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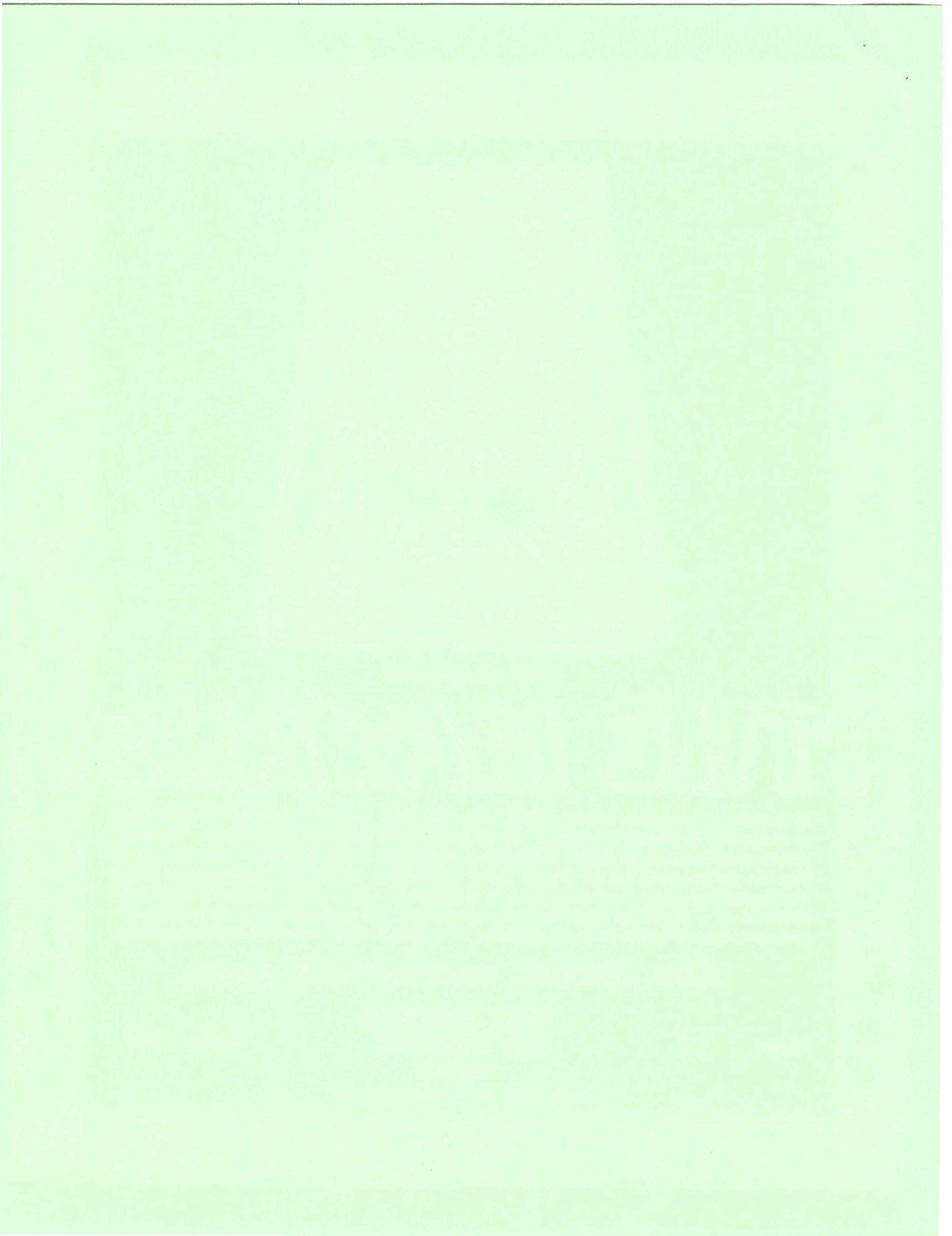
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# FRIENDS AND FRIENDSHIP

Mayan Revelation Number 243

Shoring

The Upgrader

The Master of Friendship

Reinforcement

The Wider World of Friendship

The Changing World

## Techniques

Beloved Perfectionist:

Many years ago, we set aside a day to be known thereafter as "Friendship Day". Every year, "Friendship Day" falls on August 1st. This practice was put into effect, as near as I can remember just now, about or near the year 1936.

