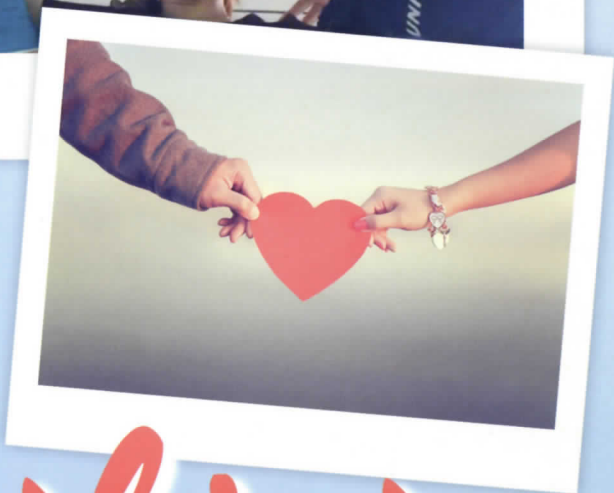




CONNECTIONS

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WHY Family Friends Relationships

SEARCHING for FRIENDSHIP

By Audrey Yeow (CFAB)



New people, new environment, and a new beginning. I've always thought that college would be a tough one for me because I thought I wasn't going to fit in, I'm not going to be good enough to have friends, and I was going to do this alone, but I was proved wrong.

No man can live on an island alone, and that's how we humans long for companionship. Not only for relationships, but even friendship. After college begun for me a year ago, slowly but surely, my fear went away, and I started making friends naturally.

Be optimistic, happy and most importantly, be yourself and friendships come naturally, and that's the magic of it. When I started off, I wanted to be someone different, to portray someone that I thought was more likable than myself, but I realized it is so much easier and comfortable when you are just you. I remember how my friends' faces lit up the moment I let go of my pretence. I was told how much more relatable I became. That's a lesson I'd never let go.

When it felt as though I was at my lowest, I realized the importance of positivity. It was as hard as it sounds. I realized that I needed to focus on what I can do to help me achieve my targets and keep progressing. It helped keep things in perspective for me. I managed to pull through the semester. I kept reminding myself to take baby steps and not let the fear of failure take a hold of me. It has kept me afloat thus far.

I remember how my friends' faces lit up the moment I let go of my pretence.

That's why you need to surround yourself with the right people, with positive people. Their encouragement and quirky sense of humour kept me going. They say that college is one of the places you're going to find long term friends and I'm starting to believe it as my friendship grows. The friendships that I have gained humbles me as they taught me that real friends are a gift who will stick with you through thick and thin. I finally understand the meaning that family doesn't end with blood.

I've learnt that communication and an understanding of each other's expectations and boundaries is very important in a healthy relationship. This helps maintain the essence of oneself while respecting others. It takes time to learn, but we're getting there. Isn't that why we seek new experiences and long for adventures? For these are lessons that you cannot find in books located in bookstores and libraries, they're found in your very own book of life, and the author is none other than you.

Think

Positively



By Clara Lai (CFAB)



Challenges are often thrown our way in every possible direction, and we are constantly trying to juggle our lives, yet some people manage to do that so effortlessly. What makes

these people so different from us? The answer is there's a secret that all these people have in common and that is, thinking positively.

Everybody knows that positive thinkers tend to look at the brighter side of things, but not everybody understands the impact this has on their lives.

Positive thinking doesn't mean ignorance to your surroundings, it actually means to approach unpleasantness with positivity. As college students, we tend to have day-to-day obstacles that eventually build up and stress us out. It is extremely unhealthy to keep all that negativity inside you.

The best method to release all this (stress) would be to talk it out. Talking to your family, friends, a pen pal or even writing it out helps to identify and organize the things that are bothering you. I know that it may be difficult at first and that you might not want to, but there are people who care about you and sharing your feelings and thoughts to them can lift some of the weight off, it might not be instant but never give up on trying.

Getting used to a positive mind-set can not only influence the way you view your situations, but also boost your energy and benefit your health. This is often broadcasted by your body language and can even affect those around you. As the saying goes 'You become like those whom you closely associate yourself with'.

Personally, my positive energy is often channelled through my family. I went through a phase in my early teenage years that my father calls 'the black

phase' - where I had on my stoic poker face refusing to react to anything and anyone while I was actually suffering on the inside. What made me fight and break through this phase was none other than my older sister. I used to think that movie scenes of loving siblings was clichéd and unrealistic, but I was wrong. I can never thank my sister enough for what she did for me, and as a matter of fact, I constantly remind her about it every opportunity I get.

