

## How

### DO YOU MAKE FRIENDS?

*Childhood and the college years are opportune times for making friends. As an adult, it becomes more difficult to form connections with people you don't know. A friendship isn't built in a day! What can you do to develop friendships? Here are some ideas.*

#### Say **THANK YOU**

Surely this will come as nothing new—everyone knows that saying thank you is the polite thing to do. Plus, it will make the person on the receiving end want to see you again. Not to mention, the word “gratitude” is very much in fashion at the moment.

#### **CALL** *them*

Taking the time to call people and check in on them shows that they are important to you—how can they know if you don't call? It makes sense. “It's the friends you can call up at 4 a.m. that matter,” Marlene Dietrich supposedly said.

#### **CELEBRATE** *birthdays*

This is so easy to do: just enter your friends' birthdays in an app so you don't forget them. On the big day, give the person a quick call or send a short message—that's all there is to it. If you invite them out to a restaurant or over to your house, surprise them with a cake and candles—they'll consider you their best friend. I know, I know: I just said that all of our friends are our best friends. . . .

#### **BRIBE** *them*

Yes, giving small gifts can make all the difference. We tend to think that we have to wait for a special occasion to give a gift. But why wait for a commercial holiday when you can spend your money any time you want? It's important for friends to demonstrate small acts of kindness. And if you manage to find a present that suits them perfectly, you'll make their day!

#### *Be* **PATIENT**

It's easy to make “friends” on Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, and Facebook, but forming a solid friendship in the real world takes time: 140 hours to be precise. Jeffrey A. Hall, professor at the University of Kansas, managed to quantify the number of hours of interaction required to form a true friendship with a stranger. Fifty hours is enough to create a friendly relationship, but a deep friendship takes at least three hundred hours together. Friends are hard work! I've always known the solution: I'm a very loyal friend.

#### *Give them* **OPPORTUNITIES** *to see you*

Studies have proven that to make friends with someone, they have to be a familiar face. So if you want someone to be your friend, you have to see them often. You'll become a fixture and, as a result, their friend! But you still have to figure out what kind of friend they are—a domesticated canine or an untamed feline—and adjust your behavior accordingly. What type of friend am I, you ask? I don't really know, but I do know that I don't shed much.

#### *Tell them they're* **IMPORTANT** *to you*

It might seem obvious, but telling your friends that you enjoy spending time with them or that they mean a lot to you really helps form connections. And when someone shows affection, most people try to live up to it. I'm not the only one who believes that you have to be nice in order for people to be nice back: the seventeenth-century philosopher Blaise Pascal said, “Kind words do not cost much, and yet they accomplish much.”

#### *Show up when* *the going gets* **ROUGH**

Baptism by fire: this is when you find out who your real friends are. You get divorced, lose your job, or someone close to you dies, and suddenly your “friend” magically disappears. But others will remain very present—even some you didn't expect to. You should be able to share your troubles with your friends. When you can put words to your pain, the burden becomes lighter.

Ask

# THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

So you want to make friends—great.  
But what should you know before gathering a crowd?

1

## IS ONE MAN'S HAPPINESS ANOTHER MAN'S SORROW?

There's no reason why you shouldn't keep company with happy people. Still, I would never abandon my unhappy friends; if I can cheer them up, then I'll be happier too. A study by Concordia University in Quebec has proven that friendship protects us from stress and depression—and you don't need a prescription for that!



2

## Does like really seek like?

I'll spare you the list of studies demonstrating that friends often have similar genetic traits. Especially since I'm more of an example of "opposites attract": I have friends from all backgrounds, nationalities, and social classes. Actually, I seek friendship with whoever I like!



3

## SHOULD YOU BE COMPLETELY HONEST WITH YOUR FRIENDS?

I would like to say, "of course." But can you really tell a friend that you would prefer to stay at home in pajamas, watching the final episode of the latest Netflix show, than go out for sushi at a crowded restaurant? Why can't you just tell her the truth? The right response to her invitation is "Grab some takeout and come watch my show with me!" A friend you can't be honest with is no friend at all.



