112
survey respondents

4
persons interviewed in person

11
persons interviewed via a open-ended form

WHAT IS A FRIEND?

CLOSE FRIEND

Someone who knows you really well, even maybe some intimate details.

Someone you can call at any moment if you feel the need, no matter for how long you didn't talk to each other.

Someone whom you can rely on anything, and you know that he/she/they cares about you, even if it hurts.

75,5%
of the respondents said they
have intimate conversations and/or they are emotionally open with their friends

"My true friends are people I can trust, laugh and cry with. We support each other and we don't hide our negatives about them to other people. They know what is important to me and what is happening in my life."

65%
of the respondents said they
share the same values with their closest friends

"Having the same values with my close friends is really important, with my more casual friends it's not."

"A friend is someone who has a similar outlook on life as you, and that you hang out with from time to time. It doesn't have to be exactly the same, but somewhat similar. It is someone who is interested in similar activities, so you can do them together, and who you can have deep conversations with, and who knows you well enough to leave you alone sometimes."

CASUAL FRIEND

People you speak to regularly, but don't share personal information or share yet with them, because you didn't reach the right level of intimacy.

If you don't see them regularly, your friendship will slowly fade away.

"I live here for 2 years now. I met most of my friends at work. I like them but they will never be my best friends. I don't want to cry on their shoulder on Saturday night and have to deal with them in a meeting on Monday morning."

ACQUAINTANCES

Someone you know a little bit. You have a general knowledge about them.

There are still things you cannot say to these people.

HOW DO YOU MAKE FRIENDS?

YOU SEE EACH OTHER REGULARLY

Time and regularity is one of the first element needed

Whether it is at school, at work, or while doing an activity regularly, you can build friendship with people you. See quite often because you will have a lot of opportunities to develop your relation.

"I've met most of the people that I would consider my real friends through school/university or work, or some other environment where you see each other regularly without having to actually schedule something to actually hang up. So always an environment in which you spend a lot of time together naturally, so there is a lot of time to develop a friendship."

"It's hard to develop real friendship outside these type of environments because you have to really make an effort to spend a lot of time together and spend the time and mutual experiences needed to develop a real friendship."

"I met my closest friends in the university. We have common memories, we had intimate moments, moments where we struggled together."

66,7%
of the respondents said they
they met some of their friends at work

"I have 6 really close friends: 4 from university, and 2 from my roller skating club. For the last two, we became friends because we were seeing each other every week and we discussed a lot during the breaks"

"If I had to move to a new country, I will try to be friends with my colleagues. Then I'll join an association where I will have to go every week. That's how I met my friends when I moved here."

BUT YOU DON'T NEED TO SPEAK DAILY WITH YOUR CLOSE FRIENDS

Some participants mentioned they don't talk to their friends often.

But they know that the day they'll call them for anything, their friends will be there for them.

"My friend is someone who can count on me and I count on him. ANYTIME, no matter how long we haven't talked."

"A friend is someone I can trust and talk to anytime I want. Someone who I don't have to think before speaking. Someone who is always there for me, even though we don't talk for few days."

"It doesn't mean that we have to talk every day, I just don't believe in that. I have friends I don't really catch up with for a while and then we just talk and it's like, it just feels like regular."

YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE TOGETHER

You need to click with someone before you can go any further.

"There is always something invisible happening behind the scene in the process of making a new friend. You don't know why exactly, but you click with some people, and you don't with the others."

"I met my last friend at the beginning of my master. We were in the same class and we were part of the same friend group. I directly found her very interesting and we had a good feeling about her. Then we discovered that we have a lot of common things in our life and that we like same similar activities."

"It doesn't really matter where and when we meet each other, but if it feels like we need to spend years before we exchange phone numbers."

56%
of the respondents said they
they have the same sense of humor than their friends

"I think the best setup to make friends is an activity you do together, and then if there is a click with someone while doing that activity, well great, we can try to bring it to the next level of our relationship then and try to be our friends."

YOU HAVE COMMON INTERESTS

A lot of interviewees mentioned that they have a lot in common with their actual friends.

However, this is not mandatory, as some of them mentioned they don't have the same interests or lifestyle than some of their closest friends.

"There was a girl I only met once and it turned out that she loves the same kind of music and we talked a lot. We started hanging out more often, because she also likes to go to museums, cycle 40 km on a grandma bike or have a coffee on a sunny day."

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49,5%
of the respondents said they
they have common center of interests with their friends

"I met my latest friend at my climbing place, we started talking together about climbing and then I got his Instagram, now we are friends."

"The last time I met someone who became a real friend was at work, we were part of the same office, colleagues and found out we had similar interests (Korean drama, absurd Japanese comedies), so we started hanging out together, going to movies and eating Asian food."

