

Friendship



Ever-evolving friendship

The average Briton is still in touch with at least five of their former school friends. This number is relatively small – the complicated navigation of twists and turns in our youth perhaps confines us to a constricted number of schoolfriends, maybe because people simply grow apart.

As young children, we aren't usually exposed to the ugly side of friendship, we are blissfully ignorant of the negative extremes.

The graduation to secondary school stimulates a fear of the unknown. New classmates, new teachers, subjects you had never heard of. For many, primary school was comfortable and easy. We were surrounded by the same classmates for the past six years. The, almost foreign, concept of uncertainty is deeply unsettling, and the idea of having to communicate with unfamiliar people often stifles attempts at forming new bonds.

No one wants to be the kid left alone at lunch time – especially on the first day of secondary school. Thoughts of potential permanent isolation bubble, as the race to make new friends begins. Fears of choosing the wrong ones and not fitting in infiltrate defenceless brains. For many on their first day, a great first impression is all that matters.

Of course, many children remain friends with people from primary school. However, the contest to befriend new companions often overpowers the urge to stay in touch with old ones, leaving former friends in the dust. Many students describe how the people they used to be the best of friends with are now the ones they just smile at as they walk down the corridor.

Friendships are different in secondary school. As an individual you have discovered what you are interested in and students can make friendships with others who share the same interests. The complexity of each individual is central, and students say that this individuality enabled the realisation they did not have much in common with their primary school friends after all. The bond, with some primary school friends, however, is sometimes unbreakable – a level of deep understanding between two friends will always bind them. Many things change when going from primary to secondary school – friendships is just one of them.

Samuel Rabin & Maheela Morey – Archer Academy

What is friendship

Friendships: they are shaped from the moment your first words are formed all the way until your last words are stolen from under your breath. As Jim Rohn once said: "You are the average of the five people that you spend most of your time with." It is said friendship peaks for most people in their adolescent years, when the ventral striatum – the brains reward system – is the most active, along with your brains fuelling production of our bodies' most powerful blend of hormones: oxytocin, dopamine and serotonin. These chemicals are especially potent as you spend more and more time on social activities, drifting away from your parents and towards society's future generation. The warm radiating sensation of atoms constantly colliding, as our friendships evolve from a few specks of similarities and flourish into the overflowing biospheres that make up our world, dancing around our heads on a daily basis. It just takes that one pinch of dopamine to open our eyes, enabling us to see the alluring wonders of our world.

In our world, life flies past us like the wind on a breezy day. But friends are like the constant roots that keep the foundation of our lives grounded and secure. These states of enduring affection, esteem, intimacy, and trust boost our experience of the world and give us a heightened perspective we could never achieve alone. We crave and yearn for these luminous shadows at the end of the tunnel hoping they bring us true friendship.

Donya Khazaei & Riya Choudhary – Archer Academy



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