

Cultivation of Friendship within Epicureanism

Post by “Kalosyni” of January 16, 2022 at 8:54 PM

Principle Doctrine 27:

27. Of all the things that wisdom provides for the complete happiness of one's entire life, by far the greatest is friendship.

Principle Doctrine 27 is very important for a happy life. Modern life is busy with work and family, and yet we all still need friends. So it is very important to take the time and put the effort into making friends and maintaining friendships. Some people might be satisfied with the number and kind of friendships in their lives, but others (like myself) could put some work into making more friends.

And for any of us who are not currently in any kind of romantic relationship, (and maybe not even dating), it takes a lot of friends to make up for not having a romantic partner or a life partner.

Friendships can be challenging for some, especially for introverts. And the covid shutdowns, covid restrictions and restructuring, and continued mask mandates have had a big impact on socializing and making new friends. So this thread is a bit of an "antidote" for anyone who feels lonely, or who wishes to have more friends in their life.

I want to have this thread running for anyone who wants to say 'hi'... or drop in here for giving or receiving friendship support.

So for anyone who feels the desire to make more friends, and improve their friendships. I will post helpful tips, and feel free to share any of your own tips as well. 😊

Post by “Kalosyni” of January 16, 2022 at 9:25 PM

Some tips for where and how to make new friends from an online article (will include link below).

--- Find new friends where you work - this sounds practical, however won't work for those who work from home, or are retired, or unemployed.

---"Micro-communities are another great way to find new friends while also doing activities that you love. Have a penchant for gardening or volunteer work? Groups like that still exist—just browse social media or your local newspaper. Can't find your dream group? Now's a good time to start it yourself."

More tips from the article:

- * Confidence is key. Arm yourself with a good self-introduction and be ready to engage in casual conversation with people you come across.
- * Put in an active effort. Friendships rarely just happen.
- * Say yes to safe, socially distanced opportunities. On the flip side: Have a good reason to say no.
- * Remember: You set the expectations for your own space.
- * Keeping up with a routine can offer strong support to virtual friendships.
- * Use your network however you can.
- * Be kind to yourself. It might be hard to make friends at first. Remember, there are people who want to be your friend.

Source: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-t...mic-11600782801>

Post by “Kalosyni” of January 16, 2022 at 9:50 PM

How to improve existing friendships, from a NY Times article:

Quote

5 ways to make your friendships closer

If you want closer friendships, the first step is to decide you're going to do something about it. "We think about relationships as things that happen to us, but the truth is that we make them happen," Dr. Johnson said. Getting closer to your existing friends requires making the time and being intentional.

Once you have determined to work on your friendships, here are five techniques to try.

1. Create a foundation of security (hint: Answer that text)

Before we can attempt closeness, we need to have security. Through his research, Dr. Levine has identified the five foundational elements of secure relationships, which he refers to as CARRP.

- **Consistency** (Do these friends drift in and out of my life on a whim?)
- **Availability** (How available are they to spend time together?)
- **Reliability** (Can I count on them if I need something?)
- **Responsiveness** (Do they reply to my emails and texts? Do I hear from them on a consistent basis?)
- **Predictability** (Can I count on them to act in a certain way?)

Once these five elements are in place, it can pave the way to a deeper connection. “From an attachment perspective, once we feel safe, we can start being more adventurous and playful, which helps us at work, raising our kids, in every aspect of our lives,” Dr. Levine said.

That doesn’t mean that you have to respond to texts within the hour, but it does mean that you need to create a baseline of responsiveness and availability so your friends feel secure in your friendship. Likewise, if you have friends who are flaky, unresponsive or unreliable, it will serve you to try to see if they can become more CARRP and if not, look to other people for close friendship.

“We often tell ourselves that we shouldn’t care if somebody cancels plans or we can’t count on them, that we should be more laid back and stop being so needy, but that’s the same as fighting against biology,” Dr. Levine said.

2. Pay close attention

The next step of creating close friendships is to just open your eyes. Humans have a unique ability to read emotions by mimicking subtle facial expressions.

“Intimacy starts with attention and attunement,” Dr. Johnson said. “When you look at somebody with your full attention, your face muscles start to mirror their facial muscles within milliseconds. If you aren’t giving them your full attention, you can miss it completely.”

This mimicry helps us empathize with the emotional experiences of the other person. The next time you’re with a friend who is sharing something about his or her life, Dr. Johnson suggested that you look that person in the face and give your full attention. This will create a psychological sense of connection. “As bonding mammals built for connection, this makes our nervous systems hum,” she said.

3. Let yourself be known

If you want to be seen for who you are, you have to be willing to stop pretending to be somebody cooler or smarter than you are. Admit that you binge watch “Honey Boo-Boo,” are jealous of other people’s accomplishments or don’t always brush your teeth before bed. Make that goofy joke. Share that less-than-flattering detail.

“You have to try to help people understand and accept you, which conversely means you have to understand and accept yourself enough that you believe you can make somebody else’s life brighter just by being in it,” said Donald Miller, author of [“Scary Close: Dropping the Act and Finding True Intimacy.”](#)

In his 40s, Mr. Miller said, he had a successful career as an author and public speaker and an audience that adored him, but lived without true intimacy in his life. Determined to connect with others, he learned that the only way to get the intimacy he was searching for was to start being more honest about who he was.

Helping people understand and accept you may sound intimidating, but getting started is easier than you think. Dr. Levine suggests that the next time you’re with a friend, start diverting the conversation into exposing more vulnerability. When your friend responds in a way that feels supportive, give positive feedback by saying how helpful that was, or what a good perspective your friend has on your situation.

4. Take your friends on a test drive

Most of us would consider a close friend somebody we could call in a pinch. But if you, like me, have a romantic partner or live close to family, you might rarely find yourself in a pinch that requires a friend. I recently had to undergo a minor medical procedure and my husband wasn’t able to go with me. “Why don’t you call one of your friends?” he asked me the night before, naming a couple of friends who might be available. I didn’t have a good answer. Sure, these were pretty good friends, but were we medical-procedure close?

When I posed this situation to Dr. Levine, his suggestion was simple: Take them for a test drive. “Ask for help even when you don’t need it so that when you truly need them, you’ll feel more comfortable reaching out and you’ll have a better sense of how they will respond.”

He suggested that the next time I had an issue — a tricky work situation or I needed help coordinating a birthday dinner — I should go out of my way to lean on a friend. Not only is this a low-risk way of testing how reliable a friend is, it also builds closeness. “When we give someone a chance to show up for us, we pose an opportunity for

greater bonding and closeness,” Dr. Levine said.

5. Accept that closeness isn't one-size-fits-all

I asked the same question of everyone I interviewed for this article: How much closeness do we need? Each person gave a different answer, each of which boiled down to this: It's not that simple.

