TATF
THEY ARE THE FUTURE



Friendship and me

An activity book for teens

www.theyarethefuture.co.uk

INTRODUCTION



Welcome to this Friendship and Me: Teen Workbook. Friendships have a huge impact on your mental health and happiness, so making your choice of friends is very important. The purpose of this workbook is to help you learn more about friendships, identify effective and ineffective aspects of your friendships and provide advice and skills to help you to develop and maintain healthy friendships that bring out the best in you- that help you to flourish and be who you truly are. These sets of skills can be drawn upon throughout the rest of your life.





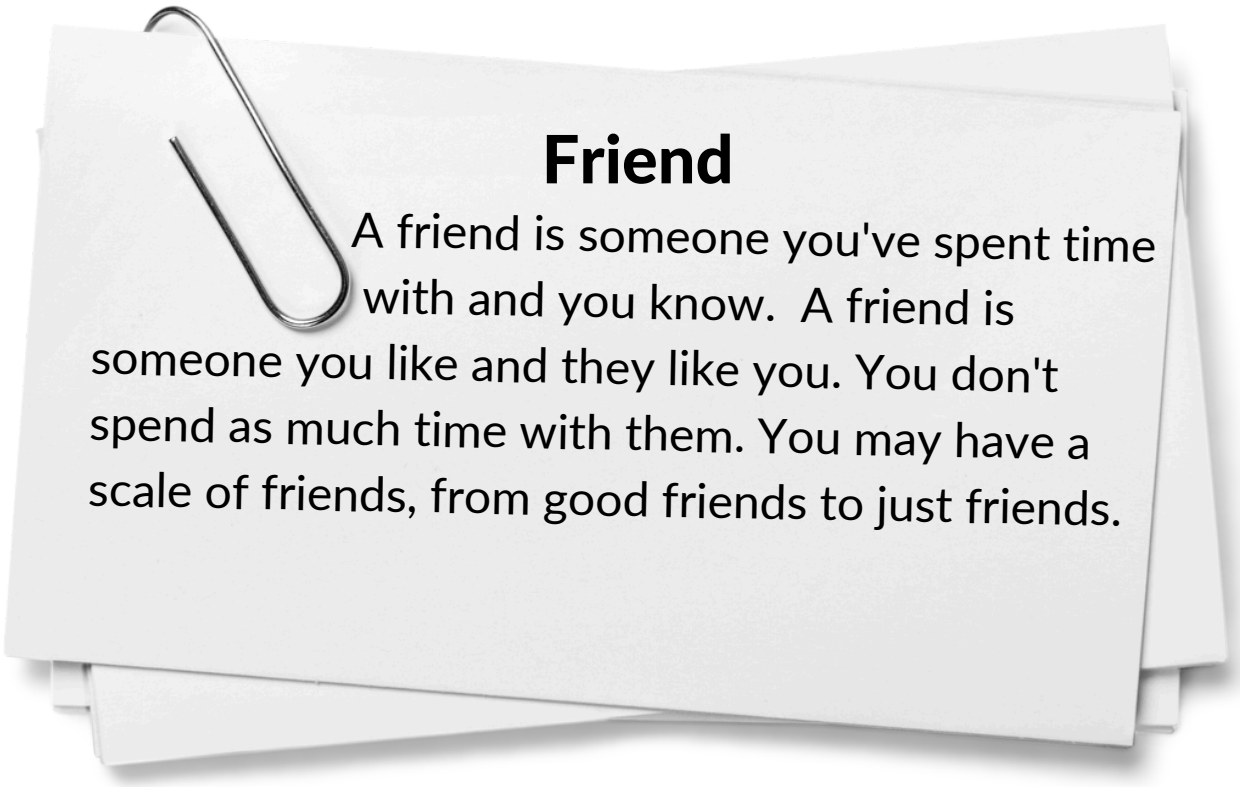
One of the most important aspects in building and maintaining your friendships is that you always need to be yourself. You do not need to change who you are, nor should your friends expect you to change.

