

Understanding Friendship as Social Discourse

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ABSTRACT

Friendship is a kind of relationship that has been nurtured since time immemorial, it is something that is found in every society and culture; it is a relationship of mutual affection between two or more people, a bond that is usually never broken. The idea of friendship can best be thought of as two people side by side looking forward towards a common goal, or a relationship between two people who like each other and enjoy each other's companion. At a higher dimension and more interesting level, the idea of friendship contains not only the component of association but also that of loyalty; the highest level of friendship contains the components of association and loyalty along with affection, this would greatly help in the emotional, psychological, and social development of the individual. However, any relationship needs constant nurturing and development from all the people that involved in one; this means, friendship cannot survive if one person makes all the efforts to sustain it without any mutual recognition from others, because both positive and negative experiences refine the personality of the individual, it is of paramount essentiality that we find friends who are compatible with our aims and goals in life and that concerted and mutual effort should be made to sustain it.

Keywords: Agentic, Acquaintance, affection, affinity alliance, Association, attachment, bond, closeness, comrade, Companion,

INTRODUCTION

Friendship can be considered to be one of the most complex and ever changing concepts that the human race tries to comprehend. There are many valuable things in life, but friendship may be one of the most important. To live a life without the experience of friendship is life

without living because human interaction is a necessity to survival, and developed friendships are essential to the successful well being of any one. It is one of the things in life that is really needed, and that is friends. Without friends, people would suffer from loneliness and solitude. Loneliness leads to low self-esteem and deprivation. The human survival is based on friendship, from the highest authority to the lowest living on the streets, all of them have experienced in some way or the other one of the different kinds of friendships.

People talk about friendship regularly on daily basis in social circles; it is a relationship we make and enter into most often, sometimes consciously or unconsciously, We take this friendship for granted because it is something that exists naturally in society and most of us never really have to actually go out into the world looking for a friend, because many did not understand the meaning or what it stand for, many have often sought answers to this interesting, simple, yet a complex discourse but never come with adequate answers, This is because, it is a relationship that is made up of beautiful and complex feelings which may not often be described in mere words as there are so many different aspects, views, theories and perception of it, depending on the individual or parties involved. It is in the light of the above that this article intends to share with many, most especially within the social parlances that understanding friendship as a social discourse tries to explore what friendship is all about and how we can make and maintain a healthy friendship.

WHAT IS FRIENDSHIP?

Searching for meaning of friendship has always been a burning question, however as soon as we meet our friends all these get answered automatically in that the answer to what is the meaning of friendship lies within our hearts as something so pure and essential is not always visible to the eye but is felt by the heart. According to Mohammed Ali, *if you haven't learned the meaning of friendship, you really haven't*

learned anything. Friendship is a term that people use at all times but if you ask a cross section of people, you would find that it means very different things to different people depending on the context of the usage or perception, for example, there are those who will happily refer to the one hundred people linked to them on the social media flat form sites as *friends*, while others may refer the term to a small handful of people they know very well.

Fundamentally, friendship is a relationship between two or more people who holds mutual affection and respect for each other, it is actually a *form of love*, when you love someone with every ounce of your being and genuinely want him or her to be happy, even if it means sacrificing something to deny yourself to make them happy. Praise Obeahon once said, *sometimes you have to displease yourself and deny some of your privileges just to make other people happy.* She maintained that the true meaning of friendship is when you consider the other person's wellbeing to be as valuable as your own. If you feel this way about a person, you are truly his or her friend. If you consider that another person's good is as important as your own, you will treat them the way friends are supposed to treat each other, you will make sacrifices for them when by doing so you can help them; you will make sure that you are behaving in ways that will not hurt them because this is the essence of friendship. If you are not friends with someone, you may care about their happiness, but not as much as about your own, but if you are true friends, you will care as much for the other as you do yourself.

Goffman (1953) said, *friendship is that relationship in which two people may share openly and equally with each other.* A true friend will listen more than lecture; help more than criticize, pick one up when one falls, and share happiness, joy, grieves and fears. A real friend will not always tell one what one wishes to hear but will always tell one what he needs to hear. A friend will be there for one when no else will, and will always put your happiness above his own, laughs with one, not at one, and will

always be there when needed. According to Dickens Bard, quoted by Kiwi, January 3rd, 2011, *true friendship is unconditional*. It is when you care for and love a person whatever their faults and failings, and they treat you in the same way; it is reciprocal: both parties consider the good of the other as equal to their own, accepts differences but share commonalities, criticizes without hurting and is unafraid to tell the truth. True friends accept truth from each other. M. Shurn (2011) was of the view that, *Friends are the family we wish we had instead of the one we got*. I heard somebody say that one time, and I think she had been having pretty bad day! Seriously though, we pick our friends, choosing from all other people. A friend can be *true friend* for a while, and then move on; relationships changes as people and their circumstances changes also.

However friendships last long as two friends live, and these are indeed precious, so what is a true friendship, one that lasts for a lifetime? Yes it is, I think, a relationship of mutual trust, respect and admiration. Through a history of genuine shared experiences, a genuine friendship gives us an anchor in an uncertain world. There is comfort and security in knowing that we are not alone come what may, and there is joy in knowing that a couple of good friends will always find other adventure to share with us. When you love someone so much that you would want to rest your head on them and cry and you would let them cry on you too. It is someone you can talk to about things you disagree on and end up being closer for that disagreement; it is when you think about someone, how close you are to them, how much you love them and smile and are happy all over, something when your love for someone exceeds your need for them.

The oxford English dictionary describes a friend as, *a person with whom one has a bond of mutual affection, typically one exclusive of sexual or family relations*, suffices to say that friendship is about having fun together, enjoying each other's company, learning from each other,

supporting and caring for each other, building memories and helping each other to grow, a kind of relationship between two or more individuals that share a mutual trust, likings, commitments and personal feelings which allows them to benefit from each other. It has to do with opening ourselves up and allowing others to do the same, it is when we build bridges to each other's Islands and realizes that we are stronger and better as two or more, than when we are on our own as the saying goes, *two is always better than one and a threefold cord is not easily broken (Ecc. 4:9 -12).*

The dictionary further explains that *friendship is a state of being friends, friendly relation or attachment to a person or between persons; affection arising from mutual esteem and goodwill; friendliness, amity.* The Dalai Lama (Tibetan Spiritual Leader,) once said that *Bil and Lisa are real friends, they are physically opposite, have completely different tastes and interests, and see each other very differently but they both know the other will be there for each other no matter what, and that is friendship.* Hence, a friend is someone who walks in when others walked out. Aristotle maintain that *friendship is a single soul dwelling in two bodies,* hence a combination of affection, loyalty, love, respect and trust; where the general traits of friendship includes similar mutual interests and an attachment to each other.

In order to experience friendship, you need to have true friends. *It is the emotional comfort provided by friendship, inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words but, pouring out just as they are, chaff and grain together, certain that a faithful friendly hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping and with a breath of comfort blow the rest away.* (Dina M. Craik 1826) . A best friend is someone who accepts the good as well as the bad qualities of his friend and takes initiatives in correcting and mending them. It is a distinctive kind of concern for your friend; it is a relationship of immense faith and love for each other. It is all about how

much you care and understand each other, a pure kind of relationship which would make your friend smile, feel good as to how much you love and care for him, centering on talking, listening and building up a strong relationship and loyalty between each other. A true friendship is when someone who knows you better than yourself and takes a position to be by your side in every moment of your challenges; when someone comes to rescue you from the worst phase of your life, it goes beyond just sharing of time together because it is lasting.

Some people see friendship as simply the trust that someone will not hurt you, yet for others, it might be an unconditional love or just *normal relationship*. Here are a few definition of friendship by different social Scientists. *Friends are people who spontaneously seek the company of one other, further more they seek proximity in the absence of strong social pressure to do so.*

(Hartup 1975, p.11), similarly, (Davito, 1992) opined that friendship can mean *an interpersonal relationship between two people that is mutually productive, characterized by mutual positive regards*. It is seen as interpersonal relationship because an interaction of communication must have taken place between two or more *people*. It is often considered as mutual and agreeable relationship between two or more people and that it is a good thing, as it has been said a person who find a true friend has found a priceless treasure. *A voluntary interdependence between two persons over time, that is intended to facilitate social – emotional goals of participants and may involve varying types and degrees of companionship, intimacy, affection and mutual assistance*(Hays,1988,p.395). *A friend is someone who likes and wishes to do well for someone else and who believes that the other party reciprocates these feelings with good intentions*(Reisman,1979,pp.93-94). *Friendship is a relationship involving voluntary or unconstrained interaction in which the participants responds to one another personally, that is, as unique individuals rather than as packages of discrete*

attributes of mere role occupants (Wright, 1984, p119). Friendship is an intimate, personal, caring relationship with attributes such as reciprocal tenderness and warmth of feeling reciprocal desire to keep the friendship; honesty and sincerity; trust; intimacy and openness of self; loyalty; and durability of the relationship over time (Donelson & Gullahorn, 1977, 156).

A true friend is someone you can talk about your feelings, someone you can tell things you could never tell your family or even your partner. They are someone you don't have to talk to but someone you will go out of your way to be with, a person whom you can sleep fighting and getting up another morning with a better understanding of each other. Consequently, to form a healthy and long lasting relationship, a person must be productive, sincere, honest, transparent and accountable so that they cannot be causing harm to themselves or the other person involved in the relationship. It is therefore essential to build your friendship with a person or people who are compatible with you on both, emotional, social, moral and psychological levels, because it is a relationship shared between two friends for the welfare of each other, in other words, it is a relationship of mutual caring and intimacy between or among one another.

True friendship therefore could be regarded as perhaps the only relationship that could survive the trials and tribulations of time and yet remain unconditional. It is however important to note that it is generally believed that friendship is rarely a one sided, though it takes two individuals to negotiate the boundaries of relationship and friendship will not survive very long if only one person is making the effort to sustain the relationship without any help or recognition from the other person, because it takes both positive and negative experience to define a personality.

THEORIES OF FRIENDSHIP

Theory simply means suggestions or assumptions made about something. What you think a thing is or should be. They serve several functions, they provide a vantage point for determining what aspects of a situation are relevant and important to consider; contain constructs to help us label and classify events; indicate how phenomena are interrelated and suggest questions worth researching, as evidence builds, theories can summarize a multitude of observations and facts into few generalizations. A theory helps us to understand and explain, as relevant circumstances change they help provide guidelines as how predictions may also need to be altered. Finally for both analysts and laypersons, theories can provide an important basis for formulating strategies for promoting well being. Having examined what is friendship from the general perspective, it is very important to take notice of what proponents and exponents are saying about the subject of our discourse. This chapter however is not intended to argue for or against a particular theory, but it is to examine what the various theorists' tries to explain what friendship stands for from the perceptions of various scholars and disciplines.

When approaching the notion of friendship, the first major concern is that there is a lack of a universally, firmly agreed and socially acknowledged criteria for what makes a person a friend or otherwise, because most often in one setting, we may describe a person as a friend while in another the label may seem less appropriate, consequently this makes us to lack an integrated theory of friendship and a framework within which such a theory could be constructed, but several contributions to the understanding of friendship have been made by sociologists, anthropologists, psychologist, social psychologists and scientists. Although we may have a very thin understanding of what friendship entails, yet people like Merton and Lazarsfeld (1948), Rege – Schlonsky (1961), Litwack (1961, 1969) and Naegel (1958), among others have approached friendship from a sociological point of view, utilizing

traditional sociological concepts and focusing on norms, values and social structures, they have shown how social arrangements provides social relationships, while Bellah (1996 .115), drawing from Aristotle suggest that the traditional idea of friendship has three components: friends must enjoy other's company , they must be useful to one other and they must share a common commitment to the good of each other. Newcom (1961) have from the point of view of a social psychologist looked at the friendship process. Paine (1969,1974) and Brain(1976) have developed approaches to friendship from the position of anthropology .From psychological perspective, Duck (1970,1978) and preeminent Wright(1974,1978) have explored the dynamics of friendship and a number of other contributions exist which are relevant to the theory of friendship, please check Kurth (1970),Suttle (,1970),Kon and Losenkof (1978).

Little attempt has been made to integrate these works in a way that the contributions from the different disciplines can be part of the potentially coherent theory and Such a frame work is essential ,for without it studies done within each separate discipline could be misleading, incomplete and inconclusive representations of friendship. For example, the sociologically and anthropologically oriented theorists like Paine and Naegel were unable to explain the composition (configuration of characteristics) of the friendship relationship. The patterning of friendship relationship is constrained by social structure of the society within which it appears and the character of the mechanisms and processes within the individual in terms of which the relationship works is also constrained (Blau 1983).For Paine and Naegel, the composition of the friendship is given and can be dealt with descriptively, hence because they lack a psychological theory they were unable to explain the composition of the role. This can be illustrated by looking at two key characteristics they associate with friendship, trust and the revocability of friendship. Assuming the accuracy of the much psychological theorizing on friendship (Wright's work for instance),

revocability is significant because it conditions the way in which people must reward each other in friendship. To permit another to change their mind without consequences other than those from the relationship it means that the participants in the relationship must attend carefully to the exchange, to what they are giving and getting (E. Goffman.1952). Under these conditions trust is essential in friendship. Trust is critical, as argued bellow, because it is only as each participant is truthfully representing what he is getting from the relationship that each can altogether make the best use of his or her ability to manage the relationship.

