

# INGREDIENTS OF FRIENDSHIP

results of a survey  
from PSYCHOLOGY TODAY, October, 1979

"HOW IMPORTANT TO YOU IS EACH OF THESE QUALITIES IN A FRIEND?"

Keeps confidences	89 %	BUILDS
Loyalty	88 %	TRUST
Warmth, affection	82 %	
Supportiveness	76 %	ADDS
Frankness	75 %	VIGOR
Sense of humor	74 %	
Willingness to make time for me	62 %	CREATES
Independence	61 %	SOCIAL
Good conversationalist	59 %	BONDS
Intelligence	57 %	
Social conscience	49 %	
Shares leisure (non cultural) interests	48 %	
Shares cultural interests	30 %	
Similar educational backgrounds	17 %	
About my age	10 %	
Physical attractiveness	9 %	EXTRA
Similar political views	8 %	VALUE
Professional accomplishment	8 %	ADDED
Abilities and background different from mine	8 %	
Ability to help me professionally	7 %	
Similar income	4 %	
Similar occupation	3 %	

Social psychologists have proposed a theory that suggests that trust encourages self-disclosure (revealing aspects of yourself that are both precious and vulnerable). If self-disclosure meets with continued acceptance (not necessarily the same as approval of the feelings or actions), liking and affection will deepen--as well as trust. In this theory, self-disclosure and trust must be reciprocated in order for the relationship to deepen.

Two letters from readers illustrate different facets of this **trust / self-disclosure / liking** cycle. One noted: "My closest friend asked for advice, which I gave and which turned out to be good. However, the friendship is not the same, because it bothers her that I know about the problem and its resolution. The problem was due to a course of action she took that I can understand and sympathize with but cannot condone. It bothers me that she took that course . . . and the bother always nags at the back of my mind when I think of her or when I see her. [Now] I think less of her." Another reported: "The definite and observable switch from a casual to a close friendship came about when my friend told me something about herself she felt I would disapprove of. After leaving the safe ground of constant agreement, our true feelings and thoughts flowed without the normal hesitancy one has with a casual friend or acquaintance."

## LOVE IS EFFORT OVER TIME

OPINIONS AND FEELINGS ARE FREQUENTLY A PERSONAL TRIUMPH OVER GOOD THINKING  
YOU DEFINE REALITY BY WHAT YOU KNOW, WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND WHAT YOU DO ABOUT IT.

