

# 5 Levels of Friendship

Hey Psych2Goers, welcome back to another Psych2Go video.

Have you ever wondered how friendships develop?

Do you want to know how someone goes from being a stranger to being your best friend?

Well, there's no widely accepted theory on the formation of friendships in social psychology yet.

There is still a natural progression that is easy to observe.

So here are the five levels of friendship.

## **Level one, strangers.**

Before you become friends with anyone, you start out as strangers.

While you certainly know of each other, like their name or what they look like, your relationship is still very superficial.

Maybe you see them pass by in the hallways or you run into them on your way home.

You're still yet to introduce yourself.

What matters most at this stage is the impressions you make.

A good enough impression may pique their interest and make them want to know you more.

And with continued interaction, it won't take long for you to go from being strangers to acquaintances.

## **Level two, acquaintances.**

An acquaintance is someone you know to a slight degree.

You might exchange names and contact information with them, but you only ever reach for important, usually work-related reasons.

You may become acquaintances with someone because you enjoy making small talk in class or at work.

Your interactions are occasional, friendly and polite.

Some people may even stay acquaintances for years without ever developing a friendship.

But when you start to spend more time with them outside of work or school and get closer to them, your relationship may turn into a friendship.

## **Level three, casual friends.**

Casual friends are all about shared interests, fun activities and enjoying each other's company.

You see them every once in a while to have fun with them, but you'd never call them after a breakup or go out of your way just to see them.

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Casual friends are defined by exploration.

At this point, you're willing to share more about yourself, but you're only presenting them with the best version of who you are.

Your connection with them is still uncertain, and so you often keep them at an emotional distance.

You're happy to spend time with them, but don't yet feel comfortable letting them see, lose control or break down and cry.

### **Level four, close friends.**

When you're close friends with someone, it means you've accepted them into your inner circle.

It may take a long time to reach this stage since a strong bond of mutual trust, commitment and a comfortable sense of familiarity is usually needed.

Most of us may be careful about who we let into our lives and who we allow ourselves to be vulnerable to.

You can always count on a close friend to be there for you when you need them.

They cheer you on and listen to your rants.

They're part of your weekend and summer plans.

While not all close friends end up becoming lifelong best friends, your friendship is still very much worth cherishing.

### **And level five, intimate friends.**

Casual friends may come and go and close friends may drift apart, but a best friend stays with you forever.

They're the ones you trust most, the ones who have stood by your side since the very beginning and the ones whose happiness is just as important as your own.

Intimate friends share a deeper level of connection than close friends.

They keep all your deepest, darkest secrets and know things about you no one else does.

You're not afraid to speak your mind around them because you feel like you have nothing to hide.

You're comfortable letting them see you at your rawest and most vulnerable.

Do you have a casual friend you're hoping to become best friends with or someone in your life you never expected would be such a good friend?

Let us know in the comments below.

If you found this video helpful, be sure to like, subscribe, and share this video with those who might benefit from it.

The references and studies used in this video are added in the description below.

Thanks for watching and we'll see you in our next video.

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### Discussion Questions

1. Do you think it's necessary to have friends at every level described in the video? Why or why not?
2. In your opinion, what is the most important quality of a best friend? Justify your answer.
3. Some people believe it's important to have a large group of friends, while others prefer to have a few close relationships. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each perspective?
4. The video focuses on the positive aspects of friendships. What are some potential downsides or challenges that can occur in friendships?
5. How do you think social media and technology have influenced the way friendships develop and are maintained today?