Psychological theorists on the other hand suffer because they cannot explain many of the properties of friendship as a relationship. Wright for instance, who has developed the most comprehensive psychologically based theory of friendship lacks a picture of the self as a socially conditioned object whose attributes are derived from the social system. Wright focuses almost exclusively on the self as a psychological structure, but the capacity of another to provide one with rewards, depends on the social characteristics of the other, not simply on the psychological characteristics. How meaningful another's assessment are, determines to some extent their reward potential. The rewarding of another's evaluation of one's self depends on their social stands, on their worth as a possible evaluator, not merely on the act of affirmation, hence Wright cannot explain important aspect of friendship, that is why friendships are most often between equals. From the above analysis attempt were made to integrate the contributions from number of theorists in a logical theory of friendship, but suffices to say while none of the hypotheses presented is surprising, the demonstration that they can be derived from a framework, the pieces of which are already in place is significant.

However what original contributions are made available, the idea of the befriended modification, the attention given to specialization and the

generalization in friendship, the stress placed on the significance of the set of friends and the contrastive disposition of classification processes are relatively negligible compared to the work of organizing existing pieces of theory of friendship into a sound theoretical body. Having explored friendship from the point of view of various scholars and disciplines, it is most interesting to note that numerous other theories are available in attempt to explain the concept of friendship, For the purpose of this write up two of them are discussed below.

A. Morality Theory

The study of morality is molded by an intricately linked set of tangential issues each of which has a unique effect on moral development. Friendship in particular plays an indisputable role in helping to shape the path of moral development in the individuals involved. In evaluating various philosophical and psychological perspectives on morality, two principal arguments emerge concerning the link between friendship and moral development: in the first argument, friendships act as a positive force in fostering moral development, as they provide a background upon which the parties can formulate their own moral rules and values. In direct contradiction, the second argument espouses friendship and morality as inherently antithetical, relying heavily on the idea that friendship encourages subjectivity and impartiality. The potential negative influence of peer influence on moral development is perhaps most clearly manifested in the prevalence of aggression and violence in the lives of many people. In studying the connection between friendship and moral development, then, it is crucial to consider both the positive and negative consequences that peer relations can have on a person to develop his or he own individual sense of morality.

In exploring the effects of friendship on moral development, it is necessary first to establish the ways in which these phenomena are related. Traditionally, friendship and morality have been viewed as

separate entities independent of one another; consequently, there is little research pertaining to the specific link between friendship and morality and the ways in which friendship influences moral development. In philosophical and psychological research, morality is largely treated as an intrapersonal phenomenon, studied by observing the principles used in resolving moral dilemmas. Friendship, conversely, is typically viewed as an interpersonal relationship, studied according to patterns of interactions, a more relational approach that cannot be applied to the study of individual moral development.

Despite the different ideological approaches taken by researchers, the mutually influential link between friendship and moral development remains indisputable. Friendship, at its most fundamental level, mirrors any social relationship, as it is defined and constrained by certain moral parameters. Furthermore, it serves an important function as an arena in which morality is learned, tested, and refined. In this sense, morality can be accurately viewed in a relational context, as moral issues such as loyalty, trust, commitment, and honesty are prominent features of any close relationship, and serve as a foundation for the constant struggle that accompanies moral growth (Bukowski 238).

Concrete definition of friendship and an intricate understanding of how morality is measured and studied serve as the framework within which one can explore the specific link between friendship and moral development, or more accurately, the ways in which friendship influences this process among friends. Friendship plays a unique role in the progression of moral development, triggering processes of collaboration and cooperation through the establishment of affective ties and mutual respect. While most moral theorists seemingly agree upon the significance and unique nature of this relationship, there exists considerable divergence throughout psychological and educational domains regarding the exact ways in which the two are related. In attempting to reconcile these varying ideologies, it is helpful to look

closely at the perspectives of several different moral theorists. In his view, Jean Piaget (1932) sets forth two types of moral values that result from interactions. The relationship fosters in the parties a sense of *unilateral respect*, or an innate respect for authority and social tradition. Interactions with others, he claims, instill a certain adherence to principles of *mutual respect*, through cooperation with people of equal status, he asserts, may help them discover the boundaries that separate individuals from one another and learn to understand each other's emotions and the motivation behind individual actions. The development of both unilateral and mutual respect, which Piaget identifies as coercive rule and rational rule respectively, is preceded by the motor rule, a preverbal stage of intelligence in which action and morality are dictated purely by desires and motor habits. For Piaget, friendly interactions become a very important influence on moral development largely during the autonomous stage. This stage of development is characterized by a greater level of involvement with a gradual move toward being togetherness, consequently the achievement of a certain level of mutual respect and cooperation, and a perception of rules as rational which effectively, encompasses a change of consciousness in the ethics of rules based on changes in social relationships. This development of cooperation and mutual sensitivity is, essential to the process of internalizing morality, a crucial step in the process of moral development.

Kohlberg, in sharp contrast, focuses primarily on the cognitive processes of moral development; his research serves as one of the dominant theoretical approaches to examining the influence of friendship on the moral development process. The goal, or *end point* of moral development is often more vague than that of other processes of human development; the development of language, for example, has as its aim the ability to communicate coherently with others. For Kohlberg, the goal of the moral developmental process is, simply, the ability to resolve conflicts rationally by adhering to principles of justice irrespective of the social

context. According to him, two interrelated processes affect moral development: the first involves exposure to both internal and external moral conflicts, conditions that serve as the foundation of any moral development process. The second process, labeled by Kohlberg as *moral attachment*, involves the recognition of a perceived likeness, or connection to a person with whom an individual has formed a close relationship. (Bukowski 251) *Although Kohlberg generally links these processes of relationship, they are equally applicable in the realm of friendship and the interaction between them.*

Henry Sullivan presents an important argument in his assertion that the process of friendship underlies moral development by creating a greater moral sphere within which friends may operate. According to him, a sense of collaboration begins to emerge among friends during the formation of the relationship, spurred by an innate need for interpersonal interaction, particularly friendships based on mutual trust, he suggest, provide a crucial opportunity for friends to share in one another's moral conflicts. This expanded range of moral situations serves as a greater context within which each friend may evaluate their own moral standards. (Bukowski 252). Sullivan's theories on friendship and moral development are largely echoed in the work of Marilyn Friedman (1993). In accordance with Sullivan's concept of the expanded moral sphere, she suggests that friends validate one another's moral experiences and inspire each other to consider new moral values and principles. Consequently, working through conflicts in a caring relationship helps to maintain the *emotional intactness* (Friedman 2003) of the individuals involved, creating a sort of stability and constancy in their lives. Furthermore, Friedman asserts, the affective features of friendship facilitate their understanding of honesty, kindness and justice, thereby aiding the development of moral standards. Effectively, she argues, the needs, desires, fears, experiences and dreams of friends provide a wider background against which to compare and develop moral values and standards. The development of trust among friends is a crucial step in

the process of moral development; confiding in one's personal experiences creates a level of intimacy and disclosure, triggering openness to new viewpoints, and permitting friends to bear moral *witness* to each other's decisions and experiences.

However interesting and intelligent these arguments are, a body of research since the mid 1970s questions the relationship between the phenomenon of friendship and particular moral theories; for example proponents like (Stoker1976,1981; Blum1980,1993; Wilcox1979; Friedman1989,1993; Badhwar1991; Cookings and Oakley1995) have criticized consequentiality and deontological theorists on the ground that they are somehow incompatible with friendship and the kind of reasons and motives that friendship provides. Often, the appeal of friendship is intended to bypass traditional disputes among the major types of moral of theorists (consequentialists and deontologists) and virtue ethics; and so, the critics of the friendship may seem important and interesting. At the root of these questions concerning friendship and morality is the idea that friendship involves special duties: duties for specific people that arise out of the relationship of friendship. Thus it seems that we have obligations to assist and support our friends; that go well beyond those we have to help strangers because they are our friends, much like as parents we have special duties to aid and support our children because they are our children. (Annis 1978) suggest that such duties are constitutive of the relationship of friendship but Bernstein (2007) argued that friendship does not involve any requirements of partiality. Given this assertion, the question arises as to what the relationship is between such special duties of friendship and other duties in particular moral duties: can our obligations to our friends sometimes trump our moral duties, or must we always subordinate our personal relationships to morality in order to be properly impartial as we might think morality demand?

One concern articulated by Stocker(1976) is that the phenomenon of friendship reveals that consequentialist and deontological moral theories, by offering account of what is right to do irrespective of the intentions we have, encourages a kind of moral schizophrenia: a split between our moral reasons on the one hand and our motives on the other. Such moral schizophrenia, stocker argues, prevents us from harmonizing our moral reasons and our motives, and it does so in a way that destroys the very possibility of our having and sustaining friendship with others. Given the manifest value of friendship in our lives, this is undoubtedly a serious problem with these moral theories.

Bye and large, the debate on the issue in the friendship critique of consequentialism and deontology needs to be carried on part at the level of discussion of the nature of motivation and the connection between moral reasons and motives. Indeed such a discussion has implication for how we should interprets the sort of mutual caring that is central to friendship, for the sophisticated consequentialist would presumably try to make one to believe that mutual caring in terms of friendly dispositions (motives divorced from consequentialist reasons), an attempt which supporters of the friendship critique would say involves insufficient attention to the particular person one cares about, insofar as the caring would not be justified by who he or she is (motivated by personal reasons).To this end,, the discussion of friendship and moral theories has concentrated on the nature of practical reason and a similar debate focuses on the nature of value.

Scalon (1998) uses friendship to argue against what he calls teleological conceptions of value presupposed by consequentialism. The teleological view understands the state of affairs to have essential value, and our recognition of such value provides us with reasons to bring such states of affair into existence and to sustain and promote them. He argues that friendship involves some kinds of reasons – of loyalty, for example, is not teleological in this way, and so the value of friendship does not fit into

the teleological conception as such cannot be properly recognized by consequentialism. In responding to this argument, Hurka (2006) argues that this argument presupposes a conception of the value of friendship as something we ought to respect as well as to promote that is at odds with the teleological conception of value and so with teleological conception of friendship. Consequently the debate must shift to the more general inquiry about the nature of value and cannot be carried out simply by attending to friendship, which in conclusion is that, we must turn to broader issues if we are to settle the place friendship has in morality which reveals that in one sense, the friendship critiques have failed; it has not succeeded in making an end run around traditional debates between consequentialists, deontologists and virtue theorists, yet in a larger sense it has succeeded because it has forced these theories to take personal relationship seriously and consequently to refine or complicate their accounts in the process.

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory is one of a number of social science theories that has been proposed to explain the dynamics of how humans interact. The exchange theory has its foundations in neo-classical economic theory, and has been applied in a number of disciplines including anthropology, sociology and social psychology (Johar, 2005; Sprecher, 1998). The social exchange theory proposes that social behavior is the result of an exchange process. The purpose of this exchange is to maximize benefits and minimize costs. According to this theory, people weigh the potential benefits and risks of social relationships. When the risks outweigh the rewards, people will terminate or abandon that relationship. Cost involves things that are seen as negatives to the individual such as having to put money, time and effort into a relationship. The benefits are thing things that the individual gets out of the relationship such as fun, friendship, companionship and social support.

Social exchange theory as a generalization relies on three main assumptions. The first assumes that each person is a self-interested actor that transacts with other actors to accomplish a range of individual goals that they perceive cannot be achieved alone. The second assumption is that individuals attempt to maximize the rewards and minimize the costs of any interact. Humans have a strong, innate need to belong that is visible through our drive to form and maintain positive, lasting and significant personal interpersonal relationships. This suggests that people have a consistent goal to engage in frequent, pleasant contact with others who we have formed stable bonds of mutual concern, (Laursen & Hartup, 2002) which is perhaps best demonstrated through the relationship example of close friends. People often have an extensive network of acquaintances and friends from a range of different social forums, such as work, university and sporting teams, most people seek a limited number of close friends (about 4-6) (Baumeister & Bushman, 2008). It appears that further developing these close friendships is the goal for most people and friendship fits the cliché of *quality not quantity*.

