

The Japanese term, *kenzoku*, literally translated means family and implies the presence of a deep connection and special bond.

Many of us have people in our lives with whom we feel this close relationship. Time or distance cannot diminish the bond we have with them.

Four reasons why we are drawn to others in meaningful ways:

1. **Common interests.** People who enjoy the same activities make life more fun.
2. **History.** Nothing ties people together like going through the same difficult experience. But maintaining strong relationships requires more than a shared history.
3. **Common values.** Long-term relationships need a foundation of shared values because we act in accordance with what is most important.
4. **Equality.** In healthy relationships, each person should be involved in making decisions and compromises so the needs of one are not continually diminished to support the other. It's all about balance.

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Healthy relationships are based on empathy, kindness and respect.