

# OPPAM

O N L Y P O S I T I V E



**Can Strong  
Friendships  
Help You Live Longer?**



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ONLY POSITIVE

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# Editorial

**PROF ANTONY P JOSEPH**  
Managing Director

## Hope, Hope And Hope

Even those who knew nothing about cricket are now familiar with the name Jemimah Rodrigues. Because she was the one who led India to a record-breaking victory against Australia in the World Cup cricket semifinal - the player who steered the team to the highest successful run chase in the history of women's One Day Internationals. But the effort Jemimah put in to reach such a triumph was by no means small.

The journey toward victory was not an easy one. Jemimah had to face much neglect, hardship and rejection. Yet she overcame them all for two reasons: one - her unwavering faith in God and two - her unending determination to succeed. Jemimah revealed to the world that even in that moment when she rewrote history, she was praying. She boldly told the media that Jesus Christ was the reason for her success. For many reasons like these, Jemimah's victory became a success unlike the ordinary.

Faith in God is not merely belief; it is not just a ritual. It is the believer, not the atheist, who can truly find comfort and joy in this world, for his faith is steadfast. Almost all humans are optimists - they 'expect' that good things will happen. But the believer's attitude is not merely expectation; it is 'hope'. What distinguishes him is his ability to view life and its circumstances through the lens of hope.

Expectation and hope may seem to have similar meanings. Yet expectations can wither away in adversity, while hope is a way of life that looks beyond adversity toward possibility. The one with expectations has dreams, but only the one with hope truly endures. Those who have hope are the ones who overcome and achieve their dreams. Hope belongs to the believer, because he dreams, acts and strives with God. He is certain that God fights for him and labors beside him. That certainty gives him the strength not to falter amid obstacles.

Expectation is momentary - it is the waiting for something to be fulfilled within a definite time. But hope is a patient and faithful waiting for something beyond a definite time. Therefore, rather than being people of expectation, let us be people of hope. Hope is the greenness of life itself.

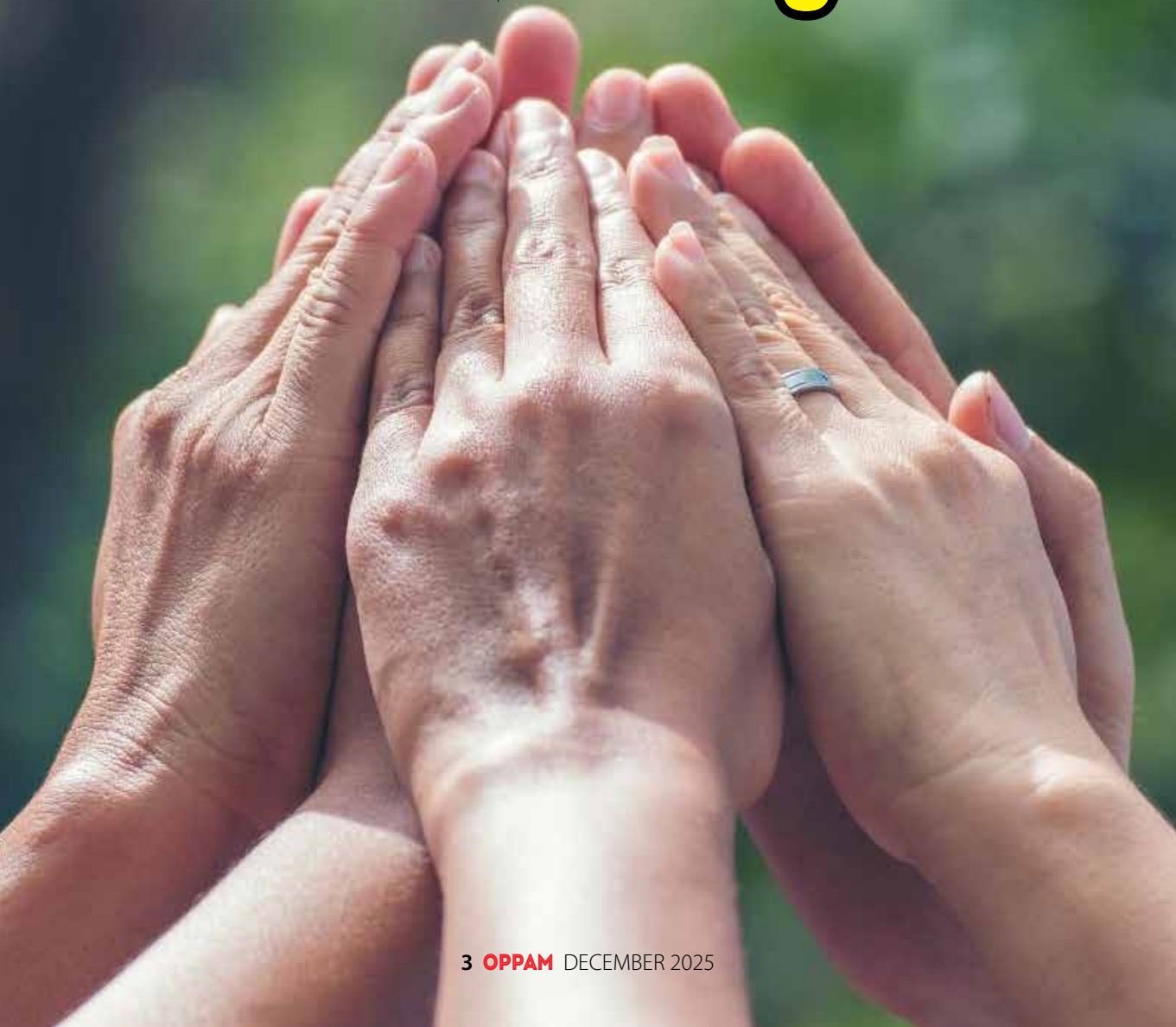
This is the month of December. The greatest celebration of this month is Christmas. What Christmas gave to the world is not mere expectation but hope. The message of Christmas is that God came to earth as a human being and that henceforth, God will be with humanity in all its days. That is hope. If until yesterday God seemed distant or hidden, from now on He walks alongside humanity - in its sorrows, in its despair - as a constant companion. He becomes a presence that makes the impossible possible and drives away despair.

