

“Virtues to Live by”

Before You Begin – An overview for teachers

Friendship

“Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance.”

(Proverbs 1:5)

Definition

Friendships are made by people who want to be themselves with each other, so friends listen to each other and share their time and feelings. You love your friend for the person they are not for what you can get from your friend. You always want the best for your friend and do not treat them badly but as a person whom you love.

Biblical sources:

“A friend is a friend at all times.” (Proverbs 17:17)

“There are friends who lead one to ruin, others are closer than a brother.” (Proverbs 18:24)

“The sweetness of friendship comforts the soul” (Proverbs 27:9)

“When Job’s three friends ... heard about all the troubles that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathise with him and comfort him.” (Job 2:11)

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour. If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)

“Love one another, as I have loved you. A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15: 12-13) “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31)

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.” (Colossians 3:12-14)

Why do we practice Friendship?

Jesus calls his followers his friends (John 15:15) because, Jesus says, ‘I have told you everything I have heard from my Father.’ Jesus says this because with his friends he can be himself, he can share his hopes, dreams and fears; he feels at home with his friends. Friendship only makes sense in the context of love and love only exists in being shared. So, when something good or bad happens, it feels good to share these experiences with someone else who understands me as I am. Friendship enables people to be themselves with each other and so to love and to be loved in return. Friendship is a means, a schooling, through which we learn to love others.

How do we practice friendship?

Being friendly makes it easier for others to be friends with us. If we smile and greet one another with genuine warmth then people will know that we are friendly. If we like ourselves enough then we will feel that we have something worthwhile to share with others.

We need to be friendly and genuinely interested in the other person, but we also need to spend time with them, sharing a pastime or do something together. We need to listen to our friends and show our love for them by being there for them in all the ups and downs of life's journey.

Key Words:

Friend, Friendly, Friendliness, Love, Be Myself,

Signs you are a good friend:

I am friendly

I treat others as I want to be treated

I show an interest in others

I ask people about themselves

I say kind and loving words

I show my friends love

I share my time and things with others

I help my friend when they are in need

I do little things for others that make them happy

I forgive my friend

Reflection Questions:

Am I a good friend?

When and how do I give time to others?

Am I attentive to the needs of my friends?

Do I reflect on my friendships, are they all good for me?

Quotes:

"The first thing, you see, is how the love involved in friendship ought to be gratuitous. I mean, the reason you have a friend, or love one, ought not to be so that he can do something for you; if that's why you love him, so that he can get you some money, or some temporal advantage, then you aren't really loving him, but the thing he gets for you. A friend is to be loved freely, for his own sake, not for the sake of something else." (St. Augustine, Sermon 385)

"There is no greater consolation than the unfeigned loyalty and mutual affection of good and true friends." (St. Augustine, City of God 19.8)

"When we are weighed down by poverty and grief makes us sad, when bodily pain makes us restless and exile despondent, or when any grievance afflicts us; if there be good people at hand who understand the

art of rejoicing with the joyful and weeping with the sorrowful, who know how to speak a cheerful word and uplift us with their conversation, then we shall nearly always find the rough made smoother, the burden lightened, and our troubles overcome." (St. Augustine, Letter 130)

"There is nothing on this earth more to be prized than true friendship." (St. Thomas Aquinas)

"Without friends even the most agreeable pursuits become tedious." (St. Thomas Aquinas)

Other sources

"What is a friend? A single soul dwelling in two bodies." (Aristotle)

"The next best thing to being wise oneself, is to live in a circle of those who are." (C. S. Lewis)

"A friend may be waiting behind a stranger's face." (Maya Angelou)

"Friendship is always a sweet responsibility, never an opportunity." (Kahlil Gibran)

"In friendship or in love, the two side by side raise hands together to find what one cannot reach alone."
(Kahlil Gibran)