

FRIENDSHIPS

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What is a friend? I read somewhere that a friend is someone who looks forward to seeing you and has now immediate plans for your improvement. How important is it to have friends? Can you imagine life without friends? Friends really are important to us, and this is especially true when we are stationed or working away from our family. There are some key points to keep in mind with regard to friendships.

1. Everyone is different in terms of how many friends they need. One person may feel comfortable having one or two friends and another enjoys knowing and socializing with many friends. For many the friendship of their partner fulfills many of their need for friendship, in fact a marital survey stated that the single most important goal of marriage is to have a friend.
2. Men often have a friend for a particular activity, for example a fishing buddy, a work-out friend, etc. Women tend to have friends that are more social and comprehensive as opposed to having friends with whom they share just one activity.

One thing that is important with developing friendships is to know the environment and to be aware of unique circumstances. If you just moved here it may be a great idea to put your energy toward meeting local people or fellow military families/individuals who also just arrived here, rather than putting energy to form friendships with those who will be moving to a new duty station in the next few months. When individuals are getting ready to leave they are going to be less open to forming friendships and relationships. When individuals have newly arrived they may be more open to forming new friendships and relationships.

In terms of environment it's a good idea of knowing where in the community is a good place to meet people and under what circumstances. Nightclubs in many ways are one of the less desirable places to develop friendships. Think about it for a second, how well can you carry on a conversation with music blaring in the background or someone being under the influence of alcohol, often saying stupid things. MWR offers classes and activities that are great ways to meet others and develop friendships. The Coast Guard Day activities, every August, for example, is a good place and event to meet and develop friendships. Other things that are helpful are to take courses or classes in things that interest you. A scuba course, a cooking class, yoga class, college, participate in an intramural activity, church activities, etc., are all good examples of places where you can meet and develop friendships in a good environment.