

It's OK for friendships to grow, change

By Skylla Mumana.

By Skylla Mumana | Reporter

Ever since I was young, I have loved the idea of friends. I loved watching kid shows and seeing the camaraderie between the characters, or reading books and thinking about all the fun adventures they could go on together. I loved the idea of being able to rely on others when in a tough spot, or being able to share unique experiences with a group of people and have those memories last a lifetime. Overall, as a kid, I just really wanted friends.

And I got them. When I was young, I was lucky enough to make some incredible friendships that, to this day, I'm still maintaining. Even though we don't get to see each other often because of school and/or work, we still keep in contact through texting, FaceTime and various [social media platforms](#). It takes a bit of work, but it's worth it.

With that being said, outside of these friendships, there have been others that didn't end up as successful. Some that I thought would last a lifetime lasted years, others lasted months, and so on. For a while, I thought it was my fault that a lot of my friendships didn't last. I thought there was something wrong with me or my personality. I re-evaluated myself countless times, and I looked back into past encounters and situations. Then I started reevaluating those friendships, and I asked myself if I was happy in them — only to find that I truly and honestly wasn't.

As we grow and age, we enter new environments. Those experiences help to define us, and the friends we make in those moments become the ones who are important to us, especially in a college or professional environment. We start to share the same ideologies and values as those friends, and overall, we start to change. Because of this, it's almost inevitable that some of the [friendships](#) we have aren't the same as they once were.

Now don't get me wrong, friendships are hard work, and it can be even harder to let them go. You invested time, emotional energy and effort into them, so with any friendship or relationship you let go of, you're experiencing a loss. However, it can be beneficial to you in the long run. Sometimes, change is a good thing, and you have to let it pan out organically.

If you're not sure how to snuff this kind of situation out, just ask yourself a couple of questions. Do you take all the initiative in the friendship, or do you take none at all? Do you no longer look forward to hanging out with someone, or are you OK with their constant absence? Are your conversations less inviting and more tiring? Do you find yourself struggling to see them, and if you do, do you always feel mentally exhausted afterwards?

What I'm getting at is this: don't feel bad if you unadd that one friend from long ago or if communication with them falls out. Don't feel bad once you realize that the awkward

silence between you is becoming a constant deafening sound. You're not a bad person. Just understand that you're a new person and that it's a new day. You have new things that you're exploring, and the generalities and habits you used to have aren't a part of your identity anymore. You've grown. It's OK to [outgrow](#) your friendships, too.