Dr. Chen said that it varied from person to person; some of us need dozens of connections, some of us need only two or three connections, but we all need some closeness to others. Dr. Johnson emphasized that building intimate connection in our love relationships is even more essential than building it in our friendships. Mr. Miller said that it had to be the right people. Dr. Levine mentioned that being able to confide in somebody or call in an emergency is only one type of closeness, and not necessarily the only important kind.

What all of the experts agreed on was this: Intimacy with other people — whether it's a spouse, a family member or a friend — is one of the most profound ways to be happier, healthier and calmer. As Dr. Levine said, “It's so potent that it will work much better than any Xanax out there.”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/20/sma...riendships.html>

Display More

Post by “Kalosyni” of January 17, 2022 at 12:58 PM

I found this and wanted to cross reference...as it brings up some interesting ideas:

Post

[Friendship as Supported by the Canon, Physics, and Ethics](#)

I have had a private and enjoyable conversation with a member about Epicurean friendship, and I think it has been a while since we specifically discussed friendship here. The member had a question about how "agape", an ancient Greek term for love which has been used for a sort of general charity and well-wishing by Christians, might be able to blend with our philosophy.

Here is a good example of how, by sticking to the original 3 part philosophic structure of Canon, Physics, and Ethics, and by...

Elayne

August 21, 2019 at 7:15 PM

Quote

In the above linked thread, Elayne writes:

PD 39 and VS 28, remind us that because we are using reality-based processes, not idealistic concepts, we will not have anything to do with virtues that treat all humans the same. We will not use abstract consequentialism. We must use our observations and feelings to find out who is a friend to us and who is not.

And so now, some further pragmatic advice...we need to reach out and make "bids" for connection. Just researching this idea on the internet...I found this excellent article, and the advice is for everyone, regardless of gender. This is such a good article, so please read the whole thing, if you feel so inclined. 😊

Quote

But as far as getting that cycle going, "it does take some push from someone," she says. "I think a lot of people, myself included, can sometimes get stuck. Like 'They haven't called me, so I'm not going to call them.' If you want to talk to your friend just call them. You don't have to play chicken about who's going to take the first step."

Rawlins, however, doesn't care for the bid concept. "I don't think of friendships in economic terms," he says. "I don't think about 'investing' in friends. I see friendship as an ongoing conversation. A way of literally coauthoring the story of our relationship."

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive...-closer/538092/>

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2017/08/how-friends-become-closer/538092/>

Post by "smoothiekiwi" of January 17, 2022 at 1:09 PM

Well, then I might add something as well 😊

I'm currently a student, thus I probably am in a different situation than y'all. Still, I took the 20th as a possibility to meet up with my friends- we simply plan to get into a cafe, talk for an

hour or so and then get back to business. Great way to celebrate the 20th, get a bit of pleasure (and cake!) and strengthen friendship.

I honestly think that sometimes, we only need an "impulse" to get rolling and meet up with people we value. And, to be honest, the 20th can be a great impulse just for that!

Post by "Joshua" of January 17, 2022 at 5:10 PM

I know people who have had great success (pre-Covid) finding friends with similar interests on Meetup. This hasn't worked well for Epicurean groups, but can be good for whatever else you do. The groups I *hear* about are for "outdoorsy" types (which I no longer am!), but I'm sure someone could find groups for writing, groups for knitting, groups for table-top gaming, groups for quilting, groups for working on cars, etc.

I haven't tried any of this myself!

Post by "Kalosyni" of January 20, 2022 at 12:29 PM

This is a good presentation, although at the end he brings up the idea of "intrinsic value" (and I would hope to find some reference to the writings of Epicurus).

Sadler on Epicurean friendship:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=7NY5n9I7qCo>

Post by "Cassius" of January 20, 2022 at 2:35 PM

Thank you Kalosyni and good catch as to "intrinsic value." I think we're on safe ground to assert that the only thing Epicurus would label as "intrinsically desirable" (which I interpret as the meaning of "intrinsic value") is pleasure itself. Friendship might come close, depending on one's definition of it, but I think the way most people speak and understand the terms Friendship

would generally be thought of as a tool for achieving pleasure, but not a pleasure itself.

That takes us toward definitional rabbit holes but I wonder if anything can be defined as "always" a pleasure other than pleasure itself.

Perhaps "joy" and "delight" and other words which are always associated with "pleasure," and maybe even "tranquility," but I would think that whatever we're discussing would have to be something that we "always" consider to be pleasurable. In that regard, "friendship" is probably tricky to classify.

What do others here think about that?

Post by “smoothiekiwi” of January 20, 2022 at 4:40 PM

Well, even the best friendships can be quite annoying sometimes. And here, the hedonistic/Epicurean calculus should kick in. If a friendship will produce more pain in the long run (although that seems difficult to achieve), then we should end it, or at least de-attach us.

Post by “Cassius” of January 20, 2022 at 4:42 PM

[Quote from smoothiekiwi](#)

If a friendship will produce more pain in the long run (although that seems difficult to achieve), then we should end it, or at least de-attach us.

Or conclude either that (1) it is not a friendship at all, or (2) our definition of friendship needs reworking.

Post by “Kalosyni” of January 21, 2022 at 8:53 PM

More tips...Here is a small-talk method called 'FORD'.

Small talk is good for conversations at parties, or meeting new people in new situations, with the goal to make people feel more comfortable. From these kinds of questions, you can begin to see what kinds of things you have in common, which might lead to a friendship. Tip: keep it light and easy, and take turns asking and answering, so that it is a back-and-forth conversation.

F - Family:

"Where are you from originally?"

"Where did you grow up?"

"Do you still have family there?"

"Do you have any brothers or sisters?" or "Did you come from a big or small family?"

If applicable: "How did you meet your _____?"(husband/wife/partner).

If applicable: "Do you have kids? How old are you children?"

"Do you have pets?" "What is your dogs name?" "How old is your dog?"

O - Occupation

"What keeps you busy these days?" (this is a good way to ask, in case they are unemployed).

After they answer then: "Oh, that's interesting, how did you get involved with that?" (or How did you get started with that? How did you get involved with that company?)

How long have you been in your field?

What's the best part of your job?

(or if in school, What's the best part of school? Your favorite course/subject?)

R - Recreation (interests and hobbies) (Make sure you don't take over the conversation... Remember you are looking for similarities).

"What do you do for fun?"

"Do you play any sports?"

"Have you seen any good movies lately?"

"Do you have any hobbies?"

"How did you become interested in that?"

"What do you like to do on weekends?"

"Have you heard the new song by _____?"

"Do you have a favorite restaurant that you like to go to?"

D - Dreams (goals) -- (Smile, listen, learn) (What gets them up in the morning) (motivation and goals, short-term dreams, long-term dreams)

"Any plans for the summer?"

"Have you traveled before?" or "Is this your first trip?"

