

## **Friendship – Adulthood**

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Friendship in adulthood is difficult to precisely define. Adulthood brings many life experiences that require different levels of support and needs from friends. Experiences such as marriage, child-bearing, and divorce can attract different types of friendships. Adults who do not marry or are of differing sexual orientations face different experiences making friendships unique. Adulthood can also look very different for both males and females deepening the differences in types of friendships.

Friends are typically a relationship with reciprocated feelings of support, similar interests, and affection. Friendship changes with personal development and age. Additionally, friendships have been regarded as distinct from other types of social relationships because they are constructed around mutuality and equality (Galupo, 2013). Friendships foster many factors that maintain its development over time. Mutual respect, trust, and support are examples of reciprocated traits. Due to the complexity of friendships in adulthood few studies have examined the depth of adulthood friendships.

Several studies have looked at the relation between personality traits and friendships. In 2016, Wrzus and Neyer detected that adults with higher levels of extraversion and openness were, more likely to experience both positive and negative friendship experiences in the future. In addition, the ability to socialize is important to gain friends. Extraverted and opened people are more likely to engage in social settings and gain those friendship experiences. The relationship between the two enhance the ability to make friends. Friends are also selected based on similar personality traits. Friends typically share several similar morals, values, and likes as

well as dislikes. People select and shape friendships that closely resemble their own personalities involving daily interactions as well as support and conflict.

In 2013, Galupo studied friendships and its importance in adulthood. He was able to emphasize how friendships represent a social relationship in which each individual can experience relative equality. Relationship can be a micro-system of rules and boundaries which can resemble a greater macro-system. In this instance, Galupo emphasized the importance of social equality in friendships and its resemblance to greater society. People have an innate need to bond and belong therefore, equality holds an important place in friendship. Feelings of belonging and security can come from friendships that hold the equality factor.

In late adulthood, friendships change in dynamics. Wrzus and Neyer (2016) noticed an increase in emotional closeness in friendships. The emotional closeness is another great protective factor as changes continue to occur in adulthood. Therefore, they were able to summarize that friendships are maintained into late adulthood due to the increase in emotional closeness. As age increase so does emotional closeness, resulting in the need and maintenance of friendships in later adulthood. These protective factors foster further feelings of belonging and equality all stemming from the foundation of friendship in adulthood.

### **Further Readings**

Galupo, M. P., & Gonzalez, K. A. (2013). Friendship values and cross-category friendships: Understanding adult friendship patterns across gender, sexual orientation and race. *Sex Roles*, 68(11-12), 779-790. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxylocal.library.nova.edu/10.1007/s11199-012-0211-x> Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxylocal.library.nova.edu/docview/1357002387?accountid=6579>

Wrzus, C., & Neyer, F. J. (2016). Co-development of personality and friendships across the

lifespan: An empirical review on selection and socialization. .European  
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