What DID my sister do that was so special? She was a typical sibling. I was often closed off from the world and felt that no one could understand me for who I am; my true face underneath the mask, my likes and dislikes, and so on. But my sister broke that wall down. She talked to me every day after school just about little things like how her day went or how she's loving this new book and would proceed to ask me about my day, and for months, in fact years, I found her incredibly annoying and would slam the door in her face. Eventually I realized that it was nice to have someone, anyone, who would sit down and listen to my rants, to my worries or my excitement over something, and just be there for me (plus she gives amazing advice). Currently my sister is studying abroad and is not able to respond all the time, but that doesn't affect our relationship. She will always be there for me, and I will always be there for her. Distance is an obstacle that shall not defeat us. Those who truly care about you will overcome impossible boundaries, and those are the people that you must treasure for life.

A crucial thing to remember is not to expect to become an optimist overnight, it does take time. Positive thinking is like a muscle, you have to slowly build it up. Trust me on this; it took me years to finally be able to look at the brighter side of things and to be able to open up to those around me. Your mind will eventually be keener on looking at the positive side of things and you'll be able to handle any challenge that comes your way.

BUS OF LIFE



By Joey Tan (FST)

On the bus of life, you are the driver. You have plenty of passengers, primary school classmates, high school classmates, that one crush that you hopelessly fell in love with for 6 years, and of course, your parents. And these are just some of the passengers on your Bus of Life. As the name implies, the bus moves through your life. So there would be different people who you would pick up along other stations up ahead, perhaps your future spouse, your favourite lecturer and maybe your mentor who will guide you through your career. For the duration of their travel on your Bus of Life, you interact, you bond; and these interactions form relationships.

But, like many other bus services, the people who get into the bus would eventually get out of it, much like real life. Do you realize that most of your friends from school have lost contact with you once you transitioned to another place, like from high school to university? It's not that the BFF oath didn't mean anything to them, but that's life. I used to feel down and under when my then classmate and best friend stopped contacting me on a daily basis asking about my personal thoughts and academic works. As time went by, I realised that, college life severed us, not entirely, but just that our lives went on in different directions once we drifted away physically. However, all is well as we still occasionally meet up for a dinner or a mamak session.

People come, and people go. But for those who stayed on beyond their stops, you know that these are the people who are willing to accompany you through your whole Bus of Life journey.

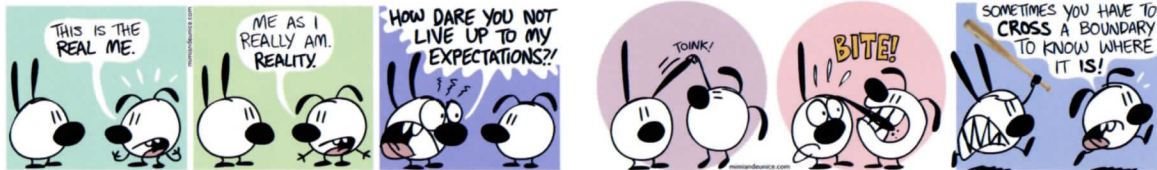


And that, needs to be cherished. Family for instance, are one of the toughest bonds around you. Siblings who share your joy and sadness who were also the ones you fought with for the remote control every weekend. The people whom I called family, albeit not being blood related; my friends, my fellow National Service recruits, my Peer Counselling Volunteers (PCV) committee. They are an essential part of my life, my experience and my growth, and they, never left my bus.

**Ohana means family,
and family means
nobody gets left behind
or forgotten**

DISCOVERING Expectations AND Boundaries

By Remy Lee and Joey Tan Heng Xuan (FST)



Relationship is a curious little thing. Every time you think that you have finally grasped what it means, it throws you in a loop again. No one taught me this better than my secondary school friend - Xue En. At a mere 5 feet, I still remember the anger that radiated off her when she told me “Don’t expect much in your relationship, save yourself from heartache and disappointments.” That marked the end of a 3 year relationship. However, those words did not ring true in her next relationship. Five years down the line when I met her again, she told me she was now in a happy and stable relationship. I couldn’t be happier for her. I asked her if she still believed what she told me all those years back.

She laughed and said she couldn’t be more wrong. It wasn’t so much about the expectation itself but communicating the expectations to others. She talked about how annoyed she was at her current boyfriend at first when he wanted to talk it through. If he truly loved me, he would know what I wanted, isn’t it? That was the thought that pestered her. Nonetheless, he was persistent about it. As time passed, she realized how much it helped their relationship as she did not have such understanding in her previous relationships. She felt thankful for his persistence.

She stressed on how important it is to understand each other’s boundaries as well as your own.

