

# THE BEST SUPPORTING ROLE GOES TO...



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## NEWS YOU CAN USE

### Do Not Forget These Other Great Resources:

Healthwise® Handbook, the 24-Hour Nurse Line, Nurse Online Chat, Audio Health Information Library® and you can go online to [www.express-health.com](http://www.express-health.com) for links to reliable health information.

### CHALLENGE:

Reach out and connect with someone that you have not heard from in a while.

### SOURCES:

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/social-support/ART-20044445>

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As we ring in a new year, take a look at the supporting roles that co-workers, friends, acquaintances, and family members play in your life. The relationships we have allow us to have a sense of belonging, increase our sense of self-worth, and provide security and accountability. These relationships make up a social support network. Creating and maintaining a strong, positive and productive support system increases the chances of following through with healthy New Year's resolutions.

### BUILD A HEALTHY SUPPORT SYSTEM

**Go to the Gym:** Exercise is a great stress reliever so why not meet people at the gym. Being social at the gym makes physical activity more enjoyable and increases the chances of continuing a steady exercise routine.

**Online Social Networks:** Reconnecting with friends online is a very easy way to develop a stronger support system full of old and new friends who know you from all different areas of your life.

**Take a Class:** Enroll in an art class or a dance class. Taking a class in something that interests you and will again introduce you to a new world of people who share that interest with you. It will also help keep your mind sharp.

**Volunteer:** Volunteer to work at the library or at a hospital. Pick something that you are passionate about and get involved. You will meet others who share this interest with you and are caring enough to volunteer their time just like you.

Once you have built a well-rounded support system, it is very important to strengthen it by becoming a contributing member of someone else's social support system.

### MAINTAINING A HEALTHY SUPPORT SYSTEM

**Appreciate Friends and Family:** Our family is our very first support system. Keeping relationships with your family strong and positive allows you to trust that they have your best interest at heart and vice versa.

**Keep in Touch:** Reciprocating invitations and proper communication etiquette, such as returning phone calls, texts and emails, show that you care and that you are equally invested in the relationship.

**Listen:** Being a good listener and showing interest in what a friend is saying will help understand their beliefs, interests, and what makes them the person they are. It also demonstrates that you care and are putting their thoughts and feelings ahead of your own agenda.

**Stay on the Same Team:** Remember, friendship is not a competition. Be supportive rather than envious or boastful. Be happy for your friends and family when good things happen to them.

**Allow Space:** Do not overwhelm yourself or your social support system with constant interaction. It is all right to allow space and give each other opportunities to reboot and relax.