

# AGES AND STAGES

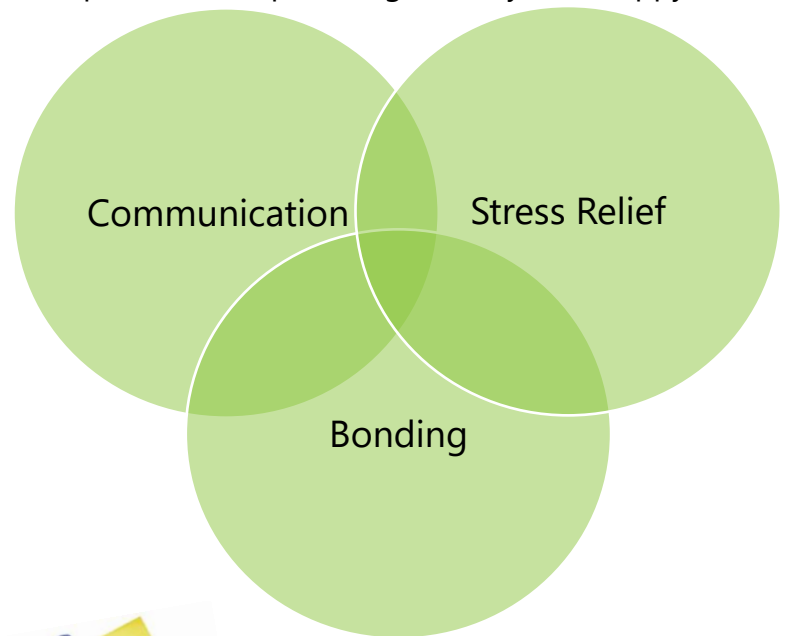
## PLAY DATES - THEY'RE NOT JUST FOR KIDS!

Our psychological and physical health largely depends on the ability to form quality relationships. Great relationships just don't happen. They take work. Keeping a relationship strong requires time and effort - time to listen and share feelings, and effort to find ways to escape daily stressors. Building and maintaining a mutually gratifying connection based is on accepting each person as he/she is.

Life can be hectic and daily responsibilities can take a toll! We can focus so heavily on family and work commitments that we forget about the importance of having fun together! How do you fit it in?

### RELATIONSHIP RESCUE

There is something that you can do today to immediately improve your relationship. It incorporates all of the qualities that make a healthy, successful relationship with the added element of fun! Date night! It's an all-in-one approach that keeps relationships strong, healthy, and happy!



### Date Night!

Date night is an opportunity to connect with a friend or loved one, share your experiences from the week, and bring the benefits of play back into your life. Young or old, married or single, fun activities are a great way to add happiness and joy to your life and those around you.



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### COUPLES – GET IN THE HABIT!

In a relationship, it's easy to fall into a rut. The security and comfort that a long-term relationship brings can be both a blessing and a curse. We get complacent and after decades of being together, we wonder what happened to the spark we once felt when our significant other entered the room. What happened? You stopped dating! Being happy as a couple requires a willingness to grow, being comfortable includes some resistance to change. Scheduling a regular date night encourages thoughtful communication, provides an opportunity to escape from the stresses of everyday life, and offers positive experiences that help you bond as a couple.



### FAMILY – GET IN THE GAME!

Strengthening relationships with kids comes down to one thing: time. Spending one-on-one time with each of our children is a valuable gift for them and us. Communicating on a personal level helps us to learn more about who they are and what they are passionate about. It also allows for time to talk about important issues, which is vital at every stage of life. When they are young, it might be teaching them to share. When they are teenagers, it could be an open discussion about vaping or drugs. Making a consistent effort to carve out this time to “date” your kids offers opportunities to escape from daily pressures and creates special bonding that fosters strong relationships.

### SELF – GET INTO YOU!

When you date, you make time to show someone that they are important to you. You want them to feel special. You may do this with partners, family, and friends to strengthen relationships, but why not also invest this time in yourself? Date yourself? Absolutely! This applies whether you are single or in a relationship. Depending on others to make you happy only leads to disappointment. Spending time with yourself is crucial to having a healthy sense of self-worth. It provides opportunities to relax and unwind, improves your ability to understand and communicate what you need in your relationships, and reignites interests and hobbies that make you your unique self!





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### THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Somewhere along the path of life, we seem to stop playing. Obligations take over and we spend our free time watching television, using our smartphones, or running errands. Play is healthy and fun for kids AND adults! Integrate some play into your life as a couple, as a family, and as individuals.

A movie, dinner or a spa night can get boring. Get creative and reap the benefits of play.

- Relieves stress
- Improves brain function
- Stimulates creativity
- Strengthens relationships
- Keeps you active



### MAKE IT A PLAY DATE!

Here are some ideas to get your play on with your partner, your family, or yourself!

#### COUPLES

- Canoeing
- Paint Night
- Bowling
- Cooking Class
- Sledding/Tubing
- Skating
- Stargazing
- Mini Golf
- Dinner Cruise
- Ethnic Cuisine



#### FAMILY

- Scavenger Hunt
- Hide and Seek
- Night at the Movies
- Building Project
- Spa Afternoon
- Game Night
- Kid Car Wash
- Tea Party
- Snowball Fight
- Sledding/Tubing
- Road Trip
- Master Chef Competition
- Sports



#### SELF

- Spa Night
- Bookstore and Coffee
- Learn to Crochet
- Classic Car Show
- Dinner and Wine
- Museum/Art Gallery
- Dance/Art Class
- Crafting
- Explore a New City
- Go Thrifting



Sources: <https://psychcentral.com/lib/self-esteem-makes-successful-relationships/>  
<https://psychcentral.com/blog/the-importance-of-play-for-adults/>  
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[https://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/2016/03/02/date-nights-important\\_n\\_9371110.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/2016/03/02/date-nights-important_n_9371110.html)