"If you could travel any where in the world where would you go?"

(Ask about what they want to see and do)

If they are working on a project (or taking a course) - "How did you get interested in that?"

"What will you do once you finish this project?" (or course)

(If they just finished reading a book) "What did you like about the book?" "What do you want to read next?"

(Source: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=gIBGzRw1rWw>)

Post by "Scott" of January 21, 2022 at 11:10 PM

Haha! Wow! That's good stuff. So easy even *I* might be able to do it. (I'm the one of the world's WORST small talkers. I've never been comfortable with it.)

Post by "Cassius" of January 22, 2022 at 1:14 AM

[Quote from Scott](#)

(I'm the one of the world's WORST small talkers. I've never been comfortable with it.)

I suspect I am in close competition with you and I bet if we thought about it that might be a trademark of the "Epicurean personality" - or at least the "Lucretian" personality!

How's this for good small talk with the next cute person you meet at a party:

Let's get right to the heart of the matter: You're wasting your life pursuing virtue! There is no god to protect you! Stop hoping for heaven or thinking that bad people go to hell! Hang some skeleton pictures on your wall and remember that death is just around the corner! And with death comes eternal nothingness - and that means FOREVER!

What do you mean that you don't care about infinite divisibility? Don't you see how crucial that is to your happiness? Or even to walking across the floor?

And are you trying to tell me that you don't think the issue of whether the universe is eternal or whether space is infinite doesn't have a direct influence on how you're going to spend your weekend?

Geesh how shortsighted can you be ? ! ?



Post by “Kalosyni” of January 28, 2022 at 12:38 PM

Here is a texting conversation that I had with an Epicurean friend recently (edited for clarity):

Me:

I've been thinking about the complexity of friendship...

- 1) First you have to meet people and have a conversation (or text conversation).
- 2) Then you have to discover commonality/common interests.
- 3) Then you have to discover overlapping needs/goals (a need for a certain goal in friendship).
- 4) Then a common motivation to mutually engage with each other must arise, which also depends on both people having a certain amount of free time to devote to one another. People who are married in long-term relationships have much less need for friends and also much less time.

Friend's Reply:

I think what we are finding is that a friendship just doesn't happen spontaneously but is frequently the result of a shared "project" on which you are working with another person. There probably has to be a joint goal to keep it all together or else even friendship can be "pointless."

So I think that joint projects are probably the key to at least let a friendship get started at the beginning. Of course in male/female relationships there is the attraction part which can start things, but unless there is a joint project even that will fall apart.

Me:

I think the joint project idea is good...and it also depends on the needs of the people involved...and also the ways that they find pleasure within friendship.

Because if the conversation is -ONLY- about the project then it doesn't really lead to a deeper friendship.

Friend's Reply:

I agree, but it is difficult to assess what friendship really is. You obviously have enjoyment in dealing with a friend, but it isn't just contemplation [conversation?]

- there is action involved "doing things together" is probably the key.

And enjoyment and pleasure are not static. Not everyone can or will be our friend.

Friendship itself is not a goal. Epicurus is right, it is pleasure alone that is intrinsically good. And what can appear to be friendship can die if it does not remain enjoyable.

Me:

More about finding commonalities...it is about what we find enjoyable in friendships. And there is what we can give, but also what we want to get.

And I very much enjoy conversation, the kind that is mutually fullfuling...a back and forth conversation...about anything and everything...no-holds-barred.

But of course some topics I might not know enough about, so then you would have to seek out someone else on those topics (obviously)...and same for you, you might not know enough on certain topics so then I would have to seek out someone else on those other topics.

Friend's Reply:

I think this is where your sister and I would agree that there are personality types among people and that there are good matches and bad matches 😊

Me:

Okay, so are you saying that a certain kind of disposition and attitude toward life makes for a better conversational partner?

Friend's Reply:

Sort of. I think I am saying that conversational styles may exist where some people may understand some people much better than others. And it's not just a matter of being considerate or inconsiderate.

Me:

Yes I do agree. I think it is both conversational style and also each individual has drives and goals which shape how they view the world.

Here is what I would add: That there is some kind of pull that we feel toward people that we find conversationally engaging and who also have a pleasant and enjoyable disposition. Over time a common history of shared experiences will build up and this will lead to a feeling of a long-term friendship bond. Yet it seems that there still needs to be a personal dedication to putting in the time and energy to maintain the friendship. In a busy world, that means people would need to prioritize friendship. Not only knowing that pleasure comes from friendship, but actively shaping one's life so that one has time for friendships. Also, when you do find a genuine friend with shared mutual understanding and shared mutual goals, it can be somewhat of a rare situation, and so it would be a very precious pleasure indeed.

Post by “Kalosyni” of March 9, 2022 at 10:31 AM

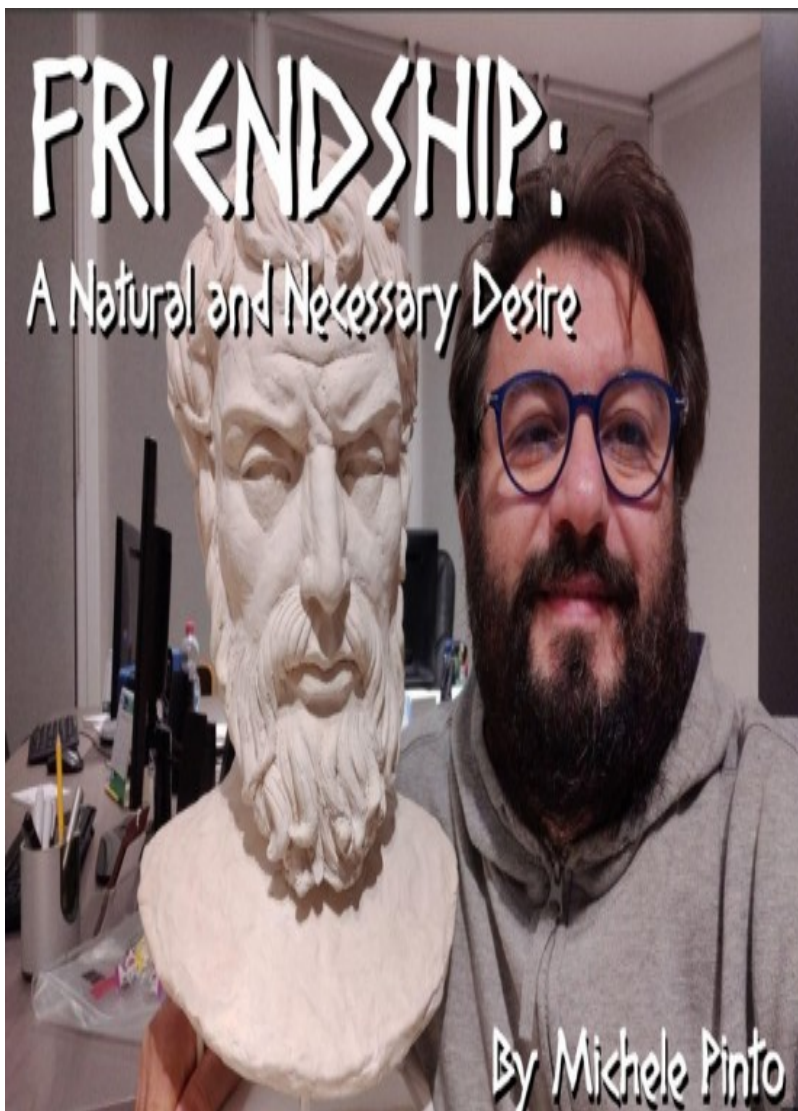
Meditations on the importance of friendship -- this writing by Michele Pinto (which I just discovered today) starts off with an idea of solitary happiness and then moves forward to cite Epicurean references on friendship and the importance of friendship.