TYPES OF FRIENDSHIPS



Best Friend

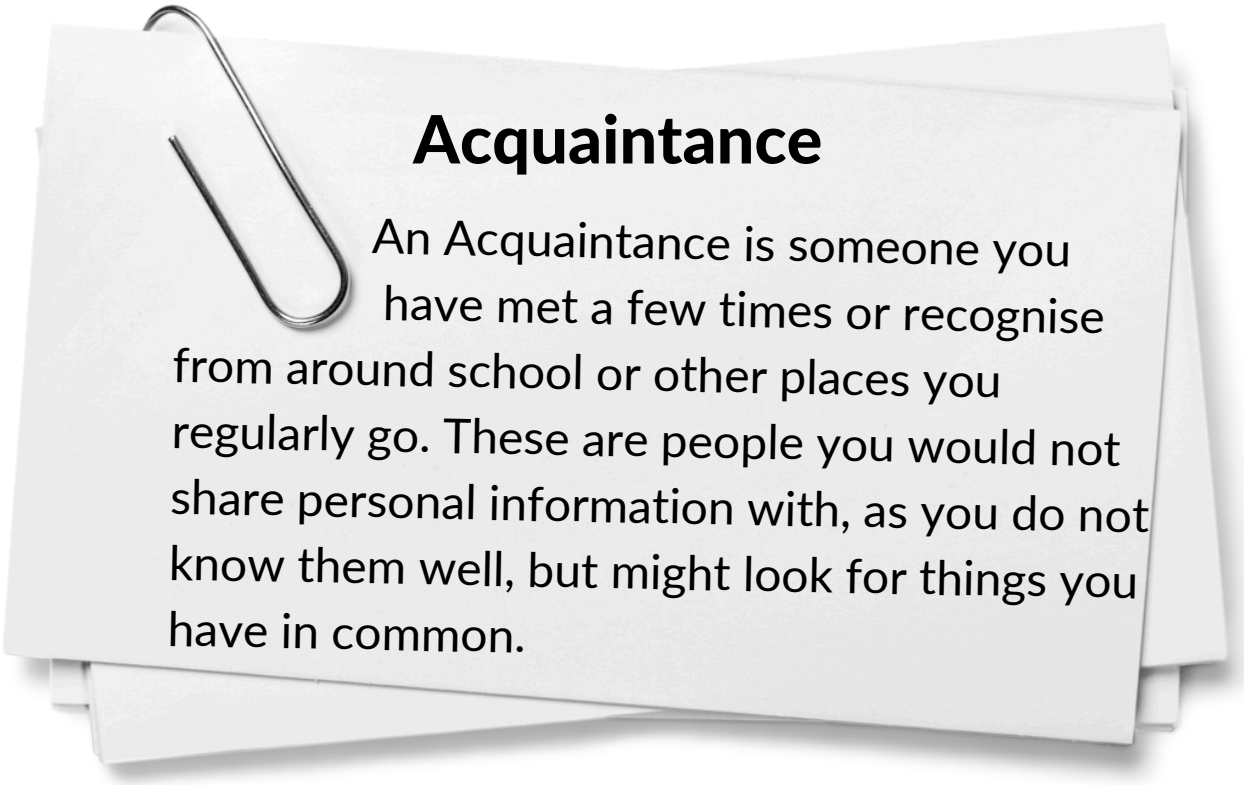
A best friend is someone who you know very well and you spend a lot of time with. A best friend is someone you want to talk to when you're excited, hurt, scared or just want to chat. A best friend shares important moments with you. Not everyone has a best friend and this is ok.



Friend

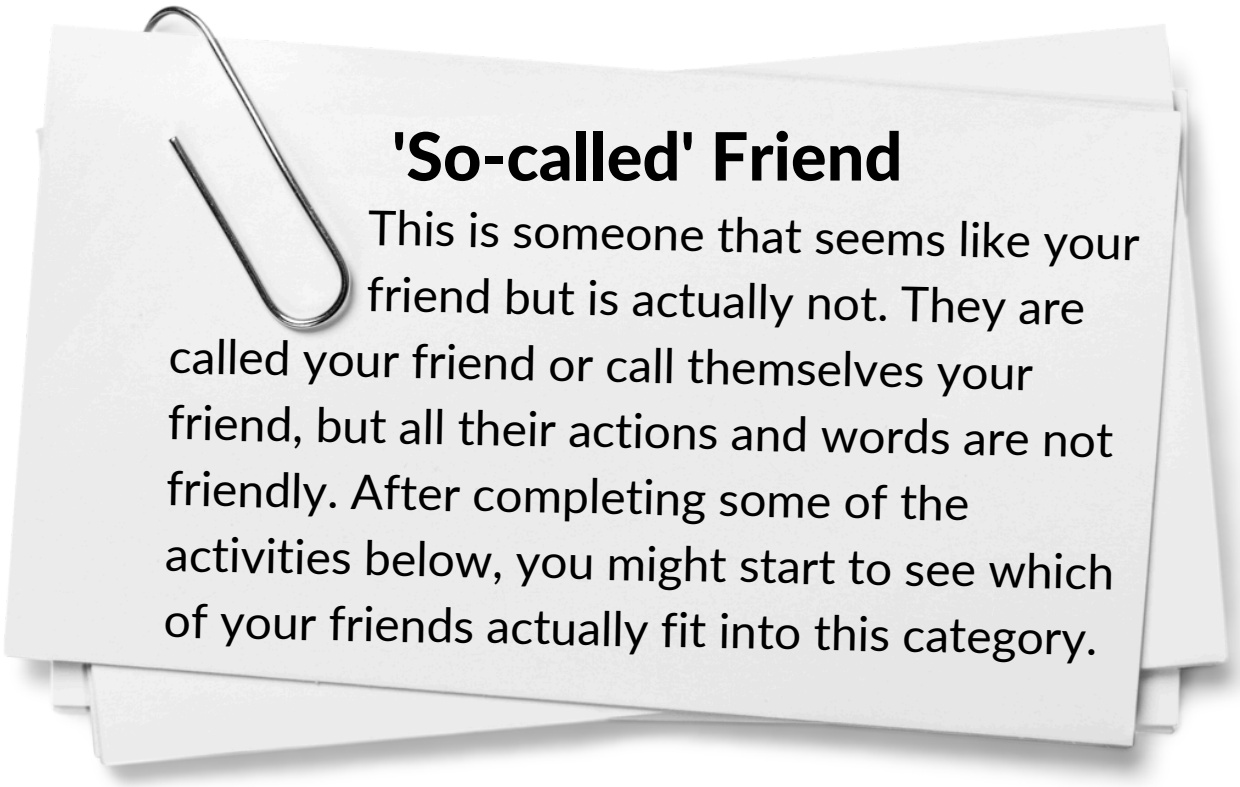
A friend is someone you've spent time with and you know. A friend is someone you like and they like you. You don't spend as much time with them. You may have a scale of friends, from good friends to just friends.