When considering examples from our daily life, the indications proposed by the model became increasingly apparent. Firstly, it seems the initial assumption that most people seek out a limited number of close friendships was true for me. As exchange theory proposes, those relationships which have endured and become deeper are those where which we have perceived as receiving a balanced number of rewards compared to costs. our closest, longest lasting friendship surfaces as an example of interaction that is often linked with a feeling that what was invested into the relationship as costs, would usually be reciprocated with equal or greater rewards and, as a result, transactions with this friend are consistently associated with pleasurable feelings and the sense that we are developing a worthwhile and rewarding relationship. It is the desire to continually deepen the level of friendship and increase understanding that is perhaps for this reason that many of the resources

involved in exchanges at this level are less physical in their nature. Studies have found that while material resources such as money, food and clothing may be involved in some transactions among friends, other forms of rewards often take precedence (Lawler & Thye, 1999; Wildermuth et. al, 2006). These other *gifts* may include a range of things such as acceptance, approval, compliments, physical company, emotional disclosure, assistance on a task, commitment of time, or the sharing of knowledge. Buying of *suya* for a group of friends as an example which may cost about ₦5000 which would have been earned through hard labor or business, while they are often consumed in a very short time and the rewards may appear to be short lived. However, the cost of purchasing the *suya*, in this case monetary, is rewarded with the felt appreciation by the friendship group, as well as an increased feeling of belonging to the group and pleasurable emotions. These subjective and emotional rewards often have a higher value within friendship groups as they contribute to our innate need to belong.

Social norms have also been highlighted as influencing the felt value of transactions with friends. A study by Johar (2005) found that people may not always seek to maximize the economic utility, or value, of a transaction, when social norms are a factor. The study found that not only do people abide by social norms in their own interactions, but they feel distressed if norms are violated by others. In the *suya* example, the situational norm suggests that each member of the friendship group, who eats the *suya*, would return the favors by purchasing another day themselves. If a friend abided by this norm, as an addition to the emotional rewards I received initially, I receive the same to balance the exchange, and the felt positive outcome is increased. However, if this social norm was dishonored, I may perceive it as another cost, which affects the relationship negatively.

It is worth to note that exchange theory can be observed in almost all social interactions and an increasingly large body of research has focused

on its application to love, mate selection and sexuality. In a meta-analytic study South (1991) demonstrated the tendency for people to marry those of similar status. Exchange theories provide a view that could account for much of this trend of homogeneity suggest that people of similar status are more able, and therefore likely, to reciprocate expected rewards and maintain an equitable relationship. Often those resources most sought after by a certain socio-economic group can best be matched or complimented by someone of a similar status, thus these partnerships occur more often. A real life behavioral example can be seen when both men and women conduct a matching process and choose those with the best package of rewards – *the best catch*.

An interesting development in the study of exchange theory and sexuality is the idea of exchange of sex as a reward or commodity within relationships (Rijt & Macy, 2006). Research has identified sex as a resource that is essentially controlled by women. Men seek to acquire sex from women by exchanging it for a range of other resources, and often social norms and gender roles are assigned accordingly (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004). This phenomenon can certainly be observed in the real world. Men are often seen buying extravagant gifts for women, showing off power and wealth and providing security both physically and emotionally for women. Some researchers would suggest this is purely in exchange for sex (Sprecher, 1998). As mentioned previously, violating social norms can also lead to distress in interactions, suggesting that men are more likely to gain the reward of sex by adhering to these norms and gender roles. In life, according to exchange theory, men could create a situation of reciprocity by paying for dinner, giving a ride and giving assorted gifts to a potential intimate partner and they may be rewarded with sex.

So it can be seen that social exchange theory and its simple costs and rewards analysis can be applied to a range of social interactions in the over-abundance of situations. When applied to the aspect of friendship,

it is demonstrated that friendships are more likely to continue and develop if a situation of reciprocity exists, particularly if non-material rewards are involved and cater for the human need to belong; the relevance of exchange theory to sexuality has also been highlighted, with the implication that in sexual economics, transactions are focused around sex as a female controlled commodity thus in the two examples of friendship and sexuality, the influence of social norms on exchange transactions should also be viewed as an important aspect, as the theory is proving to be an extremely relevant and versatile model and continued social study of its application may prove enormously beneficial for the understanding of humans and their complex social interactions.

Cultural Variations of Friendship

My discussion of this chapter will be focused on reasoning about friendship as a multifaceted and complex phenomenon that must be studied in cultural context. Throughout lifespan, friendships have significantly influenced the developmental, environmental, and social aspects of individuals across all cultures. Numerous studies have examined the ways friendship affects psychological well-being (Verkuyten & Masson, 1996). Culture, on the other hand, influences all aspects of the developmental and social features of an individual. Culture can be seen as a prominent shaper of minds; culture serves as a learning system that *transforms basic biological capacities into meaningful thoughts and behaviors shared by its members* (Bower, 1997). Friendship qualities across cultures may then vary, following each society's cultural norms and values; various cultural differences in friendship characteristics exist, including differences in the meaning of friendship and the norms and values guiding friendship behavior (Verkuyten & Masson, 1996), and even the styles of friendship (Shin, 1995). These characteristics are strongly influenced by cultural values as such it is important to examine whether different cultures share common values of friendship, or if their Values differ.

Unfortunately, these similarities or differences in friendship qualities across cultures have not been extensively studied most especially in non Western societies like ours. It remains to be determined whether friendship values and characteristics are universal or culture-specific; most studies that have scrutinize cross-cultural differences of various societal aspects have focused on the concepts of individualism and collectivism, which were first discussed by Hofstede, to explain the differences observed between cultural groups (Leung & Bond, as cited in Singelis, 1994). These two concepts have been the major focus of most cross-cultural studies. Individualism and collectivism as a whole refers to the degrees to which a culture encourages, fosters, and facilitates the needs, wishes, desires, and values of an autonomous and unique self over those of a group (Matsumoto, 2000).

According to Oyserman, Coon, and Kimmelmeier (2002), Collectivism is based on the assumption that groups bind and mutually obligate individuals. Collectivistic cultures place priority on subordinating personal goals to those of the in-group. Cultures in Asia, Africa, South America, and the Pacific Islands are identified as collectivist cultures (Singelis, 1994). On the other hand, individualism emphasizes self-fulfillment (Oyserman et al., 2002); Singelis (1994) defined it as *giving priority to personal goals over in-group goals*. Cultures in Europe, America, and Australia are assumed to be high in Individualism. Individualistic cultures, emphasize personal identity, autonomy, and place individual needs, wishes, desires and values of the self over the group (Verkyuten&Masson, 1996; Matsumoto, 2002). Individualistic cultures views of the *self* focuses primarily on personal and internal attributes (Matsumoto, 2002).

Consequently, individualistic people are associated with concern for maintaining and enhancing their self-esteem (Oyserman et al, 2002). It can be presumed then, that individualistic individuals will emphasize enhancement of self esteem and self-worth through their interpersonal

relationships. Collectivistic cultures are seen as group-oriented, and it is hypothesized that individuals in a collectivistic culture tend to be more exclusive toward outside members than individuals in an individualistic culture. Thus, it is presumed that individuals in a collectivistic culture will have a smaller social network, but will perceive their relationships with their in-group members as being highly intimate. In Verkuyten and Masson's 1996 study, individuals from a collectivistic culture were shown to have fewer friends, but viewed their friendships as closer, than the individuals from an individualistic culture. Collectivistic individuals also indicated less intimacy with others-than-best friends. Collectivistic individuals who emphasize group solidarity and emotional dependence may place more emphasis on sharing with each other (Verkuyten & Masson, 1996). Thus, whereas individualistic cultures, such as the U.S., may emphasize enhancement of self-worth through friendships and other types of relationships, collectivistic cultures like Korea, may emphasize more heavily on instrumental aid and emotional dependency between individuals.

Given the multiplicity of friendship conceptions and functions that friendship has served in different societies, only core aspects of relationships seem to be universally the same while others vary across time and societies (Beer, 2001; Pahl, 2000). Far from being voluntary, friendships in the past were at times highly regulated, contained an asymmetrical structure or were constituted as a blood relationship resembling kinship. A better understanding of the complex interconnections between friendship and societal conditions therefore seems necessary. While there are cultural similarities in the concept of friendship in different societies, there are also cultural differences in the meaning and function of friendship (Krappmann, 1996). Given that societies are not homogeneous, the definition of friendship varies further within societies and gender, for example it seems that only in modern societies that close friendship is a personal relationship mostly free from societal influence. The question can be raised whether the notion of

emotional intimacy, that is so characteristic especially for friendships in people's cultures, is typical for other types of societies as well. In subsistence economies, where the distribution of resources is not guaranteed, the help of others is needed and friendships are more instrumentally oriented towards material exchange (Beer, 2001). Similarly, it is a question whether, or how, the concept of relationship autonomy (Selman, 1980).

In view of the analysis made above let us examine two particular cultures to validate the claims made from the studies in relation to friendship.

Africa

Africa is a large place with varied peoples and innumerable cultural and linguistic variations. African culture includes all the cultures that were ever in the continent. The culture of Africa encompasses and includes all cultures within the continent, which includes the music, art, language, literature and other related practices. Africa is divided into a great number of ethnic cultures. There is a political or racial split between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, The main one is cultural split of the North from the rest of the other sub regions which is then subdivided into a number of ethnic and tribal cultures. African culture is the general widespread sub-Saharan African core values, beliefs, cultural themes and behaviors as they existed prior to European contact and as they still exist today, especially in the rural areas and to a lesser extent in the urban areas of Africa. It is upon this which many; if not most, fundamental thought processes and behaviors of present day sub-Saharan Africans are based and continue to be derived from.

The continent's cultural regeneration has also been an integral aspect of post-independence nation-building on the continent, with recognition of the need to harness the cultural resources of Africa to enrich the process of education, economy, tourism and sociality, thereby requiring the creation of an enabling environment in a number of ways. In recent

times, the call for a much greater emphasis on the cultural dimension in all aspects of development has become increasingly well articulated. During colonialism in Africa, Europeans possessed attitudes of superiority and a sense of mission. The French were able to accept an African as French if that person gave up their African culture and adopted French ways. Knowledge of the Portuguese language and culture and abandonment of traditional African ways defined one as civilized. Kenyan social commentator Mwiti Mugambi pragmatically argues that *the future of Africa can only be forged from accepting and mending the socio-cultural present*. for Mugambi: *colonial cultural hangovers, pervasive Western cultural inundation, and aid-giving arm-twisting donors are, he argues, here to stay and no amount of looking into Africa's past will make them go away*. However, Maulana Karenga states: *Our culture provides us with an ethos we must honor in both thought and practice. By ethos, we mean a people's self-understanding as well as its self-presentation in the world through its thought and practice in the other six areas of culture. It is above all a cultural challenge. For culture is here defined as the totality of thought and practice by which a people creates itself, celebrates, sustains and develops itself and introduces itself to history and humanity* (Maulana Karenga, *African Culture and the Ongoing Quest for Excellence*). Nyasani (1997) is no more reticent in his vaguely defined references to the *African mind* and its characteristics. He believes that *in the same way reference is made to the Greek or Roman civilization, it must be quite appropriate and legitimate to refer to a particular strand of mind that is quite peculiar to Africa* and which shapes the prevailing conditions or permits itself to adapt to those conditions.

There is a *distinctive feature about the African mind* which seems to support the claim that *the mind in black Africa may not necessarily operate in the same strict pattern as minds elsewhere in the world*. It is the way our mind functions and operates under certain conditions that we are able to arrogate to ourselves a peculiar status, *social*

identification and geographical label (1997:51-55). According to Nyasani (1997:56-57), African, minds are products of unique *cultural edifices* and *cultural streams* that arose from environmental conditioning and long-standing cultural traditions. Within the African cultural stream, Nyasani claims are psychological and moral characteristics pertaining to African identity, personality and dignity. Makgoba (1997) goes further and argues that the African peoples: *are linked by shared values that are fundamental features of African identity and culture. These, for example, include hospitality, friendliness, the consensus and common framework-seeking principle, and the emphasis on community rather than on the individual. These features typically underpin the variations of African culture and identity everywhere. The existence of African identity is not in doubt* (1997:197-198).

