



The Power of Influence



Building Connections With
The Power of Influence

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CHAPTER 1

Human Beings Are Social Creatures

We learned in school that human beings are social creatures, just as ants or bees are. We cannot live in solitude. We have to live in company of other people. People who live in desolation are considered to be aberrant and the world does not take to them kindly. At the same time, people who live in the company of others do not always know how they can make the most of it.

Human beings are often described as social creatures. We are almost never found alone, and even when we are physically alone, we are constantly thinking about other people in our lives. When was the last time you thought of a plan that did not include anyone else? When was the last time you saw a dream in which there were no other people but you? It does not happen that way with us. Everything that we do, consciously or otherwise needs to have other people in it. That is the way nature has ordained us to be.

From the point that we are born till our last breath, we want people to be around us. Maybe the only time in our lives when we do not want people to be with us is when we are sleeping, but even that is not entirely true, is it? Even when we sleep 'alone', we want other people to sleep in the same room as us. How many people should I tell you about who would not get a wink of sleep at night if they had to sleep alone in a room!

But, what I feel most amazing about this socialness of our behavior is that we can induce habits in other people. The way we live—the social part of our living—influences other people whether we want that to happen or not. It actually brings about a change in their lives, however small that might be.

There was a phase in my life when my family was living in a lush countryside, verdant with all the green one could find. This was an idyllic place to live and I really enjoyed the few years I spent in that sylvan retreat. Now, everything was truly mesmerizing about that place, but there was one thing that irked me in my initial days there. I always like to start my mornings with a hot cup of coffee and a crisp newspaper that still carries the smell of the printing press to read. It is just my habit. I am not very fond of getting to know what's happening in the world outside—I rely more on the Internet for that—but the newspaper is a childhood habit that I cannot break even now. So, when I was living in that beautiful house, everything was quite sufficient for my needs, but my regular supply of the newspaper was brutally truncated. No newspaper vendor could foot it out that much just to deliver a paper to my house, though the nearby village had a good supply of it.

When I could take it no more, I went out to the village one evening and found out the newspaper delivery boys in the area. I spoke to a few of them and asked them to deliver a newspaper to my house. It took some convincing and even then the first few of them refused. But eventually, I managed to find one guy who agreed to come there every morning to deliver the newspaper.

Next morning was pure heavenly bliss. I have another nasty habit—that of waking up at 6 a.m. on the dot each morning, and by 6:15, this fellow was cycling up to my driveway and plopped the newspaper, perfectly aimed at my porch. Coffee tasted better that day.

In the three months that I stayed there after that, the boy did not miss out a single delivery. Perhaps I had convinced him too much, telling him how I could not start my day well without reading the Daily Times. Anyway, the Good Lord bless him, he never missed a day.

On the day of my moving out, I made it a point to meet him in the morning, take his last delivery to my house personally and I cleared his dues. He went without a word.

A few weeks later, I happened to visit that village again. I chanced into that young chap. He was looking older already—young boys have an amazing way of looking different every week. I asked him how he was doing. What he said floored me.

He said that my moving out had taken a huge toll on him. Seeing that I was nonplussed, he told me how my habit of needing the newspaper early in the morning forced him to get up even earlier than that, and how that helped him revise his college lessons (he was learning to be a doctor). He said that it had become a habit for him to get up on the dot, cycle out to my place with the newspaper, deliver some other newspapers on the way, and then go right home and start studying. After I left, he did not need to get up that early, and because of that he became lazier about his sleeping patterns. He started getting up later and later each day (his mental clock told him constantly that he did not need to get up early) and slowly he gave up delivering newspapers altogether. Eventually, he reduced his studying hours as well.

I was amazed at what he told me. I did not know how an idiosyncrasy of mine could create a habit in someone else.

This little incident told me that everything that we do... without exception... has an impact on people around us.

We are the sum total of the people we live with. They are our identifiers; the whole concept of individual identity is a myth. Our identities are so closely connected with the people we live with that we cannot talk about it in absolute terms as well.

Think about it. Don't people in your home do things for us, and in the process develop their own habits? A mother who gets up early to prepare her son's school lunch is altering her habit because of her son. If you wait for someone to go to the gym together, then you are changing your habit according to their routine. And, don't even get me started about the relationships of love where people change themselves for each other so dramatically that there is no concept of individuality at all.

We need people around us to help us. We need them to do our small and big tasks, and we do things for us as well. We need people to live with us. We need people to share our thoughts and ideas with. We need people to go to work with, to study with, to exercise with. These are things we do not—and cannot—do alone.

And, at the same time, we know that we have to do things for them too. Though we accept it or not, at every living instant of our day, we are doing things with others in mind. You work for money probably, but at the end of the day you know that whatever it is you are selling is a requirement for someone. Businesses would not have existed on earth if we had not been social beings.

Friendship is just a small part of being social; it is just one aspect. But in the 21st Century, the implication of friendship has become much wider, as we are going to see in the subsequent chapters. It is no longer necessary that “a friend in need is a friend indeed”. The definition has now gone beyond ‘need’. Friendship is now the epitome of our very lives itself.

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CHAPTER 2

Know What a Friend Is in a 21st Century Friendship

It can definitely be said that the concept of friendship has changed remarkably over the last few years. Friends don't need to be with you all the time anymore. You don't need to hang out together to be called friends. Why, today, people who have never met can still be friends!

Confused? Read on...

The concept of friendship has undergone a renaissance of sorts. Our previous generation, when they would announce someone as their friend, it usually meant that they were together at school or work, and that they spent a lot of time together. It usually meant they were people with at least a few similar tastes and interests and who hung around together. In those times, people made friendships for a particular reason—because they were in school or at work together or that they lived in the same neighborhood. Hardly did their friends go out of their niche!

But that was the time of compartmentalization. Friends, like everything else, were compartmentalized. We had school friends, college friends, office friends, church friends, soccer friends and so on. It is funny even to think of that now. In today's times, such slotting is definitely not possible. You may meet your friend in a particular place, but it is not necessary that they will stay there. They will soon spill out to other areas of your life as well. This is how friendship is in today's world... they do not stay put in just one area of your life; they spread out all over the place.

The networks run deeper as well. It is more likely that a 'school' friend of yours knows your office colleague and so on. The exclusiveness factor just does not exist anymore.

Why has this radical shift happened? To a very great extent, the Internet is responsible for it. Today, we are all very active on social networking websites, whether it is Facebook or MySpace or Twitter. We are all over the place. These social networking websites are such that they show the whole world who your friends are. You cannot keep them hidden anymore. Soon enough, someone is going to see someone they know and other network starts building right then and there. The Internet has made our personal lives so public that immediately everyone knows what's going on with us.

It is not that these networks did not exist in the past. They did. The only issue was that in those days we did not have the social networking websites that we have today. For that reason, people whom we knew through somewhere remained there. They did not get to know much about the private part of our lives and hence they did not get to know much about the other people associated with us.

So, has it become easier to win friends and influence people in the 21st Century? Well, it has definitely become much easier to make friends today. You can expand your own network, you can make your friend's friends your friends, you can even find out people who are interested in you so very directly. It has become very easy to find friends and send them requests, and they will accept as well.

But, has it become to influence friends? This is actually the part of the story that we have to concern ourselves with more. We have friends all around us today, but we will have to put in some effort in order to influence them. The influencing part isn't going to happen just like that; you have to do some work there. At the same time, I am not telling you that it is not possible or even that it is difficult. It is not. In fact, you can influence people much easier today because you have so many platforms to play your game. But, you need to know how to go about it the right way.

Today's friends are different because:-

- They do not confine themselves to just one part of your life
- They know you much better than ever before, even some of your most intimate things
- You know them much better because of the same reasons
- They are a part of a network
- They may not have ever met you in the flesh and blood
- They can spell opportunities for you like never before
- They are more technologically-savvy, as are you
- They are not necessarily part of the same culture that you are

It is not necessary that you share your likes and dislikes with them, and so many other reasons.