TYPES OF FRIENDSHIPS



Acquaintance

An Acquaintance is someone you have met a few times or recognise from around school or other places you regularly go. These are people you would not share personal information with, as you do not know them well, but might look for things you have in common.



'So-called' Friend

This is someone that seems like your friend but is actually not. They are called your friend or call themselves your friend, but all their actions and words are not friendly. After completing some of the activities below, you might start to see which of your friends actually fit into this category.

FRIENDSHIP MAKING: TOP TIPS

Be Yourself- when starting new friendships, it is important to be yourself. If you try to be someone else or someone you think they want you to be, the friendship is not built on honesty and will not be a healthy friendship. See the 'being yourself' page for more.

Take initiative- if you are struggling to make friends, try joining a new club or hobby (this can be inside or outside of school). This opens up your options to people who have things in common with you. Whilst this is a good starting point, try to find the confidence to approach new people as well. Starting the conversation with something friendly is a good way to start. For example: 'I like your top today' or 'isn't the weather nice today.' It is also normal to feel unmotivated or not ready to make friends, and this will develop naturally, so do not force yourself into making new friends if you do not feel ready.

Set Targets- when entering a situation where there is the possibility of making new friends, set yourself a target of talking to three people. This will prompt you to make an effort to talk to new people and open up new possibilities.

Take Things Slow- it is important to remember that you will not find a best friend overnight. Taking things slowly also avoids overwhelming yourself and your new potential friend. Let your friendships flourish and shape themselves naturally.

FRIENDSHIP MAKING: TOP TIPS CONTINUED...

Be interested- make eye contact, smile and listen. This friendly and inviting appearance will help the other person to feel comfortable and want to keep engaging with you. In addition, ask questions to show you are interested in the conversation and want to learn more about them.

Make Plans- it will help you to get to know another person better if you meet them 1:1. This shows that you are putting in the effort to be friends. Make sure to be consistent. Make future plans and try your best to stick to them. It is also important to remember that it is ok to need time alone. You might need some time alone/downtime to regain energy from meetups, so do not push yourself into making plans if you need this time.

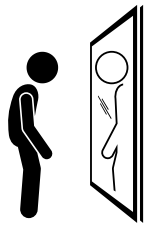
Choose Good Friends- it is important to remember that you deserve good friends. Not pursuing friendships which do not make you feel good is perfectly normal. It can be a bit of a trial and error task at first. Finding friends also involves an element of luck, which can and will change. Use this workbook to help you to determine which traits you are looking for in a friend and ways that you can be a good friend.

TOP TIPS



BEING YOURSELF

This page will look into what 'being yourself' actually means, this can be difficult. It might be the feeling of being completely relaxed and comfortable in front of others, so that you can act and speak without having to think.



"Take a moment to reflect"

Can you think of another way to describe how you know when you are 'being yourself' or what 'being yourself' means to you?

Important Tips to Remember:

1. Get to know your different 'selves' - it might be that some days you are happier or confident or less excitable than other days and this is perfectly normal. It is also important to remember that you probably have 'different selves' depending on who you are with. For example, you might feel you can be fun-loving and confident in front of some friends, whereas with others you might take on a more serious and supportive self.
2. Do not aim to please others all the time or worry about how others view you- this can alter 'yourself' into being someone you think others want you to be rather than actually being yourself.
3. Learn more about yourself- the values activity on the next page will help you to do this.
4. Appreciate and be confident in who you are- each person is unique and this is something to celebrate.

BEING YOURSELF: BASED ON VALUES

Another way to understand what 'being yourself' means is to work out your own personal values. Values are what you find important in life, and they help us to make our decisions. If you are aware of what values are important to you, you will understand more about yourself and may want to find similar values in a friend. Use the value cards below to help you with this by giving each of them an importance score out of 10 and the 3 with the highest scores are the most important values to you at this time. It is important to remember that your values are likely to change throughout your life.