"Glory to God in the highest! And on earth, peace to those on whom His favor rests." The word favor here can also mean hope - peace to those who have hope. Yes, let us become people of hope and in doing so, let peace fill our hearts from within.

Wishing everyone the blessings of Christmas.

Regards  
**Prof Antony P Joseph**

# Can Strong Friendships Help You Live Longer?





Everyone wishes to live a long life - one filled with good health, love, happiness and financial security. When these four things are missing, life feels dull and one may even begin to wish for death.

To stay healthy, people eat nutritious food, exercise regularly and go for periodic medical check-ups. We believe these habits help extend our lifespan. However, equally important to a long and happy life are our relationships especially our friendships. Studies show that genuine friendships have a positive impact on health, peace of mind and longevity.

Forming connections and sharing experiences with others are essential and joyful acts for both the mind and the body. The presence of good friends acts as a safety net in life. Sharing happy moments doubles the joy and sharing sorrow helps lighten grief. Strengthening this web of relationships has been proven to improve mental health and physical well-being.

In today's world, stress from work, family and society often wears down both body and mind. During such times, the support of friends greatly reduces mental stress and fills the heart with peace. By lowering stress hormones in the body, friendships help regulate blood pressure and improve heart health. Long-term stress is known to contribute to heart disease, diabetes and weakened immunity.

When we communicate with friends, our brain releases hormones like serotonin and oxytocin, which bring happiness and calmness. Simple activities like spending time together, laughing, recalling old memories or taking short trips trigger the release of







these hormones. As a result, depression, anxiety and loneliness decrease, while a positive mindset begins to take shape.

For older adults, one of the biggest health challenges is loneliness. The sense of isolation that comes from losing or lacking relationships affects physical health as well. Studies show that the risk of death from loneliness is even greater than that from smoking, alcohol consumption or obesity. On the other hand, people who maintain good friendships tend to have stronger immunity, better heart health and a lower risk of diseases like dementia.

In short, the positivity that friendships bring into life is invaluable. True friends inspire us, open new paths toward our goals, and give us the confidence to face failures and challenges. In

today's digital age, many connect with friends online - but genuine friendships are strengthened through real, face-to-face interactions.

Spending time together, talking directly, laughing and sharing experiences make human relationships deeper and more meaningful. Therefore, make time for your friends in your daily life. It benefits both sides equally. Never think that only the other person gains from it. Friendship is a bond where both reap the harvest.