Regarding personality characteristics he believes to be inherent in the African mind, Nyasani identifies and discusses sociality, patience, tolerance, sympathy and acceptance as: *areas in which the African mind seems to reveal itself in a somewhat dramatic way. It reveals itself through what may rightly be called a congenital trait of sociality or sociability. It further reveals itself as a virtuous natural endowment of patience and tolerance. And lastly it manifests itself as a natural disposition for mutual sympathy and acceptance. These three areas then appear to serve as important landmarks in the general description of the phenomenology of the African mind* (1997:57). By and large, it can safely be affirmed that *social encapsulation* in Africa works both positively and negatively. It is positive in as far as it guarantees a certain degree of social cohesion, social harmony and social mutual concern. However, in as far as it *does not promote fully the exercise of personal initiative and incentive, it can be regarded as negative* (Nyasani 1997:130-131,) because the ethic of a society is embedded in the ideas and beliefs about what is right or wrong, what is a good or bad character; it is also embedded in the conceptions of satisfactory social relations and attitudes held by the members of the society; it is entrenched furthermore, in the forms or

patterns of behavior that are considered by the members of the society to bring about social harmony and cooperative living, justice, and fairness. The ideas and beliefs about moral conduct are articulated, analyzed, and interpreted by the moral thinkers of the society. African societies, as organized and functioning human communities, have undoubtedly evolved ethical systems—ethical values, principles, rules—intended to guide social and moral behavior. But, the ideas and beliefs of the African society that bear on ethical conduct have not been given elaborate investigation and clarification particularly, no much study was done on , friendliness and relationships in none western countries and, thus, stand in real need of profound and extensive analysis and interpretation. In the last three decades or so, attempts have been made by contemporary African philosophers, social scientists, social psychologists to give sustained reflective attention to African moral ideas especially with regard to friendship which is intended to make some contribution to the understanding of Africa in terms of maintaining friends and good relationships.

United States

In the United States friendship is a more loosely based term. From the time children enter into elementary school, most teachers and adults call every other colleagues of they have as a *friend* and in most classrooms, or any social setting, children are dictated as to how to behave with their friends, and arte told who their friends are or should be. This leaves for a very different background for what a friend should actually be (Stout 2010). This type of open move towards friendship has made so many Americans, youths in particular to have taken on the term *best friend* (Stout2010), Many psychologists have considered this expression as risky for American children, it is dangerous because it allows for intolerance and groups to be formed, which causes for oppression and intimidation in many American schools(Stout 2010), This development has led many people in the United States to come up with their own definition of friendship in a particular way ,where research indicated that this been

going on very nearly for the past thirty years (Sheets and Lugar 2005) and for many Americans, friends are people who you come across fairly frequently that is similar to yourself in demographic, attitude and activity (Sheets and Lugar2005).

While many cultures value deep trust and meaning to their friendships, Americans would use the word *friend* to describe any person who has the qualities mentioned before (Stout 2010), there is also a difference in America between men and women who have friendships with same sex. It has been studied that men in America seem to have less deep and meaningful friendship with other men, as women have in friendship with other women. Many men and women have been studied to have similar definitions and ideas of intimacy, but when it comes to applying their intimacy to friendships women do this with a deeper meaning (Yugar and Shapiro 2001); while studies do suggest these conclusion, it is hard to say exactly this begin from, since there does not seem to be any historical explanation for it (Yagar and Shapiro 2001).

Many researchers have also revealed that Americans, as time goes on and life becomes busier would usually lose touch with friends whereas other cultures take on a more intense value. For example, an American may see a long time friend and talk about wanting to get something to eat or catch up with no real intentions of fulfilling that suggestion whereas it has been observed that this can be an extra ordinary incident in many other cultures (Sheets and Lugar 2005). They are also fond of using the phrase *friend* so freely, referring to someone they have been acquainted with for a few weeks as a friend, perhaps due to lack of a proper expression for someone that is more than an associate but less than a friend (Copeland 2001). The emergence of social networking websites – which began with *Friendster*, followed by others like *Myspace* and *facebook* which has popularized the concept of *friend requests* has also watered down the traditional meaning of friendship due to the way many of the users admits requests from people whom

they might have met only once or not at all, and once the request is accepted, they tend to include the person's name on their *friends lists*.

What is the Nature of Friendship?

Different people have different opinions on the nature someone said: the nature of friendship is loyalty and cordiality; another one said the nature of friendship is caring and affection, another one yet said, the nature of nature of friendship is comfort and fun. From my opinion the nature of is sharing, trust and help. Friendship is one of the greatest pleasures that we can share and enjoy in our life. When we achieve a great success, our friends can share our joys, what a pleasant of sharing an achievement. When we are in trouble, we need friends to offer us support and encouragement. Every time when I felt lonely, I call my friends to keep me company, sharing shifted the loneliness into enjoyment. Sometimes, we just talk to each other, and we share our happy and unhappy moments together. With friends sharing, happiness became double happiness; with friends sharing sorrow is divided into half; with friends sharing loneliness and the bad mood disappeared. Sharing for the friendship is like sunshine, for the sun it makes the friendship more brilliant and it drive the gloom away.

The second nature of friendship is trust. Trust connects two people together without a blood relationship; often times we trust our parents because of the consanguinity, we trust our husbands and wives because of love, we trust our colleagues because of the partnership but we undoubtedly trust our friends wherever friends live and what ever friends do just because of the friendship. Sometimes we even don't want to share some secrets with our parents or relatives, but we like to talk that with our friends, because trust make makes two people willing to communicate. I have a best friend Tsakuthar, when he want to shop for shoes or clothes he would always ask me to go shopping with him, because he said he trust me as I always give him good advice and suggestions for him buying better shoes and clothes.

In trying to comprehend the concept of friendship we discovered that there is a limited understanding of the topic and it is concluded that since the discussion of friendship in modern thought is limited, we will begin by examining the classical treatment of the subject contained in books eight and nine of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. As you might have been aware, Aristotle argued that the possession of virtue was indeed necessary for happiness. He also believes, however that certain other goods contributed to the happy life, and that among the most important of these necessary good is friendship.

In book eight and nine of his ethics, Aristotle undertakes a philosophical examination of friendship in order to clarify precisely how this vital good contributes to one's ultimate happiness. Aristotle began his treatment of friendship by making distinction between three different types of friendship based upon the objects that attract the friends and bond them together. This he calls friendship of pleasure, utility and virtue. In friendship of pleasure, two friends are drawn together solely because of the enjoyment they derive from each other's company. The best example of this type of friendship would be drinking associates, or football fans.

Although some sexual relationships may also be included, friendship of utility are founded upon some practical benefits the friends perceive in their relationship with one another, in this sense a business associate or a close neighbour with whom we did some work together can be rightly call friends, although our relationship with them may be limited almost exclusively to the work environment or to the things that we have share them on the way to work. In both friendships of pleasure and utility people become friends because of what they can get out of the relationship and not necessarily because of any real affection that they may have for one another. The focus in both cases is primarily on ones needs which can often make this type of friendship too self centered and in some case exploitative. These types of friendship according to him are usually superficial and therefore fleeting.

There is another form of friendship that Aristotle discussed which is far more substantial than the two kinds previously described. This third type which he called friendship of virtue exists between individuals who are drawn together for their own sake, and not for any extrinsic reason. Such friendship of virtues he maintained can exist only between individuals who are equally good – presupposing that the friendship is in agreement about what is good. In this form of friendship, one wishes good for his friends own sake, not simply because of what he can get from his friend. He goes on to say, though such friendship of virtue is in fact even more useful and pleasant to those who are involved in them than even friendship of utility or pleasure would be.

Although this sounds contradictory, it actually makes a great deal of sense when you come to think about it; if I really know what is good for my friend and care about him for his own sake, I am much more likely to be able to provide him with the kind of assistance and enjoyment that he will really appreciate. Friendship of virtue are also typically much longer lasting than the other two types as they tend to last as long as the friends remain good. Since the goodness of the virtuous individual is usually an enduring thing, such friendship is capable of lasting indefinitely. In the course of the relationship between two morally good individuals who are drawn together for their own sakes; something occurs that is quite significant: the friends actually grow in virtue through their dealing with one another. As Aristotle put it the friendship of men is good and it increases with the frequency of their meetings. Also it seems they become better as they are active together and correct one another, from the molds of the other, each takes the imprints of the traits he likes.

The reason why this transformation occurs so naturally in friendships of virtue is because in such relationship, the friends are capable of acting as mirror for each other's soul. Because my friend is so similar in character to myself, by seeing him in action, by observing how he responds to

various situations in life, I can obtain a more objective understanding of my own nature and character. This objectivity, Aristotle believes, enables me to examine my own life more intensely than I otherwise could, offer the possibility of moral transformation and growth.

Although it would seem that compared to friendships of virtue, friendships of utility and pleasure are fairly shallow and ought to be shunned, this is actually not the case. An individual's life will typically be filled with all three types of friendships, and, according to Paul Wadell, there is actually nothing wrong with this, though not ideal and certainly not sufficient for eudemonia, these most common friendships of usefulness and pleasure have positive value.

The fact that Aristotle delineates three kinds of friendship suggests each human life needs to include all the three. While it is true that of the three, friendships of virtue is the most important, it is also true that not every friendship needs to be or can be of this type; not every friendship could sustain the intensity and rigor that virtue friendships requires. Wadell is certainly correct in arguing that we have room enough in our lives for all the three kinds of friends.

In *De Amicitia* (On Friendship), Cicero, however, maintains that *while such ordinary kinds of friendships can be sources of pleasure and profit for those who are involved in them, one's life cannot be fully complete without at least one friend who cares for us for our own sake and who is as committed to our well-being as we ourselves are.* It is for this reason that he makes the distinction between perfect and imperfect friendship and focuses most of his attention in the *De Amicitia* on the former rather than the latter kind of friendship.

Rather than dwelling on the kinds of friendship that ordinary individuals possess, I would like to spend a little time examining a kind of idealized form of friendship that Aristotle and Cicero as well as many other

classical authors think is so crucial for one's ultimate well being. After examining this ideal, we then proceed to look at the various ways in which friendships often goes astray. Specifically I would like to focus on three main questions related to friendship that are often considered crucial by classical thinkers.

- (1) How should we go about choosing friends?
- (2) What limit if any should be placed on our friendship?
- (3) Under what condition if any should we terminate a long standing friendship?

Aristotle wrote in the fourth century B.C. *no would choose to live without friend* even if he has all the goods. Even the affluent and powerful, he maintains, are in need of friends if only to have someone to bestow their generosity upon and to help them protect their interests. For Aristotle friendship is one of the most important goods that we possess as human beings and without it he believes that we would certainly not be able to flourish. Thus when he maintains that friendship is indispensable for life, we should not take that to mean that we could not go on living unless we had friends, but rather that friendship is necessary for a complete and happy life.

Aristotle is not alone in recognizing the importance of friendship for human happiness. Indeed, the question of friendship occupies a place of importance in the writings of almost all the great authors of the ancient world: Plato, Seneca, Cicero and Augustine all wrote extensively on the subject, and each of these thinkers did not took it for granted that a life without good friends is simply not worth living.

The discussion of friendship, however, has been sadly lacking in modern thought. When was the last time, for example, that you saw a seminar being held on the topic especially in this our part of the world? C.S. Lewis maintains that the reason for this neglect is that friendship seems to be on the surface anyway to be the least necessary of all forms of love;

although friendship is in a sense, not at all offensive to it, the least natural of loves; the least instinctive, organic, biological, gregarious and necessary...., for example, without sexual love none of us would have been begotten and without parental love none of us would have been reared; but we can live and be breed without Friendship. The species biologically considered, has no need of it. Friendship also has an unavoidable elitism about it that rubs modern liberal tendencies the wrong way. Included in almost every conception of friendship is an implied or overt, *us and them dichotomy*. Friendship forces us to make the distinction between those who are among the ranks of our friends and those who are not.

The lack of interest that we have in the moral dimension of friendship is indeed unfortunate, since many of the most important moral issues that human beings face on a daily basis have to do with our relationships to our friends. Most of us will probably go our whole lives without ever having to make decisions about abortion, euthanasia and the like, but we will all be confronted with the various obligations and difficulties that inevitably arise out of our relationships with our closest friends. At one time or another, we will all struggle with questions about the full extent of our obligations to our friends and of their obligations to us, and we will probably all experience betrayal at the hands of those we consider trusted friends.

Friendship, in short, is often the central arena in which we live out our moral lives. I've been thinking a lot about the nature of friendship, most especially moving to a new location has had a profound consequences where new friends entering our lives, new friendships forming. Other friends moving on, following their own adventures and dreams, our friendship fading. Still yet other friends, people for whom it does not matter how far apart we are, because I hold them close in my heart, as they do me. It is the nature of life, I suppose, that people come and go in our lives but saying goodbye, drifting apart, brings a little nostalgia, and

abstraction, but I strive to accept change. Each person is a gift, time with them is precious, and I appreciate them and the time we spent together, before we part. How can I be only sad, when I know each new adventure brings new people into my life? I don't know why some friendships fade, and others remain strong. Does it matter? The nature of friendship is not clear-cut, has no single definition or description. There are people who I see and talk to only once or twice a year and yet my fondness for them remains steadfast. There are other people, with whom I would be quite disappointed, if we spoke only infrequently.

This is one of the aspects of the nature of friendship I've been contemplating. Why do I have different expectations of different people? Why do I respond differently to the same action (or inaction) by different friends? I don't think this is a good trait either; I believe this is true of most people and I believe the reason lies in emotional intimacy, and emotional investment. If I am invested in a person, emotionally, then that person has a greater ability to hurt or disappoint or anger me. When we invest part of ourselves in someone, we then develop expectations of them, which invite disappointment.