LOYALTY	BEING UNIQUE	HAPPINESS
INDIVIDUALITY	BECOMING WISE	GROWTH
FAIRNESS	BALANCE	GENEROSITY
KINDNESS	MAKING A DIFFERENCE	CREATIVITY

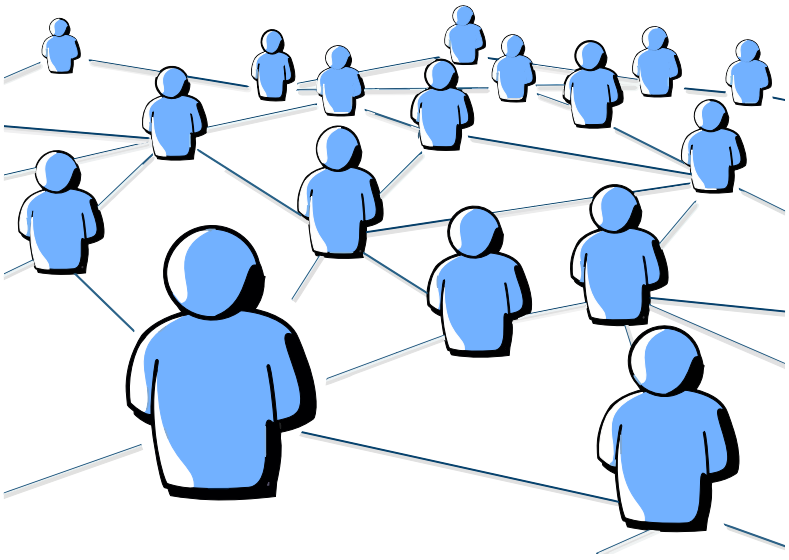
BEING YOURSELF: BASED ON VALUES

RISK-TAKING	HARD WORKING	CHALLENGING MYSELF
HAVING COMFORT	BEING PART OF A COMMUNITY	BETTERING MYSELF
SEEKING GOOD HEALTH	INDEPENDENCE	BEING PRESENT
GRATITUDE	BEING COURAGEOUS	ACHIEVING
PEACE	HARMONY	HUMILITY/BEING HUMBLE

NETWORK OF FRIENDS

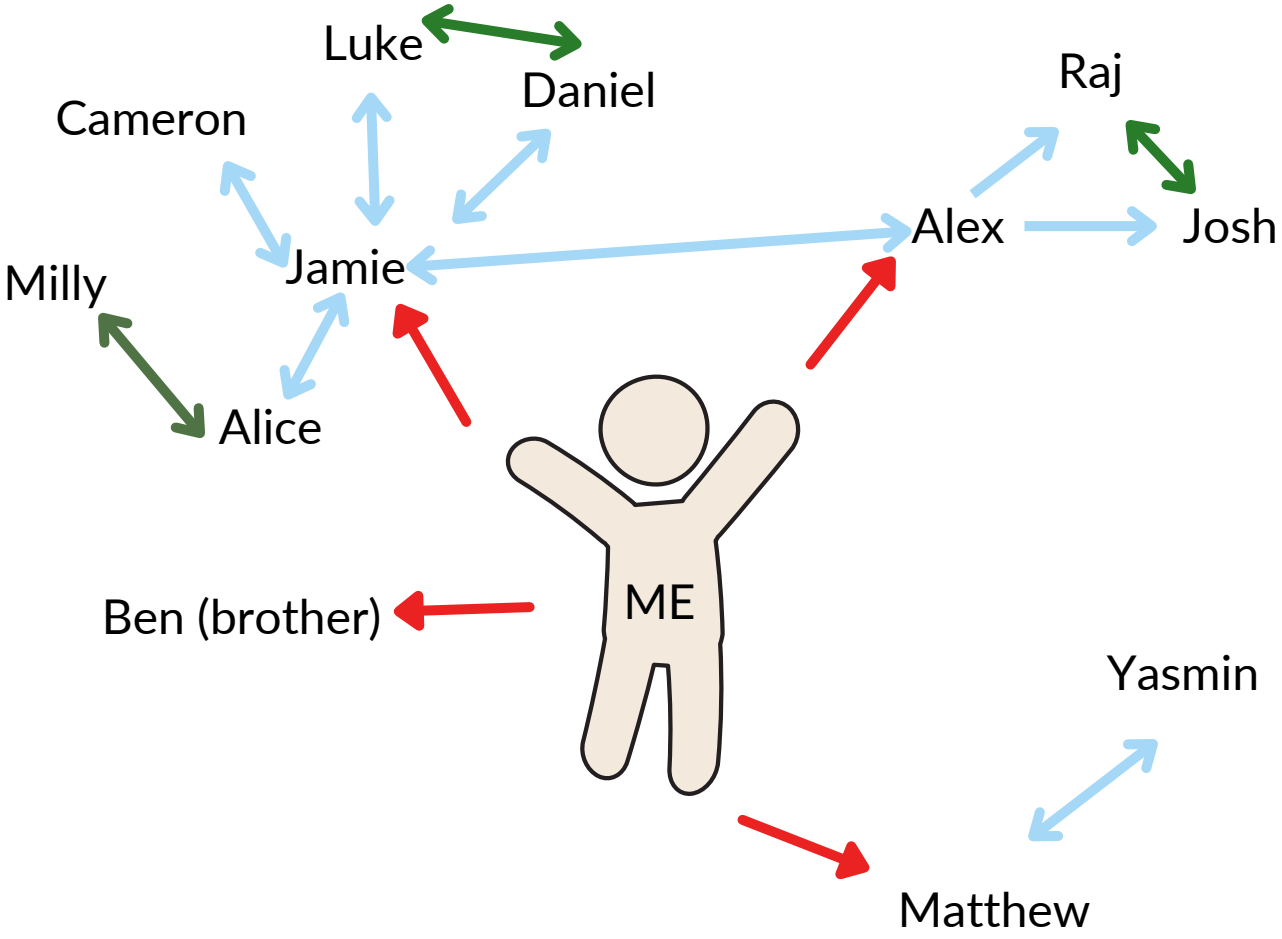
Network of friends definition: the links between and among your friendships