There is hardly any other relationship that nourishes both mind and body so profoundly. A true friend is someone with whom you can share what you cannot tell your life partner or even your parents - and that is the beauty, strength, and wealth of friendship.



# How to Build Good Relationships

Good friendships do not form automatically. They require conscious effort and sincere intention. So, what can we do to nurture them?

- Be willing and make an effort to maintain friendships.
- Take time to meet and stay in touch with your friends.
- Be ready to listen and try to understand.
- Share in both joy and sorrow.
- Avoid ignoring or belittling your friends.
- Keep their secrets confidential.
- Be trustworthy in financial matters.
- Let go of selfishness.









# The Reason Women Are Attracted to Men

Men and women are drawn into the magnetic field of mutual attraction. The harmony between men and women is the very foundation of nature. The world could not exist with only women or only men, nor would the universe have such beauty. It is the destiny of men and women to be attracted to one another.

However, not all men attract women. Studies suggest that certain specific factors determine why a woman may feel drawn to a man. What are these factors?

Women are generally attracted to men who respect and honor them. A man who values her words and opinions, respects her work and acknowledges her thoughts and emotions possesses a special

ability to attract women. Men should give space to women and truly listen to them.

Men who communicate effectively and speak in an engaging, interesting manner also have the ability to attract women. Men who can make women laugh are particularly appealing.

A man's personality, attire and personal hygiene play an important role in attraction. Skills such as cooking are an added bonus for many men and women often feel closer to men with such abilities.

When it comes to family life, a man who occasionally embraces his wife, always offers his shoulder for her to lean on and provides comfort and care will naturally be more attractive to her.

# Regaining Sexual Health





Just like physical and mental health, sexual health is equally important. It plays a vital role in the overall completeness of human life. Yet today, even among young people, sexual life is often neither healthy nor satisfying. There can be many reasons for sexual unwellness at any age - various forms of stress, lifestyle patterns, hormonal changes, health problems, anxiety, fear, depression and lack of sleep can all reduce sexual desire and negatively affect sexual life.

Whatever the reason may be, by making positive changes in daily hab-

its and lifestyle, one can restore sexual health and rejuvenate sexual life. Let's look at some common problems and their remedies.

### **Stress**

Work-related stress, family responsibilities and financial burdens often weigh heavily on both mind and body, disrupting sexual life. Stress affects the body's hormonal balance and lowers sexual desire. To overcome stress, techniques like meditation, deep breathing, yoga, and music are effective. When the mind is calm, the body and its sexual responses become more natural.



## Sleep

Sleep plays an undeniable role in improving health. Lack of sleep seriously affects hormones and drains energy. Getting enough quality sleep each day enhances sexual vitality. When the body is properly rested and restored, sexual desire naturally remains active.

## Diet

Food directly influences sexual drive. A balanced diet including fruits, vegetables, grains and protein-rich foods improves blood circulation and boosts hormone production. Nutrients found in items like chili, ginger, nuts and fish energize the body and support sexual health. At the same time, it's best to avoid excessive processed foods, oily dishes and sugar.

## Exercise

Exercise is equally important for both physical and sexual health. It improves blood circulation, strengthens the heart and triggers the release of "happy hormones" that boost confidence. When the mind is joyful and the body healthy, sexual well-being improves and desire arises naturally.

## Communication

Communication between partners significantly influences sexual intimacy. Talk openly with your partner - share your needs and expectations and strengthen emotional closeness. When mutual communication weakens, sexual desire tends to fade. When hearts drift apart, bodies rarely come together, especially in marital relationships.

## Age

As age increases or due to certain health conditions, hormonal changes may occur, leading to a natural decline in sexual desire. In such cases, it is advis-

able to consult a medical expert, undergo necessary tests and seek appropriate treatment.

## Smoking and Alcohol

Both smoking and excessive alcohol consumption reduce blood flow and negatively affect hormone production. This can lower sexual responses and diminish desire. Therefore, it is best to quit smoking and drinking completely.

## Self-Confidence

Self-confidence and body image are closely linked to sexual life. Being comfortable and confident in one's own body enhances enthusiasm and desire during intimacy. A confident mindset makes sexual relations more natural, joyful and fulfilling.