Quote

Epicurus traveled to friends, and wrote letters such as these: *"I am quite ready, if you do not come to see me, to spin thrice on my own axis and be propelled to any place that you, including Themista, agree upon."* (U 125), *"The way in which you have provided for me in the matter of sending the grain was godlike and magnificent, and you have given tokens of your regard for me that reach to high heaven."* (U 183).

Epicurus and his friends worked to build a network of relations throughout Greece, so much so that the wise man of the Garden came to sing: "*Friendship dances around the world, bidding us all to awaken to the recognition of happiness!*" (VS 52).

Friendship is therefore an essential ingredient in the recipe of happiness, so much so that Epicurus no longer speaks of the happiness of the wise, but of the happiness of the community of friends: "*As many as possess the power to procure complete immunity from their neighbours, these also live most pleasantly with one another, since they have the most certain pledge of security, and, after they have enjoyed the fullest intimacy, they do not lament the previous departure of a dead friend, as though he were to be pitied.*" (PD 40) and "*The noble soul occupies itself with wisdom and friendship; of these, the one is a mortal good, the other immortal.*" (SV 78).



Blog Article

[Michele Pinto: "Friendship: A Natural And Necessary Desire"](#)

Inspired by the considerations on the Epicurean friendship of Phillip Mithis in the book "The Ethical Theory of Epicurus - The pleasures of Invulnerability," I want to summarize the thought of Epicurus on friendship, trying to use his own words as much as possible, and adding mine where necessary. I am indebted to Carlo Diano because his thematic collection of Epicurus's maxims was essential. The first Epicurean festival, whose general theme was about friendship, was also very useful. I thank

...



Cassius

November 1, 2019 at 3:38 PM

Post by "Root304" of November 25, 2022 at 11:18 PM

For me, an "Epicurean Friendship" is someone to which I share a said or unsaid mutualistic relationship with. By mutualistic I mean we will literally help one another survive, literally in the struggle of economy, or likewise in correcting our moral character to better survive and thrive in the social arena. It's largely about security. My nuclear family, therefore, is the arena of deepest Epicurean Friendship for me as that is where the deepest solidarity and the deepest work of my soul goes on. With other extended family or friends depending on whether we share that deep sense, or actuality, of solidarity. Not all my good Friendships are Epicurean Friendships, and not all my Epicurean Friendships are of notable quality of pleasure as some other forms of Friendships, and that's all ok.

But perhaps I am mistaken in my understanding of Epicurus. putting such an emphasis on security and the lack of fear that comes from having that safety net.

Post by "Cassius" of November 26, 2022 at 7:11 AM

I skimmed back over the thread (almost a year at this point) to try to refresh my memory as to whether it had contained a "definition" (which I take as part of Root304's point). I am not sure that it does, and that might be something that needs to be discussed further to add to the clarity of the issue. I am not sure that there is an Epicurean text that really "defines" friendship is there? I seem to remember that there might be a definition in Aristotle (is it a "second self"?) but we shouldn't take for granted that Epicurus would agree with Aristotle.

And of course given the absence of ideal forms or the like, how would the word best be used in the Epicurean context? What is the most accurate 'idea" to attach to the word "friendship" so that we may not go on explaining to infinity or use words devoid of meaning?

Quote

First of all, Herodotus, we must grasp the ideas attached to words, in order that we may be able to refer to them and so to judge the inferences of opinion or problems of investigation or reflection, so that we may not either leave everything uncertain and go on explaining to infinity or use words devoid of meaning. [38] For this purpose it is essential that the first mental image associated with each word should be regarded, and that there should be no need of explanation, if we are really to have a standard to which to refer a problem of investigation or reflection or a mental inference. And besides we must keep all our investigations in accord with our sensations, and in particular with the immediate apprehensions whether of the mind or of any one of the instruments of judgment, and likewise in accord with the feelings existing in us, in order that we may have indications whereby we may judge both the problem of sense perception and the unseen.

Post by “Kalosyni” of November 26, 2022 at 7:22 AM

They didn't have dictionaries back in hellenistic Greece... but we do 😊

friendship, a state of enduring affection, esteem, [intimacy](#), and trust between two people. In all [cultures](#), friendships are important relationships throughout a person's life span.

source: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/friendship>

(This site has an interesting write-up about friendship development across the lifespan).

Quote

Friendship is generally characterized by five defining features:

- 1. It is a dyadic relationship, meaning that it involves a series of interactions between two individuals known to each other.
- 2. It is recognized by both members of the relationship and is characterized by a bond or tie of [reciprocated](#) affection.
- 3. It is not obligatory; two individuals choose to form a friendship with each other. In Western societies, friendships are one of the least prescribed close relationships, with no formal duties or legal obligations to one another.
- 4. It is typically egalitarian in nature. Unlike parent-child relationships, for instance, each individual in a friendship has about the same amount of power or authority in the relationship.
- 5. It is almost always characterized by companionship and shared activities. In fact, one of the primary goals and motivations of friendship is companionship. In addition, adolescent and adult friendships often perform other functions, such as serving as sources of emotional support and providing opportunities for self-disclosure and intimacy.

Post by “Pacatus” of November 28, 2022 at 2:00 PM

I always liked Rilke’s definition of love: “Love consists of this: two solitudes that meet, protect and greet each other.” I’d just expand the possible number and call it friendship.

Note: I’m a pretty strong introvert (which I do not accept as a flaw to struggle against – even though extroverts are the vast majority in our society); I do not get “lonely” when I’m alone; I value and cherish a few friends.