To do this activity, start by writing out all of your friends, using the arrows, from friends that you do not know well to your best friends. You can then draw lines in a different colour between your friends that know each other. This is a good way to work out who your close friends are, where they fit into your life and who knows whom. You can refer back to this whilst going through this workbook and see if you would move anyone around. It is also important to remember that you may not have a 'network' of friends and this is ok.



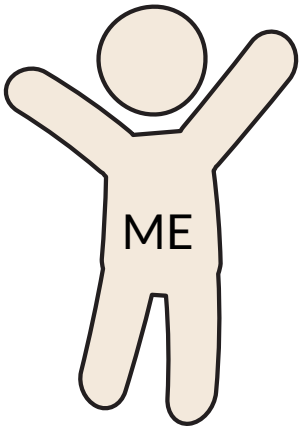
There is an example of how to do this activity on the pages below and then a blank one for you to have a go. You can choose your arrow line colour scheme and plot it however you would like that makes sense to you. You may need to do this on a bigger piece of paper if needed.

NETWORK OF FRIENDS: EXAMPLE FOR HENRY



In this example you can see that Henry has four main best friends, called Jamie, Alex, Matthew and Ben who are indicated by red arrows. You can also see that Jamie and Alex are also friends, indicated by a blue arrow. In this example Henry's friendship group with Jamie also involves Daniel, Luke, Cameron, Milly and Alice, all indicated with blue lines. You can also see that within this friendship group Luke and Daniel are best friends and so are Milly and Alice, indicated by a green line. Therefore, Cameron does not have any best friends in this group and Milly and Jamie are not friends as there is no line between them.

NETWORK OF FRIENDS: YOUR TURN



WANTED:
A GOOD FRIEND

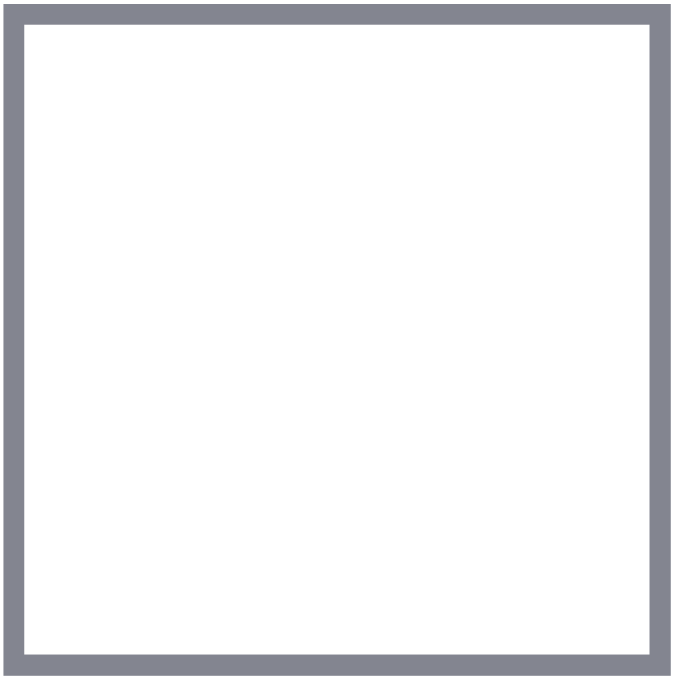
This activity requires you to write an advertisement sharing the qualities you look for in a friend. Start by drawing a picture of your ideal friend. The format of this activity will help you to think about what kind of friendship you are looking for (write under 'job description'), what qualities you believe are important in this type of friendship (write under 'requirements') and what you can offer in return to the friend to build a friendship (write under 'rewards'). This activity is perfect for helping you to build new friendships and recognise that you can have different types of good friends.





For example, you could be looking for a good friend who plays on the same sports team as you who will encourage healthy behaviours, build your confidence and push you to be your best within the sport or you could be looking for a good friend who will listen to you when you are feeling down and provide emotional support and boost happiness. See the next page for a template...