## Strengthening the Bond

Keeping freshness and novelty in a sexual relationship enhances desire and deepens emotional warmth. With mutual consent and respect, be open to new experiences together. Spending time together, touching affectionately and caressing lovingly are all gateways to intimacy and means of creating emotional connection. If the loss of sexual desire persists for a long time, underlying health issues or medications could be the cause. In such cases, it is essential to seek medical help. With the right treatment, imbalances in sexual health can be corrected.





# Where Should We Draw the Line Online?

**F**or today's children, the online world has become an inseparable part of their daily lives. It is no longer just a source of entertainment but also an unavoidable necessity for learning. Hence, for parents and teachers alike, keeping children completely away from this digital realm is a difficult task. Yet, letting them freely and fully immerse themselves in it can also be risky. Every day, news related to the online world adds to parents' anxiety- stories of cybercrimes, harmful content, online bullying and privacy violations are enough to make any parent uneasy. So, what can be done in such a situation?

**T**he online world offers children an expansive universe - a vast field of knowledge and experience. Educational materials, instructional videos, games, language learning, exploration of new worlds and exposure to technology - the internet provides endless possibilities for learning and creativity. In schools, online tools have already become part of education. Interaction with teachers, project creation and information gathering are all supported by online resources that foster children's growth. Therefore, in the present circumstances, completely banning online access is neither practical nor advisable.

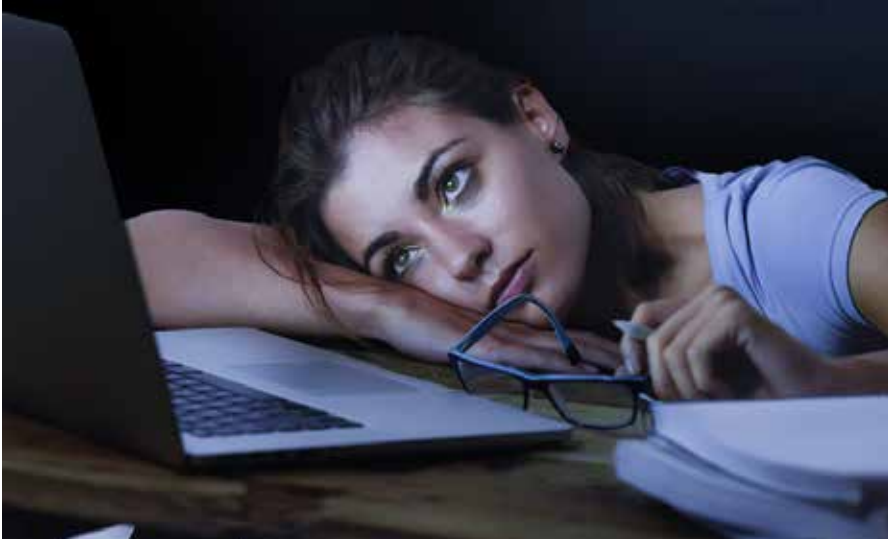
However, the dangers that children may face online cannot be ignored. Uncontrolled use can affect their mental

and emotional health. Social media comparison and the constant search for validation can create stress and pressure. Children may also sometimes accidentally encounter inappropriate content such as pornography or violent videos. Online scams, gaming addiction and other cyber threats are also real concerns.

In a way, the media too bears some responsibility. Reports about cybercrimes, dangerous challenges or misuse involving children are often presented in fear-inducing ways. While it is essential to highlight potential risks, such exaggerated portrayals can amplify parental fear beyond reality. Awareness is necessary - but it should not become panic. This fear often drives parents to impose strict restrictions, cutting







children off from the digital world altogether. But children who have already embraced online entertainment and learning will hardly accept such prohibitions, leading to conflicts between parents and children.

In truth, the question of whether or not to allow children online cannot be solved with a simple yes or no. It requires a balanced, well-informed approach combining guidance with awareness. Parents must consider the child's age, maturity, and sense of responsibility before setting boundaries for online use. Generally, parents take one of two approaches: some impose strict control, trying to keep children away from the online world as much as possible; others give them complete freedom to self-regulate. While the first approach can reduce certain risks, it can also isolate children socially and technologically. The second, on the other hand, exposes them to greater dangers, especially at a young age. Therefore, the best path lies between these extremes - a balanced middle ground.