YOU HAVE COMMON FRIENDS

It's since friend introduces you to someone. It affects the way you will judge this person.

You know you could potentially like that person given that your friend likes him or her and that you trust him or her.

"Sometimes, my friend are introducing me to some of their friends, and it that case it is easier because I trust my friends. If they like this person, I will trust their judgment and I will be more open to meet this person. It makes more curious about getting to know this person and understand why my friend likes him or her."

"The last friend I met was on a birthday party for a mutual friend. First of, I thought she was a bit weird because she was very quiet, but my friend knew her a lot longer, and talked very positive about her, that helped me to see her true personality. We are good friend now!"

"My partner was playing soccer and he joined a team that was an existing group of friends so it was easier for him. When you are already part of a group, it's easier to make new talk freely and not your guard down to speak frankly. You cannot do that if you just met somebody. So it's easier to speed up the process, skip all the small talks and have fun quickly."

HOW DO YOU BECOME CLOSE FRIENDS?

YOU SHARE UNIQUE EXPERIENCES

Unique experiences are memorable arrangements that happen between you and your friends.

Wether they are good or bad memories, they help to strengthen and develop relationships.

"When I was in Korea for my exchange year, I had a lot of casual friends there. We were not that close for months. One weekend, we decided to do a roadtrip together in the country. We didn't visit much but we had a great time. We ate a lot, we while doining K-pop music that we became best friends during this trip."

"My best friend and I have nothing in common. We don't have hobbies, the same circle of friends or university. But we started to discuss because we were both coding and struggling with the same kind of issues. And after a lot of coding nights, we became really close to each other."

"Last time I made a really close friend was in my course. She was equally clueless like me. We were similar. We was very vocal about her situation with me. I got comfortable talking to her, and soon we became friends."

"A friend is someone you can trust, someone to share good and bad moments, someone to rely on and someone for who you have to be there in times of need. Someone to share memories and values."

"Also wine. Wine is absolutely very necessary to develop real friendships because you will have stupid conversations together and say things you wouldn't tell anyone when you're completely sober."

BUT WHY ARE THOSE MOMENTS SO IMPORTANT?

THEY CREATE THE STORY OF YOUR FRIENDSHIP

They gave you stories to tell and to remember together even years after it happens.

It can start with really simple memorable moments, but the more you share unique experience, the more your friendship will grow.

THEY BREAK ROUTINE

Unexpected situations forces you to think differently and to communicate more with the people around you.

It can generates ideas and topics of discussion you could not even imagine.

THEY FORCE YOU TO BE VULNERABLE

In situation like insecurity, pain, or fear, you have to trust people around you and communicate more with them in order to cope with the situation.

It allows you to bond easily and to reveals intimates part of yourself.

We become friends with people at school or in our childhood because we have a lot of opportunities to share unique experiences together, and we encounter a lot of situation where we are vulnerable.

Moreover, the friends you met in high school or at the university are more likely to share your interests and your values.

That's why the friends we met at school can be our friends for life.

On the other hand, at work, we try to love less vulnerable, because the relationship dynamic is more complex. So we are less likely to develop friendship there.

WHY DO YOU STRUGGLE TO FIND FRIENDS?

YOU JUST ARRIVED IN THE CITY

Knowing no one in your new living area can make you feel really lonely.

"I generally love being at my own company, but sometimes I do miss having friends. To do things together with someone, A.K.A. being "happiness is happiness only when it's shared". I like to share my moments in life with someone who is not my partner."

"When I first moved in this city, I was living alone. For one year I was crying regularly because I was feeling so alone. I had nobody to do things with, I was missing my friends, I have closed friends but they are living so far away."

"I feel super super lonely and super crazy here. I do feel alone because I just arrived and everyone lives here for a while so they already have their lives built around the places, and I'm starting from zero. I don't know around people, and with me not knowing anyone, it makes it even worse."

FRIENDSHIP PARADOX

The friendship paradox is the phenomenon that most people have fewer friends than their friends have, on average.

It can be explained as a form of sampling bias in which people with more friends are more likely to be in one's own friend group.

Consequently, when you move to a new place, you don't now a lot of people, and you introduce you to some other new people.

Therefore, you have less friend than the people who live there, and don't feel the need to have more friends.

YOUR FRIENDS LIVE REALLY FAR AWAY

As adults, we make most of our friends in university. But show must go on and we slowly move from a place to another, and finally we live really far away from each other.

"All my closest friends live in another country than mine. I wish I could have a close friend in my city to go out with or to the restaurant or do some activities with me. I would like my life to be like in Friends or New girl."

