

Friends play a major role in our lives

By **Brian Bethell**
IAMAW EAP Coordinator, Vancouver

Friendship is a term used to denote co-operative and supportive behavior between two or more humans - but those of us with good friends know that the value of friendship goes much deeper than that.

Sadly, a 2006 study conducted in the United States says that the number and quality of friendships for the average American has been declining since at least 1985. The study says that 25 percent of residents have no close 'confidants' and that the average total number of friends per person has dropped to two.

Friends play very important roles and are a huge influence in our lives, important to who we are and what we want to become. They help us to move forward, develop our self-image, help with our approach to life and give us a second opinion about issues that concern us. Friendship lifts hearts and lengthens lives.

If you need guidance on these or any other issues that may be impacting your well-being, please do not hesitate to give your EAP coordinators a call.



Value that is found in friendships is often the result of a friend demonstrating on a consistent basis:

- The tendency to desire what is best for the other;
- Sympathy and empathy;
- Honesty, perhaps in situations where it may be difficult for others to speak the truth;
- Mutual understanding;
- Loyalty

Above all, your friends can help you understand what makes you unique, by telling you many things about yourself that you may have overlooked. We often tend to underestimate ourselves and our unique abilities and talents.

So if you're looking for friends in today's fast-paced society, where do you find them? The experts suggest trying the following:

- Join an extracurricular club that interests you. You'll meet new people who share your enthusiasm for the same things.
- Participate in sports. Many athletes play or practise as a team, so meeting new people will be a natural offshoot of that participation.
- Volunteer in your community. You'll meet other people who care about giving back, and you'll have a rewarding experience helping others.



Need help?

Your EAP coordinators are here to assist you with any issues that may be impacting you or the well-being of those close to you. Give us a call.

National Office
Denis Yelle (888) 992-1010

Atlantic Region
Jeff McAulay (902) 223-7911

Montreal
Gilles Filion (514) 972-4095

Toronto
Ron Rawding (416) 882-6997

Winnipeg
Barry Lazaruk (204) 471-5307

Calgary
Léon Dubois (403) 880-2589

Vancouver
Brian Bethell (604) 992-4491