Finding Psoriasis Support

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The Importance of Support

What do you need in your life? About 70 years ago, a psychologist named Abraham Maslow set out to answer that question. What he arrived at was list of requirements that everyone needs in order to stay alive, be happy and live a life of the highest quality. Maslow called it the hierarchy of needs, and it includes everything from concrete necessities to complex notions.

The first needs include what is desired for sustaining life like food, water and oxygen. The second level contains shelter, livable temperatures and other items related to safety and security. Similar to the first level, this level involves elements of survival. It becomes more difficult to survive if your security is constantly threatened by weather or an outside force.

The third level is love. It involves elements of acceptance, belonging and being connected to others and the world around you. Friends, family, coworkers, church members and others all make up the supports in your life. You can survive without supports, but life will feel less complete and satisfying.

When you have a chronic medical condition, like psoriasis, supports become even more essential. Psoriasis often leaves sufferers feeling alone, isolated, depressed and anxious. In these circumstances, they turn inwards and miss the benefits associated with multiple supports. Choose to fight against negative trends and make socialization a bigger part of your life.

Why Socialize?

Life is about having opportunities. Opportunities allow you to grow and change in your process of becoming a more complete person. Social supports provide you with endless opportunities to change the way you think and feel. Socialization can:

Decrease Isolation and Loneliness

Being cut off from the world around you is a negative aspect in anyone’s life. People need to be around other people, with very few exceptions.

There is a myth that only weak or inferior people “need” others. This could not be further from the truth. Do not fool yourself into believing that your life is better because of isolation. Strong people are ones that can admit that being alone is less fun than being with others.

Increase Feelings of Belonging and Connectedness

If being alone is a negative, being engaged, connected and having a sense of belonging is a big positive. An interesting thing happens when you become more social. Not only do you feel more connected to people around

you, you feel more a part of your surroundings including your community, plants and animals in nature and even yourself.

Connectedness is challenging to measure, but if you feel that some aspect of your life is missing or unfulfilled, it could be your level of engagement in the world around you.

Increase Activity and Routine

Once you build connections, you create systems, routines and patterns. Maybe you will go to the same place at the same time every week or you will have monthly gatherings with your contacts. In either case, these routines build structure in your life while giving you something to base other decisions around, to look forward to and create purpose.

Any change in behaviors will lead to a change in thinking and more desirable feelings.

Next page: two more reasons to socialize, and types of supports.

Why Socialize?

Provide Opportunities to Be Helped

You already know what you think, how you would solve a problem and why you feel the way you do about yourself. What you need is a fresh perspective that only comes from communicating with someone else.

Whether the person has psoriasis or not, their point-of-view may offer suggestions or a new way of thinking that you have not yet uncovered. Perhaps, they know a home remedy or can make a recommendation regarding the new doctor in town. Maybe they have an awesome chili recipe that always provides them with comfort on cold nights.

Allowing yourself to seek and accept help from others has a lot to do with willingness. Being willing means that you can approach a situation without judgment or preconceived notions. You accept that you do not have all the answers.

Provide Opportunities to Help Others

The most significant item is last. As important and beneficial as it is to be helped, the impact of helping others is even greater. When you help others, you gain a sense of control in your environment, a sense of purpose and a sense that you matter.

These aspects will make life feel more worthwhile and manageable. With this being the case, stress will be reduced and replaced with a new drive to improve the lives of others. Less stress means fewer flares and less depression and anxiety.

Types of Supports

You are constantly surrounded by supports without you even realizing it. They vary in degree of benefit and convenience, but if supports have been lacking, none should be ruled out.

Online Supports

If you are reading this, you have internet access. Today, that means you have a way to connect to millions of people around the world with countless pieces of information and an endless variety if interests.

Supports may be formalized like with an official psoriasis support group, or causal in the form of random

encounters on a message board, online game or social network. The availability is a huge plus while the lack of face-to-face contact, and the intimacy that comes with it, is a drawback.

Finding supports online is a great entry point from anyone looking to build their support system.

Professional Supports

Your doctors, counselors and any other professionals that work to improve your overall well-being are supports even though you may not have considered them previously. It is their job to take care of you so be sure that you work to communicate your needs and your wants clearly and effectively.

The pros are that they are available to you when needed and knowledgeable, but the cons include their inability to cross over from professional to personal life.

Family

Everyone has a family. Perhaps your family has some issues and shortcomings as all families do. Work hard to establish realistic expectations of your family so that you can seek the appropriate level of support.

If your family has your back regardless of the situation or circumstances, utilize this to your advantage whenever possible. If your family only comes through in particular instances, choose your contact wisely to gain assistance when needed the most.

Next page: four more places to draw support from.

Types of Supports

Church

Any kind of religious experience is a fantastic source of support on numerous levels. You receive the innate support and structure that the religion provides while also having the opportunity to be surrounded by likeminded people on a weekly basis.

Willingness in regards to church means that you will walk through the doors being hopeful and optimistic about the experience as you downplay the perceived drawbacks. Religion is an incredible support for so many. Why should you be any different?

Pets

If you are interested in undying love and devotion from your supports, look no further than pets. Hearing a soothing purr or seeing a wagging tail are sure ways to feel connected to something else and the world around you.

When choosing a pet, consider what you are looking for in a support and the level of care you are able to provide. Dogs are known to thrust their affection on anyone for the price of a belly rub whereas cats require their loyalty to be earned. Pets bring with them the ability to build connections and contacts with other pet owners and lovers.

Others

Every time you leave your front door, you have the opportunity to make new supports. Look back on the last few times you left the house. Were you friendly to people you met or did you mumble and make poor eye contact? Did you pass up the chance to talk to the attractive guy at the checkout because you were too embarrassed by your latest flare?

If your mission is to build your supports, you must behave in a way that makes you attractive to available options. Change your routines and procedures to make a good impression those around you.

Friends

Friends are the family that you get to choose. Choose them wisely by placing value on them and on yourself. If your friend becomes more of a negative than a positive, walk away. Holding on to poor supports decreases your ability to make new, advantageous ones.

Friends are interesting because anyone could become your friend. How do you make the transition from casual acquaintance to a friend? Many times, all it takes is for someone to make the first move and ask for the other's number or offer a meeting.

Asking someone on a "friend date" can be scary and intimidating but the payoff could be a lifelong friend. It seems worth the risk.

Conclusion

If you think that supports are not for you, reconsider. Having people in your life is almost as essential as the water you drink or the air that fills your lungs. Once you have committed to the importance supports, review the variations available to you while questioning how you can present yourself in a more favorable light to potential supports.

You are surrounded by supports. Will you stand on the sidelines or get in the game?