I can also be good friends with someone, but still choose not to be emotionally intimate with him/her, which means my feelings are protected. I think this is at the heart of our different kinds of friendships. So, friends can hurt us, when we are intimate with them, when we invest in them. Expectations cannot help but lead to disappointment, so is suffering, and it is unavoidably difficult to be emotionally intimate without developing expectations! These expectations, though, are, in a way, unfair. Each person is different, and will define what friendship means a little differently than everyone else.

I know what friendship means to me, what I expect of my friends, and what I expect of myself in terms of how I treat my friends. However, my friends don't necessarily define friendship the same as I do and the

discrepancies between our understanding of this relationship of friendship and our resulting expectations also lead to disappointment, misunderstandings. That is the second part of expectations - suffering. It is not just the dissimilarities in our broad definitions of friendship, though, that lead to suffering. Our understandings and interpretations of individual relationships also lead to incongruities.

Consider a tier-system, in which we place our friends at different levels: the higher the level, the closer they are to our hearts, and the more we expect from them. If I place someone at a high level, giving them trust and intimacy, and devoting more of my time and energy to maintaining our friendship. However, what if that person does not reciprocate equally, but instead places me at a lower level, in their own tier-system? Then he or she would not expect to invest as much in our friendship. I could be disappointed by him/her, and he/she could feel uncomfortable with my actions and expectations.

Our positions could obviously be switched too. So this is yet another way in which the contrast between our interpretations of our friendship leads to suffering. Of course, it should be noted that most friendships, in my experience do not lead to lots of suffering. I think this is because we tend to form close friendships with people whose ideas of friendship are similar to our own. For example I am generally a reliable person, and I honestly have very few flaky friends, those that I do have, well, I am fond of them, but I find I cannot fully invest myself in them, when I know that I won't be able to withhold expectations. Is that their fault for being flaky, or my fault for imposing my own definition of friendship on them, for holding them to standards that I set or does it have to be anyone's fault? Why should I judge them as being bad friends, when that judgment is based on my values, and my expectations?

Types of Friendship

All of us have all kinds of friends, we have friends at school, in our family, friends we see all the time, and friends we can only see once in a while. Variety prevails everywhere, whether be it in any tangible items or be it in intangible emotions such as friendship. Thus friendship can be of different kind and types. For some friends are *close associates*, others are *best friends*. Moreover in this age of technology and social networking new kinds of friendship are bound to erupt and prosper for there are *Internet friends* where friends hardly get to meet each other in person yet share great emotional quotients, there also exist *Pen Friends* where friends share emotions through the exchange of letters.

You can have old friends and new friends who are adults or kiddies, and you can even be the best test of partners with your pets and even your toys. There are countless means to develop friendships and the types of benefits these friends contribute to our lives is in direct proportion to the amount of giving we decide to dedicate to that particular relationship; especially when growing up, we generally find friends through school and so many other possible avenues. When we graduate, we continue making friends, through work we begin hobbies that lead us to more friendships. In volunteering, we spend time passionately giving and make even more friends through charity work.

It seems there may be no end to the avenues of developing friendships. However, there are a variety of types of friends and nowhere does this become more apparent than through social media, as we click and select just the kind of friend our *friend is*. Despite this internet assistance, there still remains some ambiguity when it comes to the nature of defining some friendships, particularly when we are just navigating the beginning of the friendship. These days; we name almost any relation as a *friend*. Do we really think what kind of friend we are to another, or what kind of friends we are actually looking for?

To me, friendship is a relationship where both individuals can have a great time together, with whom there are less ego fights, with whom I can have open conversations, and who will prove loyal. Based on my experiences, I have explored the different types of friends I have found in my life, and what we can expect from each of these types. Friends are an important aspect in our lives providing companionship, joy, and much more. Friends also create environments in which you thrive, be yourself, can just let loose and most importantly grow and evolve.

As years go by, our sets of friends tend to change as our personality and paths change, but there are the exceptional few that we consider close friends that last a lifetime. If we really look into it, *what exactly is a friend?* The term *friend* could vary in definition, but basically means someone that you care about and cherish and who also feels the same way towards you. To better understand this, we must first look at the different types of friendships as mentioned earlier and properly differentiate them, so here are some of the basic types of friendships:

1. **Agentic Friendship:** In an agentic friendship, both the persons involved expect each other to help him or her achieve practical goals in their personal as well as professional lives. Agentic friends may help with studying for an exam, completing projects, or helping move houses. They cherish sharing time together, but that is only when there is no other priorities and if they have time available to help each other. These relationships usually do not include the sharing of emotions or personal information.

2. **Acquaintance:** This is the person that is known either through someone else, or through a project, but nothing more. They are the type of person that you may ask a question once in a while, but you will not very often carry on a conversation with. These friends are your everyday encounters that you share conversations with at the office, the local post office or store etc. It is from here that all friendships start out and could

potentially bloom into something better. This person is someone you slightly know. The barrister you say hello to three times a week is an acquaintance. Your friend's boyfriend or girlfriend, who waves to you from the living room sofa and who you see about once a month while taking to or picking your child from school every day, is an acquaintance.

Your priest or pastor, that gentle man or lady who talks to about four hundred parishioners at the same time each Sunday in the church but doesn't know your name or doesn't bother to look for or know where your home, is an acquaintance. The nature of this relationship is a polite and cordial friendship and sometimes includes a slight amount of humorous jokes and short conversations. You typically see the acquaintance because you have to in an effort to accomplish something else - not because you chose to. The benefit of the acquaintance is slight but this relationship always holds the potential to develop into a full friendship, if both parties are willing because they are people who are good acquaintances.

You go to school with them or live with them, see them at parties, in class, lab, might even be your immediate next door neighbor or other settings, but you wouldn't really have anything to talk to them about if you are not in a particular social setting. They are borderline friends and just may pass the threshold from acquaintance to friends. You know their first and last names, and they know your first and last names, and you both know basic facts about each other. You would invite your friends to a large house party or get-together that you are having, just to get more people to attend who aren't total strangers.

You are usually *friends* with them on online networking sites such as Face book, have their screen names on instant messenger but rarely meet them and you would stop and talk with them for a few minutes if you ran into them on the street somewhere randomly *like, whoa, what are you up to these days? Ahhh, cool! Cya!, or what are you doing here!*, but you

wouldn't take the time to have closer intimacy with them. The number of *acquaintance* friends you have determines how *well-connected* or *popular* you are.

3. Best Friend: A best friend is someone who used to be just a friend, but evolved to be more than that. They will stand by you no matter what you do, no matter how silly or stupid of a comment you may have just made. A best friend is someone who likes to spend time with you, and will wait around for you even though they have to be somewhere very soon. A best friend is someone that you can tell your innermost secrets to, and who you can trust to keep them secret. This is someone who can complete your sentences, and would be able to understand what you are saying, even if no one else understands the gold standard of friendships.

A best friend listens but never judges, helps you out of a jam, tells it to you straight in the face without doubt or fears, and often forgives a debt. Best friends resemble invisible friends in that both are most common in childhood and may not really exist. Otherwise known as your best companions, these friends are the special ones that have been with you through the thick and thin of it all and are a constant in your life. They share extremely strong interpersonal ties with each other. They share almost everything with each other and are most comfortable in each other's presence. The tie between two best friends is perhaps the strongest of all the different bonds. Even though you may not be constant in communication, yet you know that these friends are always there and will be there when you need them the most. These are the friends that would eventually metamorphose into blood friends.

A best friend is often a lifelong friend. The best friend (best friend forever - *bff*) is more of a rarity. A best friend develops when you have a friendship that is almost romantic in nature but there is not a sexual attraction connected to it. While typically same gender, there are many opposite gender *bffs*. However, there is always a sexual element to the

opposite gender *bff*, this sexual tension is stifled, ignored, or developed into a friendship with benefits. The best friend feels almost as close to you as a family member. The best friend is your confidant and ally. The best friend supports your efforts and holds you up when life has dealt you a blow. The best friend will defend you. The best friend is the one you call when you are arrested for public execution and need someone to get you out of jail...! You have a natural ease of the relationship that allows you to let your walls and guard down. You don't have a wall up with your best friends. You can tell this friend anything and its okay, although the other person might be upset for a short while but it's not a friendship-killer.

You feel safe in telling this person what's really in your heart - even if what's in your heart is that, she should dump the loser she's in love with because he hit on you last night! Best friends are allowed to hold you by waist and search for your car keys in your pocket which they are then going to take out for indefinite time while you keep waiting for them. Occasionally they slap you or hit you so hard that you see the constellations in broad daylight that are yet to be discovered. You call them almost every day and they know all your secrets, starting from your latest defeat or failure in college to your childhood molestation by some casual guys.

These are your closest friends in life. To determine whether someone is a *best* friend, think about whether you would have a great time eating dinner together with him/her alone on a semi-regular basis and chatting one-on-one for at least two hours or even longer without getting tired. Notice that to be a *best* friends with somebody, you don't necessarily need to be their soul-mate, BFF (best friends forever!), or a childhood friend who goes way back.

There just needs to be some compatibility and rapport where both people, enjoy each other's company and can share genuine laugh. I don't

mean the occasional humorous 'hehe'; I mean true Long Laughs, where you're literally laughing out so loud that it hurts with your eyes shading tears of pleasure. Being with your *best* friends can be both fun and emotionally fulfilling and can make you feel happy to be alive. I presume that most people, no matter how sociable have no more than at least two to three best friends.

4. Boyfriend/Girlfriend: A boyfriend/girlfriend is someone who you are intimate with. Depending on your age, and sometimes not, this type of friendship could last anywhere from a week or many years to the rest of your lifetime (in the chance that you marry them). This is a person who you have gone out with, and who's personality you like very much. You will be able to talk to them for a long time. There tend to be two different types, however. There is the type who truly likes you for who you are, and the type who pretends to like you just for sex.

This categorization can also be used for girls, although most will be put into the category that likes you for who you are. Unless you trust them a lot, then you should probably not tell them your innermost secrets. A boyfriend/girlfriend if they are someone you truly care about should be someone that you used to be friends with, but preferably not best friends with, because of the problems that could arise if/when the two of you break up. Most of the time, the two of you would no longer be friends, and you would have lost someone you were previously able to trust. In addition, a best friend would know your innermost secrets, which you might not want your boyfriend/girlfriend to know from the start of your relationship. If they are someone who is just using you for sex, then they would most likely not have been friends with you before.

5. Friends with Benefits: The definition of the friend with benefits is a kind of friend with whom you have non - committal, outside the relationship sex. Recent movies such as *Friends with Benefits* or *No Strings Attached* have highlighted the possible pitfalls of this kind of

friendship. However, these types of friendships can exist without a love-connection. This type of friendship is not to be confused with the casual sex hook-up or one-night-stand where you never see the other person again.

It is not an affair as many contend, this type of friendship is not for everyone since, if the friendship continues too long, at least one of the parties develops an emotional attachment or even falls in love, thereby creating the type of drama that this very type of relationship is meant to avoid. This kind of friendship generally does not result in something more serious but it is not a rule. This kind of friendship can occasionally result in a full-fledged relationship where both people are happily committed to each other. While there are pitfalls, this type of friendship may be very gratifying to both individuals involved. While the friendship may have benefits that are appealing, the ultimate purpose of developing a friendship should never be the benefit involved, but rather the friend.

A true friend brings the qualities to the friendship to the relationship: caring, listening, loyalty, respect, sympathy, empathy, trust, honesty. A key component of friendship is reciprocity. You are giving back at least as much as you are receiving from the friendship. The give and take in any relationship allows for a balance between the two individuals, when this balance is upset or challenged, this usually doesn't result in a mutually beneficial friendship. So, examining your own contribution and patience in a friendship will help you to see where you may go astray in the development of utility friendships.

Of course, to have good friends, you also need to **be** a good friend, to know how to care, talk, and listen to each other. Sometimes, though, even BFFs can say and do unkind things, but two small words – *I'm sorry* – have a magical quality to repairing friendships. In our brave new world of interconnectedness, staying in touch even thousands of miles away is easier than ever before, and while making new friends in new

places can be hard, sharing that first question of *what's your name?* Can put you well on your way to one friend, two friends, and few more friends. *Not* the kid down the street with a trampoline or a parrot that swears. We're talking sex buddies. Popularized in a lyric by singer Alanis Morissette, friends with benefits were actually observed and documented years ago by anthropologist Margaret Mead in *Coming of Age in Samoa*. Caution: *Sex for the fun of it is completely illegal and prohibited* especially in the African cultural setting and from the religious perspective (emphasis mine)

6. The Boss Friend: A person higher on the organizational chart who thinks your delicate smile and the startled look in your eye is an invitation to further intimidate you outside the workplace. One reason golf is popular in the business world is that it gives underlings a way to pal around with their superiors and still stay one hundred miles apart. Girls are good at engaging in this kind of friendship, especially at their place of work, just to help them maintain their job.