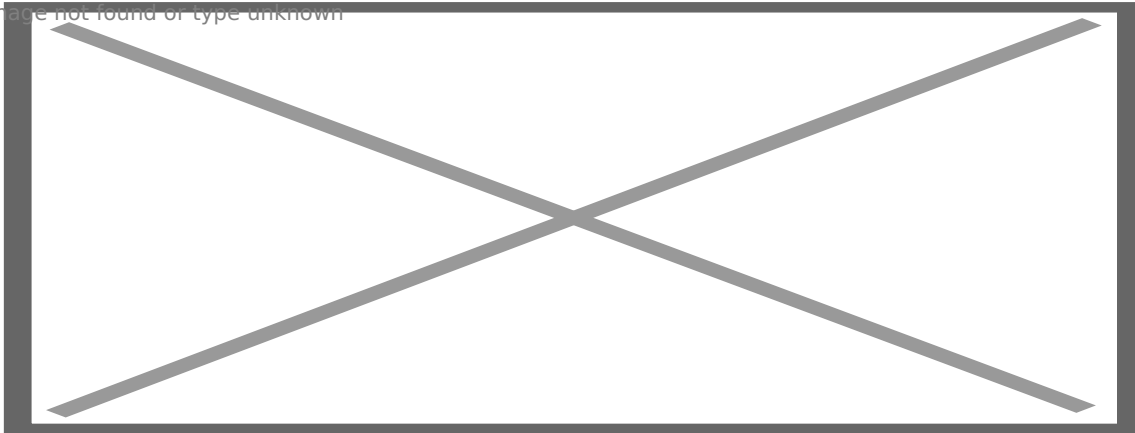
Post by “Don” of November 28, 2022 at 2:03 PM

[Quote from Pacatus](#)

Note: I’m a pretty strong introvert (which I do not accept as a flaw to struggle against – even though extroverts are the vast majority in our society); I do not get “lonely” when I’m alone; I value and cherish a few friends.

Fully agree! If you haven't read Susan Cain's *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*, I highly recommend it. Her website is at:

Image not found or type unknown



[Home - Susan Cain](#)

Hi, I'm Susan! #1 NYT bestselling author. Unlikely award-winning speaker. Seeker of kindred spirits. Welcome to the world of QUIET and BITTERSWEET Susan Cain'S...

susancain.net

Post by "Pacatus" of November 29, 2022 at 11:20 AM

[Don](#)

Thanks for that. I find that in a group -- with mostly extroverts -- I sometimes talk compulsively, like I need to "fit in." When being quiet, and in a quiet mind, is what I want. So, I'm going to be quiet now, and check out Susan Cain. 😞 😊

Post by "Don" of November 29, 2022 at 11:26 AM

Cain's book was a revelation for me. Specifically, she talked about introverts who can be gregarious at parties, great public speakers, etc., but who also get exhausted by that (even though they find it enjoyable!) and need alone time to "recharge their batteries." I was like "Hey! I recognize that person!"

I hope you enjoy it. I think she has some videos or TED Talks on her introvert research too if you don't want to read the whole book.

Post by “Pacatus” of November 29, 2022 at 11:28 AM

Thanks again, [Don](#).

BTW, I got 17 out of 20 "true" on her quiz -- and two of the three "falses" were really borderline. Now I am going quiet. 😊

Post by “Kalosyni” of June 14, 2023 at 4:15 PM

Here is an very good article:

Some excerpts, and link follows:

Quote

People need friends. They are literally lifeblood in terms of physical, cognitive and emotional wellbeing. And work is an important place to make friends and feel a sense of connection and community. Dunbar says it best, “We forget that at our peril, and businesses forget it at their peril.” With loneliness on the rise and wellbeing on the decline, the opportunity today is significant—to reinvent the experience of work so it’s a venue for meaning, community and friendship.

Quote

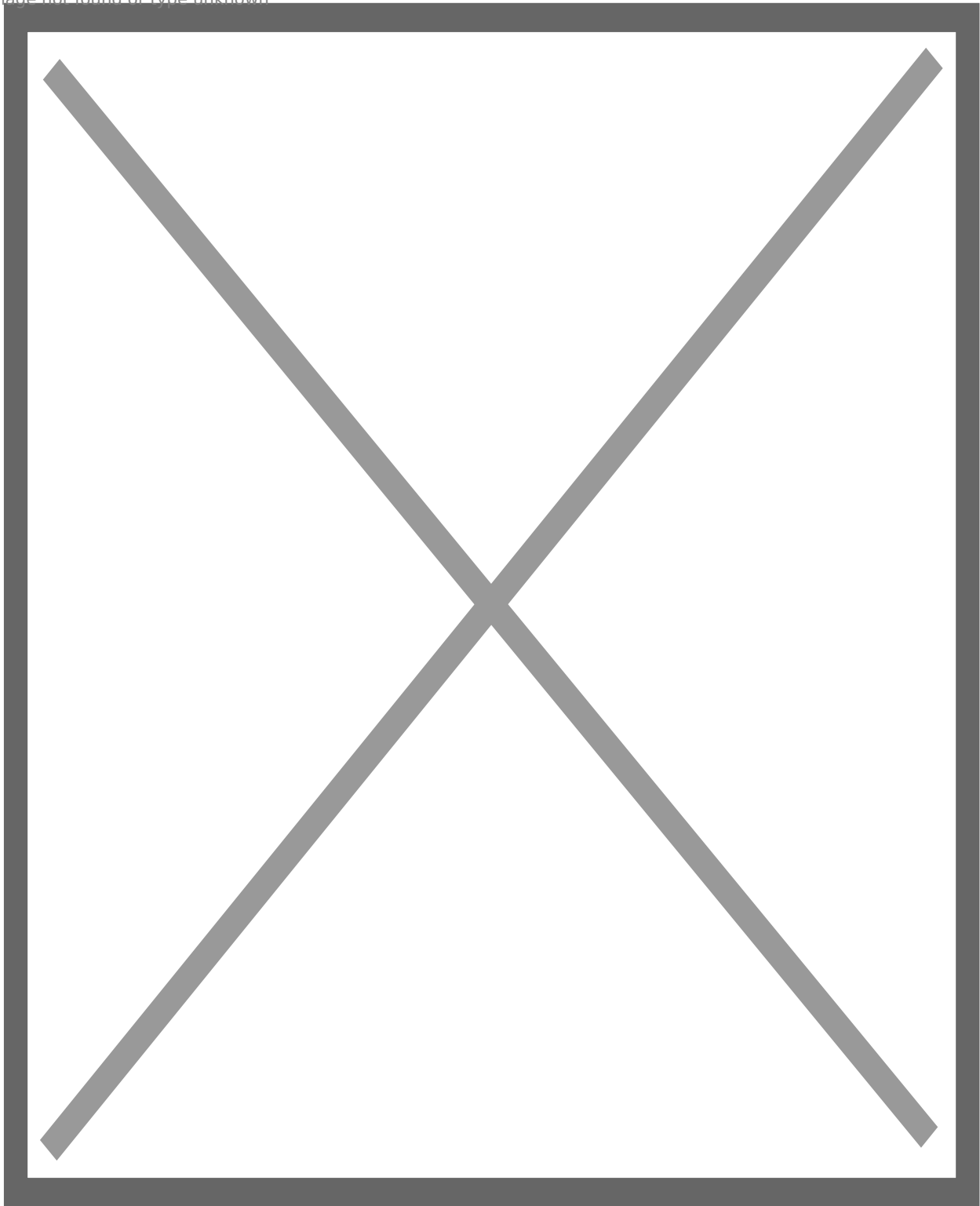
The Fisherman’s Friend study found it takes about 34 hours of investment to shift from a more superficial acquaintance to a true friendship. In addition, the average friendship requires about 11 interactions and each one should last about three hours—clearly longer than a cup of tea. With this investment of time, making a friend takes about five and a half months. And this is no small thing in a fast-paced, over-scheduled, time-impooverished world.

