

# 6 people you need in your tribe

Every parent needs a tribe. Including you.

You need a group of people who can support, uplift, answer questions, and make you feel normal. This isn't always easy. It can be a challenge to find people who will be a part of your inner circle - but it's always worth the effort. It can even help you be a better parent.

"We are meant to be interconnected," explains Angie Kendall, director of development and communications at the Child Abuse Council. "Sometimes it can feel awkward, but we must make purposeful connections."

If you don't feel like you have a tribe, that's okay. Now's the time to make an effort to build your support system. Consider it a gift to yourself and your family.

Before you begin, make a list of the people who are already there for you - your siblings, parents, friends and acquaintances. Many of us have a tribe without even realizing it.

Then, build on it.

First, start a wish list of who you need in your own tribe. It may seem strange, but this is a great way to start building intentional relationships.

Here are a few people you want to include on that list.

## **Someone who has the guts to tell you the truth.**

It's not difficult to find a "yes man" (or woman). These friends can be fun to be around - but they aren't interested in having the tough conversations.

And when it comes to your tribe, you need someone who can have tough conversations. You need the open and honest relationships.

It can take time to find friends like this - friends who are willing to tell you the truth. And it can take time to build these deep relationships in your tribe.

But finding people who can be honest with you - even when it's not easy - is worth the effort.



**now what? Keep Connecting.**



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## **Someone who makes time for you.**

Your tribe must go beyond the screen. Social media and technology can make it easy to stay connected, but your tribe must go beyond that.

"Facebook isn't enough," Angie says. "Online connections don't take the place of real connections." And this means you also have to be willing to get off the computer and connect in person. Set up a coffee or meet at the park with your kids. This is how you'll build meaningful and lasting relationships with members of your tribe.

And if you want something more formal, try scheduling a monthly get together with a group of friends. This helps you make it part of your routine!

## **Someone who is older than you and someone who is younger than you.**

Don't limit your tribe to people who are in the same life stage as you. This can be an easy trap to fall into - the people you spend time with are often around your age with kids that are your age.

Try to develop relationships with people who are older and younger than you.

People at different life stages can help put your experiences into perspective. (And you can do the same for them.)

## **Someone who is smarter than you.**

When you build a business network, you look for people who are smarter than you. They can push you and expand your knowledge - which makes you a better professional.

The same is true for your tribe. You want someone who knows a lot more than you - to help you be a better person and a parent.

## **Someone who encourages you.**

We all need cheerleaders in our lives and we all need cheerleaders in our tribes.

While having honest conversations is important, so is having encouragement through tough times.

Your cheerleaders tell you that you are doing a great job. They make sure you know you look great.

They help you see yourself in a positive light.

## **Someone who doesn't have kids.**

You need non-parents in your tribe. They help nurture your other interests outside of your kids.

(Remember those interests?)

And they also help to keep you in check. You need friends to remind you that they no longer want to talk about potty training or baby led weaning.

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Being a caregiver can be challenging and lonely. That's why it's so important to have people you can rely on and trust.

now what? | **KEEP CONNECTING.**

This holiday season, give yourself a gift of a tribe. It's a gift that never goes out of style and becomes better with time.



Originally posted on the Now What? Blog 11/10/15. The Now What? Blog served for nearly 7 years to

1. Normalize parents seeking support and help as a manner of child abuse prevention
2. Engage community in how they can work to prevent child abuse
3. Work to build resiliency in families through promotion of the 5 protective factors

Maybe you coach a baseball team or you help care for the neighbor kids from time to time. You are investing in the safety and security of the children in our community. Because it truly does take a village to raise our children, we want to offer the tools needed to bring awareness and education to preventing child abuse.

**now what? Keep Connecting.**