I was told a story of how a female minister, after coming from a trip, invited a male cleaner who works in her house to sleep with her, when the cleaner tried to refuse or protest the offer base on moral and religious grounds, the minister threatened that if he doesn't do it, he would regret ever being born, including his entire family, so the cleaner conscious of what will follow, reluctantly slept with her. After they finished the act, the minister asked him that, didn't he enjoyed the affair they had, to which he respond, *yes I enjoyed it*, then minister replied, why was he foolish enough that he had wanted to refuse the request at the beginning? That he should have count himself lucky to even have the opportunity to sleep with a minster.

The minister gave her new lover plenty money, house, car, paid for him to go to school up to university level and gave him a lucrative job in government, they eventually became tight friends, but the truth of

the matter is that, that relationship is not friendship as it were because she has inadvertently converted the cleaner to a sex slave under duress. This is an undue influence by the minister.

7. Comrade - This term denotes a friend, colleague, or an ally, specifically in a military or political context. This is the feeling of affinity that draws people together. Comradeship may arise in the time of war, or when people have common goal or a mutual enemy. These leads to friendships in circumstances where ordinary friendships may not have formed but often times ordinary friendship could be mistaken for comradeship; for example, former *New York Times* war correspondence Christ Hedges wrote: *We feel in war time comradeship but we confuse this with friendship, with love . There are those who will insist that the comradeship of war is love – the exotic glow that makes us in war feel as one people, one entity, is real, but this is part of war’s intoxication., Friends are predetermined; friendship takes place between men and women who possess an intellectual and emotional affinity for each other but comrade ship – that ecstatic bliss that comes with belonging to the crowd in war time – is within our reach; we can all have comrades.* In English, this term is associated with the Soviet Union.

8. Close Friends: These friends are the friends that you hold dear to your heart, do almost everything together with, and are always in touch. These friends are the ones that you influence and likewise influence you in terms of growing up and maturing as a person. This kind of friends is allowed to grab arms, shoulder but are not supposed to hold hands. They go out in groups for movies, adventure, sports, camping etc. It is usually a tightly-knit group of three to five friends. They call each other on semi-regular basis but call duration never exceeds five minutes for boys and fifty five minutes for girls.

These are people with whom you would enjoy having lunch one-on-one, but not as much as you would with your *best* friends. You would be able

to hold an interesting conversation for an hour or so, but not for any extended period of time after that, so it would be more appropriate for a lunch break, not for a dinner outing. These are your close friends whose company you enjoy, but not necessarily always one-on-one.

A tightly-knit group of friends might all be *close* friends and have a great time at dinner together, sharing laughs and memories. With *this type of friends*, the sum is greater than the whole of its parts ... you might have some fun with each of them individually, but when you put everyone together, you have an even better time. I would guess that most people have around five to ten *such* friends.

9. Deep/Emotional/ Intellectual Friends: Friends in this group are very few. This group of friends tends to have an intellectual appetite, but usually have perceived and experienced life through various relationships. This friends group will be there to support us during the ups and downs of life. Sometimes, we can find these friendships between married women, mother and daughter, close sisters. These are the friends who we will grow old with, while the intellectual friends have a very curious and intellectual mindset.

We can talk about anything without being embarrassed. Friends in this group are also very few. The difference between the Emotional and Intellectual friends is that the latter understand situations logically without mixing feelings. Usually this group of friends is considerate, matured, well-developed and have their own fulfilled lives. Sometimes, these groups of friends are so busy in their own pursuits and quests of life that they might not be able to offer the time needed, but when they do, it is mutually fulfilling.

10. The Dormant Friend: Every so often a dead friendship will spring back to life, bringing two people even closer together than they used to be. The reawakened friendship speaks to the mystery of friendship in

general—especially if you’ve forgotten why you drifted apart but give it time; you *will* be reminded.

Values of Friendship

Friendship comprises of many human values such as sympathy, mutual understanding and compassion, but above all it is about honesty, trust and love with a degree of intimacy. Friendship is undoubtedly a central part of our lives, due to the concerns we have for our friends and also because our friends can shape who we are as a person. Most of the times we need friends for companionship, conversations and laughter, but the real value of friendship lies in the support that we get from our friends, and the concern that they show.

Philosophers argue that friendship is a *source of personal happiness*, but surely we cannot consider a person a friend if we do not value them for their own sake? Epicurus distinguishes the different motivations for getting into a friendship and maintaining a friendship. The latter is certainly *a concern for the friend for the friend’s sake*, with our happiness being secondary to the friendship. But because friendship brings us happiness, it is a good reason to indulge oneself into a friendship initially. Once the friendship is established, we acquire new concerns, which were absent; we will then respond to goods that are internal of the friendship.

Some held the theological view that friendship is like any other good, and like all goods it is only to be promoted. Therefore someone who values friendship will believe that he or she has reason to maintain his or her current friendships and to cultivate new ones; he may also try to encourage friendships among other people. Someone who values friendship *will take himself to have reasons, first and foremost, to do those things that are involved in being a good friend: to be loyal, to be concerned with his friends’ interests, to try to stay in touch, to spend time with friends, and so on*. It is argued that this takes priority when

there is a conflict between the two concepts: *We would not say that it showed how much a person valued friendship if he betrayed a friend in order to make several new ones or in order to bring it about that other people had more friends; so it is pertinent to say that the value of friendship cannot be measured empirically.*

Its value can be seen in the fact that friendship makes you happy, keeps you sane, and makes you feel alive. Friendship is reciprocal, which means that you get a double fill of happiness out of the relationship - joy in giving friendship and joy in receiving it, for me the value is immeasurable as it is only here on these friendships that we see ourselves - they reflect us back and the love is so bright such that there is nowhere to hide so we learn on daily basis. The measure of it is in the self love we are capable of feeling and the compassion where we are opened up to and the amount of warmth and excitement generated by the possibility of seeing these friends. A friend will see you through, when others see that you are through and they listen attentively even when you say nothing.

How can we then measure a valued friend? It is when we realize that they do not sympathize with your weakness but they help summon your strength. Friends are there for you if you realize it or not. They can save your being crushed by the issues of life and help you without you knowing. It gives you someone else to care about that isn't like your family. Friends are important to show that people can make family with other people rather than just the bloodline. They make you happy and are always there for you when you need them.

We value it so much because it brings out the best and worst in us, we can trust in people and care for them without them being direct family members . It shows how connected we are even though how different we are. It shows we can love people outside our family just as much as their own family does. Friendship - you choose it and like the saying goes, you can't choose your family. There are many things that you would share

with your friends but not your family. Because it feels good having people to be around, talk to you, and care for you. It prevents people from being lonely, bored, and sad. You have more fun with life having friends and experience new things.

So, whether you are married, single, unemployed, on top of the world, student..., no matter what your status, friendships are one of the most important constants in any given person's life, but what are the most important things to consider when you think about the associates you surround yourself with? What are the most important things to consider when you evaluate your relationships with others? *What makes a friendship work?* Let examine some below:

Companionship: One value of friendship which many find extremely important is the companionship aspect of it. Whether you are going out with your friends regularly or as occasion demand, you will find that having friends is a really great thing. Friends are companions who will keep you occupied and individuals who you can have a great time with all the time.

Conversation: Even if you can't get together with your friends you can usually get a hold of them by phone, email or text messaging. Conversation, whether actual or virtual, is another value which people consider with regard to friendship. Everyone needs to talk and share their thoughts and feelings and friends are great in providing this for you. Good conversation usually equals a great friendship.

Laughter: Those who have good friends will also find that laughter is a big part of the relationship. No one can make you laugh like your friends and laughter is so good for keeping your spirits up and making your day bright. You will find that the more good friends you have, the more laughter and happiness you will have in your life. Just keep in mind,

though, that it is often quality of friends and not quantity of friends which make an individual happy overall.

Advice: Another valuable aspect of friendship is that friends often provide helpful advice for one another. When people have problem they usually turn to their friends. For example, sometimes they may find that their family members may be unable to help out in a certain situation and this is when they truly need the advice of their friends; this suggests that *having friends' means that you will have someone to help you get through a situation that you need help with.* This, too, is a great aspect of friendship. The advice may range anywhere from what clothes to wear to what you should do in a certain circumstance. No matter what the issue may be, having a friend to provide advice is quite valuable you must always be willing to give advice to your friend. For example say your friend is in a situation where they do not know what to do, and so they turn to you for help; you must be willing to think things through with them and try to give them the best advice.

Concern: *a matter that engages a person's attention, interest, care, or that affects a person's welfare or happiness.* Caring about people and vice versa comes with looking out for their well-being. When I, personally, think of this, I think of friends offering advice I might not necessarily want to hear. In the end, friends will try to do what they can to end up with a positive resolution to anything happening in their friends lives.

Compassion: *a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.* This could be going out to render assistance for a viral plague of a friends, making them to feel belong, causing them to forget what they consider as shame and reproach in the public eye, and other endless opportunities to bring out a silver lining from a cruddy situation.

Honesty: *truthfulness, sincerity, or frankness.* You may have heard that this is the best policy, even if the truth hurts. It will sometimes test your strength and bravery at some point, but this isn't something you can just brush off; you have to face it. Whether it's an opinion on significant matters, their professional work, or which phone or car they should buy, tell the truth. Tell the truth. Tell the truth. There are times where it might hurt, but it will never be worse than being lied to.

Understanding: *a state of cooperative or mutually tolerant relations between people.* The word *tolerant* in this definition made me laugh. In healthy relationships, the parties involved are able to be themselves from the most modest to the most extreme. I am not sure how it is with your company of friends, but most of mine are everyone, very different from each other; this leaves room for teasing, laughing, and embracing the fact that we are all individually ourselves and not afraid to show it.

Support: *to sustain a person, the mind, spirits, courage, etc. under trial or affliction.* Almost every one, we are bound to face new challenges at one time or the other, people, tastes... people are constantly evolving themselves as a person and we need secure relationships around us to keep going, whether or not we are conscious of this fact; I know for sure that if I didn't have support from friends and family when I left my former place of work knowing very well that securing a job is not easy nowadays, I would probably have been hesitant and lacked the confidence that I do have. This is probably the most reciprocated of all the friendship ideals: watch their back and they will watch yours. Encourage their endeavors and they will encourage yours. Motivate them and... Well, I believe you get the picture by now, me imagine the above all come down to one simple thing in the end: *happiness*. It is crucial in our overall well-being. Surrounding ourselves with people that make positive contributions and enrichment in our lives is important for our spirit, mind, and health.

Willingness: That is all it takes in order to be considered a valuable friend. If you lack will, there is a little chance of you being able to be a valuable friend. Willingness must come from within. Listening is the most essential part of a friendship; you must be willing to stay for long hours listening to what they have to say, even if it is not the most exciting thing in the world to hear. Listening to your friend makes them feel important, special and wanted. It also allows them to exhale their problems and worries, and not keep them all bottled up. Although listening makes up most of what a nice friend is, there are also other things that form a good friend. The will to sacrifice for your friend will also take you a step closer to being a good friend. For instance, you planned your entire Saturday night, but as you are about to leave to enjoy your week end somewhere, your best friend calls you right when you are stepping out, you became panic stricken because something bad had occurred in their life; You must be willing to sacrifice your Saturday night you had so carefully planned out and go to your friend's house and converse with them about the situation and try to console them in any way that you can, doing this demonstrates that you are willing to be there for him/her in their time of need and sacrifice whatever you had planned.

Qualities of a Best Friend

What are the qualities of a good friend? True friendships can start instantly but they take time to build. Here are a few qualities to look for when making friends.

1. A Best friend is honest: a good friend may not share every detail of every second of their life, but they do try to be clear about their intentions. This means that they try to present an accurate picture of who they are and of different situations. When something doesn't seem right, they let you know.
2. A best friend is attentive and adaptable: a best friend is at least a fairly good listener and notices how little, day-to-day things affect you; they can't read your mind, but chances are that they can

usually tell when you're happy, sad, excited, shocked or upset. If they're aware that they're doing something that annoys you, they try to change their ways or at least talk to you about it, so do not be afraid if the friendship becomes sometimes sour, if the friends care for each other enough they will smoothen it. After arguing or disagreement, if the both sides care enough they will learn on how to compromise forgive and forget. Of course watch out not to allow to happen any serious fights and try as much as possible to close your eyes for the faults you see of your friends, accept them with their faults bearing in mind that they accepts you with your faults as well, see the good things in them and be happy with that.

3. A Best friend is supportive of you and your goals: sure, your friend may think you're cool, but are they on the same page with you? Do they know what you want most out of life? A really good friend will know what makes you tick and help you become the person you want to be. They won't try to change who you are or drag you into situations that make you uncomfortable or put you at risk of losing something that matters to you. Do not expect anything from your friends, give your best in that which will help them every time they need it and do not ask for help in return, they will surely help you as well when you need it too, although when you do not expect you still won't be disappointed.

