

## Importance of Social Support

Social support enhances our quality of life. Support can come from many sources, such as family, friends, pets, neighbors, coworkers, organizations, etc. Companionship is known to improve mental and physical health.

Cultivate your support network:

- Be accessible – Answer calls, emails and attend social events.
- Be proactive – Initiate communications or social events.
- Be supportive – Remember to maintain your part of the friendship.

The benefits from a social support network are numerous and important. Friendships are personal and unique, and they offer lasting shared histories and memories. Friends laugh with us in happy times and provide a shoulder when we need one. Friends are able to recognize when silence is needed, and will make us smile at just the right time.

For those who try to tough it alone, it can be a difficult uphill battle. A social support network is something you can develop:

- Volunteer - Pick a cause that is important to you.
- Join a gym - You'll make friends and get some exercise.
- Take a class or workshop - Get in contact with others who share similar hobbies or pursuits.

Start making more friends or improving the relationships you already have.

A strong social support network can be critical to help you through tough times. If you would like to speak with a counselor, EASE counselors are available at 800/882-1341.



***“Strength is the courage...to reach out!”***