That is why winning friends and influencing them requires a totally different approach today as well. We are going to spend a lot of time on this aspect—that of influencing people. Anyone can make friends, but retaining them is a challenge. Slowly, we are going to unravel the secrets of that to you.



CHAPTER 3

Friends at Work Vs. Real Friends

Before we embark on the actual task of winning friends and influencing them, it is important that you can identify who your real friends are. You need to distinguish them from another popular category—work friends.

We often mistake acquaintances for friends. This happens in several cases. One of the most common cases is when we mistake our work acquaintances for real friends. People at work can be made friends, but they are not necessarily friends by default. Thinking that work people are friends is a notion that has its roots in our past way of thinking. We used to think that anyone we spent time with was a friend. That is not necessarily true.

The intention of the eBook is to tell you how you can win friends and influence people in today's times. Though that is not very difficult to do, one of the essential first steps is to know how to recognize a friend. Hence, you should know what qualities 'do not' make a friend as well. Here, we have taken work friends as an example. But, the discussion applies to any other kinds of friends as well.

In order to be able to effectively make friends and influence people, you should have an innate understanding to realize who your true friends are, and who are simply your 'work' friends.

Who Can You Count on?

Earlier, I said that the proverb 'A friend in need is a friend indeed' does not hold much water in today's times, and I stand behind that point. But, at the same time, there is no refuting the part that it is important for you to know who of your friends will stand with you in those bleak, difficult times.

Indeed, a true friend is someone who can help you in times of adversity. Now, think about your friends at work and your other friends. Suppose you have a financial problem. You need some money urgently. Who will you approach?

Think about this point. If necessary, write this on a piece of paper. Then circle the names of all those people who you can bank on... the people who you will not hesitate in calling up if you are passing through lean times. There will be people who you know won't bother to dirty their hands to remove you from the tight spot, but then there will also be people who are ready to help you. It is these indications that can help you separate the wheat from the chaff.

Who Will Be with You?

When you think about who your real friends are, it is a good idea to think ahead. Think about the person two years down the lane. What do you think—will they still be in contact with you? With most friends we make in schools, colleges and at our workplace, the friendship is only because we are doing something together. Once that common bond is broken, it usually happens that the contact itself is lost, let alone the friendship. Is that going to happen? If it is, then perhaps you should not consider this relationship as true friendship.

A true friend is one who will be with you beyond the barriers of time, irrespective of what phase of life you are in. Though they might not be physically present with you anymore, they will surely keep in touch. And now, there are so many more options to stay in touch.

What Do You Know about Your Friend's Family?

This is another factor that tells you how close your friendship is. Usually when we meet people at school, college or at the workplace, we take it for granted that they are our friends without ever realizing how little we know about their lives outside the common place that you share.

For example, how much do you know about the family of this person? Do you know about their likes and dislikes? Do you know what places they hang out? Do you know any of their other friends?

If your answer to these questions is negative, then what you have is merely an acquaintance. You cannot call it as a friendship.

A truly friendly person will let you get involved in different aspects of their lives as well. They will tell you about their life outside the place where you meet each other. They will talk to you about it. They will also want to know about the other parts of your life.

Remember that true friends always want to know as much as they can about each other.

Do They Regard You Seriously?

The next time you are interacting with any person from your workplace or the place where you study, assess them as to how seriously they regard you. Do they listen to you well? Do they ask you for opinions or suggestions? Do they heed them? Do they ask you about your likes and dislikes, about the way you feel about certain things? Are they interested in you as a person, or are they simply interested in being with you?

If the former is true, then they are good friends of you. You have found someone that takes an interest in you and regards you with the seriousness that you deserve. But, if they are only interested in being with you, then it is a selfish motive that they are after. They just want your company. They are not interested in you as a person, so the fundamental grain of friendship does not exist there.

Just as you should be interested in a person for them to be your friend, it is important that they should be interested in you as well. It is a mutual bond.

What Do You Talk about?

This is another interesting way to find out who your true friends are. When you meet your so-called friend outside the place of work or school or college, can you talk to them casually about other things? Or does your conversation with them only entail talking about the activity that you are commonly sharing?

If you are not able to talk anything with them apart from the activity that you are put together forward for, then it is certainly a weak friendship. Good friends never run out of topics to talk about. They never find each other's company awkward or boring.

Do You Feel Happy for Them?

How emotionally attached are you with them? Do you become genuinely happy when something good happens to them, even if it is at your expense? For instance, if both of you were vying for a particular promotion and if they got it, would you still be happy? And, the other way round, if you got the promotion, would they be really happy?

It is how well you can share each other's victories that decide how close you are. If you do not feel the emotion, then there is something that is lacking in the relationship. You cannot call it friendship if the emotional ties are weak.

Do You Plan Things to Do Together?

Another very profound way of finding out whether your friendship is for real or not is to see whether you plan things to do together... and whether you enjoy that! Do the two of you just spend the time you are together because circumstances have thrown you together or do you really plan some things especially? Like, do you plan to go for a movie or visit the library or go shopping, or whatever, apart from your time at the workplace, or school, or college or whatever? And, when you make such a plan, do you enjoy the time you spend together? Can you make good conversation with each other? It all adds up here. If you look forward to do many things with each other, more than what you are supposed to do, then it is a good friendship blossoming there.

Friends who are merely 'work' friends would not want to do anything apart from what they are supposed to do—attend the workplace, attend lectures, etc. If it is true friendship, it should go beyond these obligatory things.

So, these are some things that you have to keep in mind when you are assessing your friendship. There are all kinds of people out there and you are going to meet all of them. But, our intention is to strengthen friendships and create an impression on people. Now that you know what the signs of good friendship are, you know what you have to aim for.

You have to aim for a friendship that goes beyond just meeting and spending time together just because you have to. It extends to thinking about the other person with concern, knowing about the other part of their family in which you are not present, knowing what makes them happy or sad, what their personal likes and dislikes are, being happy in their happiness, etc. This is what you have to look forward to. Friendship is a sublime thing, but developing it till it reaches that stage requires continuous effort.

CHAPTER 4

Are You Friend Material?

Before you think about how you can make friends with other people and influence them, it is important that you look into yourself first. Are you friend material? Do you have what it takes so that people can consider you as a good friend?

You have to enhance your skills first. Let us see what is needed.

While we are talking about how good other people can be to you as friends, it is highly important to look into yourself as well. Friendship is something that works both ways... are you friend material yourself? Do you have the qualities within you that are looking for in others?

These are some questions that have to seek answers to first. When you are looking at winning friends, remember that it is your own personality that will matter the most. Whether you become a friend magnet or a friend repellent will depend in significant measure on who you are. People will look at you and then decide whether they want to stick with you.

Also remember that it will be easy to find people to hang out with for the first time. Meeting people is the easy part. But the difficult job is to keep meeting them. How do you retain their friendship? For that you need to have very strong friendship qualities within yourself.

So, take this chapter as a voyage of self-discovery. Before you go out into the open there and start spreading your charm, you have to see whether you have friendship qualities in you or not.

Care and Concern

One of the pillars on which your friendship stands is your care and concern for the other person. How much do you care for them? If they face some kind of problem, will you be there with them? To what extent will you go? There are three things that people usually do when their friends are going through a problematic phase.

- a) They try to avoid the whole thing and speak about more cheerful things, completely regardless of how their friend must feel at the moment.
- b) They hear their friend out and speak a few words of consolation and give out some advice.

c) They actually stand with their friend and work shoulder to shoulder with them until the problematic situation has been taken care of completely.

