



# BalanceWorks® Newsletter

November 2016 | Written by the work/life experts at eni



## Nurture Your Connections This Season

The month of November notoriously makes us reflect on our life and think about what we are thankful for. Of course there is Thanksgiving, which is a holiday dedicated to giving thanks and Veterans Day, which is a holiday intended to honor and give thanks to those who have served in the United States Armed Forces.

This November we encourage you to think about the people in your life who you are thankful for and make an effort to nurture those connections. Between social media, text messaging, and even email, we feel so connected all the time that we can take it for granted and actually start to lose that personal connection. Sure you “like” the pictures your college roommate posts online and may even comment on them, but when is the last time you actually met up for coffee? Similarly, when is the last time you picked up the phone to chat with your mom, brother, or best friend instead of texting them?

Let’s take a look at some of the benefits of nurturing your relationships:

Everyday Health reports that socially engaged adults age more successfully. “According to surveys of women

over age 60, those who are socially engaged and visit with friends and family throughout the week are happier as they age.”

Everyday Health also reports that being social boosts your immune system. “Being socially engaged leads to more positive emotions, which in turn may actually boost your body’s immune system and reduce the physical signs of stress”.

The Mayo Clinic reports that “adults with strong social support have a reduced risk of many significant health problems, including depression, high blood pressure and an unhealthy body mass index (BMI).”

According to the Mayo Clinic, a strong social network can also:

- Increase sense of belonging and purpose
- Boost happiness and reduce stress
- Improve self-confidence and self-worth
- Help cope with traumas, such as divorce, serious illness, job loss or the death of a loved one
- Encourage you to change or avoid unhealthy lifestyle habits

For more information or support on nurturing your relationships, contact the work/life experts at BalanceWorks® by calling:

**1.800.327.2255**

eni’s BalanceWorks® program is a confidential 24/7 service provided by your employer to help achieve work/life balance.



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Adults tend to be incredibly busy, so it can be difficult to make time to nurture your relationships, but with all the positive benefits that can be gained it's certainly worth the effort. This month, try to fit the following into your schedule:

Make plans with friends that live nearby to physically meet up. Go to dinner, catch a movie, get coffee, or just stop over their house to sit and chat.

If you live close to your family members, make an effort to visit with them weekly. Cook a big Sunday dinner and have your parents and siblings over, take your mom shopping, go to the playground with your sister and nephew, bring your grandmother flowers, etc.

As for family members who live far away, make weekly dates to video chat. It's hard to be away from family members, but actually seeing their faces can really improve your bond and make you feel closer.

Unfortunately, many adults do not end up living near our closest friends from childhood, high school, college, etc. However, this is no reason to let these relationships fade. Make an effort to chat on the phone often. Also, try to get together at least once per year. Invite them to come visit you on their next vacation, go to them on your vacation, or vacation together somewhere in the middle.

Since you can't always celebrate holidays and milestones with family and friends who live far away, it can be fun to mail cards to commemorate special occasions.

Sending and receiving "snail mail" feels so much more personal in this digital age.

Nurture your professional relationships by getting to know your colleagues on a personal level. Go to lunch together or happy hour after work.

Next time you get the urge to text a friend or loved one, pick up the phone and call them instead.

Finally, don't forget to nurture your relationships with your immediate family members. Although we may live in the same house as our significant others and/or children, we sometimes get so busy, that we may not share quality time with them. This month, take some time each day to really bond with your family and focus on your relationship. A couple can get up a half hour early each morning to spend time together before heading off to work. Busy parents can take an hour after the kids go to bed to discuss their day together over a glass of wine or bowl of popcorn. After picking a child up from school, a parent can stop by the park to spend some fun quality time together before getting home and starting dinner prep, baths, homework, etc.

Nurturing your relationships by spending time with family and friends is fun and can be good for your mind and body, which is certainly something to be thankful for this season.

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