

4 Types of Friends Who Will Help You Walk Through Your Single Years

Friends are probably one of the greatest factors in being successful during singleness. It's quite normal—and has been repeatedly researched—that in this stage of life, the primary influences in your decision-making process are your friends. At this point Mom, Dad and church take a backseat to your friends.

Therefore, a discussion of friends is definitely pertinent. Singleness doesn't happen in a vacuum. Those you have with you in the process can slow you down or speed you along the journey, and it matters what *kind* of friends you have—and what kind of friend you are.

There are different types of friends in life. This is never truer than when you are single. You can have a variety of friends, and each can have an impact on your life or heart. Let's walk through four general types of friends.

1. Convenient Friends

These are by far the easiest friendships to develop. These are the people who go to the same school, church, or job, or they live in the same neighborhood. You see them. These seem to be the friends that life just happens to have surrounded you with. You have a choice to be with them or not, but for the most part, they are just there, day in and day out. They are the students in the dorm, neighbors in the same apartment building or people that you run into through the course of the week.

2. Interest Friends

Interest friends have something specifically in common with you. They play on the same sports team or do the same extracurricular activities, like music, computer games or projects of some type. Your common interest in something is what keeps the friendship going.

You're somewhat familiar with them, but what you do together is usually a similar activity. With these friends, a certain part of you is regularly expressed and usually accepted—the athletic part, fun part, intellectual part or some other gifted part of you.

These relationships are usually encouraging and fun to have. A deeper relationship may or may not occur with a common-interest friendship, but either way, these friends meet a need.

3. Spiritual Friends

These are your Christian buddies. They may or may not go to the same church, but they most often do. They might be the guys or gals you go to lunch with after church. They may even be your core group of friends. These are the people you talk to about spiritual issues, like God, purity, the Bible or religion.

They often have a similar worldview as you and give you spiritual encouragement and guidance. Hopefully, this group is the one group where you can experience love, acceptance and grace. This is an important group of friends. If you don't have this group, I would encourage you to join a singles group on campus or a Bible study at your church.

These people will often have a wide spectrum of interests, intellect and perspective. They won't be perfect, but this group is central to being successfully single.

4. Honest Friends

This group will usually include no more than a few people. These are friends you call when you are hurt. They may be from any of the above groups, but you know you can count on them. They do accept you as you are, and at the same time can see your error in logic or behavior.

They are there for you. You can let down your guard and be honest. You can cry, be angry, be afraid and not feel your best in front of them, and it's OK. Often, they feel the same way about you. You are comrades in this season. For most singles, these friends are often also single. Many singles have spiritual parents or mentors with whom they can be deeply honest. I have found both to be helpful during a time of singleness. Sometimes I needed wisdom, and other times—such as after a breakup—I just needed comfort, or a “you will be OK” from a friend who knew I was hurt. This group of friends is the most critical to have during your entire lifetime, but especially in a season of singleness.

If you don't have honest friends, get going and find them. I know singles often move away for school, work or other reasons. Honest friends are the anchors of your soul. Choose these friends carefully. Take a few moments and ask yourself these questions.

1. Is there an area of friendship that does not currently exist for you? If, so what is your plan to find these friends?
2. Where do most of your friends come from? How balanced does your array of friendships look?
3. Of the Christian singles you know, can you be one type of friend to someone in need? {eoa}

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