

FRIENDSHIP

“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born in adversity”.
Proverbs 17:17 NKJV

STEP 1: ACHIEVED RESULTS

What specific action did you commit to take last week? What was the result?

STEP 2: REFLECTIONS

Instructions: Take turns reading the following paragraphs. As you read, underline the ideas that stand out to you.

We all need a true friend to relieve the load when life gets tough.

True friends give everything without expecting anything from you, however, relationships of this kind do not survive in our time. The quality and quantity of friendships is in decline, this indicates that something is not right in our society.

It can be argued that Twitter and Facebook connect people to media discussions, but the world of high technology will never replace the warmth of a personal relationship.

For our ancestors, friendship was the most humane and happiest way. Unfortunately, if true happiness is based on a person's ties and friendships, then the future of the new world is lost. But, perhaps with enough resolution, the principles of a true friendship can be restored, turning the tide of the modern world's tide to decline.

THE EIGHT PRINCIPLES OF TRUE FRIENDSHIP

1. True friendships form around the same interest

True friendships are formed around the same interests, point of view or tastes, enjoying the common bonds that unite them.

Love is wishing the best for the other person. Only deep friendships develop bonds of love of such magnitude.

Friendship is born from a simple camaraderie when two or more people discover that they share common interests and ideals, or tastes that others do not share.

There is an indescribable joy in discovering and being discovered by another human being, which gives us a little rest in our daily loneliness. Emerson said: “The glory of friendship is not an outstretched hand, a friendly smile, nor the joy of a company; it is the spiritual inspiration that comes to us when we discover that someone believes in us and is willing to trust us with their friendship.

Aristotle distinguished between a genuine friendship and two types of false friendship: one founded in unity, like the postman, survives only if both parties receive a benefit; while a friendship founded solely on pleasure, like golf partners, ends when one of the parties finds no more pleasure in the relationship.

The genuine friendship, rather, is based on something stronger. According to Aristotle “The most sincere friends are those who seek the good of their friends, for their benefit; because each one loves another

for what he is, but not for an incidental quality". A genuine friendship, then, endures as long as both parties remain committed to virtue.

In a friendship one can assume the quality of their friends by the ability to laugh at each other (not mocking or a condescending laugh, but a laugh that simply acknowledges the inherent imperfections in a human condition).

True friends enjoy each other 's company. When a person finds someone who decides to help him be better while enjoying his friendship, he is on the way to find a good friend. Everyone should try this kind of friendship with others and seek friendships of this quality, increasing their blessing when they both offer and receive true loyal friendship.

2. True friends accept each other as they are

They accept each other, protect each other's weaknesses, and applaud their virtues. Everybody makes mistakes, but *"love covers many sins"*(1 Peter 4:8 NIV). In other words, a friend loves his friends enough to ignore their faults and failure, acknowledging their hidden talents and treasures. Friends build bonds of trust that cannot be easily broken, especially when forgiveness and grace exist in a relationship. Friends forgive each other when they make mistakes, recognizing that in the future they may need to be forgiven.

Author Les Giblin created the triple A formula "accept, approve, and appreciate". If this formula is practiced from the heart, it allows the development of solid relationships. The acceptance that a human being shows to another generates peace, which allows relaxation and open sharing. When someone constantly judges what another person does or says, it doesn't allow the other person to relax, and friendship becomes impossible.

Acceptance doesn't mean you approve of everything your friends do; on the contrary, it means that you accept your friends as human beings.

Only when a person is accepted as they are, they feel free to be who they want to be. Acceptance provides adequate energy to improve. Many people think that they cannot accept someone until they do everything right. Nobody does anything right. A person should not judge by the faults of others so harshly that they would have to work on a project full time to improve their own. (*Read Mt. 7:5*). Gaining acceptance from our friendships and from ourselves to our imperfections is the starting point of change. When a person is accepted, regardless of their flaws, they are given a foundation on which hope for a better future is built. All of this happens when someone accepts another human as they are, freeing them to become what they should be.

Benefits of having true friends.

1. It brings joy and fun to your life.
2. It will help you to be a better person.
3. You will never feel alone.

Stepstofollow:

1. **Be a true friend.** *"A man who had friends must himself be friendly; but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother". (Prov. 18:24 NKJV)*
2. **Give to your relationships more than you receive.** *Take care of your relationships, cultivate them.*
3. **Acceptpeople as they are**

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STEP 3: REFLECT AND RESPONSE

Choose something that you underlined as important to you. Take a minute to share with everyone what you chose and why it is important to you.

STEP 4: AUTO EVALUATION

Respond the following section of self-evaluation:

On a scale of 1 to 10: How well do you accept others as they are? _____

Why did you give yourself this score?

What benefits would you obtain from improving your score?

What people do you know that are a good example of this quality? What do you admire the most from this person?

What specific action can you take immediately to improve your score?

STEP 5: SHARE YOUR ACTION STEPS

Take a moment to share your responses from the self-evaluation section, include the action that you plan to take to improve in that area. We ask that everyone participates.

Instructions for the host:

1. **Make the calling:**

“Lord Jesus, I recognize that I have sinned and that you died for me. Today I repent and ask for forgiveness. I give you my life and my heart so that you may be my Lord and personal Savior, amen”.

2. **Impartation:** Pray and activate what you have learned today.

3. **Pray for the offering.**

4. **SCHOOL OF SUCESS.** Announce the classes of Level I, II, and III they start on Sunday, September 4th at 9:00 am. (Motivate the members of your HOP to assist).

5. **Practicing our values. Value #1: FAITH IN PEOPLE (Including winning souls)** *“We believe every person has potential and a God-given purpose. (Isaiah 44:2). WINNING SOULS: “We believe every person. Whether they are Christian or not is valuable to God. (Matthew 18:14).*