



The friendship code for beating loneliness...

In a time when it's not uncommon to have 1000+ friends on Twitter and Facebook more and more people are falling out of touch. Some of the contributing factors are: increased busyness, longer work hours, more screen time and less face to face time and forgetting the code of friendship. Reinstalling this code into day to day friendships will beat back the loneliness syndrome, so share it with friends who are falling out of touch and reconnect.

The friendship code...

1. **Honour your end of the bargain.** Tit for tat doesn't always work. If you were the last one to touch base and organise a play date and a friend hasn't reciprocated, it's wise to avoid the trap of misinterpreting this as rejection. In most cases, where there is a genuine friendship, shared values and common interests, a lack of contact is usually not personal. So, take heart and keep extending the hand of friendship until they're back on deck. Your friend may be struggling.
2. **Listen, listen, listen.** The most important support we can give each other is an interested, curious, listening ear that doesn't feel a need to offer a solution in return. Trust your friends to be capable of fixing their own problems and being responsible and simply listen to be a support.
3. **Make time for regular fun and play.** Beware the busy trap, where time seems to slip by and before you know it weeks or months have gone between play dates. Face to face connection, having fun and catching up in real time is vital to keeping relationships alive. Allocate time in your diary for the people who matter.
4. **Remember it's about embracing diversity.** Too often relationships break down when we try to be alike, compare or compete. The strength gained by relationships is as much from the diversity of the individuals as it is the shared common values. If your friend is great at something that happens to be your 'weak' spot, celebrate it, delegate or ask for some skills training rather than feel less than or the need to point score.
5. **Be as honest as you can.** Trust your friends to cope with your honesty, warts and all and they'll feel free to do the same with you. It's the fastest way to build respect and trust in a relationship.

Bare Hands is run by allied health professionals committed to helping women embrace positive change by providing access to practical education. To find out more give us a call, email us or visit www.barehands.com.au.

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- ✓ Follow the friendship code for stronger relationships
- ✓ Extend an invitation first
- ✓ Listen, listen, listen
- ✓ Catch up consistently
- ✓ Embrace diversity
- ✓ Be honest

"It's one of the blessings of old friends that you can afford to be stupid with them."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

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