



A guide to

NURTURING FRIENDSHIPS

Developed as part of

ICMR's Multistate Implementation Research Study on Improving
Mental Well Being Among School and College Students



about

NURTURING YOUR FRIENDSHIPS

Friendships are a vital part of your lives. They offer support, joy, and a sense of belonging. However, as you grow and change, so do your friendships. During adolescence, it is common for friendships to evolve.

You might find that as you explore new interests, develop your identity, or face different life experiences, your friendships also go through ups and downs. This is normal. Some friends may grow closer, while others might drift apart. It is important to recognize that these changes are part of growing up and don't necessarily mean something is wrong.

Understanding that friendships can change, and knowing how to navigate these changes, can help you maintain strong, healthy connections that support your growth and happiness. This handout will offer tips on how to nurture these important relationships.

Here are some important aspects that can help in strengthening and maintaining your friendships:

Effective Communication

Active Listening: Really listen to what your friends are saying without interrupting. This shows you value their thoughts and feelings.

Express Honestly: Do not be afraid to share your own feelings, too. Honest communication strengthens your bond and clears up misunderstandings.

Resolve Conflicts Respectfully: Disagreements happen, but how you handle them makes a difference. Focus on understanding each other's perspectives and finding a middle ground.

Mutual Support

Be There for Each Other: Whether it is celebrating achievements or being a shoulder to cry on, showing up for your friends in both good and bad times is key.

Encourage Growth: Support each other's dreams and goals. Cheer on your friend's successes, and motivate them when they need it.

Respecting Boundaries

Understand Personal Space: Everyone needs their own space and time to recharge. Respect when your friend needs time alone or with other people.

Appreciate Differences: Friends may have different opinions, interests, or lifestyles. Celebrate these differences instead of letting them create distance.

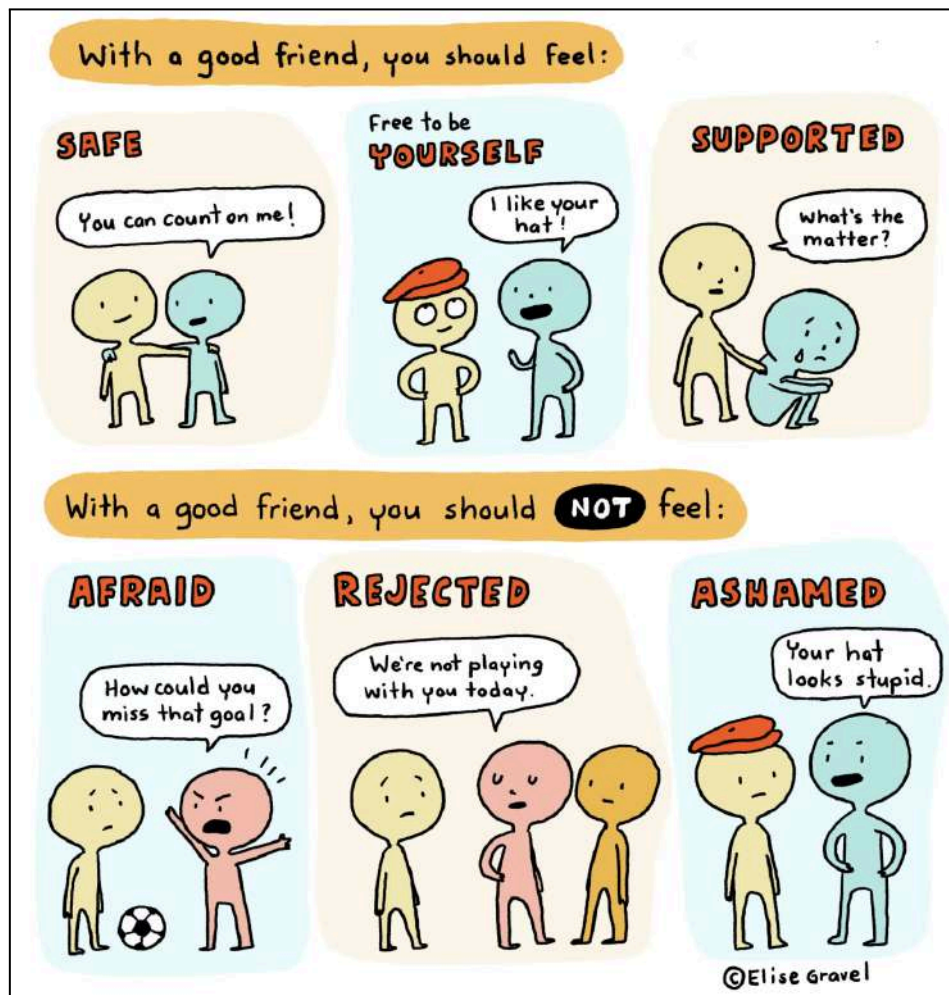
Communicate Boundaries: Clearly express your own boundaries.. Healthy friendships thrive on mutual respect and understanding.

