

Communication And Friendship

"One friend in a lifetime is much; two are many; three are hardly possible."-Henry Brooks Adams. True friends are rare. It has been said that friendship doubles our joys and halves our sorrows.

Some may feel that friends are not necessary, sadly, to their regret, they learn all too late in life, we all need true friends. In fact, the quality of your life depends much on the quality (not the quantity) of your friendships. Healthy friendships are essential to our mental and physical well-being. Dr. David Weeks, a neurophysiologist said "I have a high proportion of patients with anxieties, phobias, and depression who could be described as lonely. There are connections between the severity of depression and the severity of loneliness." A market survey revealed that "in the United States 25 percent of the adult population suffer 'chronic loneliness' and . . . in France half the people have experienced acute isolation." The explosions of computer chat rooms, the proliferation of dating clubs, and profusion of newspaper advertisements by those seeking companionship, are indicators that we all need human contact. And what better contact can we have than a true friend?

The answers to the following questions should help us in our search for good friends. What is a friend? How can I find a true friend? How can I keep my friends? And how can I be a true friend?

What is a friend? One dictionary defines a friend as "one attached to another by affection or esteem." Another simply states, "a person one likes." To me the best description of a true friend is found in one of the oldest books ever written. These words of wise King Solomon at Proverbs 17:17 state, "A true companion is loving all the time, and is a brother that is born for when there is distress." Our health may fail us, our material possessions may lose their value, but true friendship grows stronger and flourishes with time. True intimate friends are among the most precious gifts you will ever have, and if allowed to grow, can produce a positive influence on you for life.

Friendship is a gift everyone is able to give and to receive. American essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson once said: "the only way to have a friend is to be one." Genuine friendships develop over time. All too often people want the benefits of a good friendship but they are too busy to invest the necessary time. Remember a friend is more than just an acquaintance. We have many acquaintances -neighbors, colleagues, and people we meet now and again. True friendship goes far beyond a casual meeting with others. Friendship is special; it requires an investment of time, energy, and emotional commitment. Friendship brings privileges, but it also involves responsibilities.

Good communication is a necessity with those we value as friends. When you converse with others, you show personal interest in their feelings, and you encourage them to express their thoughts and emotions. If the conversation always centers on you, you might end up talking to yourself. Good communication requires being a good listener as well as the ability to express yourself. To have real friends, we must open up to others-let them know who we really are. At the same time we must allow them the same opportunity. Just be yourself. Only by being genuine can we enjoy a genuine friendship.

To keep good friends do not overlook the importance of loyalty and confidentiality. The quickest way to lose a good friend is to reveal a secret or something said in confidence. Once we have a good friend, never take him, or her for granted. You can have good friends, if you are willing to spend the time.

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