It is needless to say that option c) is the best one to use. If you are a truly great friend, it is this you have to do. Remember that friendship is not something superficial; it is deeply ingrained and it has a very profound meaning and purpose. You have to realize that first if you want people to realize it for you. If you want to have true friends, you have to be a true friend yourself.

Often, we are too busy or too worked up ourselves to listen to other people's travails. But if that is the case, then those people won't have time to listen to our problems as well. No one in this world is sacrosanct. Today, they are having a difficult time. Tomorrow it might be you.

A very important thing is that you have to show genuine care in everything that you say and do when you are with them. You have to be able to feel their pain. You shouldn't just say superficial words of comfort because people can see through them and understand the shallowness of it all. You have to say things that you mean and you have to be there to help them out to whatever end.

It is true that we are all busy people today. In most cases, we do not have the time for ourselves, let alone our friends. What can we do in such a case? The easiest thing would be to cite that you are busy and cannot help them out. But that will be the end of your friendship. That is not the way you deal with friendship; that makes the whole thing quite meaningless.

Even if you are supremely busy, even if you cannot be there physically, your care and concern should show through. It could be merely a phone call that you make when you are miles away, but that phone call should be meaningful, show genuine care and concern and ask what you can to help them, whatever you can. And, if you are physically present with your friend in their difficult times, you should not rest till they find their rest.

That is what the exemplary friendships of the world are made up of. That is what you have to emulate within yourself. If you show that you are person who really cares for others, you will see the vast measure of care that you get in return as well. But, at the same time, I should tell you that you should not be with your friend with any selfish intent. Just be with them. Do not think about anything else. Do not think about what you can get in return. Even if the situation seems completely hopeless, be with them.

The Interest Factor

How interested are you in whatever your friend tries to tell you? When they talk to you, do you listen with complete attention, or do you let your mind think about other things?

All of us like to be paid attention to. We are attention-seeking individuals. We like it when there is someone to hear what we want to say. We all want our little audiences, all the time.

And this is all the more important in a relationship between two friends. In fact, most of the time, we are not looking for anything more from our socializing than the need for someone who could hear us

out. We have to tell so many things all the time... sometimes it is an opinion that we have about something, sometimes it is something that we are planning to do, sometimes it is a grouse that we have about some issue, sometimes it is a problem that we are facing. We always need company as an anchor to hear us.

That is the reason why you always have to pay attention to what people are telling you. Most of the time, they are not telling you something just to inform you. They are telling you because they need your counsel on it, or they need to vent out what's in their mind and they want a pair of concerned ears to hear them out.

So, you have to be a listener. But a poor listener you will be if you just hear and do not react. Humans are highly expressive species, and when you are with someone you count as friends, that becomes all the more important. You have to listen to what they are telling you with interest and then you have to respond. It is not necessary that that person will tell you what they are looking for in your response—most of the time they will not even know what to look for—but you have to take each situation on its merit and react accordingly.

Do not worry too much about it actually. You will automatically come to know how to respond to situations. Nobody needs to tutor you on that. When a particular situation presents itself before you, you will know how to react.

One suggestion is to put yourself in the place of the talker. If you were talking about those things, how would you like the other person to react? What would you want their reply to be? Would you want them to give you a suggestion, rebuke you, praise you, advise you or simply to hear you out? When you put yourself in their shoes, you get a very clear idea of what you should do yourself. Let your reactions be in accordance with that.

Another very important thing you have to remember is that you should not get distracted. This can really take away a lot from the conversation and your friend will get a very sour view of you. When they are talking about something, however inconsequential it might seem, you have to focus your attention onto what they are saying without thinking about other things. If you have genuine concern for them, the interest will automatically build up. All you have to do is to tell yourself this—"If my friend is telling me about this, then it is important to him/her." When you think that way, you know that you have to pay attention. If something is important to them, you need to concentrate on what they are saying.

A very annoying habit in some people is to go off-tangent when a conversation is going on. Someone is telling you something, and you suddenly talk about something else. This is entirely insulting to the person who started talking earlier. It shows that you do not give any importance to them, that you think of them as inconsequential. This is definitely not done. If you want to win friends and influence people, it is of utmost importance that you listen to what they are saying and then give you due input. You should not distract from what they are saying, which could be tantamount to insulting their intelligence and their very existence in your life.

React

One of the most vital things that tell what kind of a friend you are is your reaction to what they say or do. Or, rather, it is about how you react. What is your reaction when they tell you something? What is your reaction when they do something for you, or just something in general? Do you respond in the right way?

We are born with a natural talent to be expressive. We cannot hide our emotions normally. But, some people try to suppress their emotions and that's when the problems begin. Now, when you are with someone who you want to count as your friend, and who you want to count you as a friend as well, then you have to make sure that you exhibit the right emotions and expressions. Your sentiment has to carry across. Do not take friendship for granted; the other person should know what you think.

Why is that important? It is because if you want someone to be your friend, then it is important that they know what kind of a person you are. You have to make it apparent by expressing the right way.

When they tell you something, listen to them. And then react accordingly. They may be telling you of something very trivial, such as what they saw while coming to meet you, but even that tells you something about the kind of people they are. You come to know what can grab their interest and attention. There might not be something very much for you to emote or express here, but you should at least acknowledge what they are telling you. I am not telling that when they tell you a story, you have to tell a story of your own. That's not what is expected, but you have to make it apparent that you have heard their story.

When you are friends with someone, small gestures are going to come your way all the time. When they give you a gift, for instance, make sure that you express your thanks. You do not have to take it for granted and think that they are your friend, so they should give you a gift. It does not work that way. Perhaps they spent time thinking what to buy and then on the actual shopping itself. They spent money as well. So, you have to appreciate the effort.

Wish them on their important days. This is not something to be taken for granted either. It is an important day for them, a unique day, and they need people to consider it as special. At least, they expect their friends to make this day special for them. So, take the time and effort to make their day special.

Reveal

When you make a friend, it is a commitment. Among other things, it is a commitment to get to know them better. You want to find out things about them, because you know that when you find out more about them, you can be a better friend to them. So, how about giving them the same opportunity as well?

One of the essential things about being a friend with someone is that you have to share things with them. Just as you want them to speak about themselves, you have to tell them about yourself as well. Even if you are a secretive person otherwise, it is not a good idea to continue being so once you have counted someone as your friend.

A true friend would like to listen to you, whether you are telling them something happy or something that is not so pleasant to hear. They will want to hear you, and they will show interest in it as well. They will want to know you better. At the same time, this is also a test for you to decide if a person is your true friend or not. If someone is inclined to hear what you are saying and gives you solutions and opinions as well, then they mean well. You must nurture their friendship at all costs.

The very purpose of having friends is that you can have someone to share your thoughts and opinions with. Thus, by speaking up, you are lightening your burden.

But, does that make you a good friend as well? Yes, it does. A person who keeps secrets from their friends, who does not reveal about what he or she is in other areas of their life is a very tricky friend indeed. How can you trust someone who does not tell what they do when they are not with you? The same applies to you as well. Your friends have a right to know what goes on in other areas of your life. You need to acquaint them with those things as well.

Now, I am not telling that you should go out and tell them your innermost secrets. You are entitled to your private space, and you can keep it. You need not tell them about all the details, because that would only be too boring for the most part.

But, you could give them the bare essentials. You could tell them who are in your family, you could tell them what you do when you are not with them, you could tell them about your hobbies, you could tell them about your relationships if you are not too secretive about it, and so on.

These are general things but they are a part of who you are. If you are looking at making some great friends, then you should be able to tell people about these things. Slowly, as your friendship keeps improving, you will find that you are more comfortable in telling them about more things from your personal life. Slowly, your friends become a part of your personal life as well. You actually begin telling them things of your own accord and you find out that things become easier for you when you do so.