Parents must also educate themselves about the digital world. Understanding online platforms, safety settings, and privacy controls is essential to effectively guide children. It is equally important to set clear rules and time limits for online use - assigning specific times for study, entertainment and social interaction helps balance freedom with discipline.

Mutual trust is crucial. Parents should maintain open communication with their children, encouraging them to share their online experiences. A threatening or punitive attitude may cause children to hide things, whereas a supportive and understanding approach will make them feel safe.

Finally, parents must avoid making decisions based solely on sensational news and approach the issue with a sense of realism. The threats are real, yes but so are the solutions. Through responsible digital education, controlled access and active parental involvement, it is possible to guide children safely and wisely through the digital world.

# Two Forms of Love

Is everything we feel truly love? Not at all. Often, what feels like love may not be love. Even when we speak of love, there are countless forms it can take. Just as water in the sea, water in a river, water in a glass and water in a bottle are all different, love, too, varies. Love differs depending on the situation, the people involved and the individuals themselves.

Among these diverse forms, two are completely distinct: self-love and narcissism. We can also call them self-affection or self-adoration. They differ greatly in inner meaning, in the influence they create in people, and in the ways they manifest. Which is good love and which is harmful? Let us see.

A person who loves themselves is capable of loving others. Self-love is, therefore, a guide to the strength and ability to love. It arises from a healthy sense of self-awareness. Such a person accepts their own worth and gives themselves the care and respect they need. They recognize their strengths and weaknesses and approach themselves with confidence and compassion. Only those who love themselves can show empathy and kindness toward others, because they see themselves in others. People with self-respect and self-confidence also respect and value others, giving each individual the recognition





they deserve. Self-love is, unquestionably, positive.

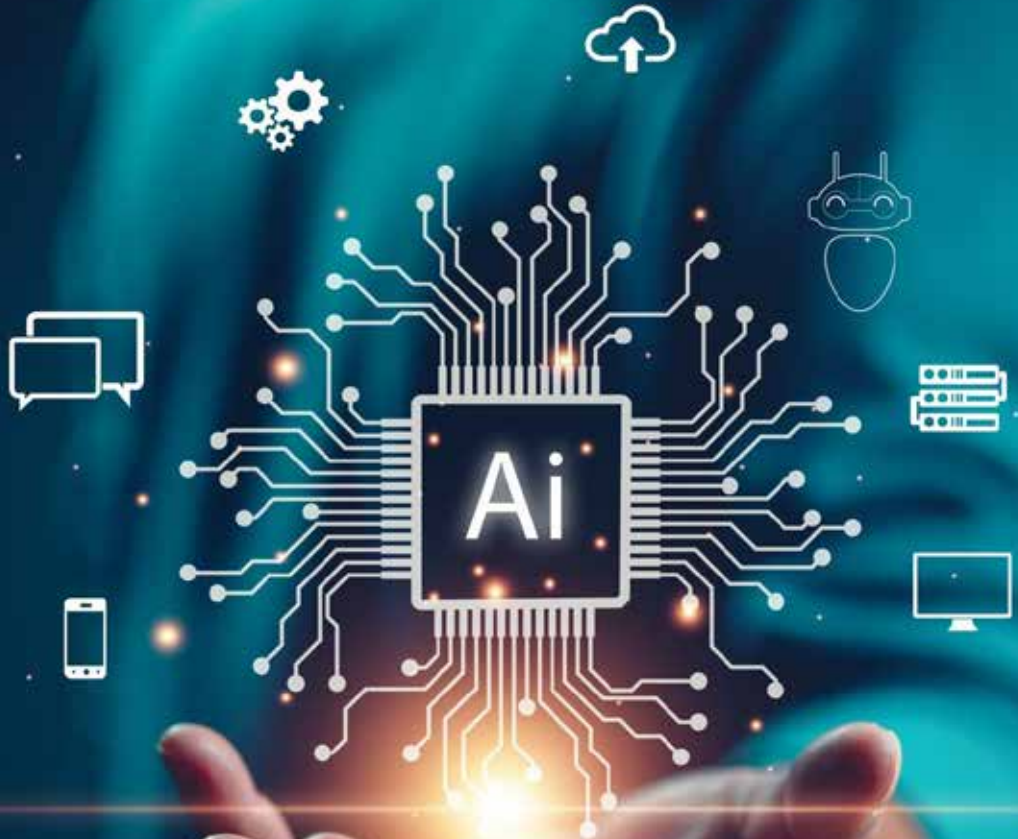
Narcissism, or self-adoration, is very different. Narcissism gives an excessive sense of self-importance while disregarding others. It is a self-centered attitude of 'everything is mine' and 'I am enough; nothing else matters.' A narcissist overvalues their appearance, abilities or status and demands endless admiration from others. They ignore others' feelings and lack empathy. Their relationships are one-sided, driven by self-interest. Criticism frightens them

and can destabilize their mental state. Narcissists can be harmful, creating stress and conflict in personal, professional and social relationships.

