

10 WAYS TO BE a Better Friend

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You can be a poor, fair, good, or great friend. Take stock of your own stable of friends. **Some are just better than others at being your friend.** You have friends that you trust more than others. Some friends are more enjoyable to be around.

Being a great friend is a skill that you can cultivate. There's no risk incurred by making an effort to enhance this part of your life.

Use these strategies to be a better friend:

1. Keep an open mind. Most of us could stand to be a little more open minded. We tend to judge everyone, even the people that are close to us. Be the friend that will listen to any idea or problem and keep an open mind.

- Consider the open-minded and close-minded people you know. Which group would you rather be friends with?

2. Be present. Too many people are too scattered with their attention. We have ten things on our mind and can't seem to keep our phones put away while someone is talking to us.

- When you're spending time with your friend, be 100% present with them. There's nothing more heartbreaking than trying to tell a friend about your problems, only to realize that they're not listening, because they're busy texting someone else.

3. **Empathize.** Be sensitive and understanding. Having an open mind and being present will help you to be more empathetic. **Seek to understand how your friends are feeling when they are experiencing challenges.** You can also take more joy in their successes.

4. **Spend time together.** Texting is insufficient to maintain a significant relationship. Spend time together and spend some of that time actually doing something.
 - Sitting around chatting is great, but you create more cherished memories by sharing experiences.

5. **Show gratitude.** If you're not grateful for your friends, you might not have the right friends. Don't keep your gratitude to yourself. Let your friends know how much they mean to you. We like the people that appreciate us the most.

6. **Help them achieve their goals.** You know what your friends are working on. You know who has started a business online or who is trying to lose 25 pounds. Be supportive and find a small way to help them achieve their goals.

7. **See them more frequently.** Absence might make the heart grow fonder to a point, but after a while, **people can start to forget about you.** Interact with your friends more frequently and keep those relationships alive.

8. **Support their other relationships.** Your friends have other friends. They might have a spouse or partner. You want to avoid being the kind of friend that openly dislikes your friends' other relationships. It creates drama, and you might find yourself being left out.

9. **Keep private information private.** Be known for keeping secrets to yourself.

Everyone loves a friend that can be trusted with secrets.

- Conversely, how do you feel about a friend that reveals something that you asked them to keep in confidence?

10. **Apologize when necessary.** Own your mistakes and apologize when the situation calls for it.

Being a great friend is a lot of work, but it can pay off handsomely. Being a great friend entitles you to having great friends. **It also feels good to treat the important people in your life well.**

Take a little time each week and make the effort to be a better friend. You and your friends will all benefit.