4

## DO "BEST FRIENDS" exist ?

I'm not comfortable with the idea of a "best" friend. Obviously, you might get along better with some people than others, but does that make them better? Are your other friends really not as good? Avoid ranking your friends—no one ever talks about having a "second-best" friend.

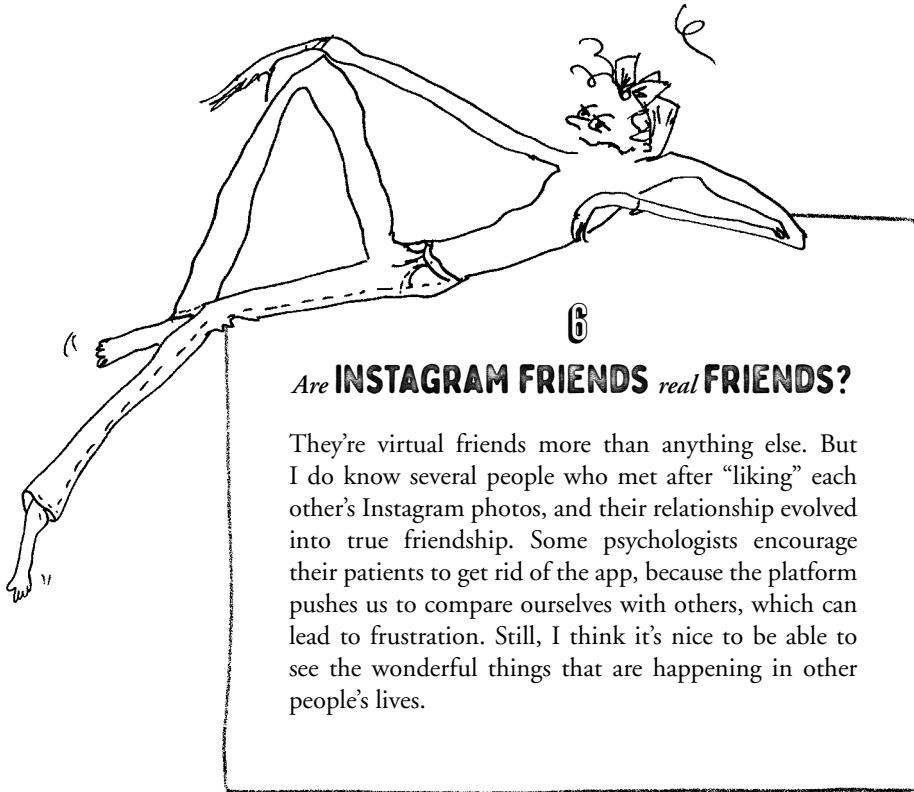


**ULTIMATELY,  
ALL OF MY FRIENDS  
ARE MY BEST FRIENDS!**

5  
SHOULD YOU TALK  
**POLITIC**  
WITH YOUR FRIENDS?

You can, on one condition: that you learn to listen and avoid interrupting the other person because you think you know what they're about to say.

Above all, remain calm.



THINK  
**POSITIVE**

If you're too negative, you'll turn people off and you risk alienating your friends one by one. According to American researcher John Cacioppo—one of the founders of social neuroscience—our brains tend to remember negative experiences more readily than positive ones.

**LEARN TO FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE.**

If you're caught up in negative thoughts, here are a few tips:

- ① Breathe (always good advice).
- ② Avoid people who are negative —and who forget to breathe.
- ③ Stand up straight and smile! Smiling stimulates positive thinking. People who don't smile are in no position to be happy. Smile and life will smile back!

④ Try to push negative thoughts out of your mind. Writing can be a good way to help chase away negativity. Positive thinking leads to a positive view of the world. So instead of saying, "Things are really bad right now. All I've got are problems," try saying, "Life is giving me exciting challenges right now." A change in perspective can make all the difference.

*"Don't let a little dispute injure a great friendship."*

— Dalai-Lama