The main thing you have to remember here is that just as you want to know about your friends, they want to know about you as well. But, you don't want to know all the details. Which means, you need not tell them all the details either. However, you should tell them the relevant things... the things that tell them what kind of person you are. They should be able to picture you doing other things... things that you actually do when you are not with them. This is how friendships are kept going.

Easygoing and Casual

This is another very important friendship trait that you should be sure to emulate within you. Are you a laidback, fun-loving person, or do you get worked up by even the smallest things in life? Of course, if you are fun-loving, casual-minded person, then people are going to like you more. They are going to like being with you. You become a friend magnet. Even the friends of your friends who meet you briefly will like to be with you. You suddenly find yourself getting invited to more events and from people you barely know. It is just because of your penchant for having fun that people want to be with you. So, who's complaining? If it is fun-loving attitude that it takes, why not give it to them?

A lot of people repel everyone they meet without their knowledge. These are the people who are constantly griping about things. They are unhappy about various things in life. They do not know how to handle things and then they get frustrated when things go out of control. This becomes very difficult for them and then they go all out and start cribbing to everyone they meet. They vent out their inner depression onto other people. The friends that they have are the ones who bear the brunt the most. They have to listen to these cribbing people who would simply sit down and complain rather than stand up and take stock of the situation.

These people are the worst sort for winning friends and influencing people. People usually avoid them. When they see them approaching, they run a mile in the opposite direction. You certainly do not want to be such a person.

That is the reason you need to be always cheerful, optimistic and a great person for friends. You need to have a sense of humor. You need to be able to cheer people up by your mere presence. This is not difficult to achieve actually. If you are a person who always thinks positive and if you are confident about yourself, then you should be able to make people like you by doing practically nothing.

Everyone is looking for a spot of comfort in life. Everyone wants those few friendly words of advice, they want some consolation, they want some praise for things they have done. Everyone wants to hear such things. If you become that person... the bringer of good tidings... then people are going to really like being with you. This can only happen when you are happy within.

Untoward things will happen in life. Even if you are immensely happy today, we should not think that there won't be circumstances in your life that will put everything in a state of disarray. Things will happen that will disorient you, depress you, defeat you. But, even in those times, you should try to come out of your mental state as soon as possible. Nothing is too big to mar a person's inner state indelibly. However difficult the situation may seem outwardly, deep inside you know that you can come out of it. So, do that. And do that quickly.

In happy times, people like being with you. In bad times, people like judging you. When you are going through a bad time, there are several people who are judging you. How you deal with such situations is what really impresses people. Do you cow down completely and give everything up? Do you stand up and give a fight? Do you make a determination not to let things affect you? Do you still keep your sense of humor at its pinnacle?

These are things that people are observing in you. They are judging you at all times. If you sail through these moments nicely, then you become a role model for people. People want to emulate you. People want to be with you. You can win friends and influence people as easily as saying ABC.

In conclusion, you need to keep your spirits high at all times. Even if the going gets tough, you have to ensure that you come out of it soon. You have to influence people. You cannot let events in life destabilize you. Take your moment of grief and move on... and otherwise always keep a cheerful smile on your face. That's what brings those people to you like bees to honey. Do it and you will see!

Helping Nature

When you are assessing what kind of a friend you are, one very important factor is the kind of help you extend to the people you meet. Are you of a helping nature? What is your general disposition when someone asks you for help?

A little help goes a long way. It may not be material help all the time; even if you are able to speak some words of comfort to people, it can mean a lot for them. They will feel better for it, and surely many people are going to know of the support you have been for your friend. Any kind of help can never be hidden. The benefactors and the beneficiaries may not speak about it, but there are ways by which such things get publicized.

But, that does not mean you have to become selfish and only help your friends because people will talk reverently about you. That's not what you should think about. Your point of view should be to be a good friend, helpful in need, and that is that.

When you go through your times of trials and tribulations, you certainly want people to help you. Even if they cannot help you in the way you expect them to, you want them to be there for you at least by showing their care and concern. If they don't, then you don't hesitate to develop a bad impression of them. Now, the same applies to you as well. When your friend is in difficulty, if you do not help them out, then naturally, they are going to get a bad opinion of you as well.

This is not the way good friendship works.

You should constantly try to win friends and influence people. The way you deal with your existing friends is definitely an indication of how well you can do that. It tells other people what kind of a person you are. If you have helped someone in their difficult times, then everyone is going to like you for it, sans exception. When you approach them for friendship, chances are that they already know about you, and they will want to be friends with you. The best thing here is that you have already created a great impression on them.

You need not be the richest person in the world to be able to help others. Sometimes just being with someone helps. Sometimes it is just a word of comfort that is needed. What is most important is the kind of feeling you have in your mind. What do you think about your friends? What can you do for them? Do you have a mind to help them out in their difficult times?

These are the things that really matter. People are seeing you all the time. They are trying to understand what kind of a person you are. If you are kind to others, being with them when they need you, then you are going to make a remarkable impression on them. They are going to enjoy your company, and you could actually be an example for them to give to others.



CHAPTER 5

Why You Need Friends

There are people who think whether they really need all the friends they have. These are usually the people who have a lot of friends and feel that they need to be left alone sometimes. Or, they are introverts—people who do not like to mingle with other people much. But, is that really a good idea? Why do we need friends after all?

Since this eBook is about how you can win friends and influence people, it is a good idea to answer this... why does one need friends anyway? Why should we put in the effort to make friends and then make more effort to retain them? There are people who think in a businesslike manner about this. If they invest in making and retaining friends, what are they getting at the end of the day? Are the returns commensurate with the ‘investment’?

Let us simply look at the ways in which friends are useful to us.

Friends Are Our Emotional Support and Anchor

One of the greatest reasons why we want friends is because they support us emotionally. Outside our family, who do we go to if we are exceptionally happy or exceptionally sad? Whom do we want to tell if we are angry about something? Whom do we like to share our secrets with? It is with our friends. If you have friends, you will realize how important they are to your life.

Our friends know what we want; especially the ones who have spent a long time with us know exactly what reactions a particular thing can evoke in us. It is because of this reason that they can comfort us when we are despondent and celebrate with us when we are happy. They know what can cheer us up when we are feeling low and what can make us miserable.

We need that kind of support. We cannot live a lonely life. You may have understood that already if you have had to live alone somewhere in a new place. Or, if you have ever relocated, you will have felt what I am talking about. Despite of the fact that there are several people with us wherever we go, having just one friend can make things so much more easier.

Friends Are Our Company

We are social beings and for that reason we need to be with people all the time. However, strangers won't do. We eventually try to make friends with strangers too—and that is the point of this eBook—but the truth is that if we have an already existing friend to help us through, it can make a lot of difference.

We need friends for being with us during all kinds of occasions. Even if it is a small thing, like company for going to a movie, we want our friends. If you are feeling lonely, what do you do? You simply call some friend up and hang out with them. This is how we are made. We feel comfortable with the people we have spent time with. This ties in with something I said earlier... we form habits in people. When we are with our friends, who have been with us for a long time, we have definitely formed some habits in them. They have formed some habits in us too. It is because of this reason that we like being with them. We feel comfortable and at ease when we are with our friends.

Friends Give Us Courage

A major part of our courage in life comes from the friends we have. Our friends are great people; they know us precisely well and for that reason they know how to encourage us.

True friends will stay with us through whatever we do. They will give us their support and help us by their physical contribution as well.

But, most importantly, by just being there they give us a lot of courage. We feel motivated to go on. When we are alone, it becomes very difficult to achieve things. But, with someone loyal to support us, things become very different. We are able to elevate our potential and reach greater heights of glory, just because someone was with us.

Most people who have become successful in life today have become so because they had people to support them already, or they influenced people enough so that they could support them in their efforts. In effect, these people already had good friends, or they made friends on the way. But, whichever way they went about it, the gist was that they needed to have friends. They understood the importance of having friends and stuck with them through. Their friends proved to be a major contributor in their success.