"Friendship Day" is a day in which we honor our friends, a day in which we make an effort to do a little kindness for someone. It is a day we who observe it like to be a friend to someone - it may not necessarily be someone with whom we are acquainted; it may be a day that we go to the hospital with flowers or a book or a kindly word; it may be a day we take someone less fortunate for a ride in the country, someone who would not be able to get out otherwise. The observances of "Friendship Day" are so many - it would be impossible to list them all - but it is a good day for the givers and the recipients.

And, as I was arranging your lesson program for the present and the months to come, this seemed to be a good time for a lesson on "Friends and Friendship", not only because of our "Friendship Day", but because we are living in a world today when friendship can play such an important part. We do not mean solely our personal friends - I am thinking about the friendship of other nations, other worlds, and the need for strengthening it.

We of the Mayan Order, although there are thousands of us, cannot expect to turn all nations into friends, but we are certainly in a position to play an important part, for it all helps - and we are a strong group. We are a large group and a strong one, and we have contact with many people - and what we, as members of The Mayan Order, do has an effect on others.

We are a power for good in this world and I want you, as a member,

never to forget that, and to use your influence with your friends - and they, in turn, will use their influence with their friends, and so it has a chain reaction and can be far-reaching. Never think for one minute you are too small to have an effect. We all can do much towards bringing about a more peaceful coexistence with our brothers.

Friendship is a priceless treasure. It is one of mankind's greatest gifts. I love my friends as I have loved my family, and as I love my country and my God. Many people think of Friendship from the standpoint of what they will receive, what friends can do for them - but in order to be a true friend, we must think in terms of giving, rather than getting. We have friends - not for the sake of receiving, but of giving.

We must learn to overlook the faults of our friends even though we recognize them. Those of you who have ever had a pet dog, or perhaps some other animal, know that animals are such agreeable friends. They ask no questions of us, they do not criticize us for in their sight we can do no wrong. The poorest kind of master, in the eyes of his dog, is beyond criticism, for his master is his friend and he is true, loyal, and steadfast in his love. We human beings could learn a great deal from the animal kingdom.

A friend sometimes has the skill of a physician in handling one who is ill. A friend who loves you has the vigilance of a nurse and the tenderness and solicitousness of a mother. The right kind of Friendship can build character, and it is the duty of each and every one of us to cultivate friends.

Friends are like companions on a journey who want to help each other to persevere on the road to a happier life. We, as members of The Mayan Order, on The Path, must ever keep this Truth before us.

Let us repeat the following prayer, asking help in an endeavor to cultivate Friendship - and then proceed with the lesson.

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#### PRAYER

Open my heart, Heavenly Father, to the blessing of good friends. Let it be a constant demonstration of the oneness of Thy family in Thee. Amen.

#### SHORING

**W**ALLS that show signs of weakness and danger of falling are sometimes furnished with supports to hold them up till they can be more permanently mended. Thus, many a wreck is prevented. This process and these supports are called shoring. We sometimes need such supports, and are fortunate to have them - they are our friends. They help us to hold on a little longer, or help us prevent the increase of whatever is pulling us

over, or do some of many other things that take the defeat out of us and replace it with strength and resolution.

We have all known many strong and successful people who marched triumphantly through the years. We thought, when we saw them, that they must never have had problems or perilous hours, but had always been strong enough to meet all situations and go on with firm steps and heads erect. How mistaken we were in some cases! Many of these people had their difficult moments and had swayed like trees in the wind, when the issue was the outcome of their very lives. If they had tried to explain it, they would have said simply, "I had a friend". They might have said, "Someone came along and shored me up 'till I could mend my foundations." Let us hope they could also say that they had paid for it by doing the same for others.