WANTED:
A GOOD FRIEND



Job Description: (what kind of friendship you are looking for)

Requirements: (what qualities are important in this friendship)

Rewards: (what you can offer in return to the friend)

RECIPE FOR A GOOD FRIEND

This activity is similar to the previous one, but focuses more on the 'requirements' aspect. Imagine you are making a potion and when people drink it they would become the perfect friend for you. This will help you to understand what makes a good friendship. You can also use this to reflect on your own friendship qualities and the attitudes and behaviours of your current friends and establish if they are *actually* good friends.

Write good qualities that you believe are important onto the cauldron on the next page. See below for an example.



RECIPE FOR A GOOD FRIEND



FRIEND SCAVENGER HUNT

This activity will help you to interact with new people and learn new things about them. This activity could be taken to a party or on the first day at a new school. To complete this activity you need to find a friend who fits each one of the points below and then write their names in.

Find a friend who...

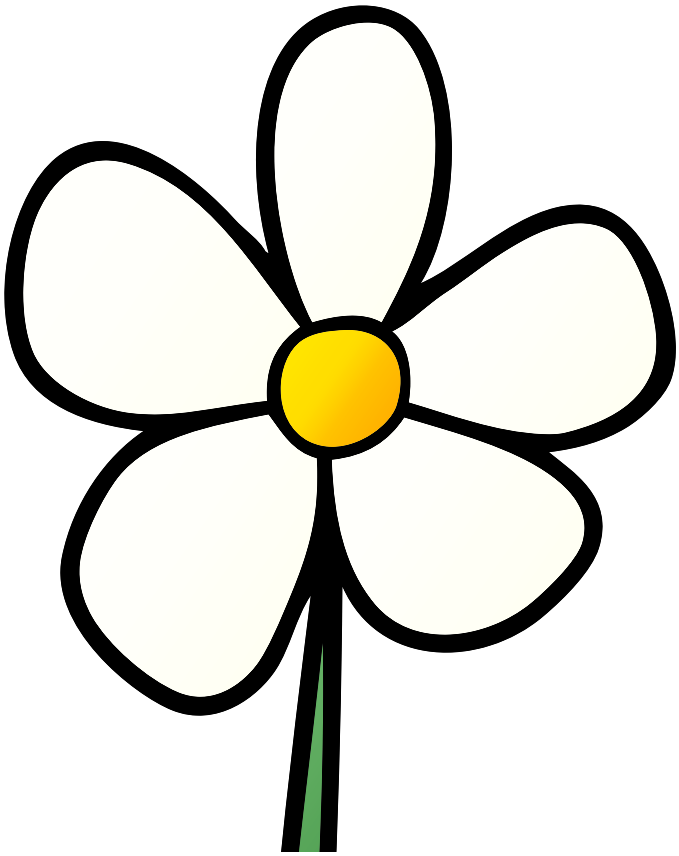
Plays a sport	Is wearing the same colour as you	Has a pet
Has the same favourite school subject as you	Is taller than you	Can tell you a joke
Likes to dance	Has an older sibling	Has been on a plane
Has a birthday in the same month as you	Plays a musical instrument	Has the same favourite film as you

Feel free to make your own scavenger hunt with things that you are interested in finding out about other people

FRIENDSHIP FLOWER

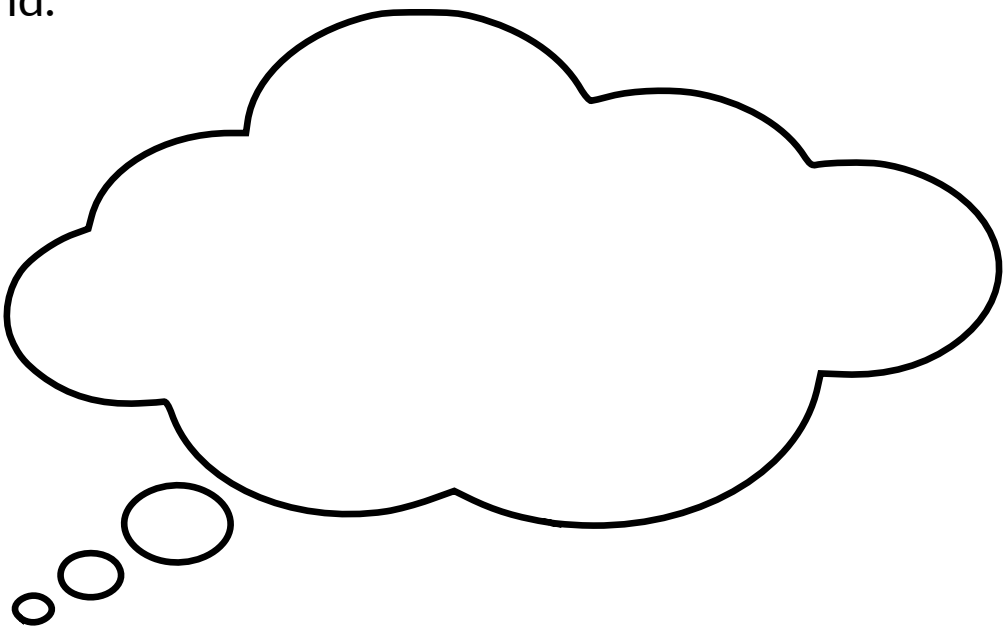
An important thing to remember about friends is that they should add to your life and help you to 'grow'. You can picture your friends as the different things that a flower (you) needs to grow. With them, they can help you to be the best person you can be.
Have a long and hard think about which of your friends truly **add** to your life and make you 'grow' and 'blossom' and write their names on each of the petals below.