Quote

People also tend to build the strongest friendships with those they believe to be most similar to themselves. Dunbar says it takes so long to create a true friendship because

you're looking for seven pillars of friendship—similarities in the following dimensions: the way you speak (dialect), hobbies and interests, religious views, moral views, sense of humor, musical taste and [career trajectory](#).

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[New Study: Making Friends Is Hard But Work Can Help](#)

Social isolation and loneliness have become wide-spread and a majority of people say they are actively looking for more friends—and in particular—close...

Post by “Randall Moose” of August 1, 2023 at 3:33 AM

So far, my favorite part of this philosophy is the celebration of friendships and community. When I left the church, the first thing I missed was that sense of community. Since 2017, I have made an effort to grow and maintain my friendships.

With that said, I am surprised that there is not more focus on friendships here. Unless I am missing something?

Post by “Don” of August 1, 2023 at 7:08 AM

[Quote from Randall Moose](#)

With that said, I am surprised that there is not more focus on friendships here. Unless I am missing something?

One complication is that we're all spread across the world.

That said, [Kalosyni](#) and [Cassius](#) have led efforts to have more online social opportunities including book discussions, happy hours, monthly 20th gatherings, etc. Those have been wonderful opportunities to meet real people, have conversations, and establish friendships as far as one can across vast time zones. If one wants to call those acquaintances or friendships is a matter of semantics I suppose. I've personally felt welcomed here, and have shared, privately and publicly, tragedies and triumphs with friends I've made here. I also probably wouldn't have "stuck with" Epicureanism these past five years if not for this Garden. That's my personal response.

That said, if you're talking about expecting more discussions concerning friendship, I could see that being beneficial. I'm glad to hear that the philosophy has been beneficial in your friendships! That's the kind of practical application that is encouraged here. But I could see more threads on "what does Epicurean friendship mean in the modern world without Gardens available?" to be interesting and helpful.

That turned into a longer post than initially intended



I hope that addresses your concern abit.

Post by “Cassius” of August 1, 2023 at 7:19 AM

Don summarizes the situation very well.

One aspect I would emphasize is that working together on joint projects here has been a great friendship-builder, and it is those people who have done that who I think get the most out of the forum.

If you have ideas Randall please be sure to share them.

Post by “Randall Moose” of August 1, 2023 at 8:44 PM

Thanks y'all. I would like to see more resources here on how to cultivate and maintain friendships.

Speaking for myself as a 26 year old American, my peers rely on social media for their social lives. I have made an effort to find friends through hobbies such as D&D. The house I share with my roommates is the primary meet up spot for D&D, board games, MtG, CoD, movies, dinners, and nights around the fire pit.

I'm curious what y'all think about this question, "What place do games have in Epicurean philosophy?"

Post by “Don” of August 1, 2023 at 8:53 PM

[Quote from Randall Moose](#)

I'm curious what y'all think about this question, "What place do games have in Epicurean philosophy?"

1. Do they give you pleasure?
2. Are they harming you in any way?
3. Do they do harm to others?

Answer those three questions about games and you're well on your way to answering your question.

It also sounds like you and your friends enjoy them together. Another plus.

That's my take.

Post by “Joshua” of August 2, 2023 at 12:59 AM

Quote

I'm curious what y'all think about this question, "What place do games have in Epicurean philosophy?"

I think that's a very good question, though it may be difficult to answer fully--although I think Don's answer settles the main point.

The Greeks were to a remarkable extent a gaming civilization--so much so that they literally set their calendars by it. They valued their games--Olympic, Pythian, Isthmian, Nemean, and other local affairs--for some of the same reasons we do; in the first place, because they helped to foster a unified and *pan-Hellenic* cultural identity. They aided in cultivating good relationships between City States.

In a remarkable passage in Xenophon's *Anabasis*, a mercenary army of 10,000 free Greeks that has just been marching for months overland across the whole length and breadth of hostile Persia finally reaches safety in the Greek colonies on the coast of the Black Sea, and they celebrate their immense good fortune by *playing games*! Extraordinary! I think if it were me I would have collapsed in a chair and not stirred for three months. The ended a forced march across difficult and dangerous terrain by celebrating with foot races, wrestling, discus and javelin.

So what did Epicurus think about all of this? On the question of Epicurus' alleged rejection of Greek culture Norman DeWitt has this to say;

Quote

This Platonic program consisted of music and gymnastic, inherited from the Athenian past; of rhetoric, which had been introduced by the sophists; and of dialectic and mathematics, especially geometry, which were the addition of Plato himself.

Toward every component of this prevailing education the attitude of Epicurus was determined by the nature of the objective adopted for his own program. This objective was not the production of a good citizen but a happy and contented man. For practical purposes this happiness was defined as health of mind and health of body. The famous prayer for mens Sana in corpore sano, "a sound mind in a sound body," recommended by Juvenal, is genuine Epicureanism.

This being the case, there was no reason for rejecting physical training, and approval of it was the easier not only because the laws required it — and Epicurus recommended obedience to the laws — but also for the reason that the amateur athlete and the citizen soldier were being replaced by the professional athlete and the professional soldier. Thus the rigors of the required exercises could be relaxed.

As for music, there need be little doubt that the approval of Epicurus was enthusiastic. His own capacity for appreciating good music seems to have been keen. It is told of him that he would arise early in the morning and trudge to the theater to enjoy the performance

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And then are there the tabletop games of Ancient Greece, most of which were distinguished by the common feature of gambling on chance. I suspect that Epicurus would have cautioned against gambling, though of course I don't know that.

In any case, playing a game for the game's own sake is a very human pasttime, enjoyed among friends, and yielding pleasure--and for those reasons is very much worth doing. Play like the Greeks!

Post by “Cassius” of August 2, 2023 at 2:37 AM

I agree with the above answers which in most general form comes down to "Do the games being you more pleasure than pain, all things considered?"

Maybe the greater concern than the games is over-reliance on social media for social interaction.

