

Identifying a Genuine Friend

When is someone not a genuine friend?

It is perfectly normal to feel sad when a friendship ends, but sometimes it is for the best. If a 'friend' is treating you badly, or even just signalling by their behaviour that they no longer want to be friends with you, then it is best to consider ending the friendship. Here are some common times when people decide to end their friendship with someone.



If your friend doesn't communicate with you, if they don't respond to your calls, texts or other messages and never want to meet up with you, they may be trying to convey to you that they don't want to be friends with you. As a friendship is a reciprocal relationship, if the other person is signalling to you that they are not interested, then you need to accept that the friendship may be over.

As discussed above, some arguments or disagreements are normal in a friendship. However, if you spend most of your time arguing, and/or if you and your friend struggle to compromise and move forward from conflict, then it may be for the best to end the friendship.

Friends should always be there for each other and the relationship should be balanced. You should support and help each other. If your friend doesn't seem to help or support you, but still expects assistance from you, this is a 'one-sided' friendship and is not fair on you. Signs that your friend may be using you include:

- Only contacting you when they want something from you.

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- Failure to return your calls or emails.
- Claiming to be busy when you want to get together, but finding time when they need something.
- Not there for you during the important times in your life.

If it looks like your friend might be using you, this is not a healthy friendship.

You should be able to trust your friend and be able to confide in them. A true friend will not talk about you behind your back and will not break confidences, unless failure to do so would put you in significant danger.

If a friend betrays your trust for no good reason, you may well feel that you can no longer trust them, and without trust it is very difficult to have a meaningful friendship.

Below is a chart created by Marc Segar, a person with Asperger Syndrome. This chart can help you differentiate between real friends and people who are just pretending to be your friend.

True Friends	Hoax Friends	Enemies
Treat you the same way they treat all their friends.	May treat you differently to how they treat others.	May ignore you most of the time.
Make you feel welcome in the long term as well as the short term.	Might make you feel welcome in the short term and then drop you in the dirt.	Will make you feel unwelcome and will notice all your mistakes and may bring them to the attention of other people.
If they give you compliments they will be genuine and sincere.	Might give you many compliments which are NOT genuine.	May give you anything from sarcasm, put-downs and temper tantrums to the silent treatment.
Will treat you as an equal.	Might often make unfair requests of you.	Will often treat you as a less important person than them.
May help you to see the truth behind other people's hoaxes when suitable.	Might want you to make a spectacle of yourself	May set you up to receive aggression or scorn from others.
	May threaten not to be your friend anymore or play on your guilt if it is to help them get their own way.	
What to do:	What to do :	What to do :
Repay them with the same attention they give you and listen	Stand up to them and don't feel guilty about telling them to p*ss	You might have done something to annoy them or they might just be

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to them	off if they have said something which is obviously unfair	jealous of certain skills or knowledge you have. If it is jealousy, they will never admit to it.
Accept any compliments they give you by saying a simple 'thank you' and then you won't make them feel silly in any way for having complimented you.	They could be the kind of person who gets pleasure out of hurting people more vulnerable than themselves because they feel weak and inadequate inside. Remember that.	If you find them on their own at any time they might switch to being quiet and shy towards you and you might be able to ask them awkward questions as to why they behave differently towards you than they do towards other people. Also, if they can give you a good enough reason, it might be a chance to apologise if you have annoyed them in some way and say that you will try not to annoy them as much in future.

You are likely to meet many people who don't fit exactly into any one category in this table, in which case you must use your discretion.

Don't be living under the illusion that everyone who knows you cares about you because they don't. People who care about you will probably fall under the category of true friends or will otherwise be family.

Never underestimate the value of a **true** friend.