Friends Help Us to Discover Ourselves

Outside the family, friends are the only people whom we can open out to. We do not mind speaking out our innermost thoughts to our friends. We tell them what irks us; we tell them what makes us happy. If there is something that has not gone down well with us, we can tell them. We can tell them of our lean times and our best times.

It is when we share so many things about us with our friends that we truly start to discover ourselves. When we are telling our friends things, subconsciously, these things are also playing in our minds. We are reinforcing our likes and dislikes, the lessons we have learnt, the emotions we feel, etc. We are telling us what we are like. By simply exchanging our thoughts with our friends, we get to know ourselves in a better way.

And that is how friends can help us in rediscovering ourselves. This gives us a powerful sense of self-expectancy and self-sufficiency. We know what we are about and we can play to our strengths. That is why, just by being with our friends and exchanging things with them, we can go a long way in our lives.

These are just a few of the most important reasons why we need friends. Speaking from experience, everyone has their own reasons for having friends. You will have your own reasons as well. Also, we have different reasons for needing friends at different stages of our life. When we are children, we just need someone to play with and share our studies with. When we are in college, we need someone to hang out with. When we grow older, we need people for a varied number of reasons. So, our expectations from our friends change as we keep growing up.

But, one thing remains unshaken. We need friends at every stage in our life. We cannot do without them. And, the more the friends we have, it is always the merrier. That's the whole point of winning friends and influencing people.



CHAPTER 6



Creating Impressions on People

When you are armed with the agenda of winning friends, the first most important thing for you is to create the right impressions. When you meet someone for the first time, it is very important that you give out the right impression to them. If you are deficient in that department, winning friends could be seriously an uphill ride.

The Importance of Creating Impressions

Why is it important to create impressions on people? A significant part of that answer would be because we are not solitary individuals. We spend all our time living with other people and interacting with them... well, at least we spend most of our time with others! People are important in our lives.

So, it is important to create the right impressions on them. People will act and react to us according to their perceptions about us. They will soon build up a persona for us, and they will react accordingly. What we get out of people—who form a major part of our lives—will depend on the impression that we have created over them.

For example, if we give out the impression that we are polite and soft-spoken, then many people are going to behave with us in the same manner as well. These people may act differently with others, but with us they will act in the way our impression has built upon them. A boss in a company gets a different behavior from the people he meets than an auto mechanic at a repair shop. Even if these people are the same, they react differently with the boss and with the auto mechanic. Why is that so? This kind of reaction is based upon the impression that is created by these two personalities.

At the same time, we should acknowledge the fact that the way people react with us is a very important deciding factor on how we lead our lives itself. Our actions in life are a culmination of the reactions we get.

It is a vicious circle actually. People react to us according to the impression they get from our personality. And then, we get molded according to the reaction we get from people.

The impressions we create influence people's reactions towards us, and then these reactions shape our personality.

However, even though this is a circle, you can take control of it. You can do something that can improve the situation for you in vast measure.

The one thing you can do is to try and improve your personality. Improve the impressions that you are creating on people. Try and leave a positive mark on everyone you meet. This will automatically change people's perception of you. They will want to meet with you and react with you in a totally different manner. If your personality changes for the better, then the reactions you get will be totally positive as well.

Here, we are going to see what kind of personality you should build up. The end result is to win people over as friends and then create a wonderful impression on them. Or rather, create a wonderful impression on people and then win them over as friends, because that is the most logical way to go about it.

How to Impress People You Meet

When you are trying to win friends over, this is the most important thing you will need to do—impress people. You have to ensure that the impressions you build are positive, so that people will react to them in the right manner. You have to make sure that these impressions are constructive and helpful to the people you meet so that they meet you again, and become your friends. You have to leave a good taste in their mouth. They should reminisce about you with fond memories.

Think that is a very difficult task to achieve? It is not! All it takes is probably some minor adjustments in your behavioral patterns when you meet people. You have to rise above thinking about yourself and it works.

I shall tell you 10 different things that you should absolutely make a part of your personality.

1. Get Introduced

You have to begin by getting introduced. Self-introduction looks great in the movies, but it is not considered to be the most proper form of invitation in real life, unless you have the suave panache to carry it off. Most people cannot do that without sounding rude or imprudent; hence, it is best to have someone do the introduction, unless the person himself or herself walks up to you.

Find someone who knows you mutually to introduce yourselves. This need not be a long-drawn formal introduction; that can be actually off-putting. Just a single sentence of who you are will suffice for the initial draw. You should also get to know who they are. First names are important to know when you are trying to make friendship with someone, unless those people are some high-profile dignitaries or some royalty where it would be inappropriate to ask for first names.

When you are being introduced, keep a smile on your face. Look at the other person in the eye and smile. You should definitely not look bored and distracted. You should work up an expression on your face that tells that you really liked meeting this new person. If the introducer tells you something

impressive about them, then should suitable impressions. If you do not, then you might come across as callow and the other person may build an impression about you right then and there.

In the remote possibility that you are introducing yourself, do not eulogize yourself with a lot of words. Be succinct and just say that you should. Just a few words mentioning your name and a few personal details like where you work and where you live should be enough. Be equally interested in knowing the same details from the other person as well.

If they walk up to you and introduce themselves, then it is an indication that they are already interested in striking friendship with you. You should make the most of this opportunity. They have already decided to add you to their list of friends, so it becomes easier for you to create an impression on them.

At such a moment, keep a warm expression on your face. Do not jump with joy because someone came up and introduced themselves. That makes you look childish and people don't really appreciate that. At the same time, do not be too reticent because that will take them away. Keep a calm and composed look about you, and when they are saying things about themselves, commit them to memory. It is now common courtesy to speak about yourself. Whatever they say about themselves, you can tell them equivalent details about yourself. Let them know who you are adequately. Chances are that they know you already and that is the reason they came up and introduced themselves to you.

In any case, be short and precise during all first introductions. Do not talk much and look interested. Smile; look at the other person in the face. Let them know that you liked meeting them. This is their very first contact with you; it has to be done really well.

2. Be Attentive

During the first meeting, and during every other subsequent meeting you will have with anyone, a most crucial thing is to be completely attentive to what they are saying.

Paying close attention to what your friends say works in more ways than you can think. It is not only about gaining information; you are actually finding out more about the person you are talking to. By listening to them, you can get an idea of what the person is like.

But, the most important thing is that it is common courtesy to listen closely to what people are saying. If they are telling you something about themselves, then you need to hear it out so that you can comment about it later. It is important to make them feel important. If you want to impress people, then this is the right way to go about it. Let people know that you are hearing what they say and you are also paying attention.

During the conversation, pay attention to them. Do not distract yourself with other things, and do not speak tangentially on other issues when they are saying about something. You will find that showing genuine interest in what someone says goes a long way in impressing people.

There are times when we are really interested in what people are saying, but we do not evoke the right expressions. If that happens, then how will the other person know that you are interested? How will

they know that they can keep talking about what they are saying, that you are interested in it? If they do not realize that, they may feel nervous and walk out.

So, make sure to show your interest in what people are saying. This is a window to their feelings and expressions; it tells you more about what the people are from within. If you want to create the right impressions and make friends, this is very important knowledge for you.

3. Ask the Right Questions

Taking the previous point a step further, you have to actually react to what the people are saying. You have to react according to the circumstances. When people tell you something, they want you to act happy or sad or to give them advice or to just speak some words of comfort and support. You look for the same things when you are talking with someone, don't you? The same applies to everyone.