We definitely need to develop some material on:

- 1 - [Practical tips on cultivation of real-life friendships.](#)
- 2 - [Practical tips on management of social media engagement.](#)

At the very least we need to find ways to focus social media interactions to be mainly with real world friends rather than people so extended away from us that interaction with them is little more than as with AI or bots or caricatures of real people.

Post by “Cassius” of August 2, 2023 at 3:09 AM

(Just updated my post 31 above with more detail. I see Randall is a night owl too.)

Post by “Randall Moose” of August 2, 2023 at 3:21 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I agree with the aboce answers which in most general form is "Do the games being you more pleasure than pain, all things considered?"

Maybe the greater concern than the games is over-reliance on social media for social interaction.

I hear this a lot and I tend to agree. I am still balancing social media and media in general in my own life. I was 8 when the first iPhone came out and I remember how much it changed our lives. In short, I know only a little of a life without the impact of Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, etc. I doubt I know the full extent of that impact. Whatever the case, I am working to spend more times with my friends, with us in the same room and without our faces lit by screens. Especially after experiencing the lockdowns. I'm figuring it out as I go.

Post by “Don” of August 2, 2023 at 8:11 AM

I will add that "online gaming" can engender and preserve friendships that would otherwise wither. I know people that have maintained friendships from high school and college or created lifelong friends with online gaming. Even separated by miles and time zones, friends get together to play while at the same time talking and maintaining ties. They still get together in real life when possible, but online gaming is a platform that allows regular camaraderie.

Post by “Eikadistes” of August 2, 2023 at 12:12 PM

[Quote from Randall Moose](#)

Thanks y'all. I would like to see more resources here on how to cultivate and maintain friendships.

Speaking for myself as a 26 year old American, my peers rely on social media for their social lives. I have made an effort to find friends through hobbies such as D&D. The house I share with my roommates is the primary meet up spot for D&D, board games, MtG, CoD, movies, dinners, and nights around the fire pit.

I'm curious what y'all think about this question, "What place do games have in Epicurean philosophy?"

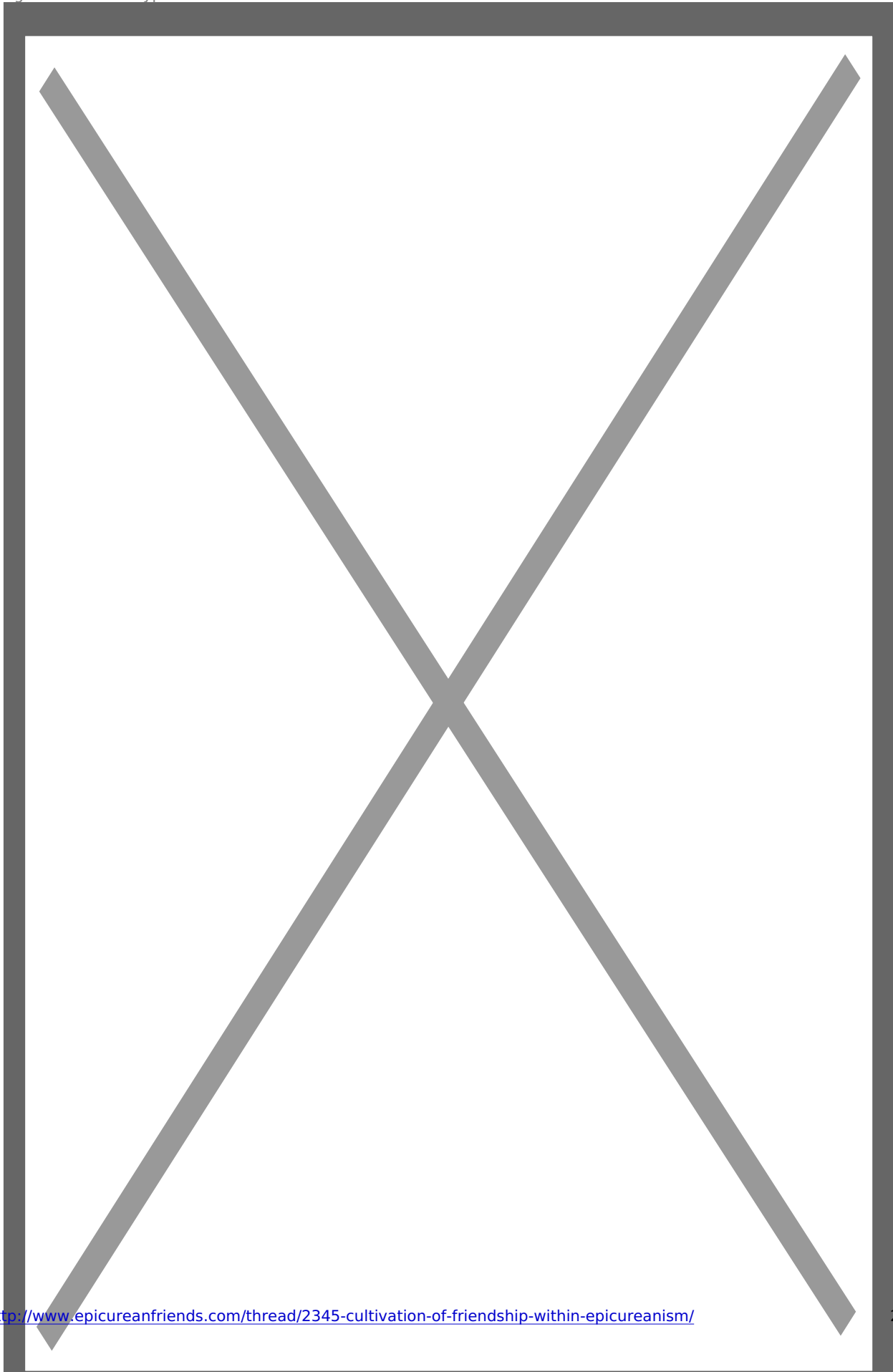
A **KEY** place (*I think*)! I need to go back and find my source, because I only have this scribble in my notes, but I recall that Eikas celebrations would have hosted a game called *Kataktos*, what I

believe is ... basically ancient Beer Pong (with wine), so I think parlor games like darts, ping pong, and billiards are *particularly* appropriate. That said, I am a gamer, and I miss the days when card games and board games were more-widely-practiced forms of recreation, so games are key for me; that absolutely extends into the world of D&D, and digital gaming, and MMOs so long as they engender friendship.

Someone fact-check me on *Katakotos* though because I meant to bring it up, but I didn't leave myself a source.

