

# Becoming Friends

written by Jeff Johnson  
revised by Marilyn Kielbasa

Nihil Obstat: Rev. William M. Becker, STD  
Censor Librorum  
17 March 1998

Imprimatur: Rev. Michael J. Hoepfner, JCL  
Administrator, Diocese of Winona  
17 March 1998

The nihil obstat and imprimatur are official declarations that a book or pamphlet is free of doctrinal or moral error. No implication is contained therein that those who have granted the nihil obstat or imprimatur agree with the contents, opinions, or statements expressed.

Design and composition by Proof Positive/Farrowlyne Associates, Inc.

*Photo credits:* Copyright © 1997 Adamsmith, FPG International, page 9; copyright © 1997 Ron Chapple, FPG International, page 8; copyright © Comnet, Westlight, page 23 (top left, upper and lower); copyright © Randy Faris, Westlight, pages 6, 17, and 22; Richard Hutchings, PhotoEdit, page 23 (bottom left); copyright © NSPL/Mauritius, Nawrocki Stock Photo, page 7; copyright © Orion Press, Natural Selection, page 3; copyright © 1997 Tom Stewart, Stock Market, page 1; copyright © Telegraph Colour Library, FPG International, page 15; copyright © F. Wartenberg, Westlight, page 23 (top right); David Young-Wolff, PhotoEdit, cover

*Illustration credits:* James Edwards, Sheryl Beranbaum Representative, pages 10–11; Tatjana Krismanic, Munro Goodman, pages 12–13

The acknowledgments continue on the inside back cover.

Copyright © 1999 by Saint Mary's Press, Christian Brothers Publications, 702 Terrace Heights, Winona, MN 55987-1318, [www.smp.org](http://www.smp.org). All rights reserved. No part of this text may be reproduced by any means without the written permission of the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

2130

ISBN 978-0-88489-452-0



# Having a Friend, Being a Friend

Friends. Everyone wants them. Everyone needs them. Everyone has them (even though it might not seem that way sometimes). Thousands of songs and millions of poems have been written about friends. Even the Bible—one of the most important books ever written—has lots to say about the topic. Considering how important friends are in everyone's life, a course on having and being a friend is bound to be pretty interesting.

This booklet is for you. It contains some valuable information about the qualities of friendship, how to carry on a conversation with a new friend, healthy and unhealthy friendships, and lots of other stuff. It has some quotes from famous and not-so-famous people about relationships. Most important, it might eventually hold some of your deepest thoughts about friends and friendship. (If you look at the last page in the book, you'll find a place to write those thoughts, which may not seem to belong anywhere else.)

Thanks for your participation and cooperation in this course. You can help make its sessions good for everyone else. Enjoy the next several weeks as you learn all about *Becoming Friends*.



# Qualities of Friends



To help yourself answer the following questions, check the poster with the qualities of friends that your group has created during this session. Also, if you think of something that is not on that list, feel free to use it in these reflections.

1. What are the five most important qualities that you value in your closest friend?

---

---

---

---

---

2. What one quality does your friend need to work on most?

---

3. What are the three most important qualities that you think your friends value in you?

---

---

---

*friends*  
Jesus' home was the road along  
which he walked with his friends  
in search of new friends.  
(Giovanni Papini)

*friends*  
Friendship is the only cement that will ever  
hold the world together. (Woodrow Wilson)

4. What is one quality that you think you have to work on in yourself?

---

*friends*  
The only way to have a friend is to be one.  
(Ralph Waldo Emerson)

## Check These Out

The Bible is full of stories about good friends. Check these passages out and think about the qualities of friendship the people in them share:

- Ruth 1:1–22 (Ruth and Naomi)
- 1 Samuel 19:1–7; 20:17,42 (David and Jonathan)
- Luke 1:39–56 (Mary and Elizabeth)
- Acts 9:19–21,26–27; 15:36–40; Galatians 2:11–13 (Paul and Barnabas)



# A friend is . . .

A friend is someone who gives you time  
Yet asks for no time.

Who serves  
When there seems to be no reason for service.

Who is honest  
When it would be easier to lie.

Who cares for you  
When no one else seems to.

Who understands you  
Even when you don't understand yourself.

Who accepts you for who you are  
Even when others try to change you.