That is the reason why you have to be evocative. One of the best ways to do this is to punctuate the discussion with the right questions at the right time. When they tell you something, you must prod them on with the right question. Ask them something, and that suddenly has a positive effect as you shall see. They will brighten up, just because you asked them something. Not many people do that in a conversation with total strangers. They let them speak and don't bother with what they are saying. But, if you actually lend them an ear and then ask them something more about it, they are suddenly going to feel very important. The impression starts building up to an immense degree right from that point.

Your question should not be personal, or it should not be offensive in any manner. You have to take care of that. Such a question could actually make the whole thing backfire. People who are offended at the first meeting with you will not want to meet you again. Your questions have to be very casual, but still relate to what they are saying in some way or the other. For example, if they are talking about their recent trip to Malaysia, you can comment on how busy an airport Kuala Lumpur has. This will immediately tell them that you are paying attention to what they are saying, and they will also get the impression that you are relating to what they are saying. This is the one thing that actually makes all the difference.

It is the connection that matters, really. When you are trying to build an impression on someone, the connection you make with them matters a lot. You simply associate yourself in some manner to what they are saying and then you are comrades in arms. If they speak about Citibank having a high rate of interest, you mention how you found it difficult to manage their credit card payments. There—you connected with each other, thanks to Citibank!

During the entire conversation, you should look for such leads to continue your conversation and make connections with people. You have to see where you can link in. And that is the reason why you have to pay close attention to what they are saying. That is the reason why you should hang on to every word, but not seem too eager about it, and when you get the right hook, pop the question!

The next time you are with someone, try this out. You are going to be amazed to see the power of the casual but strategically placed question. You might make a friend right then and there!

4. Be Confident about Yourself

Another very important thing is that you have to be confident about yourself. This should clearly show in your manner and your way of talking. Some people get nervous when they are around new people. If this is something that happens to you as well, then you should try to overcome the habit. If you are frightened of people, you are not going to be able to make a strong impact on them.

Remember that they are people too. They have the same kinds of foibles and limitations as you have. They are also meeting you for the first time, so probably they are also on the same shaky ground that you are on.

If you keep these things in mind, it does not become difficult to approach anyone. You realize that everyone is just human and nervousness is a part and parcel of being human.

Develop your confidence. When someone walks up to you, do not fumble for words. Be straight and speak coherently. It is not necessary that you should speak large volumes—no one wants that actually—but whatever you say, say it crisply and adequately.

Enhance your knowledge. Read the newspapers everyday. Browse the Internet for information. All this matters in impressing people. A well-read and well-informed person is also a confident person. People like to hobnob with someone who has the right information and can speak about things. They like people who are confident about what they say and do. When you are with people, show this confidence in what you say and how you act. They will be monitoring your every move. But, you should not be nervous at all. This is something that happens to everyone. Slowly, you are going to see the fun in meeting new people and building an impression on them. You are going to see that it is really great to know a lot of people and interact with them.

When that happens, you will find that you are not wanting for confidence in any way. It just happens to you... you can simply do the right things and say the right things without even thinking about it. This is what you should be looking for. With practice, you are sure to reach that stage as well.

5. Let Them Speak

It is of paramount importance that you let people speak, at least when they meet you for the first time. You should allow them their 'screen' time. Let them say what they want to say, even if they do it too gregariously.

Everyone likes a pair of ears to talk to; I have said that before and I am repeating it here because it is such a profound truth. People want someone they can tell everyone they want to tell. In fact, if we made a list of the top 10 reasons for having friends, the need of someone to talk to will top the list!

When you get introduced, someone of you has to carry on the conversation. In most cases, you will find, it is the other person. They will make a casual comment, then you say something about it, and then they carry on the conversation. The conversation goes on with its own steam. You do not have to move it forward, except punctuate it with the right questions as I mentioned before. It is quite simple to have

such a conversation, especially if you are meeting at a place of mutual interest such as a party or a club meeting where both of you are associated with everything.

Let people go on if they want. They are not going to be talking all the time. Even if you feel someone talks too much, it could be a wrong initial impression. They must be just wanting to let you know of something. It is really great to listen to people; there is such a wide range of things to be learned from their experiences. So, keep listening. You never know where you may find something really interesting that can carry the conversation forward on its own merit.

You, on the other hand, will have built a great impression on the person. For them, you will be the person who listened to something they had to say. You will be the person who gave them the stage, the platform to express themselves. You become a wonderful friend from that moment on. For a lot of people, listening to them is much more precious than helping them out with money. They will want your company some more. It is a great way of making friends, truly... listening to them when they want to say something.

6. Use the Right Expressions

Being an expressive individual is always a good thing. You need to think about what you are told and then react accordingly. There could be so many different ways to express yourself about something. But, make sure that you give out these expressions. They are signals that you care for the other person... that you are genuinely interested in what they are trying to say.

A lot of the impression you create pegs on the way you react during your conversations with people. The right interjections always matter. It is necessary that you show the right amount of evocativeness. That always hits the mark.

But, at the same time, you should make sure that you do not exaggerate your expressions. That could backfire. You do not want to come across as fake. Let your expressions be real.

How do you achieve that? One of the best ways to do that is to really 'feel' what the person is saying. When someone is talking to you, pay attention to what they say. Then put yourself in their place and think how you would have reacted if you were in their shoes. By merely placing yourself in their shoes, you will find that the right expressions come to you.

Your expressions can have a great impact on the way the conversation is going. The person talking with you will understand that you are someone who cares for others and displays your feelings as well. This is always appreciated, rather than being a person who clams up and does not let other people know what they are about.

There is nothing wrong then with showing the right expressions at the right time. They are not going to bill you as a sissy. On the contrary, people are going to have a truly great impression about you that you are someone who gets involved with others in a very affectionate and considerate manner.

7. Show Your Care and Concern

During your initial discussion, there will be opportunities when you can show your care and concern, and this is something you have to definitely do. It may be something that they say, and you suddenly respond with a concerned expression or something that shows you care. Or, there may be some incident when you are meeting that shows you care for them.

Common courtesy also counts. If you are sitting when they approach you, stand up. It is really impolite to keep sitting when someone is standing in front of you and getting introduced to you. If you have a dinner plate in your hands and they don't, it is best to keep your plate down for a while, shake hands, smile warmly and then continue with your plate. These are good manners. They show that you care. This is important to do during those initial meetings because people are going to check every sign and signal from you. They want to know that you are positive about them meeting you. If you keep chomping on that piece of meat when a stranger is talking to you, it counts as really bad manners.

You have to be especially careful if you are a man and the person getting introduced to you is a lady. Be commonly courteous, but there is no need to be chivalrous! Women do not like it nowadays. They do not want to be treated differently just because of their gender. At the same time, you cannot slap their back or jog their elbow or hug them like you would do with your guy friends. You have to be careful about how you tread here.

In all other matters, show your care and concern. Ask people about where they live, what they do for a living, etc. These are 'safe' questions to ask. They are not too personal for a first meeting and they give out the impression that you are only trying to get to know the person better. This is always a great impression to create.

8. Talk about Yourself

Now comes the important part. How much about yourself should you tell a stranger? You have several things to tell, of course, but should you tell everything? There are reasons why you should not do that. First, it looks as though you are giving too much importance to yourself, which is never a good thing. You come across as a selfish, uncaring person if you simply talk about yourself and don't listen to what the other person has to say. However, if you do listen to them in equal measure, then this could be acceptable. The other reason is that you have not yet decided whether or not you want a close friendship with this person. Should you tell them things about yourself? Not yet, probably.

Our intention here is to create impressions on everybody and to win friends, but that does not mean you have to tell everything about yourself to them just yet.

But, at the same time, remember that clamming up is never an option. It is never a great idea to talk so much about yourself that the other person pales in comparison. If you have achieved a lot, let that pass during the first conversation. You have to create impressions on people, but you should certainly not have a wrong impression about it.

