



7 Signs of toxic friendships

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Many people don't live purposely. That is life just happens to them. And because it feels like they are at the mercy of others (which they are) they usually complain and moan about the horrible aspects of life. But that is not how you live life. You need to proactively manage your life. You need to decide what it is that you want from it and set some goals and then go and get those goals. Otherwise you are going to be on the end of helping other people live the lives they want, irrespective of whether or not it suits you. Friendship is an area where we cannot be passive. We need to actively decide who we want in our lives, and then work to maintain those relationships.

What are some signs that you may need to have a serious talk with a friend or end a friendship?

1. **They are not happy for your achievements.** If you mention a success or recent accomplishment and your friend looks like she is about to get sick rather than congratulate you, you don't have a real friend. If your friend stares at you blankly or says nothing, or tries to "one up" you with mention of their accomplishments then you also don't have a real friend. True friends are happy for your successes. They are happy when you are happy.
2. **They are there for the good times only.** These are people who are there when things are going well. They love it and want to share in it, and hope and often demand you share some of the good stuff with them as well. But when things are not going well, when you have that accident or lose your job, they are nowhere to be found. Now you might actually want some support from them.
3. **They find ways to belittle and demean you.** Comments could include "Oh anyone can do that, "; "that is quite easy to do, "; "no big deal". If your friend seems to be happy when you are not happy then you need to see a big red warning sign and pay heed. A true friend will not attempt to make you feel small. Only unhappy people who feel a need to put you down so they can elevate themselves do that.
4. **They exhaust you.** Sometimes we call them emotional vampires. This is the person who goes on and on and on about all their problems and never listens to anything you bring up. When they have finally finished talking about their issues and you start to mention yours, suddenly they have something else to go and do. You also deserve to be listened to. Friendship is not a one-way street.

5. **They are too busy - all the time.** Yes, we all lead busy and demanding lives with jobs and families and hobbies and social lives. And sometimes things are just more hectic than at other times. But never available for you - ever? Real friends make some time when they can. No one is that busy that they can never see you. If they keep putting off time together then you need to get the message. They don't really care. They aren't going to make the time and effort to maintain the friendship and this could be a one-way thing with you doing all the work.

6. **They don't stand up for you.** When someone treats you badly in front of them, what do they do? Laugh, ignore it, or stand up for you and have your back. Real friends help others out. Real friends come to one another's aid. If someone doesn't have your back stop defending them and realize this is not a true friend.

7. **Disrespect.** This can take many forms. It could be someone who is always cancelling on you last minute. It could be someone who never respects your time and keeps you waiting 30 minutes or more without letting you know they will be late. It could even be someone who makes moves on your partner. If you are being treated in any way with disrespect then get out.



Most of us don't like change. It takes energy and effort. And we all lead such hectic lives that anything that requires more effort is usually avoided. However there are plenty of nice people out there. People who would make fantastic friends. So if you are not being treated nicely then do yourself a favour and respect yourself. Find some true friends. Nothing beats an authentic friendship with caring and respect.