In doubt, a real friend advises; in despair, he encourages; and in failure, he lends a hand. He does not criticize or try to take over. He gives a lift or a nudge, according to what is needed; and he never leaves us feeling obligated to him, though we are obligated at least to pass the blessing on. Such service is not sold, for there would not be enough money to pay for it. It is given in the holy name of friendship, and paid for by keeping it going. Friendship has not really functioned until it becomes a chain reaction.

Friendship has all this power because its matured form is brotherhood. It is a part of the solidarity of the human family, and that is the basis of the kingdom of hope - the time when the will of the Father will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. It cannot fail, because it is a holy thing. It is hinted at in the Master's use of the collective pronoun in The Lord's Prayer - Our Father, who art in Heaven. That recognizes the claim to the Everlasting Mercy not of one but of all. If a triple cord is hard to break, as the Book of Ecclesiastes says, what about the power of countless lives of good will unified in friendship?

It is not a sign of strength but of weakness to try to walk alone. One strength is not enough for the sterner crises of life, or even for its everyday needs. A life rich in friendship is a fortified life, and a nation made up of such lives is a well-protected nation. If the world were made up of such nations none of them would need protection from anything but the danger of reverting to the old rivalries. Today the whole world is groping for this and failing to find it because it is looking too far away. It is at our fingertips. The Kingdom of Heaven is "at hand".

#### THE MASTER ON FRIENDSHIP

**T**HE Great Teacher, being a great teacher, did not overlook the subject of friendship. A great teacher could not, because really great teaching deals with the living of life, with the building of the complete life, and no complete life can disregard it or fail to include it. Too, a great teacher is also an example of what he teaches, and was not Jesus the great friend, and a great teacher in that He directed His special attention

to those who needed it most? The truest measure of a teacher is what becomes of the neediest and poorest of his students, the measure in which he develops their possible selves.

"I call you no longer servants," He said, "but I have called you friends." Here in one sweeping sentence He breaks down any and all notions of class distinctions and qualities. Life may make its own distinctions of ability, but man is not qualified to make any. The only difference between people we are qualified to make is the degree of need and the consciousness of it. The right of a servant to character and worth is as great as that of a master, and in this sense the master may be even needier than the servant. Jesus was and is the Master of all, but He did not play on that string. He was the greater Master of men because He was their Friend. True mastery is not even likely to be conscious of itself, and without friendship it would never be at its best.

This means that friendship is the basis of the real democracy we dream about and expect the human race some day to attain. Character, integrity, and friendship are three areas of life in which we can be equal in standing, worth, and influence. When this is consciously true, and we treat each other in accordance with it, we should have democracy at its best; and what less than that should be the result of the good work of the great teachers of the world? The implication of the Master's view of friendship is the unity that makes a nation strong and binds nations and races together.

The kind of friendship Jesus taught and exemplified is about the only real solution to the master and servant problem ever advanced. In fact, it is one under which it would no longer be a problem, but a cooperative relationship. Under it all, this jealousy and contention between employers and employees would have to cease because there simply would be no place for it. A man does not cheat when he works for a friend, nor deal unjustly when he employs one.

There is much needless and artificial ill will between teacher and pupil. The pupil builds up an artificial distrust which prevents the relation in which the teacher could be most helpful to him. But Jesus shows teacher and pupil how to be friends, which removes these barriers and enables them both to be and do their best for each other. This makes learning a value and a privilege.

This also links friendship with the other priceless elements of faith and religion. It therefore becomes one of the elements of the new world order the Master called the Kingdom - the sway or the realm of God.



## THE WIDER WORLD OF FRIENDSHIP

**L**IKE love, friendship enlarges one's world. It lifts and expands our lives and interests beyond ourselves. This is more than a priceless service - it is a necessity. For one's life to turn inward and all his interests come to center in himself is spiritually fatal. The most ruthless and dangerous person is the one who has never discovered others, has never become conscious of the existence of mankind. For him the human race consists of himself, but he ceases to be a menace the day he discovers that life is largely a set of relationships. Those relationships are at their best when they are the bonds of friendship.