So, what are the things that you can talk about to people you meet for the first time? You can talk about casual things that you are associated with. Such as, if you meet at a mutual friend's party, then speaking

about that friend could be a good idea. You could say how you are connected with that friend, maybe even talk of a few experiences that are not too person. Or, if you meet on the way to school while accompanying your children, you could talk about the school itself. These are safe topics to speak about. You are telling things about you, you are getting to know things about them and at the same time, you are not crossing any limits or divulging more about yourself than you should.

It is always a good idea to follow the lead. If someone tells you about something, then you can simply follow the lead and say something that is related to it but is your personal experience. If someone tells you about how they celebrated their Christmas, you could tell a few things from your own Yuletide experience as well.

Such is the conversation that you have to maintain. Speak things that people would not feel bored hearing, and things that make sense to the conversation. It should connect with what they are saying because then they understand you are paying attention to them and they feel good about it.

Always remember that conversations are a two-sided affair. Both people engaged in a conversation must be given equal importance and opportunities to express themselves. This is the best way you can go about things, make no mistake about it.

9. Be Honest and Frank

It always pays to be honest and upfront about what you are doing at all times, and if you stick to this when you are having an initial conversation with someone, it really makes a great impression.

When you are talking with someone for the first time, never make the mistake of exaggerating anything about yourself. People do that all the time. They feel that boastful talks can impress people faster. But, people can see through things. They can understand that a self-indulgent boast is just that... a self-indulgent boast. Your impression will plummet to the ground the moment you say something like that.

Even if the person does not understand that you are talking out of your hat the first instant, they are going to find it out sooner or later. If you are planning to strike a bond of friendship with them, then this will definitely happen sooner than later. Whenever that happens, you could be in a tight spot. Not only do you risk losing your impression in front of this person, but they are probably going to go all out and tell everyone they know about your lie. That could be the end of your impression-creating game.

So, be honest and say what you must. Do not exaggerate. Be truthful about your achievements, about what you are, about the people in your life, about everything. There is absolutely no need to try and impress anyone with lies. Such a thing is certainly not going to work, and is best avoided if you are trying to become a better person at the end of the day.

10. Invite People Over

The best chance to create a favorable impression on people is when you are closing the conversation. There is so much that you can do at this point. If they say that they have to now move on, you should let them go... it is just your first impression and pressurizing them to stay on will reflect poorly on you. But,

at the same time, you have to express how you felt about the meeting. You should say that it was nice meeting them and that you would like to know them better.

Always keep the channel open for further communication. Ask them for their card or phone number. You are not looking for a romantic relationship here; you are just looking at winning friends. Make people realize that.

Never lose out on an opportunity to meet people again. If there is something happening, such as a common event where both of you can attend, make sure to tell that you hope to see them there. They will like it, and if the first meeting has gone well, they will even anticipate that next meeting. This is a very casual way of opening a new opportunity to talk with them some more. They will get the message that you liked being with them. There is every likelihood that they will be present at the next event and will be looking out for you as well!

These are the options that can help you in creating a wonderful impression on people. It is not easy to do all of this overnight—some of these things need to be practiced and take time to incorporate in your daily routine—but when you go about them in the right manner, you will find that they become second nature to you. This is when you can automatically impress people. You won't have to do much to make them happy, because you show your concern to them!



CHAPTER 7

Friends—A Whole New World

With the advent of the Internet, a whole new world has opened up, even in terms of friendships. Today, people have more online friends than offline. If you are looking at winning friends, you simply cannot ignore this option. But, do remember... impressing them is a completely different ballgame.

The Internet has opened up new vistas for everything, even in terms of making friends. This is an immense resource that you should not miss out on. Today, everyone has more friends online than offline. These friendships may not be as strong as the friendships in the real world and you cannot do things such as hanging out with them, but all the same, they are friendships! People who know how to handle them well can foster some great relationships here, even make business associations or have lifelong relationships that go much beyond the Internet world and seep out into the real world.

Where Are Internet Friends Found?

If you have been using the Internet already, there is very little chance that you have not made any good online friendship already. Internet friends are everywhere; you could not escape them if you wanted to!

One of the best—and the easiest—ways to make online friends is through social networking websites such as Facebook, MySpace and Orkut. These are wonderful places to find people that have the same tastes and interests as you have. You can even build communities of people who have likeminded interests and spend a lot of meaningful time with them. It is very simple to make new friends here. Your friends of friends are great options. Once you make a friend, all these websites give you recommendations for new friends, who are their contacts. You can even go ahead and check their profiles and then decide if you want to contact them as friends. If you decide you want to do that, all you have to do is to send them a friendly invitation and they will accept your invitation if they want to become your friends.

The best thing about making friends on social networking websites is that you have the opportunity to check out their profiles and thus get a preliminary idea of what they are like.

Another very interesting way to make friends is to have a blog of your own. A blog is a chronicled journal of information, which contains posts that you make. On a blog, you can post about your personal raves and rants and you will have your loyal band of readers. These people can comment about whatever you write. Over time, these people will start liking you, and your communication may go beyond what is

exchanged on the blog post. You could add them on your personal chat messenger and the talks can go beyond normal blogspoke. One of the good things about finding people over blogs is that you know what they are like, and they are already impressed with your blog posts, which is the reason why they are reading and commenting on them. It could be a great idea to get in touch with them in the real life. They could be really interesting people to chat with and even meet in person.

There are some ways by which you can make people come over to you directly. One way is through YouTube marketing, a very popular channel right now. Just make a video about yourself and post it on YouTube. People can comment on it and get in touch with you directly. It is better to make a video that tells something informative, like one that teaches people to do something. Those who see such videos and like them may get in touch with the video-maker to get additional information.

As you use the Internet more and more, you will find that there are so many different options to make friends. People that you don't know at all can become great friends, telling you about various useful things and helping you out in so many different ways. However, in order to make kindle such a friendship, you will need to put in extra effort. These people don't know you from Adam. Hence, it will take some additional work on your part to make good friends over the Internet.

Why Are Online Friendships Different?

The one most important reason for that is that your online friends do not have any knowledge about you. They may be in a totally different part of the world. They may not even understand your culture and tradition. They may not subscribe to your beliefs or anything that you do. There might be just one common point between you and your online friends, and that is what you have to play on. It becomes difficult to have a friendship with people with whom you don't have much in common.

There is also the fact that you have never seen these people. You don't know who they are. You may not even get to see their pictures, because everyone does not put their pictures on the profiles. That is why you do not know how they will react, what they like and what they don't, what offends them, what they may get happy for, etc. You have to deal with them in general terms. That is what makes things too different. When you cannot see a person, it becomes very difficult to deal with them in a way that they would like to be treated.

Another important thing that you should know about online friendships is that the trust factor becomes an important point in deciding whether to go ahead or not. Cyberspace has its share of negative elements and then some more. You would not know whether a person who is trying to get in touch with you has noble intentions or not. You cannot say anything for sure about.

And that applies to the other person as well. Just as you cannot trust someone on the Internet, there is no reason why they should trust you as well. They will find it difficult to communicate with you as well. Maybe most of them will not like to go beyond the initial communication you have with them. They will want to be very sure about you before they go further with anything. They will certainly not tell you any personal things right at the outset. They will keep the talks general for a while, and will like to keep it that way.

It also becomes difficult to think about the common chord that you might have. Once this common chord is found, things become much easier, but until then, it is going to be an uphill ride.

CHAPTER 8

The Right Approach to Impress Online Friends

When you get online friends, you need to use a proper approach to deal with them. Winning friends over the Internet is comparatively easy, but retaining them as friends is a very tall order. Here are some ways in which you can make an easy job out of it.

We have seen how online friends can be completely different from the people you meet in the real world. They are different because they do not have an idea about what they are like, and they do not have any idea about you either. This makes your association difficult. Though you may have come in contact with each other over some common thing, keeping that communication going can be a difficult job.

