

Building a Closer Relationship with Someone You Love

by Karen Holford
Family Ministries Director
Southern England Conference
Trans-European Division

Whether you want to build a closer relationship with a child, spouse or friend, these relationship-builders can help you to find ways to express your care for them in a meaningful way.

- Remember the other person, even when you are apart. Send messages to them in different ways, or find a tiny gift for the person you love that they will really appreciate. Carry their photo, or something special from them, with you.
- Enter into their emotional world with them and see things from their perspective. Be happy with them when they are happy and be sad when they are sad.
- Love them just the way they are, accepting them without expecting them to change, and offering your love and acceptance even when they make mistakes.
- Appreciate them, thanking them for the special things they do for you. Appreciate your relationship as well, and find ways to let them know how you value them, and how important the relationship is to you.
- Togetherness is vital in a healthy and growing relationship. Do the everyday things together, and spend enjoyable time together, too.
- Inspire and encourage them to reach their goals, especially when they are feeling overwhelmed or tired.
- Open yourself up and be vulnerable. Share your hopes, dreams and struggles, and encourage them to share theirs, as you listen attentively.
- Needs. Understand the things that they need in a relationship and know that these things may be different from the things you need in a relationship. Find ways to meet each others' needs.
- Support them when they are facing challenges. Take some of the burden from their shoulders, and be there for them at all times.
- Happiness comes from making the other person happy. Find new and creative ways to delight them.
- Inspire them with God's love, shown through you.
- Protect them from harm. Help them to feel safe from physical threats, keep their secrets, and avoid causing them extra stress or fear. Pray specifically for them whenever you can.

Adapted from Holford, K. (2004). *The Family Book*. (p. 12). Alma Park, Grantham, England: The Stanborough Press Limited. Used by permission.