**Friendship - Stories & Illustrations**

**The ABC's of Friendship: Always be honest. Be there when they need you. Cheer them on. Don't look for their faults. Every chance you get, call! Forgive them. Get together often. Have faith in them. Include them. Just listen. Know their dreams. Love them unconditionally. Make them feel special. Never forget them. Offer to help. Praise them honestly. Quietly disagree. Rescue them often. Say you're sorry. Talk frequently. Use good judgment. Vote for them! Wish them good luck! X-ray yourself first. Your word counts. Zip your mouth when told a secret. *(Robyn Freedman Spizman, in When Words Matter Most)***

**The average American now has just two close friends, a new study has found. One in four people say they have no close friends. Sociologists say we are becoming more isolated because of suburban migration, long work hours, and the growing amount of time spent on the Internet, iPods, and other electronic devices. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, July 14, 2006)***

**The animal inhabitant of the Pinna Marina is a blind slug or snail, which has many enemies, the worst of which is the cuttlefish. No sooner does the pinna open his bivalve shell, than the cuttlefish rushes in. How can such a blind defenseless creature secure food and protect himself? Luckily there is a kind of crab-fish, with keen sight, who is a constant companion of the pinna. They live together in the shell that belongs to the pinna. When the latter is hungry, he opens his valves, and sends out his faithful companion to secure food. If any enemy approaches, the watchful crab dashes back to his blind protector, who quickly closes the valves as soon as his friend is inside. On the other hand, when the crab has returned with food and no foe is about, he makes a gentle noise at the opening of the shell, which is closed during his absence. When admitted, the two friends then feast together on the fruits of the crab's industry. *(Arthur Tonne)***

**It was American F. Scott Fitzgerald, author of such seminal works as “The Great Gatsby” and “Tender Is the Night,” who made the following (rather cynical) observation: “It is in the 30s that we want friends. In the 40s we know they won’t save us any more than love did.” *(Samantha Weaver, in Tidbits)***

**Friends are key to reaching a ripe old age, at least for chacma baboons in Botswana. Researchers say females that maintained a stable set of female grooming partners lived years longer than those with fewer or briefer partnerships. Surprisingly, social bonding had a greater impact on an animal’s longevity than did her rank in a group’s hierarchy. *(Jessica Righthand, in Smithsonian magazine)***

**No birth certificate is issued when a friendship is born. There is nothing tangible. There is just a feeling that your life is different and that your capacity to love and care has miraculously been enlarged without any effort on your part. It's like having a tiny apartment and somebody moves in with you, but instead of becoming cramped and crowded, the space expands, and you discover rooms you never knew you had until your friend moved in with you. *(Steve Tesich)***

**Man: “To be honest, Judy, I wouldn’t have agreed to this blind date. If I had known you were a woman trapped in a dog’s body.” Dog: “Oh, right, and this is the part where you say ‘Let’s be friends, but maybe I could pet you sometimes.’” *(Scott Adams, in Dilbert Zone comic strip)*Comic actor John Belushi would borrow a twenty-dollar bill from new acquaintances so he could judge what they'd be like as friends by how they reacted to his request. *(Bob Fenster, in They Did What!?, p. 85)***

**I was on a trip, feeling a little down, and I called my best friend from back when I was a kid. Even though we live in different towns, we still can talk to each other with the unguardedness of when we were five. I called around 10 p.m. We have always known each other’s voices instantly, but this time he said, “Who is this?” Surprised he had asked, I told him who it was. “I thought so,” he said. “But then I wasn’t sure, because you never call this late at night.” That’s what counts – having a friend who knows you so well that he knows what you never do. *(Bob Greene, in The 50-Year Dash)***

**On the Fairplay, Colorado, courthouse lawn is a memorial to canine devotion. It is reported that a burro, Old Shorty, befriended a Dalmatian named Bum. The foraged together and their companionship was recognized by the entire city. Sadly, Old Shorty was killed in an accident. After hauling the carcass to the dump, people reported that Bum patiently rested by the lifeless form of his friend. When Bum died in 1959, a plaque memorialized the animals’ great friendship and loyalty. *(Denver Rocky Mountain News)***

**Marguerite Yourcenar was asked how one makes friends: Your question calls to mind a charming passage from a book by Montherlant. Surprised that a little girl has not given her cat a name, someone asks, “But how do you call him?” The little girl answers, “I don’t call him. He comes when he wants.” So, too, do friends often come to us through the most improbable of chances. *(With Open Eyes)***

