

How to be a nicer person

If you're one of those people who feels angry and irritable a lot of the time, the chances are you're not a nice person to be around. Unfortunately it's often those closest to you that suffer the most. If you would like to be a nicer person, the steps below will no doubt help:

Take Action - Make a plan

It's much easier to be nicer to others when you recognise why the problem exists in the first place. Decide where the pressure points are in your life e.g. getting the children to school, your boss's excessive work demands. For each situation make an action plan to approach the situation more constructively. Taking action puts you in control, making you feel a happier and less irritable.

Create "Me" Time

Being nicer to others begins with being nice to yourself. It's not selfish - it's a necessity to relax and recharge your batteries. Meet up with your friends or go for a walk in the park. Do what you enjoy doing on a regular basis. Even having a relaxing bath can become a really pleasurable experience with the addition of lighted candles, fragrant oils and soothing music.

Appreciate Others

It's so easy when you're busy to forget to praise and appreciate those closest to you. Spend time thinking about the people you really care about. Write down next to their name all the things you value about them. Do something special for them to make them feel appreciated e.g. place a little note in your partner's pocket with a special loving message written on it. They will be surprised but be really pleased that you made the effort, and remember what you give out comes back to you.

Don't over-do it

As well as appreciating others, decide to really listen to that inner voice which tells you when you're doing too much. You don't have to be perfect, your best is good enough. Set some clear boundaries around yourself and learn to say, "No". If a friend wants to have a drink one evening and you feel too tired, thank them for the invitation but express how you feel and arrange to do it when you're less busy. When you respect yourself and your needs, others will respect you too and you'll be a much nicer person to be around.

Give Positive Energy to Others

Even though you may feel under pressure, make a point of listening to what people are saying to you. Instead of trying to complete another task, give your

full attention when your loved ones are speaking to you. Make eye contact and don't interrupt or judge. When your child is speaking, listen rather than hurrying them along. Giving them your undivided attention for a few minutes will make them feel content, and less likely to play up later causing you more problems.

Admit you are wrong

When things go wrong it's easy to blame others rather than to admit you may be part in the problem. Even though you know you should apologise, your "nice state" becomes difficult to achieve when you're angry, stressed and worried and refusing to take a portion of the blame. The next time there is a dispute think about how you've contributed to the problem and admit where you've made a mistake. When you take responsibility for your actions, your life will begin to run smoothly.

Change your Mind Set

As you move towards becoming a nicer person using the technique "Affirmations" can further help you to achieve that goal. Affirmations are positive statements you say to yourself to reprogramme your mind. Repeat the statement 10 times when you wake up in the morning and also last thing at night. e.g. *I like people and people like me*, You'll be amazed at how this changes your attitude towards people and how positively they respond to you.

Allow yourself to have fun

As you progress towards being a nicer person, notice how much lighter you feel. Letting go of the need to be right or perfect frees up a lot of energy. Be spontaneous, bring back romance into your life, watch a funny film, open a bottle of wine: You deserve to be happy and allow yourself be that relaxed nicer person.