

Lindon
CHARACTER
Connection

Friendship

December 2009

**“A friend is a person who knows me and still likes me.”
“A friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson**



(Reprint of December 2005 Article)

As I pondered writing this article, I came upon many quotes honoring true and deep friendship. For example:

**And a youth said, “Speak to us of
Friendship.”**

**Your friend is your needs answered...
For you come to him with your hunger,
and you seek him for peace...**

**And when he is silent your heart ceases
not to listen to his heart.**

**And let your best be for your friend...
For what is your friend that you should
seek him with hours to kill?**

Seek him always with hours to live.

**- Excerpt from The Prophet by Kahlil
Gibran**

One of my favorite quotes on friendship simply states, “A friend is someone who knows all about you but loves you anyway” (Anon.). I find great comfort in knowing a friend loves me for just being me. Ralph Waldo Emerson explains it more eloquently, “A friend is a person, with whom I may be sincere, Before him, I may think aloud.” In today’s world of hustle & bustle and glitz & glam, being able to be truly genuine with someone means so much.

A friendship of different life experiences or phases of life can be so enriching. George Eliot agreed, “Perhaps the most delightful friendships are those in which there is much agreement, much disputation, and yet more personal liking.” These friendships often are more able to draw from the differences and reveal our better selves. It’s amazing to me how rewarding and comfortable a friendship with differences can be.

Mark and I have a dear friendship with a couple whose marriage has fallen apart. It has been painful and uncomfortable to see them struggle. At first we thought we would

just act like we didn’t know. But we did know! And by doing so we were unable to support and nurture them. They both felt so alone and burdened. We weren’t able to “heroically” save their marriage. But we gave a non-judgmental ear to listen and a strong shoulder to lean on. We were able to help smooth the painful transition for their children. We stood by them in their time of need.

**We do love and appreciate the friend
that will stand by us in our trials:**

**The Friend Who Just Stands By
Author Unknown**

**When trouble comes your soul to try
You love the friend who just stands by.
Perhaps there’s nothing he can do;**

The thing is strictly up to you,

**For there are troubles all your own,
And paths the soul must tread alone;
Times when love can’t smooth the road,
Nor friendship lift the heavy load.**

**But just to feel you have a friend,
Who will stand by until the end;**

**Whose sympathy through all endures,
Whose warm handclasp is always yours,
It helps somehow to pull you through
Although there’s nothing he can do;**

**And so with fervent heart we cry,
“God bless the friend who just stands
by.”**

Sometimes a true friend is someone who doesn’t just stand by. I love a friend who can see my needs and not just hold my hand. They see what needs to be done and roll up their sleeves and just start helping. When we were moving to Utah from Minnesota our scheduled movers decided to simply not show up. It was mid-June and every moving company in the area, near and far, was completely booked. We had two days to be out of our home. So we rented the two biggest trucks we could find and started loading them ourselves. Within the hour friends

(Continued)

**“Don’t walk in
front of me; I
may not follow.**

**Don’t walk
behind me; I
may not lead.
Walk beside me
and just be my
friend.”**

-Albert Camus

**“Friendship
improves
happiness, and
abates misery,
by doubling
our joy, and
dividing our
grief.”**

**-Joseph
Addison**

**“The only way to
have a friend is to
be one.”**

**-Ralph Waldo
Emerson**

Book List

“The How I Found a Friend”

by Irena Hale

“The Very Lonely Firefly”

by Eric Caril

“The Giving Tree”

by Shel Silverstein

“The Secret Garden”

by Frances Hodgson Burnett



found out about our dilemma and started showing up to help. By the evening we had nearly fifty neighbors and friends helping us – packing the kitchen, loading the furniture, wrapping the art, watching our five children, bringing in food for everyone. Through all the chaos, something strong and miraculous was manifest to me. True friendship is not passive. It is love in action.

When we got to Utah we were welcomed with another miracle. Friends from Minnesota had called relatives in Lindon to tell them about our situation. As soon as we pulled the moving vans into our new driveway, pick-up trucks and Suburbans started pulling up. They were full of new neighbors, ready to help us unload. People we didn’t even know were reaching out to us in our time of need. Great compassion was shown to us through this volunteer friendship. We were blessed by those who were willing to serve utter strangers.

Lindon is a great place. Our family loves it here! As newcomers we have observed that many here have extended family and long-time friends who live nearby. Because of these strong relationships the impression is often given that they do not need new friends. The old adage “Make new friends but keep the old, Some are silver and the others gold,” seems relevant. I know that old friends are dear and special, like gold. But new friends can be of value as well. Don’t limit yourself to the gold because the silver is precious too. Maybe during this holiday season we can reach out to someone new. We can invite someone who isn’t just like us into our homes. You might be surprised by the wonderful relationships that develop.

So, do I think friendship is worth it in this busy world of work, family, church and children? To put it in the words of the insightful writer, Charles Dickens, “Friendship? Yes, please.”

By Cristie Wood

Family Activities

–Make a new family friend. As a family, make a Christmas craft or treat and take it to someone that you don’t know quite as well. Use this as a springboard for a get-acquainted conversation.

–Encourage involvement in various hobbies. A child that has many interests is fun to be around. While pursuing a hobby, your child may find a friend that he enjoys working with.

–Rudyard Kipling, was born on December 30, 1865. He is remembered for his short stories, poetry, and novels. One of his novels, *The Jungle Book*, tells about a boy and his adventures and friendships with animals. *How do friendships with those that are different from us enrich our lives?*

By Laura Clement

We, at Character Connection, would like to focus on helping parents access character materials by using the web site located at www.lindoncharacterconnection.com.

**Lindon
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