

Female Friendship – Women as Friends Exercise

According to psychologist and author Barbara Hunter, PhD,
“Friendship is one of the things women do best. We are better at making friends than many of the things we put our minds to because it comes naturally.”

Do you agree/disagree?

Ready to Heal (156, second edition) identifies three types of female friendship.

They are as follows:

- the crush-the woman you fall in love with
- the sideline friend-the friend who needs you/ your energy jumpstarts her life
- the acting out friend –the friend you need to accompany you when you want to hunt

When friendships are in these limiting categories, they don’t permit regular connection. You may experience fleeting moments of closeness only to find yourself bored, suffocated, annoyed, or yearning for more attention. You may have times of intensity, drama, and perhaps flattery. However, the relationship never quite feels safe, or mutual.

In active sex and love addiction, intensity between women is mistaken for intimacy. Adrenaline substitutes for clarity of thinking. Your friendships happen “to” you rather than reflect your authentic choices. Your friends may seem like a gathering of individuals who came to the same party but after the initial novelty wears off, have nothing to say.

In the space below, make a list of your current friends and friends you have lost. Beside each name, identify whether she is/was a crush, a sideline friend, or an acting out friend. If these categories don’t fit, create one that does.

- | | | | |
|-----|--------|----------|------------|
| 1. | /crush | sideline | acting out |
| 2. | /crush | sideline | acting out |
| 3. | /crush | sideline | acting out |
| 4. | /crush | sideline | acting out |
| 5. | /crush | sideline | acting out |
| 6. | /crush | sideline | acting out |
| 7. | /crush | sideline | acting out |
| 8. | /crush | sideline | acting out |
| 9. | /crush | sideline | acting out |
| 10. | /crush | sideline | acting out |

Questions for Thought

Think about the women in your life, and the quality of your friendships. Consider what kind of friend you are. Are you trustworthy, available, and interested in your friends?

Consider how much time you spend with your friends. Which friend(s) make your life feel more full (your life is better for her presence)?

Which friend(s) support your best self (genuinely want good things for you)?

Which friend(s) leave you feeling lonely or depleted (drain your energy)?

Which friends stir up a feeling of being less than?

Which friend(s) feel worth the time to work through these issues?