**Friendships that last either have less conflict than those that end or involve friends who know how to effectively handle conflict. Unfortunately, conflict, which often involves temporary stress in the short term but less stress in the long run, is too often avoided at all costs. That cost may turn out to be the friendship. One way to deal with any problem in your friendship is to confront your friend, eye to eye, and say, “We have a conflict. Let’s deal with it. I don’t want anything to hurt our friendship because you, and our friendship, are very important to me.” Do what the communication experts suggest you do, a technique I use when I work as a group facilitator – validate him or her by acknowledging your friend’s point of view or position. Agree to disagree. Let your friend know you value your friendship, which should help the stakes in working things out, rather than just cutting the friendship off. *(Jan Yager, in The Power of Friendship and How It Shapes Our Lives)***

**Dakota comes from the Sioux word for “friend,” so the designation of North Dakota as the Peace Garden State is well-deserved. *(Tidbits)***

**Why you like certain people well enough to call them friends is mysterious, isn’t it? And most personal. Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott disagreed on politics, art and philosophy. Both had game legs. Both limped. They became good friends. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Is there any foolproof way to distinguish between phony flatterers and one's real friends? Not sure. However, Prince Bernhard of Holland thought he had a way. He grew a mustache and asked various people how it looked. Those who said “ridiculous” were his friends, he decided. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Once a rich man said he would divide his fortune among his friends, if only he knew who they were. Years passed and the man died -- in a mid-winter blizzard. His last request was that his funeral be held at 4 o'clock in the morning. Although scores had boasted of being his intimate friend, only three men and one woman turned out to stand sadly beside his grave. When the will was read, it directed that his estate be divided equally among those who attended his funeral. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Flipper and friends: Humans have long marveled at the apparent intelligence of dolphins, prompting some to draw comparisons between the sleek sea mammals and Homo sapiens. Now, new research suggests that the two species may have another thing in common: making friends. Scientists examining interactions among bottlenose dolphins in Florida's Indian River lagoon found that much like people, dolphins form complex social networks, spending time with dolphins they like while avoiding others entirely. Male dolphins, in particular, have been seen pairing off to hunt and feed, forming bonds that can endure for upward of 20 years. Scientists also noted that dolphins living in narrower areas of the lagoon seemed to form the closest friendships, suggesting that the shape of their habitats plays a role in how they socialize. "It created a funneling effect," study author Elizabeth Murdoch Titcomb tells HuffingtonPost.com. "Like, they're living in a smaller town. They know each other better." *(The Week magazine, May 29, 2015)***

True friends are getting rarer: For all their so-called friends on Facebook, most Americans have fewer close confidants now than they did a generation ago. Cornell University sociologists surveyed 2,000 adults and found that on average they had only two friends with whom they could discuss “important matters” – down from three in 1985. Nearly half of the volunteers listed only one friend, and 4 percent said they had none. A reduced social network “makes us potentially more vulnerable,” study author Matthew Brashears tells LiveScience.com, because talking our troubles over with a trusted pal provides “both emotional support and ideas for how to solve problems.” Brashears says that while we appear to be just as social as ever, our friendships seem to be shallower, leaving us with fewer people we can call on to lend us money, give us a place to stay, or simply keep us company during a tough time. (The Week magazine, November 25, 2011)  
  
A Friend: He is one who troubles himself to get you out of scraps, and then scraps to get you out of trouble; he sticks with you when you get stuck; he’s never in your way – except when you are on the way down; there are no strings attached to his friendship except those he pulls for you; he never asks you for a favor as though it were coming to him, and never makes you feel he is doing one for you; he gets his biggest kick helping you kick over your obstacles; his biggest disappointments are those that come to you; and all he wants in return for his friendship is yours. (Sunshine Magazine)

**A common laborer named Jimmy always went inside of his church at the end of each day -- week in and week out, month in and month out, and year in and year out. He would always go over to the same secluded place in the sanctuary and just sit there for a half hour or so, and then he would leave. One day the priest happened to stop Jimmy on his way out of the sanctuary. “Jimmy,” he said. “I've been the priest here for six years, and I've watched you come in here every single evening and pray to God. And I don't guess it's any of my business, but what do you say, Jimmy?” “Well, Father,” he replied. “I come in here and I get real quiet. And then I look up and I say, ‘Jesus, it’s Jimmy.’ In a little bit, Jesus looks down and he sees me and he smiles and then he says to me ‘Hi, Jimmy! It's Jesus.’” And then he says to the priest, “When I hear that, Father, I know we're still friends and he knows we're still friends, and that it's okay for me to go.” *(Norman Neaves)***