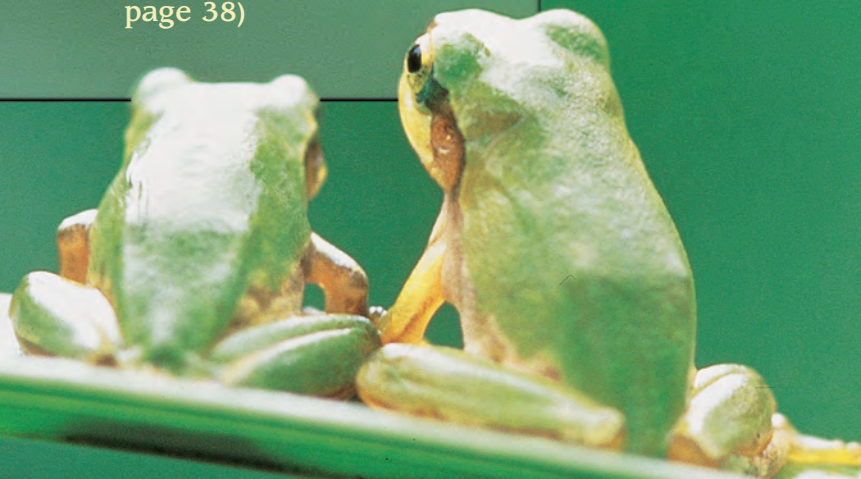
Who will be with you  
Even when you're wrong,  
Even when no one else wants to.

Who forgives you  
Even when it's hard to forgive yourself.

Who trusts you  
When you don't deserve to be trusted.

A friend is  
Someone like you!

(Candace McMahan, editor,  
*Easy-to-Use, Fun-to-Do*  
Junior High meetings,  
page 38)





# A Friendship Checklist

Write a friend's name in the space provided. Then respond to the friendship statements that follow by checking the box that most accurately represents your thoughts and feelings about your friend and your relationship with her or him.

My friend's name is \_\_\_\_\_.

	Yes	Sometimes	No
I have fun with my friend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My friend does things I don't approve of.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I really enjoy being myself around my friend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am proud of my friend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My friend puts me down in front of others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like telling people about my friend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our friendship gets me into trouble.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am happy with my friend just the way he or she is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My parents express concern about our friendship.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My friend has other friends and lets me have other friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I really like who I am when I'm with my friend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My friend is proud of things I do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My friend and I put down other people when we're together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want this person to still be my friend ten years from now.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



# Deciding About Friends

Read these two lists. Decide if you agree with the items on them. Change or draw a line through those you do not agree with. Write your own ideas on the lines provided.

## Healthy Friendships . . .

- make me feel good about myself
- develop the positive side of me
- help me develop positive attitudes about others
- allow me to include others in activities
- help me think of wholesome and creative and inexpensive things to do
- challenge me to avoid doing things that are wrong
- have my parents' approval
- help me live by my values
- encourage me to develop my own interests
- help me grow closer to God

---

---

---

friends

*No one can make you feel inferior without your consent. (Eleanor Roosevelt)*

## Unhealthy Friendships . . .

- make me feel disappointed in myself
- develop the negative qualities in me
- cause me to put others down
- cause me to exclude others from activities
- involve illegal and immoral activities
- depend on alcohol and drugs for fun
- do not have my parents' approval
- cause me to discard my positive values
- do not encourage me to do things I'm good at
- discourage me from working on my friendship with God

---

---

---

friends

*A friend can tell you things you don't want to tell yourself. (Frances Ward Weller)*



# GROWING WISER

Think about all the different kinds of friendships in your life. Focus on four or five of these relationships and, using the lists on page 5, decide whether they are healthy or unhealthy. Then complete the following statements to describe your healthiest and unhealthiest friendships.

## Unhealthiest

My healthiest friendship is probably with

---

I know this because

---

---

To this person I would like to say

---

---

## Healthiest

My unhealthiest friendship is probably with

---

I know this because

---

---

To this person I would like to say

---

---

One thing I plan to do about this relationship is

---

---

# Faithful Friends

When you make a friend, begin by testing him or her, and do not be in a hurry to trust your new friend. Some friends are loyal when it suits them but desert you in your time of trouble. Some friends turn into enemies and tell everyone about your quarrels. And there are friends who take advantage of you and in time of trouble are nowhere to be found.

.....

Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter;  
whoever finds one has found a treasure.  
Faithful friends are beyond price.  
There is no measuring a true friend's worth.  
Faithful friends are like life-saving medicine.  
Those who believe in God make true friends,  
for as they are, so are their friends.

(Adapted from Sirach 6:7-17)

