



RULES TO LIVE BY: THE IMPORTANCE OF FRIENDSHIP

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**“TO HAVE A FRIEND AND BE A
FRIEND IS WHAT MAKES LIFE
WORTHWHILE.”**

~Unknown

RULE #1: TRY TO HAVE AT LEAST ONE CLOSE FRIEND

- ❖ Middle school students with close friendships at the beginning of sixth grade are more social, helpful, and cooperative than students who do not have close friendships.
- ❖ Those students with a close friend are seen by their peers as more helpful, cooperative and willing to share with others than those without a close friend.
- ❖ During middle school, students begin to form a sense of self based in part on their interactions with their peers. They also tend to look to each other for help and support as they make other important physical, emotional, and school-related transitions.
- ❖ People who have a large network of friends outlive those with the fewest friends by 22%. Why is this so? The authors suspect that good friends discourage unhealthy behaviors such as smoking and heavy drinking. And the companionship provided by friends may ward off depression, boost self-esteem, and provide support.

RULE #2: TRY TO BE A FRIEND TO OTHERS

- ❖ Students that are seen as the friendliest students in the sixth grade actually improved their academic performance more by the time they reached eighth grade than those who are not friendly.
- ❖ if you ask people why they became homeless, why their marriage failed or why they overeat, they often say it is because of the poor quality, or nonexistence, of friendships. They feel outcast or unloved.
- ❖ Friends encourage you to take better care of yourself. And people with wider social networks are higher in self-esteem, and they feel they have more control over their lives.
- ❖ People with fewer friends tend to die sooner after having a heart attack than people with a strong social network. Having lots of friends may even reduce your chances of catching a cold. That's true even though you're probably exposed to more viruses if you spend a lot of time with others.

RULE #3: FRIENDSHIP IS NOT ALWAYS EASY

- ❖ Friendships are vital for wellbeing, but they take time to develop and can't be artificially created.
- ❖ **Be accepting.** Just because someone is different from you doesn't mean you can't find common ground on which to build a firm friendship. Go outside your "zone" to find friends.
- ❖ **Be flexible.** People's lives ebb and flow. So do friendships. Let it be okay to have changing degrees of closeness with your friends.
- ❖ **Be respectful.** You and your friends may not have the same likes and dislikes in people, politics, or passions. Be respectful of these differences.
- ❖ **Be supportive.** Cheer friends on when they "win," cry with them when they "lose," and laugh with them when either of you do something stupid.

IN CONCLUSION...

Building a lasting friendship is not easy. If you are authentic and are willing to open yourself up to others, you will find that there are many people who are looking for a good friend. So, if you haven't already, take the time to invest in friendships. They may be your lifelines one day, and you may be one for them.