53,2%
of the respondents said they
not knowing a lot of people in their current country or city prevent them to find more friends

"I would like to have more friends here, because I need to go out, to do stuff, and I don't want to always just sit online with my actual friends. I feel like I'm going around in circles, in a routine."

"I make deep friendships fairly easily, but I don't really have a "group of friends" that I hang out with consistently where I live today. Back home yes, but not in my new city."

A study conducted by OnePoll reveals that
63%
of the respondents said that
the number one cause of lost friendships is moving away

A NEW COUNTRY, A NEW CULTURE

Culture is playing a big part in how people make friendship.

You have to invest more energy in understanding the other person when you are from someone that has a culture different from yours.

"I definitely feel lonely. I am living now in the Netherlands with my boyfriend from 1,5 year but we still don't have any friend. Our colleagues do not share anything with us except the job. The Dutch mentality is really different. They don't even do the effort to speak English with us (we both don't speak Dutch)."

"I lowered my expectations in everything because I realized how difficult it is to make friends. The cultures in the North of Europe are cold, we don't have the same codes, and inviting people for dinner for example is a crazy thing for them, but common for us."

"I feel irony sometimes, because my only friend here moved to Italy. But in this country it's really hard to get friends, I'm the people in Holland is general."

"Dutch are quite individualistic and they often have a group of childhood friends that they keep for life. They may be friendly at first, but getting to the level of friendship takes time. They have an unfortunate tendency to assume that you are going to return to your country so they are not going to get involved in a temporary friendship."

YOU HAVE LESS TIME TO INVEST IN FRIENDSHIP

The more you grow up, the more we need to spend time with our family and existing friends.

It makes it more difficult to find time to develop new friendship.

"It's not easy to make friends because all our age people already have friends so they don't want to have other friends."

"I don't have the time to search for friends on internet. Plus, I already have my boyfriend so I don't feel the need to find someone else".

"When I worked full time, on really amazing business journeys, I couldn't really meet many friends with activities they organized. When I was free, they had to work, that made me feel super lonely. I wanted to go out, do something fun, but there was nobody to join."

"I found even harder to make new friends when I moved living in a couple. Because you have the comfort of the couple at home and it takes more time to feel the need to meet other people."

"Everybody told me it will be easier to make friends with a child. Well, it's true, but it's not easier because meeting other parents is not easy when you don't speak the same language... Now, they tell me I have to wait, my child will make friends. Seriously..."

PEOPLE ARE NOT ALWAYS OPEN TO FRIENDSHIP

People who are already settled in a place and have their current group of friends are not open to new friendship.

They don't feel a need for it, or they don't have the time to invest in this friendship.

"I go to the gym regularly (indoor classes), but I don't talk to people. I don't have time to talk and we are not there to make friends anyway."

"When I first moved here, I tried to go ceramic workshop to meet people. After 2-3 lessons I got fed up, I participated changed all the time so you can't get to know each other. Plus people are there to do ceramics, not to find friends."

"I created a group in Meetup to meet people. It was a language exchange group, I wanted to have conversation with me (a native French). At first, I liked it, but I figured out we didn't have the same expectations: I wanted to make friends and meet people, they just wanted to learn French and learn more about grammar and vocabulary."

"The biggest change in my ability to make friends has it being extremely proactive the first time I meet a person I click with. Don't wait and always try to know them instead, invite them immediately to do an 1-2 hour thing that I know they would be interest in. This makes it clear to the other person that you are seeking a deeper level friendship."

"It actually makes it harder to move from acquaintance to friendship (for example, outside work if they're colleagues with me). Instead, invite them immediately to do an 1-2 hour long activity you both have an interest in. This makes it clear to the other person that you are seeking a deeper level friendship."

YOU DON'T WANT TO HAVE THE SAME FRIENDS THAN YOUR PARTNER

A lot of interviewees mentioned that they didn't want to interfere with the friend circle of their partner.

"My girlfriend lived here for five years. She introduced me to her friends but, I didn't connect with them. It's so rare to find people you click with, and I'm so happy that she has to find friends of my own rather than just letting too much into her circle. I mean, you never need your squad as well."

"My partner introduced me to his friends. But I don't want to interfere with his circle of friends, the same way I prefer to have my own circle of friends".

"What's important we are still nourish our one-on-one friendship separate from couple-to-couple relationship, which I think is very important thing to do."

YOU ARE INTROVERT

Introvert people are energized when they spend time alone. They need more recovery and one deep conversation and they dislike small talks and chit chat.

It takes time before they can reach the level of intimacy they like to have with people.

"I really find it very difficult to find friends. I honestly myself don't know what the solution is because sometimes, I think I am the problem. I know, I see people around me and they look perfectly social and fine to me."

