# Friends and how they shape you.

“Psychologists have found that interactions with acquaintances—and even strangers—can also give our mental health a boost.” (Zara Abrams. “The science of why friendships keep us healthy” The strength of “weak” ties, Vol. 54 No. 4 Print version: page 42.) Being social is only what makes us human. Everyone’s quality of life can become better with some friends. Friends are a key to what makes you who you are. Through the thick and the thin my friends have been there. From elementary school to high school, I have had plenty of different people who were once strangers to me, make big changes in my life. Who would you be without your friends?

When we were younger it was all about having fun. I was friends with everyone and there were no problems. I remember when I was a kid having there be girls and boys. The boys would hang out with the boys and the girls would hang out with the girls. Very simple. When middle school came around, I found it became a little bit more complicated. There were these friend groups starting to form and the differences between all of us were just only growing larger. With these hormones going wild you now see people getting into relationships. Boyfriends and girlfriends and all. Where did I fit in? Everyone starts to become reserved, and people don’t really open to each other anymore so easily. Highschool comes around and this is where everything becomes complicated. You must figure yourself out. Who am I? What are my goals?

I think that friends are the biggest influence in your life. For example: I only started playing basketball because my friends, I only started playing video games cause my friends, my fashion was influenced by my friends, and to put it simply, your whole future is dependent on who you surround yourself with. It’s really a simple concept. Don’t surround yourself around people who only bring you down and ridicule you. I’ve been a victim of such friendships before, and you probably have as well. Sometimes it’s hard to see it because we are afraid of being alone.

“Creativity, intelligence, or rudeness is often best perceived by others” (Rick Nauert, PhD. “Friends May Know You Better than You Know Yourself.” Psych Central). Sometimes we are blinded by our own eyes. Our own perception of ourselves are usually plagued with worries and negativity. Sometimes our friends know who we are better than we do. I sometimes worry that I annoy others, or that I appear too blunt, or maybe I am too loud and obnoxious. Where is the good in me? Ask your friends and they can tell you.

In America we are extremely diverse. I have friends of all types of different ethnic backgrounds, all types of genders, all types of ages, and all types of personalities. Especially in America you can find all sorts of different cultures around you. Now I have friends who are very different than me and I think that it’s a good thing. It helps you see the world around you and changes your perspective of things. I grew up in a fortunate household with both parents and multiple siblings. I have friends who are not as fortunate and live in different conditions than me. This changes my perception on things because I now see that there are levels to all types of things. Nobody is the same and we shouldn’t expect anybody to be the same.

This Is American Culture. How? Because we all are worried about not fitting in. In American the large diversity of people makes it hard to find people you can relate to, and we worry about ourselves and create large amounts of anxiety. It’s okay to be different and you should accept who you are. Others may be different than you and others may be too worried about yourself to make new friends but it’s okay, because in the end we are all the same. We all grew up together and we all have experiences and wisdom we can share with each other.

This is important to understand because it’s something which is all around us. At every corner you go to you will see vast amounts of culture. And you can expand your knowledge of what’s around you by making friends in these cultures. If you see something, you don’t recognize it, you can go ask what it is. Maybe they will tell you what it is, where it is from, and how it relates to their culture. Understanding the world around us and who is around us is key not only to yourself but also to others, because culture is something you create.

# Bibliography

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