



Take Care of YOU

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Self-Actualisation

Desire to become the most that one can be

Esteem

Respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, freedom

Love and Belongingness

Friendship, intimacy, family, connection

Safety

Security, employment, resources, health, property

Physiological Needs

Air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing, reproduction

Universal Commonalities Connect Us

How to “Step into Someone Else’s Shoes”

- Pause before reacting. Give yourself space to respond thoughtfully.
- Listen with curiosity. Give your full attention and focus on the other person’s words.
- Assume positive intent. Most people are trying their best with the tools they have.
- Ask gentle, open-ended questions. “Can you tell me more about that?”
- Notice what you have in common. Even a small shared experience helps bridge gaps.

Across every neighborhood, culture, and lived experience, people share core needs and desires—connection, belonging, purpose, safety, and the opportunity to contribute. One of the most powerful things we can do to build strong, resilient, peaceable communities is to remember our commonalities.

Human beings share a universal set of traits—Maslow’s hierarchy of needs demonstrate that all people seek safety, connection, esteem, and self-actualization—that transcend differences and remind us of our shared humanity. When we recognize these shared needs in one another—including those we don’t get along with or feel we can’t relate to—our interactions naturally become gentler, more patient, and more understanding.

Strong communities grow from consistent, meaningful engagement. Participating in local events, shared projects, or interest groups creates opportunities to meet others and build trust. Activities like community gardens, workshops, neighborhood clean-ups, or potlucks give people natural ways to connect and discover common ground. These experiences strengthen a collective identity and build mutual support that sustains us during difficult times.

Looking for commonalities and making an effort to see things from another person’s perspective also helps us listen to different voices more openly, challenge our own assumptions, and create space for others to feel respected and valued. When people feel seen and heard—which is another universal need—relationships thrive.

In good and challenging times alike, it’s good to remember that kindness and empathy are not only crucial but contagious. And as the saying goes, “*Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about.*” Focusing on what unites us rather than what divides us will help create the safe, connected, and supportive communities we all long for.