

Are you really a friend?

Written by Timothy Houston
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My friend Pastor Lawrence Knighton posted this on his Facebook page and I was so impressed with his question and answers that I thought I would share it. Pastor Knighton's question of the day was: "Are you really a friend?" Because the word friend is used so freely in relationships and in general, he wanted to share what attributes a real friend has. Pastor Knighton went on to say that a real friend does what he calls the 3 E's. Real friends educate, evaluate and elevate you.

First, real friends educate you. In other words, a real friend gives you knowledge. I agree with this wholeheartedly. Would a true friend have some knowledge that could make their friend better and not share it? Two heads are better than one.

A real friend will not only bring balance to your thinking, they will also bring an expanded perspective based on their life's experience. Skills, knowledge, and ability are freely shared from friend to friend. In this exchange, both friends are educated, and both friends become better.

Secondly, real friends evaluate you. In other words, real friends check you when you are wrong. They don't mind giving you constructive observations. I believe that a critical eye is necessary for real evaluation to take place. A real friend will never let you say, do, or wear the wrong thing without saying something. They will check you in a friendly way. This does not mean that you will always like the evaluation, but you will at the least consider it because you know they are your friend.

Finally, real friends elevate you. I believe this is the greatest value a friend can bring. When they go up, they take you up with them. When you are elevated, you are put into a safe position. This safety will aid in your success. A friendship that builds you, your esteem, will always lift you above harm and danger. You no longer fear failure because they will be there to lift you when you are down. Because they are watching your back, you are free to run with the wind.

Are you really a friend? This is the true question of the day. Before you look outward, look inwardly. Evaluate yourself as a friend. Do you educate, evaluate, and elevate? If so, you will attract those of like mind and spirit. What kind of friends you have will be a reflection of what kind of friend you are. If you are elevating the friends in your life, those whose standards and values are below yours will be too far down to reach you, and those whose values are the same will be on the same level of success.

Timothy Houston is an author, minister, and motivational speaker who is committed to guiding positive life changes in families and communities. For copies of his book, questions, comments or more information, go to www.tlhouston.com