

# Aristotle on friendship essay sample

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



## **The three kinds of friendship**

Indeed, Aristotle devoted a lot of thought and time to the friendship question. He proposed three kinds of friendship and described how they were significant in life. Firstly, he looks at friendship of utility. He described that it only existed between one and another individual who is important to the other in a way (Kelly, 2010). For example, one can be friendly to a roommate mainly because he pays for all the bills in the house. Aristotle describes this friendship as shallow and one that can be easily broken because it is dependent on what one party brings to the table. This friendship can be easily broken when a part of the relationship takes a different turn and it becomes non-beneficial to both or one of the parties involved in the friendship (Sachs, 2007). For example, when the roommate stops paying rent, the friendship will likely dissolve as the dependent person may choose another alternative. Therefore, this friendship has weak bonds. Friendship of pleasure exists between a person and those people who the person enjoys being around. These might be people that you form a team, like playing soccer. It is normally built among young people because pleasures and passions profoundly shape their lives. It is normally characterized by feelings of belonging among a group or passionate feelings between lovers. It differs from friendship of utility in that one seeks something that is pleasant as opposed to friendship of utility where one seeks some benefit or business deal (Stansups, 2007). According to Aristotle, this type of friendship is a target of constant change because it can take a different direction in a short time. Aristotle, therefore, views friendship of pleasure and friendship of utility as unstable and subject to instant changes,

and; therefore, these types of friendship can easily dissolve (Sachs, 2007). The last kind of friendship is friendship of the good which is normally based on admiration and mutual respect. This type of friendship is more powerful and takes a much longer time to build compared to the other two kinds. It normally develops when two individuals recognize they have the same goals and values in life. This friendship normally begins during childhood, during adolescence, or when one is in college or it may even form after that (Carson, 2007).

Aristotle argues that it is the highest form of friendship, also referring to it as friendship of virtue. This is because a person always wishes the best for their counterpart regardless of pleasure or utility. It is friendship that is long lasting and difficult to obtain because it is extremely rare to come across such kinds of people, mostly because virtuous friendship takes a lot of work (Sachs, 2007). He further elaborates this by saying that virtuous friendship needs a lot of care and time limiting the time that one spends with their other friends, this is the reason it may be difficult to come across such people. It tends to have similarities with friendship of utility and pleasure, though, only the good endures such friendship. It is only felt among the good; it is long lasting, and can only happen between few people (Kelly, 2010).

### **What makes friendships of the good different from other sorts of friendships**

Friendship of the good is different from other sorts of friendship because it is based upon admiration for others virtues, desire to assist others and mutual respect. Friendship of utility and pleasure are fragile because they easily end

when the basis for which they are formed change or take a different direction (Sachs, 2007). For example, if your roommate declines to pay rent anymore, you may decide to seek other alternatives ending your friendship. In addition, once a love affair cools, friends of pleasure go separate ways (Stansups, 2007).

However, friendship of the good tends to have a longer lifespan; it is mostly formed during childhood or adolescence. Friends who can endure friendship of the good are rare because it requires plenty of time and intimacy to be able to truly understand people's qualities (Kelly, 2010). One should have a close connection and experience of their counterpart to endure this form of friendship.

### **What makes these friendships rare but enduring**

These friendships recognize that friendship can be the most crucial virtue in any person. These friendships are required by every individual in their everyday life (Stansups, 2007). They are beneficial for an ethical life, and different types can be used in different places, or activities, like home, church, school or work. Without these friendships, people would not have ways of comforting and helping one another (Carson, 2007).

### **Why I think friendship is a topic worthy of ethical consideration**

I believe friendship is a topic worthy of ethical consideration because it exceeds justice and honor, just as Aristotle pointed out. Friendship is necessary for the lives of humans because no one would prefer living without any friends. In fact, those who have immense power or rulers need more friends to have someone they can believe and rely on. Indeed, the love in

friendship exceeds honor because people value love in honor instead of loving. Friendship enables different people to work together and strengthen their nation. People who are just, require friends, implying friends do not require justice to become friends; therefore, justice can be described as the most significant virtue needed for any friendship. In my opinion, friendship is the most crucial virtue in achieving happiness.

## References

Carson, T. (2007, July 26). Friends: you have three types. Retrieved from Carsons Post: <http://carsonspost.wordpress.com/2007/07/26/friends-you-have-three-types/>

Kelly, M. (2010, May 6). The 3 Kinds of Friendships. Retrieved from MarieClaire: <http://www.marieclaire.com/sex-love/dating-blog/friendships-aristotle-utility-ethics-lifestyles>

Sachs, J. (2007, December 14). Aristotle and his view of Friendship. Retrieved from The Wire: <http://cantory.blogspot.com/2007/12/aristotle-and-his-view-of-friendship.html>

Stansups, L. (2007, June 13). What Would Aristotle Say About Friendship. Retrieved from Yahoo: <http://voices.yahoo.com/what-would-aristotle-say-friendship-383914.html>