

The Four Levels of Friendship

Introduction

Suggestions for conquering loneliness (Dr. William Appleton, Harvard University)

1. Take stock of all the people in your life.
2. Contact at least one friend each day.
3. Identify your interests and act on them.
4. Ask yourself how long you've been feeling lonely.
5. Make time for friendships.
6. Learn how to separate acquaintances from real friends.
7. Avoid things that compound your loneliness.
8. Get a pet.

The Four Levels of Friendship

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| 1. Initial Friendship: | The Checkout Level. |
| 2. Social Friendship: | The Choice Level. |
| 3. Close Friendship: | The Companion Level. |
| 4. Intimate Friendship: | The Change Level. |

Ingredients in Intimacy

1. Encouragement

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. ² My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going."

- John 14:1-4

*There is a relationship between what you give to others
and what you receive yourself.*

2. Honesty

"Thomas said to Him, 'Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?'" ⁶ Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know Him and have seen Him.'" - John 14:5-7

3. Confrontation

"Philip said, 'Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.'" ⁹ Jesus answered: 'Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing His work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. ¹² Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.'" - John 14:8-12

Three Questions to Ask Before Confrontation:

1. Am I confronting them for my benefit or for theirs?
2. Is my attitude correct?
3. If they react wrongly, will I react correctly?

4. A Giving Spirit

"And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it." - Jn. 14:13-14

*Friendship is like a bank account – you cannot continue to draw on it
without making deposits!*

5. Proven Love

"If you love me, keep my commands."

- John 14:15

*The law tells us what to do;
Love gives us power to do it.*

6. Comfort and Security

"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." - John 14:16-18

A friend is one who comes in when the whole world goes out.

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