**In the spring of 1887, a 20 year old arrived in Tuscumbia, Alabama, to attempt the tutoring of a deaf-blind creature. The tutor's name was Anne Sullivan and the student's name was Helen Keller. They were to develop one of the most admired friendships of the century. At seven, Helen Keller was a wild child who uttered unintelligible animal sounds. When in a rage, she would snatch dishes from the table and throw them and herself on the floor. More than one person had told Mrs. Keller that her child was mentally ill. For weeks Anne spelled words into Helen's small hand, but she could not break through to her consciousness. Then, on April 5, something wonderful happened. Here are Helen Keller's recollections of that day, written more than 60 years later: It happened at the well-house, where I was holding a mug under the spout. Annie pumped water into it, and when the water gushed out into my hand she kept spelling w-a-t-e-r into my other hand with her fingers. Suddenly I understood. Caught up in the first joy I had known since my illness, I reached out eagerly to Annie’s ever-ready hand, begging for new words to identify whatever objects I touched. Spark after spark of meaning flew from hand to hand and, miraculously, affection was born. From the well-house there walked two enraptured beings calling each other “Helen” and “Teacher.” Anne Sullivan gave most of her life to Helen Keller. When her famous pupil decided to go to college, she sat beside her in every class at Radcliffe, spelling out the lectures into Helen's hand and overusing her own defective eyes to spell out books that were not in Braille. Anne Sullivan recognized that Helen was a prodigy and had unlimited possibilities for thinking and feeling. There was no question as to which of the two had the higher IQ. By the time she was 10, Helen was writing to famous persons in Europe in French. She quickly mastered five languages and displayed gifts which her teacher never pretended to have. But did that change Anne Sullivan's devotion? Not so far as we know. She was satisfied to be Helen's companion and encourager, allowing her to be applauded by kings and presidents and to be her own unique personage. In short, she gave her friend room to grow. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Even friends I haven't seen in years are still with me, though we no longer sit on one another's kitchen counters on Saturday mornings. The letters and phone calls over the years aren't just biding time till the next visit; sometimes they are the friendship. *(Kathryn Stechert Black)***

**This is Friendship: I love you, not only for what you are, but for what I am when I am with you. I love you not only for what you have made of yourself, but for what you are making of me. I love you for the part of me that you bring out. I love you for putting out your hand into my heaped up heart and passing over all the frivolous and weak things you cannot help seeing there, and drawing out into the light all the beautiful, radiant things that no one else has looked quite far enough to find. I love you for ignoring the possibilities of the fool in me and for laying firm hold of the possibilities of good in me. I love you for closing your eye to the discords in me, and adding to the music in me by worshipful listening . . . *(Mary Carolyn Davies)***

**As love attracts, hate dissipates. Before you approach God's altar of plenty, go and make friends with your brother men. Make friends even with the money powers. Do not envy the rich. Never condemn those who have money merely because they have it and you do not. *(Charles Fillmore, in Prosperity, p. 109)***

**For a good 15 minutes the three men at lunch had gone after a mutual acquaintance hammer and tongs, cutting him to ribbons. Finally there were a few seconds of silence as they rested their claws. Then one of them sighed, “I tell you, he’s a real menace. You don't know that man like I do.” “Oh, yes I do,” countered another, “I know him every bit as well as you do.” “Nuts,” snorted the first man. “How could you possibly know him as well as I do? I'm his best friend.” *(Bits & Pieces)*  
These can never be friends: hope, dice, a prostitute, a robber, a cheat, a goldsmith, a monkey, a doctor and a distiller. *(Hindu proverb)***

**One afternoon Abraham Lincoln found on his desk a heartrending appeal for a pardon, unsupported by the usual sheaf of letters from influential sponsors. “What,” asked the president, “has this man no friends?” The adjutant at Lincoln's side assured him that the man hadn't a one. “Then I will be his friend,” said Lincoln. He signed the pardon. *(Bob Dole, in Great Presidential Wit, p. 33)***

**Among my greatest pleasures is friendship. Would that I could enrich this sketch with the names of all those who have ministered to my happiness! Those are red-letter days in our lives when we meet people who thrill us like a fine poem, people whose handshake is brimful of unspoken sympathy, and whose sweet, rich natures impart to our eager, impatient spirits a wonderful restfulness which, in its essence, is divine. *(Helen Keller, in The Story of My Life)***

**A mother was enrolling her five-year-old son in kindergarten. The teacher, following the usual formula, brought out her records and began to ask questions: “Does the boy have any older brothers?” “No.” “Does he have any younger brothers?” “No.” “Older sisters?” “No.” “Younger sisters?” “No.” At this point the lad, who had grown increasingly unhappy and self-conscious, put in a wistful word: “But,” he said defensively, “I've got friends.” *(Parts Pups)***

