys do not need to force themselves to be extremely masculine; on the other hand, girls do not need to force themselves to be extremely feminine. You can both be strong, confident as well as caring and gentle.

5. Complement each other

Males or females have different strengths and weaknesses. You can complement each other and so attain greater achievement.

6. Choose friends carefully

Look for friends who are respectable and trustworthy, good friends can help you to improve. Don't judge from one's appearance. You can decide whether you should spend more time with him/her or stay away from him/her through observing his/her speech and manner which often reflects his/her personality.

7. Be sincere

You have to be sincere when you are making friends with the opposite gender, appreciate and respect them, feel free to show your concern, pay attention to other's reaction and beliefs, be considerate and supportive.

8. Build up a harmonious and equal relationship

Both male and female have equal status in the society. You should respect each other and understand each other in order to build a harmonious and equal relationship where both of you can develop your own potentials.

In conclusion

Adolescents start to have special feelings towards the opposite gender. It is normal to make friends with the opposite gender; but you should be sincere.

You will meet different kinds of friends through social functions. Accept and respect each other's differences and similarities. Establish a harmonious and equal relationship.

