

# Making Connections with Other Students

by Pierre-Line Janvier

I started taking ABE classes in 2003. I was coming to learn English, but after I started, I discovered that at school you meet people and you make connections. You share ideas. Your classmates encourage you to come to school. They encourage you to survive. If you have stress in your life, you feel discouraged, and maybe you think of dropping out of school. Sometimes, you have to work extra hours and can't come to school. Sometimes, you have problems with childcare and can't come to school. There are a lot of life problems that can make you stop coming to school.

My problem was that I didn't have a job. I felt uncomfortable, like I didn't have any power. Everything you need money for I couldn't do. I felt desperate and I didn't know what to do. I had a friend at school



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who always talked to me. We got to know each other. She told me how life was difficult for her. She would often ask me what was going on in my life. One day I asked her if she had any ideas about

how I could get a job. She told me she worked at a laundry and encouraged me to fill out an application. She was a supervisor there and she helped me get a job.

Because of her I have a job. I can take care of myself, and I am able to come to school every day to learn more. If I hadn't met her, it would have taken me a long time to get a job. Meet-

ing that friend in school was important to my feeling of success.

By making connections, students can help each other. If a student needs a new apartment, maybe someone at school knows of a place that is available. If you have trouble raising your kids, maybe another student has some advice for you. If you feel depressed or have family problems, maybe other people in the class could listen to you and encourage you. Students coming together to help each other can create hope, which is the thing we all need the most to be able to stay in school and keep pursuing our goals.

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*Pierre-Line Janvier is 28 years old. She is originally from Haiti.*

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