For this unfortunate person who is afflicted with the disease of self-centeredness, there is fortunately a cure; and it is available, whoever and wherever he may be. The beginning is to form a good and wholesome friendship, the rest of it is to let that friendship deepen in quality and multiply in number. When the friendless man gains one friend his world doubles, and it can grow by progression 'till it is infinitely large and surpassingly beautiful.

But like everything else this shield has two sides, and the other side is even more valuable to one than this. Finding a friend is less than forming a friendship, because forming a friendship is a mutual affair. It takes two. It commits one to giving as well as receiving. Having a friend is good, but being one is what carries the supreme benefit. It is also the means by which worthwhile friendships are multiplied. One can usually find a friend, but he cannot keep it unless he is a friend. He cannot make someone else be his friend, but he can make himself be a friend to others. It is matter over which he has complete and immediate control. As the wise all know, however, being a friend is a sure way to have friends of one's own.

We all know instinctively how to get, and the more selfish we are the more possessions we can acquire, especially if we are willing to be ruthless also. Anyone can get things if he does not care what happens to his soul. How to give out and serve is the matter of which we need to know the secret, to which we need to have a key. Here is that key - be a friend. You cannot do that without acquiring the giving spirit and experiencing a widening of your life.

Being a friend does for the lives around us what summer showers do for plants, flowers, and trees struggling to grow in dry ground. The mercy of God comes down like rain, and so can the beneficence of the influence and spirit of anyone who chooses to have it so. He too can carry reviving, and courage, and the will to look up again, to drooping spirits wherever he goes. We sometimes hear it said of someone that he was everybody's friend. What a blessed requiem! These friends of everyone are passing away all the time. Why not take one of their places and carry on in the same spirit?

Real friendship is also a chain reaction. It refuses to be localized,

because forming one satisfying friendship makes it become a habit. A friend to a few tends to become a friend to all, and one who has the friendship of a few tends to acquire the friendship of all. Good will is one of the most contagious of all the contagions.

### THE UPGRADER

**F**RIENDSHIP is one of the great upgraders in human living. As learning quickens the perceptive powers, so friendship quickens the impulsive ones. As material gain quickens the acquisitive powers, so friendship quickens the altruistic ones. As ambition stimulates doing and getting, so friendship quickens living. It does all these things to these influences by refining them or replacing them with something more wholesome and productive of happiness. Wherever it touches, it generates improvement.

There are many things that have some upgrading value, many processes that carry some improvement in quality; but they are partial, slow, temporary, intermittent and incomplete. Next to harmony with the Divine itself, it is friendship that puts human attitudes and activities at their best. Without it, the greatest powers and the best intentions fall short of their mark, and fall a little below the apex of their possibilities.

The minor value of friendship is what it brings us, what it helps us gain; but its major value is what it makes of us. It lifts us out of our ensmalling isolation and relates us to the vastness of what Destiny is trying to make of the human race and its history. One who has friends and is a friend should never think of himself as anything small. He is part of a force in the world. He is a maker of the future. He is a multiplied interest in the world.

Friendship in one's life operates somewhat like a wheat separator, or a cotton gin, or a chemical filter. All the feelings, attitudes, emotions, and motivations of life pass through it and come out refined, purified and improved. It has been said that sometimes God tries us in the crucible of pain to burn away the dross. That is true, but sometimes He uses other means. His grace is, as a prophet said, "like a refiner's fire and a fuller's soap". He sometimes uses the cleansing process, and often the name of the fuller's soap He uses is friendship.

Friendship is a great evaluator. Some of us are by nature minus people, and others plus ones. Some of us change from either of these classifications into the other one. It is sad when a plus person changes to a minus one, but wonderful when a negative person manages to get over onto the positive side, out of the red ink on life's ledger into the black. Friendship is a great and constant means of bringing that to pass; because it changes the iron of life to steel, and the mixed ore to refined gold.