Remember, you might not have many names to add to the petals which is perfectly normal as these truly good friends are difficult to find. After completing this activity, it might be interesting to look back to your first 'network of friends' activity and see if there are any differences amongst your close friends.



YOU GOT A FRIEND IN ME

When thinking about friendships. it is important to remember that it is a two way thing. Reflecting on what you bring to a friendship is important for understanding your worth when choosing your friends. It is also a good way to improve your friendship skills, if you remember 'be the friend that you would like to have'
In the thought bubble below, write some of the qualities that you think you bring to a friendship, or reasons you believe you are a good friend.



If you are struggling, use the word 'FRIENDS' on the next page and write a quality that you have for each letter. For example, **f**unny, **r**eal, **i**nterested, **e**mpathetic, **n**on-judgemental, **d**ependable, **s**upportive.

friends

YOU GOT A FRIEND IN ME

F-

R-

I-

E-

N-

D-

S-

FRIENDSHIP QUALITY REFLECTION

If you are still not sure about the quality of your own friendships, here are some questions to ask yourself. By reflecting on the quality of your friendships, you might realise there are friendships that you would like to put more effort into or you might want to talk to your friends about an aspect of your friendship that isn't working so well. This also helps you to realise who your healthy friends are, who should remain in your inner circle.
Firstly, rank your top 5-10 friends using the following categories:

Best Friend



Very Good Friend



Good Friend

After this, think about if your friends would put you in the same place? If not, why not? How do you think that affects the day-to-day quality of your friendship. For example, if you placed someone as your best friend who would put you in their good friend list instead.



FRIENDSHIP QUALITY REFLECTION CONTINUED...

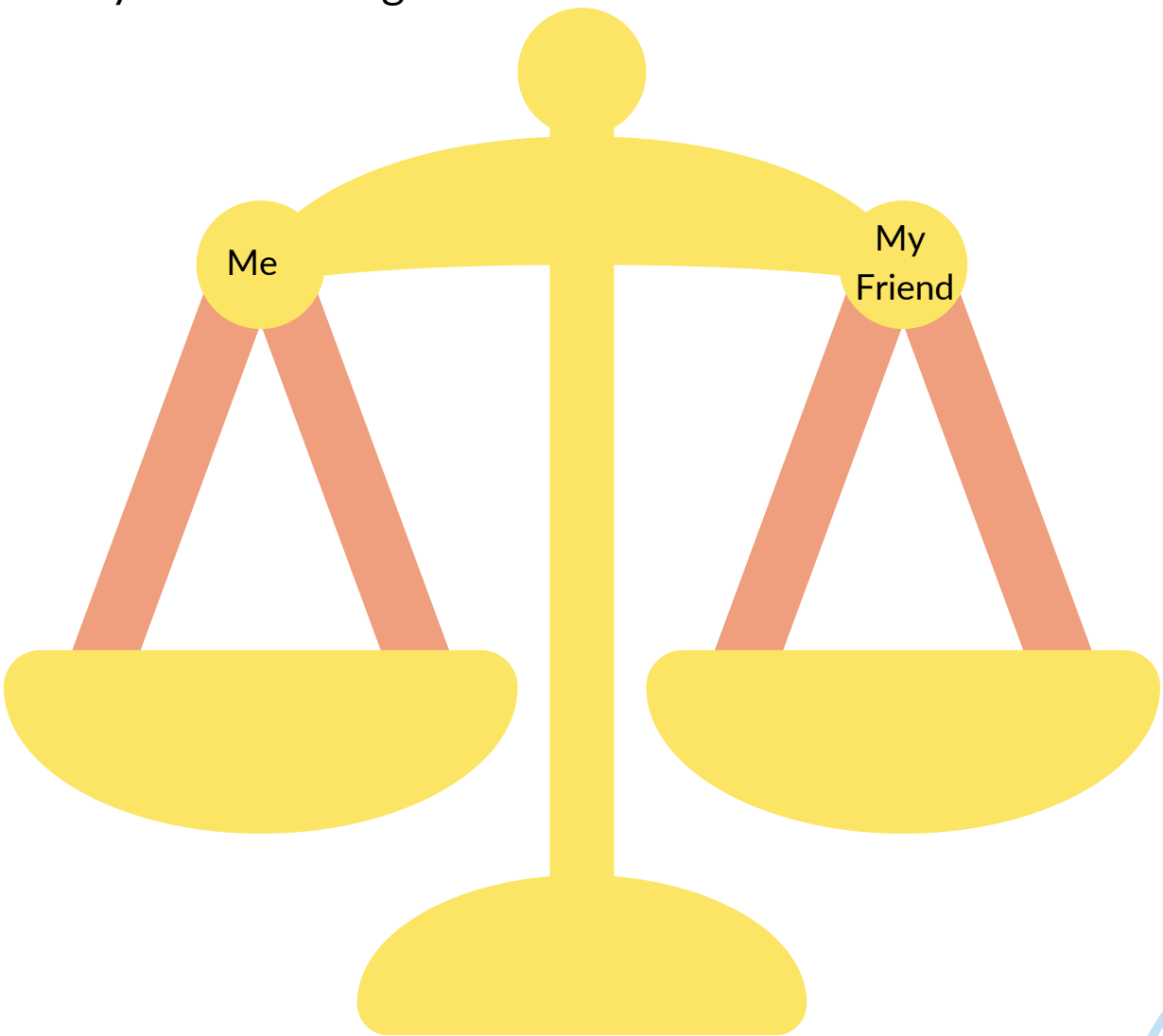
These 10 questions will also help you to reflect on your friendships. You will need to think about one particular friend at a time.