Post by “Don” of August 2, 2023 at 12:42 PM

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Post by “kochiekoch” of December 5, 2023 at 9:12 PM

An Epicurean style take on happiness I stumbled upon:

[What actually makes us happy \(axios.com\)](#)

Gotta love it:

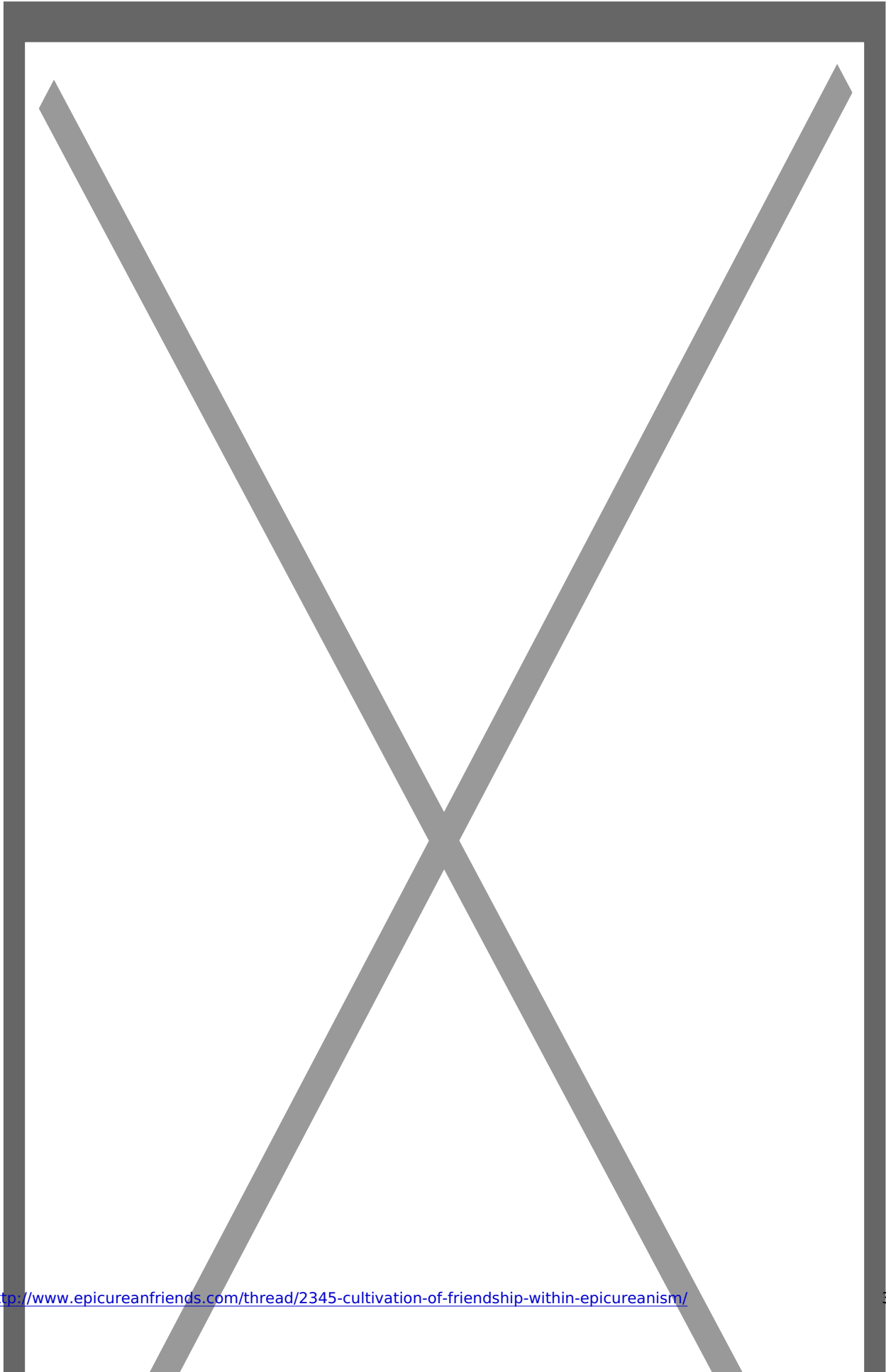
>>**Know what counts** as connection. Focus on real-time communication, which isn't a text or posting on someone's social media feed. As primates, we're evolved for live conversations, which can be virtual.<<

>>**Happiness doesn't mean** dispelling all negative emotions, which are part of what make us human. "I think especially in the tough times we're dealing with, negative emotions are normative. We need to pay attention to them because they're signaling changes that we need to make," Santos says. "Happiness really is about a decent ratio of positive to negative emotions."<<

Post by “Kalosyni” of February 5, 2024 at 9:43 PM

This article has some good tips (and this is the source which I referenced during tonight's First Monday Zoom):

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[How to Keep Adult Friendships](#)

Learn more about adult friendships, why they're good for your health, how to nurture friendships, how to reach out to friends, and what to do if things go bad.

www.webmd.com

Quote

How to Be a Good Friend

To keep your relationships strong and healthy, be a good friend. Healthy friendships are reciprocal, with plenty of give-and-take. "Be as good to your friends as you want them to be to you," Cazeau says.

Try these tips to nurture your friendship:

Be a safe space. Give your friend the freedom to express themselves. "Being a safe space where your friend can share and vent without any judgment can be vital to their mental health," Cazeau says. Try not to jump in with solutions to their problems. Your friend may simply want to talk about something that's on their mind.

Be present. Make the time you spend together count. Put away your cell phone. Avoid distractions. Ask questions, and be an active listener. Engage in the conversation. Use good eye contact.

Be kind. Small acts of kindness add up. Tell your friend how much they mean to you, Cazeau says. Celebrate their wins. Remember their birthday with a card or a gift. Try to avoid criticism and negativity, which can pull a friendship down.

Open up. Sharing feelings and experiences brings friends closer by creating intimacy. Show your friend that you trust them by talking freely about what you think and how you feel. This can make your connection deeper.

Be reliable. When your friend knows that they can count on you, it keeps your relationship strong. If you flake out on plans or don't keep their secrets, it will suffer. Show up on time when you have plans. Do what you say you'll do. And keep confidential information to yourself.

Curb competitive feelings. "Try not to compare yourself to your friends," McCrink advises. "This can be really tough, but it's poisonous to friendships."

In her 20s, when many of McCrink's friends got married, she started to feel uncomfortable about being single. "It consumed me to the point where I rushed into a marriage that wasn't right for me," she says.

Instead of making comparisons, be your friend's cheerleader. "Embrace where you are in your own journey and lift your friends up to keep the relationships strong," McCrink

says.

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Post by “DavidN” of February 8, 2024 at 3:50 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

[Quote from smoothiekiwi](#)

If a friendship will produce more pain in the long run (although that seems difficult to achieve), then we should end it, or at least de-attach us.

Or conclude either that (1) it is not a friendship at all, or (2) our definition of friendship needs reworking.

Agreed, even the Vatican sayings have a passage about toxic friendships. I don't think it unreasonable to expect your friends to be as good at being a friend as you are, so long as you forgive circumstance, as a good friend should.