We should never let our emphasis get too far over on the temporal side. The most important things and the most permanent ones come through the mind



and the heart. Whatever is good for the heart is good for every other phase of being - especially happiness and the courage to accomplish things. Being our best is really no problem. Many things are helpful, but friendship brings it out surely and on the right level. It does this because it asks and gives nothing but good. On its road there is no going astray.

### REINFORCEMENT

**T**AKE a strand of twine or sewing thread and break it with your hands. That is easy. Now twist two together and see how much harder the combination is to break. Three, you can hardly break at all. The same is true of sticks of wood. A few fragile pieces laid crosswise can support great weights where one or two would break at once. Such is the power of reinforcement or combined strength. It holds true in human relations also. Every new friendship adds far more than the strength of one person to your life.

Did you ever know a person rich in friendships who was a failure, or a failure who was rich in friendships? People sometimes call it influence, but it is really friendship. The person with many friends is impregnable too. His enemies find themselves powerless because he is not one person, but a combination.

We should all have two kinds of friends for two kinds of purpose, and dealt with in two separate ways. We should have some friends we can help and some who can help us. Of course we may also have some whom we can help in some ways, and who can help us in other ways. A friendship should have purpose, and should be of some benefit to someone. It should have results and bear fruit. An active friendship will do this, so let the fruit be of value. As two or more lives reinforce each other, let it be for the benefit of all concerned.

The day may come when some of the first group will reinforce you because you have helped to build up their strength to do so. Perhaps you have done this with strength others have encouraged and developed in you. Such is the many-sidedness of friendship. So are its multiple strands united to the benefit of all. Its power and beneficence literally go out to the ends of the earth.

Do not be condescending with that first group of friends, for friendship cannot be patronizing and remain friendship. Do not be compromising either, for the object is to help them up, not to let yourself down. What they need is an example set before them in true good will. Let them feel that you are both climbing together. Try without seeming effort to be an inspiration to them, and like it.

From the second group of friends, gather all the inspiration you can for yourself, and follow every gleam of light you find shining in their lives. This virtue constantly needs replenishing as we give out from our supply. If they are wise, learn from them. If they have excellences, emulate them. All

this will be of value to you, and you may be helping them at the same time, who knows? A good transaction carries benefit both ways.

As you discriminate between these two groups of friends, for you cannot deal with both in quite the same way, keep it secret. Never let it show, for it will be misinterpreted and defeat your purpose. Do not exhibit any feeling of superiority in the presence of the one nor grovel in the presence of the other. Be humble, sincere, human, interested, helpful, and appreciative. Be the life-giving nucleus of the group, a force that holds them together.

You are a strand, perhaps the chief one, in that multiple cord. Be a sure and dependable one by being loyal and doing your part. Nothing can break you or any of the others, because nothing can break the oneness of the many.

### THE CHANGING WORLD

**T**HIS is a changed and changing world, and the fact has a definite relation to the matter of friends and friendship. With regard to these sacred relationships, we have to adapt our lives to the times just as we do in everything else. Let us say at once, however, that no change has taken place or can take place that will lessen the sacredness of the friend relationship or cause it to cease to be. Life has changed some of the processes of friendship, but not its nature nor importance. In some outer appearances, making and keeping friends is not what it once was; but in its essence, it is the same forever.

We live under increased pressures and multiplied demands today. The necessary processes of living take more time and energy, but this is no reason for slackening our hold on this privilege of living which is emphasized, rather than diminished, by the change. If we ever needed each other's friendship, we need it now.

The new world life has changed the matter of space for living. We are crowded closer together. We have less of what Daniel Boone called "elbow room". Instead of having to follow the road to distant places to see people, we see them crowding into our range of vision all the time. But does that keep us from needing friends? Any child of the present age knows that one can get lonelier on a crowded street or a great concourse, than on a solitary road or in the silence of a forest. We must stand by each other to combat this "crowded loneliness".