4. A Best friend is a friend you can trust: A true friend won't try to steal anything from you like, marriage, your job or your personality. They won't gossip about you constantly or try to damage your reputation. They will let you know when they're concerned and do their best to stick up for you when you're in trouble; a good friend will not backbite each other or hold malice, so make sure that you don't try to annoy your friends, also try as much as possible to avoid un-necessary arguments, because people won't want to be your friend if they think you fight too much.

Keep your promises, don't ever make a promise that you can't keep or at least don't make a habit of it. If you say you will hang out

with a friend and a legitimate conflict arises, explain the situation and trust that the friendship is strong enough for the no as well as the yes. Nobody's perfect, and it's okay if you miss out on a promise once in a blue moon, but don't make it a regular thing. When you make a serious promise, look your friend in the eyes and speak slowly to show that you really mean it instead of just saying it because you think that you should.

5. A Best friend sticks with you in good and bad times: Friendships expect that everyone is loyal and help each other. Loyalty is a quality almost everyone lists when asked what they look for in a friend. A loyal friend will stick with you when things are not going well with you, or even when your parents are dead. If you move or change location, they'll do their best to stay in touch with you. A good friendship usually lasts longer but only time can prove it. If you really care and feel for each other, irrespective of the distance, occupation, characteristic features, and after some time if the friendship was proved for long lasting it will eventually turn more or less into a habit.

6. A best friend accepts you for who you are: In friendship, being accepting goes hand in hand with being loyal. A true friend rolls with the punches as you grow and change and know how to deal with your idiosyncrasy and faults. They are also patient with you when you make mistakes even big ones and learn how to forgive you when you hurt them. In other words, they treat you as you'd like to be treated, even when you aren't at your best. If you have loyal friends, they would not hesitate to help you out or lend you something like favor; but if you are bossy you should expect the same from them, your friends are expected to stay in contact with you most often.

What to look for in a Friend.

A good friend will show a genuine interest in what's going on in your life, what you have to say, and how you think and feel about things. A good friend will accept you for who you are and listen to you attentively without judging you or trying to change the subject. A good friend will

act in a trustworthy and loyal way, and will feel comfortable sharing things about themselves with you. If a person is controlling towards you, overly critical, selfish, abuses your generosity, or brings unwanted danger, drama, or negative influences into your life, it may be the sign of an unhealthy friendship.

A good friendship is not dependent on the use of drugs or alcohol and smoking, and does not require you to always agree with the other person. Good friendships improve all aspects of your life, providing comfort and joy, strengthening your health, providing companionship, and preventing loneliness and isolation. As we age, many of us struggle to make new friends or maintain old friendships; Work, family, and other commitments can all get in the way and obstruct us.

While making and keeping friends requires effort, it's an investment that will make your life richer and more pleasurable. Whatever your age or circumstances, it's never too late to make new friends or reconnect with old ones. When we're young children, many of us seem to have little trouble making new friends. Kids tend to bond quickly but as we age, friendships grow and develop differently. As adults, we tend to become more guarded with new people and have less time to devote to friendships. Consequently, most of us find it much harder to make new friends.

If you've never experienced a close friendship, even as a child, you may find it even harder as an adult. But we all need and want good friends, even those of us who may sometimes pretend otherwise. No matter your age or situation, you don't have to be an extravert or the life of the party to make new friends. It's important to realize there are plenty of other people out there who feel just as awkward about meeting new people as you do and remember: *close friendships aren't formed overnight; they take time to build for anyone.* By simply being willing to put yourself in a

new environment, however, you can meet interesting new people and take the first step to building a friendship.

Why Friends are Important

The need for friends could be natural. Our survival once depended on having friends to hunt and find food with, to help us build shelter and keep our families safe, and for companionship. Today good friends are just as important, they add a special meaning to life ;they help you enjoy the good times and overcome the difficult ones, while strong relationships with friends can be a huge source of fun and pleasure, they are also important for your physical , emotional and mental health as well social and moral wellbeing; good friends can:

- **Improve your mood.** Happiness can be infectious. Spending time with happy and positive friends can elevate your mood and boost your outlook.
- **Help you to reach your goals.** Whether you're trying to get fit, give up smoking, or otherwise improve your life, encouragement from a friend can really boost your willpower and increase your chances of success.
- **Reduce your stress and depression.** Having an active social life can bolster your immune system and help reduce isolation, a major contributing factor for depression.
- **Support you through tough times.** Even if it's just having someone to share your problems with, friends can help you cope with serious illness, the loss of a job or loved one, the breakup of a relationship, or any other challenge in life.
- **Support you as you age.** As you age, retirement, illness, and the death of loved ones can often leave you isolated. Having people you can turn to for company and support can provide purpose as you age and be a buffer against depression, disability, hardship, and loss. Staying socially engaged as you age keeps you feeling positive and boosts your happiness.

Of course, friendship is a two-way street; being a good friend to someone brings them all of the above benefits, and boosts your own happiness and sense of self-worth in the process; it also makes you feel needed and adds purpose to your life while developing and maintaining a friendship takes time and effort, the many benefits of having a close friend make it a valuable investment.

Why you might want to make New Friends.

You may find that it's time to make new friends if commitments such as work, romantic relationships or family have caused you to lose touch with existing friends. Or your old friendships may have simply faded over time as interests and circumstances in your life changed; other reasons why you may want to make new friends may include but not limited to the following:

- You have recently moved to a new area.
- You've retired, or changed or lost your job.
- You've recently divorced or finished a long-term relationship.
- You are an older adult and friends have died or moved away, or you've lost mobility and maintaining a social network has become more challenging.
- You're shy or suffer from social anxiety and feel that it's impossible for you to meet new people and develop friendships.
- You've rarely or never experienced close friendships before in your life and are unsure what to look for.

How to Make New Friends

Remember that making a friend is just the beginning of the journey into friendship. Friendships take time to form and even more time to deepen. In order to move from acquaintance to friend, you need to nurture that new connection. Sometimes it can be difficult to differentiate between real friends and mere acquaintances: *Note that an acquaintance is someone you exchange small talk with as you go about your day, trade jokes or insights with online, or chat about sports with in a bar.*

While most of these relationships will never progress beyond an acquaintance level, with effort, real friendships can blossom from online contacts, people you meet on social media sites, or from neighborhood or work acquaintances. It's a process that requires time, effort, and a genuine interest in the other person. Close relationships don't happen overnight, but there are steps you can take to help you connect with others and make friends.

When looking for places to meet new people, try to be open to new ideas and cultivate an interest in other people, their lives, and their stories. Not everything you try will be successful but you will often have fun and learn from the experience. Some people seem to instinctively know how to start a conversation with anyone, in any place, be it a party, bar, health club, the checkout line, a crowded elevator, or on public transport. If you're not one of these lucky types, don't despair.

How you bonded with a parent or caretaker as an infant will determine how you relate to others as an adult. Those who experienced confusing emotional communications during infancy often grow into adults who have difficulty understanding their own emotions and the feelings of others. This limits your ability to build or maintain successful friendships, however below are steps to take while attempting to make friends.

- **Keep your old friends close**, never leave old good friends because you may like someone else more; this is a big bad mistake. It's great to have different groups of friends, but if you warp or abandon one group for another, you may soon find yourself without any friend at all; remember the saying *make new friends, but keep the old, the former is silver while the later is gold*; even if they're scattered to the winds nothing will cheer you up faster on a lonely day than hearing a good friend's voice or getting an email with all their latest news; it takes effort, of course, but it's worth it.

- **Choose your friends wisely.** As you befriend more people, you may find some are easier to get along with than others, thus while you always give people the benefit of the doubt, sometimes you realize that certain friendships are *unhealthy*, such as if a person is obsessively needy or controlling towards you, constantly critical, or introducing dangers or threats into your life. If this is the case, ease your way out of the friendship as gracefully as possible; preoccupy with other things, such as a new volunteer opportunity, so that you can honestly say that you don't have enough time in your schedule to spend with them but don't substitute their time for time with another friend; they may notice and become jealous, and more drama will ensue. Cherish those friends you make who is a positive influence in your life and do your best to be a positive influence in theirs too, ensure that you expand your notion of who your friends should be. I've been trying so hard to meet like-minded creative people close to my own age that I've probably missed out on a lot of opportunities but I perceived that elderly neighbor could have some amazing stories or recipes to share while the much younger co-worker a few cubicles over might remind you of how fun it is to let loose once in a while.
- **Get over your fear of rejection:** It's going to happen no matter what. I've been making an effort to talk to pretty much anyone about anything. Some people look at me like I'm crazy, while others engage. Even chatting with a stranger for a few minutes can be fulfilling.
- **Follow up on every lead:** If a contact says they know someone in your new city that you might like, go for it. Sure, it could be a terrible blind-friend date, but you could also find a new *bestie*. You network to advance your career, Use those skills for making friends, too.
- **Join an organization, team or club with people who have common interests.** You don't necessarily need to have a lot of common

interest with people in order to make friends with them. In fact some of the most rewarding friendships are between two people who don't have much in common at all, but if you like a specific topic, try searching for best location,. It's a cliché for a reason: It actually works! It's a great way to meet new local people. A sporty friend of mine recently moved and he already has a bunch of friends that he met playing soccer. I'm planning to sign up for some classes that interest me, especially at a news paper stand, from computer lesson to raising chickens in the city. I'm also perfecting my downward reading habit at the National library.

At the very least, you'll gain some new skills or get some exercise while trying to meet people with common interests, such as a book group, dinner club, or sports team. Social networking Websites such as face book, twitter, goggle and Meet up.com can help you find new people and learn more about the people you meet or any local groups or start your own and connect with others who share similar interests. A church, Masjid - *mosque*, temple or any other house of worship is a great place to start since you have at least a religious faith in common.

How to End Friendship

The end of a friendship can feel like a death, even when you choose to end the friendship yourself. Ending a friendship may be necessary because of complex issues, such as a friend's substance abuse, or simply because you and the friend have grown too far apart to maintain a connection. Whatever the reason, a calm and thoughtful approach can minimize the hurt to both parties. We don't know how to faze people in and out of our lives without getting attached.

We just don't, granted, sometimes we have lifelong friends who grow and change as we do, but that's often not the case. Circumstances change we also change and we're not supposed to spend forever with

people who don't help us to enjoy life or teach us things about the world or ourselves or who generally don't serve a purpose other than to frustrate us. Sometimes it's just better to acknowledge that a friendship has run its course and that not every friendship, much like relationships in general, is meant to be a life-long thing. Accepting that is much better than trying to hold onto the pieces that are left. It's the strain of trying to do so with people who don't fit us anymore that really does us in.

So very often, the circumstances will do the phasing for us, and maybe it's not the worst thing if we let them. Knowing the reason behind your decision to end a friendship will help you to move forward in the future. Many people expect that their friends will always be there. They expect friendship to last forever. Yet, friendships end and friends part company every day. Unfortunately, even the best maintained friendships can end. Many end because of a change in personality or lifestyle when friends just drift apart and fade away with time. There is a retreat from self-disclosure and seeking out each other's company. Avoidance begins. The friendship slowly loses importance and finally disappears.

Perhaps your friend's behaviors or beliefs don't sit well with you or maybe your lives have changed dramatically, leaving you and your friend with nothing in common. Maybe it is a job switch or a new marriage or your friend loves drinking and smoking and you just can't understand. For example, moving from single life to coupled life has a great effect on friendship. Coupled persons often feel their single friends act interested in them only when a romantic prospect is not in sight.

They may feel jealousy for or neglected by a single friend's new social life. The single friend may feel awkward and withdraw from a world of twosomes. Divorced and widowed people often have a feeling of being abandoned by old friends. *Thus generally it's true that friends accept each other so long as they both remain essentially the same as they were*

when they met, or change in similar directions. If they change or grow in different or incompatible ways, the friendship most likely will be lost. Regardless of why, when, or how friendships end, there is always some pain of loss to assimilate. When nothing can be done to mend the friendship, it is important to grieve and feel the pain fully, then move on to enhance another friendship or build entirely new friendships. Sometimes outside circumstances seemingly force our relationships to shift and move apart; other times it's a decision you consciously made to walk away.

However it happens, below are some ways you can move through changing relationships in the most positive and powerful way possible:

1. Acknowledge the positive things about the friendship. Memories of the good times you've had with your friend can weaken your resolve to end the relationship. Take time to clarify your reasons for ending the friendship. Writing down your thoughts and feelings can provide insight into the best way to end the friendship. You could jot down the key points, or you could write a letter to your friend explaining your decision – with no intention of sending it. Talking to another friend or a professional counselor can also help you sort out your thoughts. Take time to review those memories before you meet with your friend or write a letter. Looking at old photographs or souvenirs can refresh your memory. Allow yourself to experience whatever feelings may be triggered by this process. When you're done, remind yourself again of your reasons for ending the friendship.