In summary: self-love nurtures a person, fostering compassion, confidence and a healthy personality. Narcissism, in contrast, creates distorted personalities that harm both themselves and others.

While self-love is a virtue that strengthens and uplifts, narcissism is a condition that negatively affects both oneself and those around.





# When We Depend on AI...

Artificial Intelligence (AI), the intelligent technology revolutionizing our times, is spreading rapidly into nearly every sphere of human life. From education, healthcare, employment and transportation to banking, its applications have made human activity far more convenient and time-efficient. Yet, despite these many advantages, excessive dependence on AI can lead to deeply negative consequences. Let us look at some of them.

### **Loss or Decline of Independent Thinking**

When AI systems begin to think and make decisions on behalf of humans, our own capacity for independent thought and problem-solving can gradually weaken. Handing over even small daily decisions entirely to machines can make us overly dependent. After all, it is through our ability to think and decide for ourselves that we become valuable, capable individuals.

### **Loss of Employment**

AI is increasingly replacing humans in many sectors - especially in data processing, customer service, manu-

facturing and transportation. As this influence spreads rapidly, countless job opportunities are disappearing, leading to growing economic inequality.

### **Loss of Privacy and Security**

AI systems collect and analyze massive amounts of personal data. Such information can become vulnerable to hacking, misuse or surveillance. This poses a serious threat to individual privacy and security.

### **Risk of Misinformation**

AI systems operate based on data created by humans. Therefore, if that data contains bias or errors, the AI may generate incorrect guidance or flawed decisions. In critical areas such as healthcare or law, this could have serious and far-reaching consequences.

### **Erosion of Human Relationships**

With social media and automated chat bots, human connections are becoming increasingly digital. As virtual interactions replace genuine human contact, empathy and emotional depth risk being diminished.





# Guidelines for Clear Communication

Our body language during conversations and interactions with others reveals much about our personality. How we speak, our hand gestures- whether consciously or unconsciously- reflect who we are and clarify our attitude toward others.

Take eye contact, for example. Many people find it difficult to look others in the eye while speaking, some cannot do it even for a moment. Others, however, speak while maintaining eye contact. Looking into someone's eyes during conversation is a sign of confidence

and sincerity. But staring too long or intensely can feel threatening. It is best to maintain natural eye contact, shifting your gaze occasionally, without exaggeration.

Smile naturally while speaking. A genuine smile eases conversations, encourages openness and fosters trust and friendship. The smile should come from within; forced or artificial smiles lose their meaning.

Observe gestures and posture. People who speak with relaxed shoulders and open hands signal openness,



willingness to listen and readiness to converse without pretense. Crossing arms, in contrast, shows a closed mind and defensive attitude.

Leaning forward while speaking or listening indicates attention and interest. Avoid unnecessary or excessive hand movements; gestures should match the conversation and be moderate. For important points, hand gestures are useful for emphasis.

Maintain appropriate physical distance. Close friends need not observe strict spacing, but with acquaintances or strangers, a healthy personal distance is essential. Standing too close can make others uncomfortable. Proper spacing reflects mutual respect.

Posture matters. Slouching or leaning too far back indicates lack of confidence or disregard. Facial expressions should align with words. Saying, 'I am

very happy and proud of your achievement,' without a matching expression makes the words less believable. Facial cues must correspond with verbal messages.

Avoid unnecessary movements like biting nails, checking watches or fidgeting, as these signal inattentiveness or disinterest. Just as you observe your own body language, pay attention to others'. Their expressions, gestures and posture reveal whether they are interested, bored or confused. Understand their body language and communicate naturally and confidently, avoiding artificial or forced expressions.

In summary: notice your own body language, respect the signals of others, maintain natural eye contact and gestures, observe personal space, align expressions with words and communicate sincerely.





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