

Safeguarding Friendships—A Way To Care For You And Your Friend

It's been said that a "best friend" constitutes a miracle of the universe.

During your lifetime, you attach to certain individuals who "mesh" with you mentally, spiritually and physically. At first, you share the weather, sports, latest boyfriend or girlfriend and the latest event on the local or national scene. As time passes, you become attached because you share deeper feelings, concerns, triumphs and fellowship.

Your friendships may revolve around a beer, wine or dancing. You might go for a walk, a bicycle ride or the movies. You might backpack, ski or raft a river. You share moments of danger, serenity or wonder at a sunset. During those times, you develop feelings through laughter, stories and shared opinions on an array of topics.



Friendships develop for a short time, a long time or a lifetime. Each friendship provides you with life energy, inspiration, fellowship or companionship. You might enjoy wise advice. You may enjoy

laughter.

Your friends pull you through good times, bad times, heartache and heartbreak. Most individuals don't think about their friendship—until they face loss of one.

At some point, you may lose a short-term friendship because you didn't nourish it. Friendships need watering or emotional deposits into the "heart bank." This inquiry revolves around examining the character of your various connections. You may value solid relationships so you periodically watch the dance within your relationships to make sure you maintain your part of creating a solid, equitable bond. Obviously, this requires being able to step back to witness your behavior within that friendship. For example, you might ask:

Are you monopolizing the dialogue and thus not aware of the tone of the energy field between you and your friend, thus not actually present to the message of your friend? You may have done this with the result of a drain in the sweet energy and feeling between your friend and you, yielding disconnection.

Are you not speaking your opinion or feelings in order to keep the peace and avoid their anger or sadness? Are you gauging your sharing and truth-telling only on what you think safest to share? Do your actions exhibit your authentically showing up in the friendship?

At times we choose the 'low road' simply due to lacking skill-sets for how to negotiate conversations that will ruffle another. Anyone who does not 'stand in our own moccasins' will certainly bring opinions and feelings that clash with ours at some point. When we do not understand another's position, the more authentic and honorable offering may be to just say we do not know how to handle the disparity but are committed to exploring so we can understand.

This adage reflects the friendship idea: each individual within the dynamic must make regular deposits to keep the

connection thriving: e.g., deposits of goodwill, compliments, phone calls to make a time to see each other, especially when the other seems to be over-withdrawing our account.

In this time of cell phones, emails and other electronic “coldness”, you must decide on face-to-face time in order to fulfill a deep friendship that lasts longer than a “tweet” or “chat” or “stumble.”

Direct communication creates wholesome connection. Who of us does not know that connections lose playful energy when issues are swept under the rug and the other person not well listened to? The emotional account becomes strained. Do you want real connection? You betcha!

Do you? If so, are you willing to become more aware? The result will be the safeguarding precious, creative friendships.

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