"I am always the person who's in the parties, you know, having a few drinks and talking to pets in the end. I honestly don't even know the solution for my own social anxiety and I wonder it can be done about it. We don't get to meet a lot of people like us, introverts. Since we don't speak a lot, we are so invisible to each other."

A study, conducted by OnePoll in conjunction with Evite, uncovered that one of the reasons
42%
of adults struggle to make friends is due to introversion or shyness.

"I'm very picky who I want to be my friend. That sounds terrible, but it's true! I don't want to waste time on people who are not friend material. I'm not looking for a friend to spend a small talk, I want to have deep conversations straight away, but it's hard to find people like that."

"I'm not a people person and I'm very shy. I have difficulties to speech each time I meet someone, even more when I know I will probably never meet this person again. So I suppose for them, I look like super cold and arrogant... And the thing that annoyed me the most, because I prefer observe before open myself, people think I'm boring, cold or naughty."

"When we arrived in Amsterdam, we wanted to meet people, we organized on Meetup, it was so boring. It was mainly drinks, which was okay, but you spend the same thing all the time with a lot of people to introduce yourself. And there is a little show off side. I was listening to people and there were just there to show themselves. Not to have interesting conversations."

"I'm really introverted, I'm pretty shy, and I don't just pick anyone to be friends with. I like quality people to be my friends but the problem I run into is I can never really find anyone who I can connect with. I like having deep connects."

WHAT ARE THE IDEAL CONDITION TO MEET NEW PEOPLE AND DEVELOP FRIENDSHIP?

NOT IN ONE AND ONE

"If I have to meet someone for the first time, I would prefer being in a gold. Feel more like I can send a message that hey let's be friends if you see what I mean."

"Meeting someone face to face for the first time is weird because you have to fill the whole conversation by yourself. It's easier if it happened to me when I met my roomate in Korea for the first time, we met in a coffee, it was horrible because we had nothing to say to each other."

NOT IN A LARGE GROUP

"Going to the activity like maybe a hike or something could actually make it better, because then you would have common things to talk to. Definitely on a visit to a museum, you have more topics to start the conversation rather than starting with step "This is me, this is my life, this is what I am."

"Ideally, I would like to meet a couple during an activity (sport, walk...) together with my boyfriend. I think we would start talking about the activity and then switch to some more personal content (house location, age, work...).

A SMALL GROUP IS IDEAL

"If my goal is to make friends, more than 5 people it's not possible, because we don't have time to have interesting conversations. We will be more in a dynamic of fun than getting to know each other."

"The ideal situation to meet people would be a small group and an activity. I would like to be sure they have a similar goal than me, which is develop a friendship, and not looking for a partner for example."

"First of all, if the group is too big, I forget all the people. Secondly, small groups so we can all talk to each other, in a quiet place so we don't have to yell.

DOING AN ACTIVITY

"It's more natural if it's following an activity example, it's more interesting because people don't feel like you're trying to force a friendship and they're just two people having a common interest and trying it out. So yeah interests definitely brings people together, much less awkwardly than just like be friends."

"I know another group of expats on Meetup to meet people with whom I can talk in a more intimate way. But it didn't work because we didn't have the same expectations. I was there to find friends, they were there to learn French..."

"I never used any app to find friends. I also feel that that people have different intentions on those kind of app, they just don't want to be friends as well. And I'm sure my girlfriend would be super paranoid and crazy on us."

"There are no valuable app to meet cool people as friend and not sexual partners."

HAVE YOU EVER USED A TOOL ONLINE TO MEET PEOPLE?

INTENTIONS MUST BE CLEAR

People are used to look for sexual partner on dating app. The intention must be very clear from the beginning.

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REALITY SHOULD MATCH WITH EXPECTATIONS

People online are different than people face-to-face.

Reality should meet expectations in order to avoid frustrations and the feeling of wasting time.

"I met my boyfriend on a dating app and it was great. We talk a lot, we sentences you know if the guy is your style or not, with the grammar and what he says. Talking on a chat doesn't make me feel anxious, but meeting in person was something else, because you know that potentially the reality will not meet the expectations."

"If I have to meet someone online and I don't have a lot of information about her, I will judge the person based on the few information I have (like a picture for example), which is bad because I like to meet a lot of different people and he or she might be really cool."

"I like to see how people think and process information and if they are open to discussion because I think it is really important."

SAFETY IS IMPORTANT

Meeting people that you don't know for the first time can be worrying and dangerous.

Safety measures are important.

"Probably I also get a bit scared of the authenticity of people online, because sometimes it also feels like a game of fake, and especially when people don't have the real pictures on."