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**Real Friends**

**By Skye Thomas**

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About a year ago, I was talking to a friend of mine on the telephone. He had just experienced a big success in his career and wanted to brag. We had a great time cheering and laughing over his big moment. Then as we were wrapping up our phone call, he apologized for gloating to me. I blew it off telling him, "Don't apologize! Real friends are people that you can cry with during the bad times and gloat with during the good times. Everyone else expects you to be politically correct in your behaviors." What's the point of having friends if you can't be yourself around them?

A friend is someone to cry with during the bad times. Everyone knows how great it is to have a friend during your time of need to cry on their shoulder. In reality, people don't like it if you cry on their shoulder for very long. So the sign of a real friend is that you can cry on their shoulder until you're done crying. And if you're crying too long, your friend will make you snap out of it. They help you to pull yourself back together rather than just give a superficial "There there dearie" and then going on about their lives. You'll be able to tell real quick who your real friends are during the crisis and uglier times of your life. They're the only ones still hanging around.

A friend is some to gloat with during the good times. We're all raised that it's distasteful to brag and to come across as egotistical. The result is that most of us are afraid to say much of anything positive about ourselves. You're allowed to celebrate a job promotion, a marriage, or the birth of a child, but it's supposed to be done with class and style. A real friend is someone that you can call up and spend twenty minutes telling them what an awesome job you just did on a project at work and how you feel so incredibly proud of yourself and they are going to be happy for you. They are not going to chastise you for being arrogant. When you have some serious politics going on at work and you pull off a brilliant career move, your friend is going to cheer with you and laugh along with you as you succeed.

A friend is someone to rage with when life is really unfair. That's not to say they're going to help you plot your ex's murder or anything like that, but when you're really ticked off and need to vent, they'll be there for you. You can safely tell your real friends just how angry you are and they'll help you find ways

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to dissipate the anger and to eventually let it go. Humor is a wonderful way that friends have of helping us to let go of our anger. Rather than help you plot the murder, they can throw out a few wonderfully witty comments about your ex and get you laughing again. No matter what it is that you're upset about, your real friends will be there for you.

A friend is someone to dream with while plotting your goals. Real friends make awesome cheerleaders. They believe in you and in your ability to achieve your goals. Everyone else may be politely disinterested in what you're planning to do with your life, but your real friends will be thrilled to hear about what you're doing. They'll help you to brainstorm ideas and will pitch in to help you make your dreams come true whenever possible.

A friend is someone to pray with for support. We've all seen the research and the studies show that the power of prayer is magical no matter who or what it is that you think you're praying to. The studies also show that whenever two or more people get together to pray, that their power becomes increasingly

strong. From my own experience I would like to point out that when you have a real friend pray with you instead of a well meaning acquaintance, that the increased power is so much greater. Yes the stranger helps, but nothing beats the power of a friend's prayers.

A friend is someone that you can laugh with until you make that funny snorting sound. Only with my dearest friends have I laughed so hard that tears poured down my face. I have shared funny stories with my friends that I'd never share with coworkers and such. Part of it is because with real friends there is a trust level and you know that you have similar views about what's humor and what's not. So, you can share jokes that otherwise might not be appropriate to tell the church ladies after service. Real friends laugh together.

My daughter wanted me to add this last one. A friend is someone to burp and fart with because they don't care if you are a real person. She has determined that the reason her best friend has trouble getting along with the other girls at school is because her friend doesn't realize that you can't do that sort of thing in front of people that are only polite superficial surface level friends. My daughter says that because they're best friends it's okay if one of them burps or farts in the presence of the other, but they can't do it in front of anyone else. I suppose she makes a valid point.

I'm not saying you should be a completely trashy mess of bad manners and selfishness around your friends, but at least know that with real friends you can be yourself and they aren't going to turn their back on you. If you have to walk on eggshells, be on your best manners, or monitor your every word and action, then you're probably not with a real friend. A real friend is one of life's greatest blessings, don't forget to give thanks.

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Skye Thomas is the CEO of Tomorrow's Edge, an Internet leader in inspiring leaps of faith. She became a writer in 1999 after twenty years of studying spirituality, metaphysics, astrology, personal growth, motivation, soulmates, and parenting. Her books, articles, and astrological forecasts have inspired people of all ages and faiths to recommit themselves to the pursuit of happiness. To read

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## **Time to Upgrade Your Friends?**

**By Myrtis Smith**

### **Time to Upgrade Your Friends? by Myrtis Smith**

There is a saying that goes something like this: The person you are today is a direct by-product of the books you read and the people you hang out with. If you are not where you want to be in life, it might be time to upgrade your friends. Take this simple quiz to see"

1. Are your friends generally on time for get-togethers?
2. Are any of your friends on the road to financial independence?
3. Do you have any friends who own their own business (or have aspirations to do so)?
4. Would you ever consider trading lives with any of your friends?
5. Are your friends "happy"?
6. Do any of your friends have clear goals they are working towards?

If you answered "no" to most of those questions, the time has come to stop hanging out with people who have less going for them than you do. Think about your goals, dreams and aspirations; make new friends who can support you in those. If you have plans to own your own business, befriend a business owner. If you dream of financial independence, find some like-minded individuals to add to your circle.

No one says you have to ditch our old friends, just make room for the new ones.

Myrtis Smith is a career coach and the founder of Premeditated Life. At Premeditated Life, we have one focus: Your Career. We offer services to support your career goals, whether you are in transition, need help with your job search or want to improve your professional skills. For a FREE Career Assessment email: [coaching@premeditatedlife.com](mailto:coaching@premeditatedlife.com)

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