

# ADVERTORIAL

## Embracing the power of friendship

Investing time in our friends is something we should all be doing to help our wellbeing and mental health

**T**HERE is an age-old adage about friendship as people come into your life for a “reason, season or lifetime”.

On International Friendship Day (July 30) consider the people in your life past and present who have truly made an impact on you: for better or worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health.

While reading up on International Friendship Day, it would appear that this calendar day was originally promoted by Joyce Hall, the founder of Hallmark Cards, back in the 1920s. What a forward-thinking lady she was! After almost dying out in the 1940s, The General Assembly of The United Nations declared The International Day of Friendship as a United Nations (UN) day that supported the role of friendship within peace-keeping.

Almost 100 years since its launch, in a time when many cards will be treasured yet fewer cards are sent (not just to save trees but also due to the social impact of technology) the premise of friendship remains the same. Why not pick up the phone or email someone you haven't seen in a long time or pop over with a cupcake, a smile and a bucket load of shared memories. Or even better, write a letter or a funny ode and put some thought into it!

Friends come in all shapes and sizes: the friends who make you laugh when you are down; those who help you set the world to right at 3am; those who are bossy and give you (unwarranted) advice; the ‘feeders’ and the ‘needers’; the ones who get you into trouble; those who hold your hand when you are sick; the talkers and the walkers. Every person that crosses your path is there for a reason or a lesson. If they go, let them; if they stay, ditto.

For those of you who might feel lonely or need someone to talk to on any day of the year, why not reach out to friends or family. Sometimes, just hearing a familiar voice can help and support your wellbeing and mental health. Young and old alike, not everyone has the same level of social skills or abilities. Some of us struggle with communication or want to make friends but feel stuck in a rut so

spare a thought for the less-than-social bunnies in your life.

If face-to-face contact is still a challenge, why not tweet or message Achieve on social media and we will always respond with advice or tips on how to seek support or advice, wherever we can.

Achieve founder, TV presenter Martin Roberts says: “It’s about bringing people

together of all ages and helping them to make small changes in their lives. We want to create an interactive community that strives towards a greater good through positivity and support.”

While Ms Hall might disapprove of a brave new world with fewer greetings cards, she would absolutely hail a global day that is recognised and upheld by the UN. Now that would make her smile...

Spending time with our friends is good for us



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