2. Don't be afraid. As you learn and grow, so do your friendships and relationships. I really noticed this when I started committing to a spiritual practice every day. My circle of friends completely shifted. This is nothing to fear. It's not a good or bad thing, but it's important to understand that throughout our lives, people are going to fall away. And who knows, they might be back, but all you do know now is that you've learned all that you can from each other at this time. When relationships

and/or friendships end or shift, there is nothing to fear. Whether or not you realize it, everything always works out the way it's meant to.

3. Take responsibility. If the break-up was messy, or the friendship ended in a not so positive way, take responsibility for it. When you get to the point where you no longer blame someone else for how you feel, miraculous shifts occur. I often turn to my inner guide, the voice for love within me, and ask, what is the spiritual lesson here? Your power is always hidden behind the people and circumstance that disturb you the most. As some of my recent friendships evolved and fell away; I've discovered areas within myself that needed to be healed. The purpose of the relationship or the friendship was to show me those areas. Relationships can be amazing tools that catapult us to another level of peace and love.

4. Trust that you always have everyone you need. This tiny idea can bring massive amounts of peace to your day. What if you woke up every morning knowing that every person you needed that day would be brought to you? I try and start my day with this idea because I immediately stop trying to control my reality, and instead, trust in my inner guidance a whole lot more. There is no one missing from this moment whom you need right now. If you're sitting in a chair with no other bodies around, that's because in this moment, your soul does not need anyone else to learn from.

5. Get ready for new friendships and relationships. When you create the space for friendships and relationships that are not working to fall away, get ready, because new people who are more in-line with what your soul most needs to learn are on their way! This only becomes a fearful process when you forget that you're always guided and that everything happens for you, not to you.

Reason why someone may not have Friends

There are a host of reasons why some people have no friends...and it is more common than you might think. It's impossible to guess why your friendships don't *stick and there's* no uptake by others but the problem

seems to be a pattern rather than a one-time occurrence—and something you want to change. Can you self-identify your specific problem (s)? Here are some of the possibilities why people don't have close reciprocal relationships with friends' although you may wish add to the list.

Temperament – Are you shy and uncomfortable around people? This can make people around you feel uncomfortable too.

Insecurity - Do you feel like you can't measure up to the people you want as friends? Are you able to trust other people? These may be barriers that create distance between you and your friends.

Preference – Are you introverted? When push comes to shove, do you actually prefer being alone rather than spending time with friends? Do you think people know this when they're around you? Or, are you extraordinarily social—so preoccupied with making lots of acquaintances that you lose out on making close friendships?

Psychological Issues – Do you have a history of difficulty establishing intimate relationships with others? Are you uncomfortable with people knowing the real you?

Lack of Experience – Regardless of age, some people lack the skills needed to make and maintain friendships. Do you think you have what it takes to be a good friend?

How to Mend or Restore Damaged or Broken Friendship

Friendships are built on trust. Many a confidence is shared between two 'good' friends, and once that confidence has been violated, then expect the friendship to be broken. No matter how old you, are sooner or later you will run into this dilemma, one of your friendships will be seriously threatened and possibly broken. Maybe you don't know what happened, maybe you don't even care.

The word friendship is yet again another word that we throw around without much meaning. In a throwaway society, meaningless relationships seem to spring up all over the place and we are left to wonder at our own values and hearts. Recovering from a broken

friendship takes time. The amount of time needed depends on the person, circumstances of the break-up; a friendship can be broken over dramatically serious reasons too, such as an attempt to develop a relationship with the friend's love interest. If the bond between friends is broken, it can be helpful to remember the original basis for the friendship. Whether due to mutual interests, shared pursuits or a likeness in spirit, friends enjoy spending time together and communicating with one another. These feelings can be reestablished once the broken friendship is restored. Doug Hewitt (Aug 16, 2013)

How can you Repair a Broken or Damaged Friendship?

If you have determined that you are indeed ready to repair the damage done or would at least like to attempt to do so, be advised that it may not be comfortable or easy. You will have to first be *completely* open about the issue that caused the break and if you were at fault you will have to apologize without any attitude. It will be up to you to reopen the lines of communication, not in a manner of demand, but in a manner of humility and request; this seems to be one of the hardest things to do for most of us. Don't talk in a setting that is linked to memories. Find a meeting place where you both can talk freely and uninterrupted. Be willing to listen with an open mind and express your feelings and thoughts carefully. Be prepared to take baby steps. Your friendship will very seldom go back to full force from the beginning on, and more and like will never be the same again. Once trust is lost, it takes by nature a while to rebuild such trust. Don't come across as pathetic or needy. Self-pity is not something that will endear you at this point. Offer suggestions as to how things can be repaired and be open to hear his/her suggestion as well.

Allow both of you some time after you make the first contact. Give yourself and our friend some space. After clearing the air you may want to recall some of the memories that made you both so dear to each other. The hardest however must be the willingness to walk away, without

hate, without condemnation. Sometimes, the instant response to a request is a solid "no", but that solid "no" can change into a maybe and then a yes if you give your friend enough time to think. Avoid pressuring and don't try to put feelings of guilt or worst try to manipulate. A friend doesn't do that to a friend.

"You need to pay attention and not just be wrapped up in what you need to say," he says. If you have an argument, address the situation right away. Acknowledge your friend's feelings. Ask him to tell you how he feels.

Apologize. A good friend is an emotional safe haven, providing support, guidance and laughter. When someone like that is suddenly gone from your life, it can be heart-wrenching. But how do you go about rebuilding a friendship that has splintered? When do you reach out? What do you say, and what if your former friend doesn't want to hear it? Texting *I'm sorry* probably won't cut it. It bears saying that it's best not to let conflict become a crisis in the first place.

A relationship is an active process, and a repair should be an ongoing process, as well, says Frederic Luskin, a psychologist, director of the Forgiveness Project at Stanford University, which researches how forgiveness is good for mental and physical health, and author of *Forgive for Good*. Forgive is the greatest gift that one Friend can give to another and so is understanding. Neither comes easy, but both are what are required to mend a broken friendship worth saving. If you do end up estranged from your friend, find a way to make peace—even if you feel you weren't at fault or the forgiving isn't mutual. Forgiveness—asking for it and granting it—is good for your health. Research shows it lowers your blood pressure, decreases depression and has a positive effect on the nervous system, says Dr. Luskin.

Is there a time limit on mending a broken friendship? It depends, the experts say. Time can make the situation worse, allowing people to stew

in their grievances too long, or letting them forget what was good about the union in the first place. But often time heals—especially if the parties mellow, mature or otherwise change their perspectives. *What is important is what happens during the time of no communication*, says Daniel L. Shapiro, a psychologist, director of the Harvard International Negotiation Program and co-author of *Beyond Reason: Using Emotions as You Negotiate*. *Am I trying to better understand myself and my estranged friend's perspective?* He asks. *Or am I demonizing the other?* Dr. Shapiro works with negotiators who are political adversaries or from estranged countries, to help them cope with the emotional dimension of conflict and negotiation and to deal more effectively with their differences.

He teaches each side to dig beneath complicated emotions that may bog down the reconciliation process, and focus on five core concerns to foster positive feelings: Appreciation—meaning each party needs to feel heard and valued. Autonomy—each side needs freedom to decide if and when he or she wants to make up. Affiliation—each side needs to close the distance to regain closeness. Status—each needs to recognize that they contributed to the conflict. Role—each needs to adopt the position of listener, problem solver or healer. Each side needs to be patient. Friends trying to reconcile shouldn't expect an immediate return to closeness, Dr. Shapiro says. They need to regain trust.

Steps to take to restore broken or damaged friendship

Step 1: Assess the situation; reflect on the cause of the friendship's demise. Think about what caused the argument, what happened during it and what was said. It may be that a particular reason caused the breakup. If you don't understand the reason, ask the ex-friend for input. The friendship may not be able to be restored unless the reason for its ending is at least partially understood. Once you can see things clearly, you can start thinking about the next step. Call your friend. Forget about an email, text or any other form of impersonal contact. It's your

friend, someone who is important to you. Make a phone call and let him know that you would like to meet up and, if possible, discuss things in person.

Step 2: Set up a time with the ex-friend to talk things over. It may be that the friend is willing to go along with a meeting. Give enough time for both of you to calm down after your falling out. You may want to wait a week or so until you feel like you can talk without getting too worked up. Your friend also needs some time to cool off. If your ex-friend is reluctant to meet, suggest that the previous time spent together as friends warrants at least one attempt to reconcile the friendship. Once you have completed the steps above, the rest will come together in good time. Your friendship will not immediately go back to the way it was before the rift, but with time and patience, healing can take place. There are times when a broken friendship may seem lost in the dark. Many times, it is not too late to renew your broken friendship. It may take patience and time. The question you both have to ask yourselves is: is it worth it to fix the friendship? If your answer is a resounding yes, then get to work on it.

Step 3: Apologize if necessary. If your friend feels like you did something wrong, or if you realize that you did, you need to be able to say that you're sorry sincerely. Many people can see through a fake apology, so if you can't earnestly admit what you did wrong, and then don't try to apologize for it. Meet with the ex-friend, and apologize if you've done something that the ex-friend feels is a grievance. If you have ill feelings toward the ex-friend about a particular event, explain your feelings. The ex-friend may apologize. If not, be prepared to explain that you're willing to let it go to restore the broken friendship. Forgiveness is the key to healing a broken friendship; it is having the ability to forgive each other. Whether they lied to you or went behind your back, or you did something to them, you need to reach a point where you can honestly forgive each other. By keeping anger and resentment in your heart, you are not helping yourself or your friendship; you may have to look deep within

yourself to find a way to forgive them if they did something that deeply hurt you. Sunderland R. (2007)

Step 4: Explain yourself clearly, watch your words and speak carefully; you don't want to make the situation worse by saying something that you don't mean, Make sure you also explain your side and how you feel about the situation; hear your friend out on how he feels, Even if you want to apologize, your friend may still need to say his piece about how he feels about the situation. Take the time to listen without interrupting. Look at things from your friend's point of view, Try to put yourself in her shoes; you're more likely to be able to understand where your friend is coming from if you can try to imagine what she thought and felt.

Explain to the ex-friend how much you value your friendship and how you miss the time the two of you spent together, the ex-friend may not realize how important the friendship is to you; this discussion gives you an opportunity to show the ex-friend that you value the bond between the two of you. Although it depends on what happened and how receptive the friend is to repairing the friendship. If your friend was really your friend in the first place, there should be understanding and willing to consider your explanation and accept an apology if one is needed. If not, they must not have been a very good friend in the first place.

Step 5: Propose that the problems that caused the friendship to end are in the past and that it is time to move forward. Although you may not be able to revive the friendship in its old form, the two of you can move ahead and forge a new friendship that may take on a life of its own so the next thing you will want to do is to work on building up the trust again. Trust is generally considered the foundation of any relationship, including friendship. Once the trust has been broken, it can seem impossible to re-establish. You must be able to honestly try to trust your friend. Think of it almost like meeting again for the first time. When you first become friends with someone, you generally do not trust them one hundred percent with every aspect of your life. As you get to know them, you learn you can trust them a little bit more each time you are around

each other. When repairing a broken friendship, you must learn to trust them all over again. It will take time, but it is worth giving them a second chance at earning back your trust.

CONCLUSION

This paper have attempted to examine friendship and arrived at the conclusion that friendship is the best of all forms of relationships because Humans have a strong, innate need to belong that is visible through our drive to form and maintain positive, lasting and significant personal and interpersonal relationships. This suggests that people have a consistent goal to engage in frequent, pleasant contact with others who we have formed stable bonds of mutual concern and that it is good that we should make friend that will last. Friendship is entered into through mutual agreement between two or more persons and therefore lacks a legal basis for the bonding and supervision.

Several theories of friendship exist, but two of these theories were examined in this write up which explained various understanding of the principle and concepts of friendships; these include morality, social exchange, equity theories respectively. Friendship cut across all cultures and are made in all societies except that the mode and method of making friendship differs according to the cultural norms, values and orientation of each society. Friendships are built on trust where love, intimacy confidence and trust is being shared between *two or more good friends, characterized by compassion, support, togetherness and openness, faithfulness, loyalty, honesty* and trust but once these virtues are violated, then expect the friendship to be broken.

Although it is difficult, and at times impossible to restore friendship, or most of the time, it will never be the same again but if you work on trying to get along and fix things the way it should be, ultimately it may turn out to be a better situation, so it is expected that we imbibe the values and virtues outlined herein that will bind us together so that we

can move forward as people, the better. By and large, It is worthy to note that friendship is very significance and necessary in our lives as individuals, and for us to practice and maintain healthy relationships between and among our ourselves, every person involved in any form of friendship or relationship is expected to play his or her own role to make it work and sustain the relationship with one another and that concerted and mutual efforts should be made in observing all the principles and concepts discussed for a long lasting friendships .

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