Keeping the Connection Alive

Quality Time Counts: It is not just about spending time together, but making it meaningful. Whether it is a quick chat or a fun outing, make it count.

Stay in Touch: Life can get busy, but a simple text or call goes a long way in keeping the friendship strong. Regular check-ins can show that you care.

Plan Together: Create memories by planning activities that you both enjoy. Shared experiences strengthen your bond.



Source: Elise Gravel

Time to Reflect!

- What do you value most in your friendships?
- How can you be a better listener and friend?
- What activities can you plan to spend time with a friend?
- How do you handle it when you and a friend disagree?
- What is a quality in your friend that you like and want to develop in yourself?
- What do you and your friends do or can do to celebrate each other's successes?

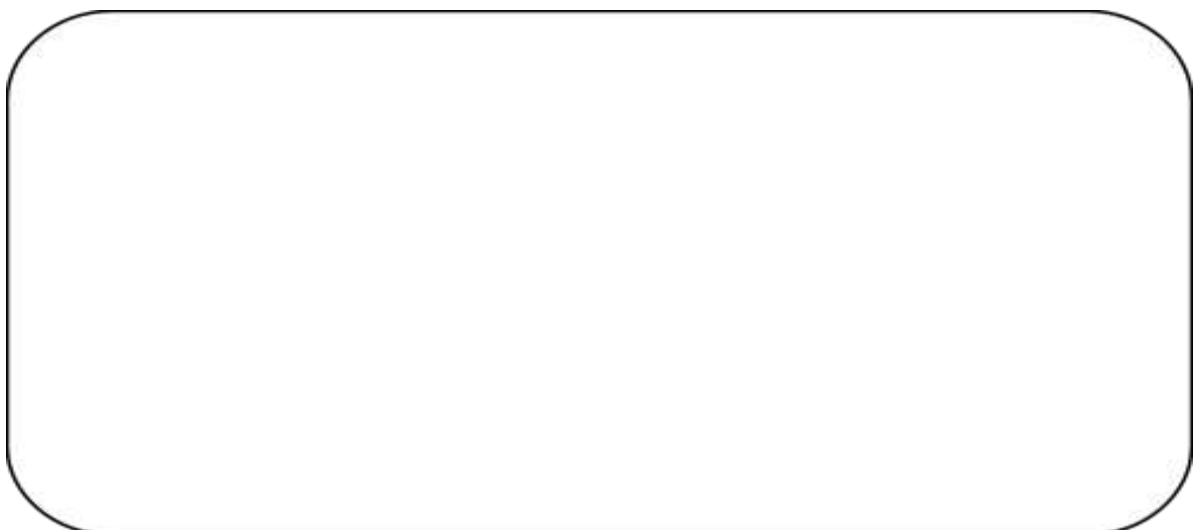
Friendship Bingo

Instructions: Check off any of the following that apply to you and your friends. See how many you can get!

We have inside jokes.	We support each other's goals.	We can talk about anything, even difficult topics.
We have been friends for more than a year.	We know each other's favourite snacks.	We have had a disagreement and worked through it.
We have tried something new together.	We cheer each other up when one of us is down.	We can talk about anything, even difficult topics.

Draw Your Friendship

Instructions: Draw a picture that represents your friendship circle. Include symbols or items that represent what each friend brings to the group (e.g., laughter, advice, creativity). **Get creative with colours and shapes!**





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