We are living in a time of changing thought, custom, and emphasis. We have to guard some of the values by which we have lived to keep them from being destroyed. We may sometimes feel disturbed about some of the transformations taking place. We need each other's friendly counsel to help us see clearly, and not lose heart. It is a time for friends to stick together,

but how can they do that if there be no friends? We seem to be losing much, but this is one of the things we cannot afford to lose.

We are living in a time of increased educational opportunities but in new forms and with new emphases. We who used to trudge long roads to school, now see children going around the corner to larger and finer ones. We dare not let the new culture be hard, cold, and spiritless. It must not lack idealism. It cannot replace friendship, but can only emphasize the need for something to keep conscience and honor abreast of knowledge.

We are living in a time of international stress. We must cultivate and cherish everything that can help to quench the fires of jealousy, covetousness, and hatred; something to build, maintain, and spread a better spirit in the world. Its name is Friendship - personal, collective, international.

These are times when we need all possible help to steady us and help us keep our courage strong. We must be able to say with the Apostle that we never lose heart. Who are the last ones to lose heart? People who have and are friends.

#### TECHNIQUES

**F**RIENDSHIP is hardly a technical matter, of course, yet there are right ways and wrong ways to proceed. Which ones are best may vary some with individual cases, yet the main principles hold rather sure. One naturally wants his friendships to be of the best quality possible, and naturally that will depend more or less on the kind of friends he seeks and how he seeks to find and keep them. It will also depend on the kind of a friend he is prepared to be. Let us, then, take a general glance at what might be called techniques, unless you have a better word.

The seed of friendship is living in the spirit of friendship. Its first principle is having a sympathetic and kindly attitude toward people in general. Your friends will have to come from that countless number of your fellow sharers of the life of this generation. Not all will respond in any active way, but no one will respond unless he is attracted by such an attitude on your part. Too, it is important not to engender the ill will of people with whom you may not become especially friendly. Every person you know, and for that matter every person you do not yet know, is a possible friend.

That includes the stranger and the person far away. Cherishing a friendly attitude makes us friends of people of whose existence we shall never know. It will take just such friendship to remake the total world life on a kindlier pattern.

\* Be at peace with all.

- \* Pray for all.
- \* Let your good will be not for a selected few, but for all mankind.
- \* Be grateful that wherever someone else has the same attitude you also are included in the circle of his good will though you may never meet.

This will improve the quality of your friendship for those you do know. As for those you do meet, a friendly word or a little kindness will usually begin the welding of a closer bond. Remember, though, that all this must be genuinely yourself and not an assumed manner.

Enemies are not to be overlooked, if you have them or ever come to have them. Most enmities are needless, and none need to be two-sided. A one-sided enmity seldom survives long. If you will think over your own experience, and that of others you know, you will discover a surprising and beautiful thing; namely, that some of the finest and truest friendships have been reconstructed out of enmities. Two people who have been enemies are usually so glad to get it over with that they are overjoyed to accept the first sign of a better attitude. Someone has to show that sign. Why not let it be you? It will pay you richly to learn to forgive.

● If there is, in your makeup, any element of curtness, sharpness, or impatience with people, get rid of it for it is poisonous. It is costing you friends to an extent of which you may not dream. At the same time it is damaging you.

● Watch for opportunities to be kind as one watches for flowers or opportunities for enjoyment. But do not keep accounts so you can taunt someone with the number of times you have tried. Do your part and keep doing it, then forget it. Life will take care of the rest.

● Use your friendships, especially your friendship for others. Use theirs for you too, but be careful about it. We meet an occasional person who doesn't begin to like us until we accept a kindness from him. Learn to discriminate, and be wise in your approaches and your methods of holding the friends you gain. Remember, however, that like everything else friendship needs exercise to keep healthy and strong. That means exercise both on your part and that of your friends.

#### AFFIRMATION

I extend my little personal life by building friendships around it. Thus I live in the lives of others, and they in mine.

Blessings,

YOUR INSTRUCTOR