# DEVELOPING A SUPPORT NETWORK

**SMART**
**Family & Friends**

- Make a list of family, friends, and acquaintances.

- Among those are likely to be some that you feel close to, some who you enjoy socializing with and some with whom you wouldn't choose to spend any more time with than you have to.

- If you cross the last group off the list, you are left with people you might like to spend time with on a casual basis and (hopefully) at least one with whom you could talk about your situation.

**Social Support**

1. List people that you could contact for a social occasion, such as coffee, lunch, or a movie.

2. Choose at least one person and identify how, when, and what you could invite them to do with you. Be specific. E.g., call/text/email Sharon and ask if she would like to meet for coffee next Tuesday.

3. Are there any unhelpful thoughts that might get in the way of you being able to do this? E.g., "I might be rejected" or "I might look desperate, as if I have no friends."

4. Can you challenge these unhelpful thoughts, using REBT? E.g., replacing the above unhelpful belief ("I might be rejected") with a more helpful one, such as: "If someone asks me out for a coffee, I usually feel flattered. If she doesn't want to come, she can say no, and I will cope."

**Emotional Support**

5. Who on your list might be a potential source of emotional support –
   e.g., someone who will listen to you without judging or telling you what to do.

6. If you have been able to identify someone, think about how you might reach out to them. E.g., "I will call my sister and ask if we can find a time to meet and talk about something that is bothering me."

7. What unhelpful thoughts might get in the way of you being able to do this? E.g., "I don't want to burden her with my problems."

8. How can you challenge these unhelpful thoughts, using REBT? E.g., replacing the above unhelpful belief ("I don't want to burden her with my problems") with a more helpful one, such as: "She is my sister and she cares about me, just as I care about her."