Here are the ways in which you can impress your online friends and seek long-term associations with them as well. Keep these things in mind when you are interacting with someone online and you will be surprised to see that you can make lasting relationships with them as well, regardless of the fact that they are in a totally different time zone than you are in.

1. When you are dealing with friends over the Internet, remember that they will not want to get too personal too soon. Hence, it is best to limit your conversations to general talk at the start. Keep the tone cheerful and happy when you communicate with them and do not do anything inappropriate like asking their personal details. Stick to casual conversations.
2. Most people on the Internet are looking for something. Even if they make friends, there is some end motive that they are looking for. If you find someone on a social networking website, they are trying to socially network with you. They are trying to communicate with you so that they are able to network, and build a group maybe. If they get in touch with you through your blog or through an article that you have written, then it is understandable that they are looking for information. If you found them at an online store or on a review website, then they are interested in buying products. You should know that even if these people are communicating with you, they have some other intention too, apart from mere conversation. If you can keep them in mind and help them with that other intention of theirs, then the friendship could become more meaningful. Like, if you make friends with someone who visited your blog and commented on it, then it is a great idea to give them more information. That becomes your common bond which reinforces your friendship with them.

3. Remember common Internet courtesies. There are things that you should keep in mind when you are communicating with them, through chat or email. Now, writing in all caps is considered to be rude, akin to shouting, and that is something you should definitely avoid. It is also best not to use too much slang, especially if that person is from another country. Slang is region-specific; what is acceptable in your country may be an impolite insult in theirs. Do not use too many Internet abbreviations. Though acceptable, they can get to be too demeaning if used too much. Moreover, they make you seem unprofessional.

4. Another thing that you have to keep in mind is the communication itself. It is always considered a good thing to communicate with the person regularly, through whatever medium you prefer. If you are on a social networking website, it could be a great idea to ping them occasionally. If you are on chat, then send them a casual message or at least an email. Such communication reminds them of you. It is easy to forget people whom you don't see, and on the Internet that is so much more possible because chances are that you have never seen the person. Hence, it is important to keep the conversation alive. If they communicate with you, you should make it a point to always reply. If you don't, then they may construe it like you have lost interest in them, and they will not want to communicate with you any further. That's where you can lose a friendship.

5. Make it a point to respond to people whom you invite into your friends list. Many people have the irritating habit of expanding their friends' list on social networking websites and when people accept those invitations, they don't bother to message them at all. When someone accepts your invitation, you should make sure to respond to them. You should thank them for accepting the invitation. You should communicate with them sometimes, just to keep the relationship alive. It is not worth having 100,000 friends on Facebook that you never respond to. Instead, it is great if you have 100 friends that you are in constant touch with.

This is the Internet etiquette of the new world. You have to make sure you adhere to it. If you want to make the most friends, the Internet is best option. Now that you know how to impress people on the Internet, the going gets easier for you. With your consistent efforts, you will be equipped to win friends and influence people both in the online as well as in the offline world. Remember that this is not a onetime activity; you have to keep your behavior high at all times if you want to really get into the good books of people.



CHAPTER 9

Spread Yourself Thin

If your ultimate goal is to win the highest number of friends and impress as many people as you can, then you should pay great attention to making yourself visible in all the places that you can. Spreading yourself thin is the one thing you really need to do.

Your goal is to get the highest number of friends possible. Everyone can be a friend; this is a party where everyone is welcome. Why not? It is always the more the merrier. You can make everyone happy, whether you have just 10 friends or 100. It does not matter. There are ways in which you can keep in touch with all of them.

You do not need to speak with every friend on every day. That is physically not possible. But, you should be concerned about them. The Internet has made things so much easier. Make a Google Group of your friends or a Facebook group and keep in touch with them. Even if you send them emails constantly, these people will be in touch with you... at least that becomes a way for them to remember that you do exist!

The same applies when you are trying to impress people. You meet people at all times. Every day, you are likely to meet several new people. This is something that you should think of as an asset. Every person you meet could be a potential friend. Think of it that way. When you meet everyone keeping in mind that they can become fast friends with you in the future, then your behavior with them automatically changes. You really work towards making them a friend just because you are meeting them with such an intention.

It does not matter how many people you try to impress. You can try and impress the whole world if you want. If you are a celebrity or a popular international figure, then that is surely going to be important to you... to impress the whole world. Again, that is a consistent effort. Once you have built an impression on someone, you cannot take away that impression for anything.

Now, one of the most important things that you have to remember when you are trying to strike the right chord with people and making them your friend is that you have to spread yourself thin.

Spreading yourself thin simply means that you have to try and impress the highest number of people possible. There are so many people around you—every person is an opportunity—but if you are introvert who keeps shying away from people, then how is that going to happen? The most important

thing for you when you are trying to build relationships is to try and spread your charm to as many people as possible.

In short, you should not fail to impress anyone that you meet. You should always keep it working. You should always be in an effort to create favorable impressions on people. Remember that people are trying to judge you in whatever you are doing. You have to ensure that this kind of impression always has the right impact, because only then will you be able to enamor people enough to become your friend.

So, try and take yourself as far and wide as possible. Do not remain cooped up in your own house. Come out of it. Do not be scared of people. You have to make friends with everyone and win them over, and to do that, you will definitely have to come out of your room and meet people.

Meet people wherever you can, wherever you go. Meet them in the church, meet them in your school or college or workplace, meet them in the neighborhood, meet them while jogging and so on. These people are all looking for friends, just like you are. However, most times we stifle potentially great friendships by not communicating our feelings to the people that we meet. If we could do that, we will certainly be able to make a lot more friends and impress a lot more people.

It is eventually a game of numbers. The more people you meet, the more chances you have of making friends. People are everywhere, but you have to contact them. Communicate with them in different ways. They will open out to you and a lot of them will become your friends too. It is only by such practice that you can become a good contender later on. If people are getting impressed by you right now, you can do better by trying to impress more people. If you are winning friends now, you will win more friends over time. It all takes some practice.

Do not focus yourself on 'niche' friends. Do not think that you can make friends only at school or college or the workplace or on the football ground or in your neighborhood. Friends can be made anywhere you go. You can impress people wherever you go. New opportunities are present everywhere. You have to have the eye to see them. You have to try everything out and see what works. Who knows, your best friend may come from the most unexpected place.

Take this as a dose of motivation. Friends are everywhere, only you have to look harder for them sometimes. But, keep looking. You are sure to find the right ones for you if you are persistent enough.



Wrap it up

We all need friends; there is no question about it. Friends are our anchor in lives, we see ourselves through our friends for the most part, they are our emotional and moral support. We are more dependent on our friends than we think. Friends are not just meant for hanging out and doing fun things together. They run much deeper than that. Even if friends do not do anything actively for us, the very fact that they are with us means a lot to us most of the time.

At the same time, we need to impress people as well. People are everywhere and they are looking at us closely. They are trying to understand what we are, and they even judge us based on our actions.

But, do we need to impress them? Yes, we do. That is because it is only when we impress people that they become receptive to us. Impressing people does not cost anything; you only have to ensure that you have the right attitude and behavior about it, and people will get impressed. Human beings are made in such a way that the actions of others influence them. We can create those positive influences in them. Impressing them is also important because we do not know which of the people we impress will become a long-lasting friend for us. Friends are always needed; it might be our endeavor to impress them that can bring them to us in the first place.

There are several reasons why we should be on a constant spree for making friends and influencing the people that we meet. That is because we are social creatures and we cannot do without other people in our lives. Even if there are several friends in our lives, there are times we can feel lonely. That is the reason we need to have as many friends as we can get.

Hopefully this eBook has created that spark of optimism in you for winning friends and influencing people. This can be a very important point of your life. You have learned what it takes to impress people in the right way. This can help you become a more influential person.

All the best for your future!