1. How much time do you spend each week with this friend? Including messaging/gaming with them.
2. What would you rate the quality of this time out of 10?
3. Write up to 5 things that you appreciate about this friend.
4. Is there any drama in your friendship?
5. Write up to 5 things that you don't like about your friend.
6. If you could change something in the friendship, what would it be?
7. Is the friendship balanced from a give-and-take perspective? If you are unsure about this, there is an exercise on the next page to help with this.
8. What is your favourite memory with this friend?
9. How would you rate your happiness out of 10 after spending time together?
10. How do you feel when you are about to spend time with this person? Excited? Happy? Nervous? Worried?

FRIENDSHIP BALANCE

Having a give-and-take balance in a friendship is very important. It allows both individuals to feel valued and appreciate the friendship, which helps to maintain and develop healthy friendships. For this exercise you will need to write all the aspects that you bring to your friendship on the left and all the aspects that your friend brings on the right.

After completing this exercise, if one side has a lot more written in it than the other then your friendship is imbalanced. If this is a friend you want in your life, you will either need to work out how you can put more into the friendship or you will need to talk to your friend about how you are feeling.



DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 'BANTER' AND 'BULLYING'

This activity is about drawing the line between 'banter' and 'bullying'. Sometimes it can be difficult to tell the difference between these two, but it is an important distinction to make when working out who your true friends are.

BANTER

BANTER IS THE PLAYFUL AND FRIENDLY EXCHANGE OF TEASING REMARKS

BULLYING

BULLYING IS HURTFUL, REPETITIVE, INTENTIONAL AND INVOLVES AN IMBALANCE OF POWER.

When thinking about these, start comparing 'banter' back to this definition of bullying. For example, is the banter hurtful- is it personal? Does the person saying it know it's hurtful? Is it repetitive? And is the 'banter' happening not just back-and-forth between you two, but in front of other people so that you feel embarrassed or outnumbered?

If you think the 'banter' could be 'bullying' the first thing to do is let them know that you don't find it funny, and try to describe to them how it is making you feel. Sometimes people don't realise how their behaviour is affecting you until you tell them, especially if you're pretending to laugh. If they carry on once you have told them how you feel, then you might need to think about whether they are your real friend or not.

RESOLVING CONFLICT: TOP 5 TIPS POSTER'

1. **STOP**: Try not to let things get out of control. Take a step back from the situation and try to calm down, emotions such as anger and sadness can make conflict more difficult to resolve

2. **SAY** what the conflict is about. Make sure you both have a clear understanding of what is causing the disagreement, and what each of you wants or doesn't want

3. **THINK**: of positive options. What is a fair solution to the conflict that meets both of your needs?

4. **CHOOSE**: a positive option that each of you can agree on. It is ok to 'agree to disagree' and move on.

5. **RESPECT**: the opinions of others, even if you can't agree. It is also important to apologise to the other person if it is needed. A good apology will communicate three things: regret, remedy and responsibility. This will help to improve your relationship with others.

FRIENDSHIP CHANGING AND ENDING

It is important to remember that it is normal for your friendships to change. As you grow up, learn and change, friendships sometimes just drift apart, and others may end abruptly. This is nothing to fear and is perfectly normal.

It is also perfectly normal to realise that you do not want to be friends with one of your friends anymore. The important thing to remember in this situation is to be kind and respectful.



It is important to talk to someone that you trust if you feel like you need to. Sometimes talking it through with someone can make you feel better. It can also be helpful to focus on your resilience. Rather than thinking of yourself as a victim, try to focus on how you can be a problem-solver and think about other people you could start talking to or what you would do differently if this was to happen again.

FINAL COMMENTS AND ADVICE

You have now come to the end of this friendship booklet. Hopefully you have found it helpful, whether you are looking for new friends or feel like you do not yet have any real friends.



Good luck with your friendships and remember the most important thing to take from this booklet is to always be yourself.