She remembered how she lost herself through her previous relationships. It is important to retain the essence of who you are, remind yourself of your own values, culture and what sets you aside from others. It is important for each other to know the limits to each other’s level of tolerance; to know what the red buttons are and not to touch it. For instance, if you are sensitive towards a particular topic, a friend, or certain people, your partner will be more aware about how to broach it to you without hurting your sentiments. However if some topics and people are off-limits then that’s the boundary that shouldn’t be crossed. Communication is essential to establish this understanding.



She taught me the importance of being mindful and aware of each other’s needs and wants; to communicate and understand each other’s expectation and boundaries. I think I’ve only discovered the tip of a healthy relationship with so much more to discover on my own.



The **ME** in the **WE**

By Remy Lee (FST)

Whenever someone mentions relationships, I often only remember the clichés. However, I do remember this one friend that was pretty unconventional. I would call her a relationship phobic if there ever was such a term. She told me that she could never imagine herself being in a relationship. She could not imagine having the need to report back to her partner every other minute while engaging in outdoor activities that she loves. Most of all she can't imagine, and I quote her, "having someone stuck to your hip most of the time" and risk forgetting the BFF code of never leaving your friends for your boyfriend. It just wasn't her. There is no logic to the equation she says.

Does it really have to be that way? I wondered. Finding a relationship mentor is as tough as it gets, anyone in a relationship would vouch to be an expert but not all opinion or advice sits well. None of the "opinions" satisfied me until I met this eccentric friend of mine. I relayed to him the story of my relationship phobic friend and he just laughed. "You can't unlock level 100 by being at sub-zero" he said. If there were ever to be an equation to relationship, it definitely wouldn't be as clichéd as one half completing the other half like a circle. It isn't a $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} = 1$ equation.

"If you sync an unhappy person with another unhappy person, they will be twice as miserable rather than having a happy relationship because they

are both waiting for the other to fill the hole in them. The hole just became bigger." He continued on. Relationships are about exploring and understanding your partner, how both of you can work together and most of all understanding yourself.

He leaned in as though he was about to share his deepest secrets and said "If say your partner is in for the right reasons, you're both serious about it and in it for the long haul, there's only three important ingredients to remember- trust, lots of communication and mutual understanding. Most importantly trusting yourself and your partner in the relationship. Managing time so that there'll be time for both partners, time for family and friends and also alone time for the individual. The challenge is to communicate this clearly and understand each other better in the process."

His words that still stuck with me up to this day is

You have to find the you
in the relationship.
Remember the "Me" in the
"We". You've gotta work on
both - Me & We.

I joined PCV because PCV looks like a big family, but after joining PCV, I realized that they are really a family.

- VinzKii Qian -

I love PCV because it has improved my communication skills and showed me that everything can be solved when there's teamwork.

- Jie Xi -

I've always had a passion for helping others, but I realized that I didn't know how to comfort them. PCV helped me with that and so much more.

- Mazni Noah -

Well, PCV is a club I have not heard before. So I joined it after discovering it. It has then spiced up my university life!

- Liang Meng -

PCV has enhanced my interpersonal skills and serves as a platform for me to help people.

- Ooi JunXun -

I joined PCV because it was something new to me and I got to discover more about others and helping the ones who needed help :)

- Carmen Chan -

What made you join
PCV?



SPEAK OUT

A BLAST TO THE PAST

What have we done so far?

Mind Matters

A series of mental health dialogues following different themes every month. Students have the opportunity to share their thoughts during the discussion session right after a presentation facilitated by fellow students.



Appreciation Week

Students got the opportunity to show their gratitude and appreciation for their fellow students, friends, lovers and lecturers through little packages of treats!

T.G.I.F 2.0

Turn Groceries in For Foodbank was a collaboration between PCV and SSV. Together we collected charity donations for supplies that was donated to the Orang Asli of Carey Island & Tanjung Malim.





JUMBO DAY

PCV's very own family get together!
 We have Jumbo Day twice a year where members from different batches get to meet each other and participate in many team bonding activities!

Your Body Speaks!

A body language workshop that highlighted the many tips and tricks in unlocking humans through their body language. Our postures, gestures and eye contact are a dead giveaway!



COMING SOON!



Others:

- Mind Matters
- C+S Week
- Jumbo Day
- Reality of Learning Disabilities



GOT A LOT ON YOUR PLATE?

Let's Lochat

SCHEDULE: EVERY THURSDAY

TIME: 1-2PM

VENUE: DISCUSSION ROOM, STUDENT HUB



*If you need a listening ear,
we are here*

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



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by Peer Counselling Volunteers

If you have concerns/issues in life, you can write to us anonymously.

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Empathise • Encouragement • Empower

