

How to Make NEW FRIENDS



(FACEBOOK NOT REQUIRED)

**I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'VE EVER TRIED
TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS AS AN ADULT,
BUT IT ISN'T EASY.**

When my wife moved from DC to Atlanta for a career change several years ago, it took her years to make friends and find real community. I don't think she is alone. As we get older, finding genuine community and authentic friendships doesn't get easier, it gets far more difficult. We find ourselves having to focus on our career, our current financial situation, our spouse and family responsibilities, plus we all need to carve out time for ourselves. All of this puts more constraints on our time, not less. So, for many people, finding space and time for meaningful friendships is no longer a priority.



BUT, FRIENDSHIP ISN'T A LUXURY. IT'S A NECESSITY.

Study after study has concluded that the happiest and healthiest people have meaningful friendships. In fact, [the world's longest study](#) (which took place over 80 years) concluded that the secret to happiness in life is deep meaningful friendships. We are all created to need friends.

And not just Facebook friends. Friends who really know and understand us. Friends who seem to always respond to our phone call or text. Friends who prioritize us, respect us, and want what is best for us. As we all move through life and experience both the joys and the pains this world can bring, having people who can walk beside us and put their arms around us is essential. We all need the precious few friends where we can find that often indescribable sense of belonging.

**THE SECRET TO
HAPPINESS IN
LIFE IS DEEP
MEANINGFUL
FRIENDSHIPS.**



Now, it's not easy to find these types of friends.

And honestly, I'm not sure if most people have these types of friends. And why is that?

Because it is difficult to demonstrate the two things it takes to have them: **transparency** and **consistency**.



TRANSPARENCY

We have to let people into our lives. And this can be completely scary. Especially in our very individualistic western culture. We want people to think we have it all together and that we can handle anything, so the idea of letting people see our struggles, our fears, and our failings can seem like too much. But it is essential to true friendship.

**TO FIND A DEEP SENSE OF BELONGING,
WE NEED FRIENDS TO SEE US, KNOW US,
AND STILL LOVE US.**



**TRUE FRIENDS
ARE A MIRROR
AND WILL HELP
BRING OUT THE
BEST IN US.**

We need friends we can trust who will tell us we are being selfish.

We need friends who can tell us we are being far too critical or to tell us when we are being a touch too sensitive with that situation at work.

We need friends who will tell us when we are thinking too much or too little of ourselves.

True friends are a mirror and will help bring out the best in us. And yes, it can be scary to be transparent and to let people into our lives, but it is a must for genuine friendship.



CONSISTENCY

The other reason most people don't have meaningful friendships is because of the time and effort it takes to achieve them. Friendship for a lot of people can just feel like too much work. It can be easy with all of life's responsibilities to think, "I just don't have the energy for this."

BUT IF WE WANT TO REAP THE REWARDS OF MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY, IT ONLY COMES WITH CONSISTENT DEPOSITS OVER TIME.



**WHATEVER YOU
DECIDE TO DO,
JUST DON'T
GIVE UP, EVEN
IF IT TAKES A
LONG TIME.**

When you start to develop friendships, make the effort to determine the rhythm of connection. It doesn't have to be every week or even every month, but you do need a consistency of connection that keeps your friendships meaningful.

Get together for tacos on Tuesdays or brunch on Saturdays. Make time for a monthly game night or get together for Sunday afternoon run. Whatever you decide to do, just don't give up. Even if it takes a long time. The only way to make friends is over time and with consistency.



WHERE TO START?

If you find yourself in a season when you need new friends, where do you start? I think we can all agree that it shouldn't be hard to meet great people. Here are a few suggestions:



VOLUNTEER IN THE COMMUNITY

There is something about doing meaningful work alongside other people that makes connection easy.

Find your local food bank or thrift store and start helping out. Here you are likely to find people who share your values which makes that initial connection far easier to find.



JOIN A LOCAL GYM

Working out has a way of bringing people together. And workout groups like CrossFit and Iron Tribe are actually built on the idea that community can make you stronger and healthier.

You can't join a group like this and not meet people. So if you are the fitness type, this could be the first best step for you.



FIND A FAITH COMMUNITY

If you are spiritually minded, the local church is still a great place to find meaningful friendships. Even if you are unsure of organized religion, local churches have programs that can fast forward the process to finding genuine friendships. Most churches have small group programs where they can connect you with people in your specific age range and in your specific station in life. The local church is in the business of connecting people together and many would love to help connect you.



IT'S WORTH IT

Whatever you decide to do, know that friendship takes effort of consistency and getting over the fear of transparency. But it's absolutely worth it.

OUR QUALITY OF LIFE AND THE JOY WE EXPERIENCE IN THIS LIFE ARE LARGELY DEPENDENT ON OUR DEPTH OF FRIENDSHIPS.

No matter where you find yourself in life, it's never too late to start. There is no deadline to finding your greatest friends.