**In-line skating provides thrills, cardiovascular conditioning and muscle tone. It can also introduce you to a whole new set of friends -- ambulance drivers, emergency room technicians and physical therapists, as well as those nice neighbors on the next block who called the rescue squad. *(Chuck Moss, in Detroit News)***

**When a soldier was injured and could not get back to safety, his buddy went out to get him, against his officer's orders. He returned mortally wounded, and his friend, whom he had carried back, was dead. The officer was angry. “I told you not to go,” he said. “Now I've lost both of you. It was not worth it.” The dying man replied, “But it was, sir, because when I got to him he said, ‘Jim, I knew you'd come.’” *(Leslie D. Weatherhead, on friendship, in Prescription for Anxiety)***

**The Navajo banned their ancient symbol of friendship during World War II because it resembled the Nazi swastika. *(The World Almanac of the USA, p. 304)***

**I know I am somebody’s friend if I think, “Oh, isn’t it wonderful that such and such a thing should be happening to so and so,” and feel happy for him or her. Sharing and experiencing other people’s joy is what friendship is about. Commiserating with their misfortunes is not enough. Any kindly person would do that. *(Carlo Maria Giulini)***

**When we bought our new television set, the neighbors gathered one Saturday to help us put up the antenna. Since we had only the simplest tools, we weren't making much progress until a man who was new on the block appeared with an elaborate tool box, with everything we needed to get the antenna up in record time. As we stood around congratulating ourselves on this piece of good luck, we asked our new neighbor what he made with such fancy tools. Looking at us all, he smiled and answered, “Friends, mostly.” *(Henry Leabo, in Catholic Digest)***

**Outside of a small village in Maine, there is a road sign with six arrows pointing the way to six other towns. The sign reads: Freedom -- 45 miles, Liberty -- 33 miles, Harmony -- 96 miles, Union -- 20 miles, Hope -- 27 miles, Unity -- 52 miles. What a testament to the positive thinking of the founding fathers of those towns! The most delightful fact is that these arrows which point to such desirable destinations are on a road sign located at the edge of a town called Friendship! *(Dr. R. Eugene Nichols)***

**Friendship has been the key to Gunther Gebel-William’s training methods. “I am the boss, but they know I am also their friend,” he explains. “I feel very close to my animals. If I miss a morning with them, I feel bad. Once you become totally involved with the animals, they become a part of you. If they are cold, I cannot rest. They are like my family.” *(John Culhane, in Reader’s Digest)***

**That Henry Fonda, an outspoken liberal, and Jimmy Stewart, a stalwart conservative, remained so tight over the years is a tribute to the transcendent qualities of friendship. Stewart recalls: We were rooming together in New York City, and one night we went out. There was something political going on, and we got into an argument about it. Then we got into a fight. Before I knew it, we were swinging at each other. Thank God it was snowing, because I went down on my face more than he did. When we got back to the hotel, Henry said, “Listen, if you go along with this, I will: from this minute on, I want us never to mention anything to do with politics again.” And we never did. *(Lawrence Christon, in New Angeles Times)***

**While doing research for a doctoral thesis, a young man spent a year with a group of Navajo Indians on a reservation in the Southwest. He lived with one family, sleeping in their hut, eating their food, working with them, and generally living their life. The grandmother of the family spoke no English, yet a very close friendship formed between the grandmother and the student. They seemed to share the common language of love, and they intuitively understood each other. Over the months they each learned bits and pieces of the other's language. When it was time for the young man to return to the university and write his thesis, the tribe held a going-away celebration for him. It was marked by sadness since he had developed a close relationship with all the villagers. As he prepared to get into his pickup truck and drive away, the old grandmother came to tell him good-bye. With tears streaming from her eyes, she placed her hands on either side of his face, looked directly into his eyes, and said, “I like me best when I'm with you.” True friendship is letting those around you not only be themselves, but be their best. *(God's Little Devotional Book)***

**One method of winning friends is to ask for advice or a favor. The person who can grant you a favor derives ego satisfaction from doing so. Benjamin Franklin, in his “Autobiography,” tells about using this method to convert an enemy into a lifelong friend. In 1736 Franklin's name was up for clerk of the General Assembly. Except for this one enemy Franklin felt assured he could get the nomination. The man was very powerful, and Franklin knew he must win his friendship or lose. “Having heard,” Franklin wrote, “that he had in his library a certain very scarce book, I wrote a note to him, expressing my desire of perusing that book and requesting he would do me the favor of lending it to me.” The man was flattered and delighted by the request, loaned Franklin the book, and became one of his most ardent supporters. *(Bits & Pieces)***

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