**The Art of Friendship**

The first step in the art of friendship is to be a friend, then making friends takes care of itself.

To be a friend we should start by being friends to ourselves, by being true to our highest and best and by aligning ourselves with the enduring values of human life that make for growth and progress.

To be a friend we should strive to be "like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," to be a source of refuge and strength to those who walk in darkness.

To be a friend we should believe in the inherent goodness of people and in their potential greatness; we should treat people in a big spirit, expectant of a noble response.

To be a friend we should strive to lift people up, not cast them down; to encourage, not discourage; to set an example that will be an inspiration to others.

To be a friend we should be sensitively responsive to the dreams and aims of others and should show sincere appreciation for the contributions others make to the enrichment of our lives.

To be a friend we should practice the companionship of silence and the magic of words that our speech may build and not destroy, help and not hinder.

To be a friend we should close our eyes to the faults of others and open them to our own.

To be a friend we should not attempt to reform or reprimand, but should strive only to make others happy if we can.

To be a friend we should be ourselves; we should be done with hypocrisy, artificiality and pretense, we should meet and mingle with people in quiet simplicity and humility.

To be a friend we should be tolerant, we should have an understanding heart and a forgiving nature, knowing that all people stumble now and then, and that those who never made a mistake never accomplished anything.

To be a friend we should join hands with all people who are working for great principles, great purposes and great causes; we should put our shoulders to the wheel to help achieve common goals.

To be a friend we should go more than halfway with our fellow people; we should greet others first and not wait to be greeted; we should radiate a spirit of overflowing good will.

To be a friend we should remember that we are human magnets; that like attracts like, and that what we give we get.

To be a friend we should recognize that no person knows all the answers, and that we should add each day to our knowledge of how to live the friendly way.

[Wilferd Arlan Peterson](http://www.livinglifefully.com/people/wilferdpeterson.htm)