

Example of friendship term paper

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



The Positive Effects on Mind, Body, and Soul

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Friendship is a unique social phenomenon. Contrary to many other species in the animal kingdom, human beings form very sophisticated social bonds that are oftentimes with people who have no genetic relation to them. This type of bonding with animals has been termed “kin selection” and is explained due to survivorship of genes shared within families. With human beings, it appears to be something quite different; however, there are some very distinct benefits that individuals experience because of friendship. Three reasons that friendship is important are: it helps to build self-esteem and self-confidence; it provides psychosocial support during hard times; and it has been suggested that it can reduce illness in individuals.

The first reason that friendship is important is that friendship has been known to build self-esteem and self-confidence. During the formable years of adolescence, a sense of belonging is one of the most crucial aspects of maturing in a healthy manner. Oftentimes, the home situation is doesn't provide the nurturing aspects and so friendship is all the more important. Furthermore, having a close network of friends can be helpful in determining personal goals along with encouragement during the process of pursuing those goals. Friends can keep you on track. This applies to adolescents as well as grown adults. In fact, according to a study done by Globoforce (“Employees Thrive on Work Friendships,” 2014), an HR solutions firm, there were distinct differences in work ethic of individuals who had formed work friendships and those who had not. In a work environment where goals are shared, the comradery helps to build and maintain self-confidence. In

another study focused on self-esteem in hearing-impaired children, Theunissen et al. (2014) determined that hearing-impaired children exhibited lower self-esteem than those with fully-functional hearing and attributed it to the lack of ability to communicate. Communication is one of the determining factors in building friendships because individuals can share goals and ideas about these goals which also supports self-confidence. When this ability is compromised, it not only makes building friendships difficult, but the consequence is lower self-esteem. This self-esteem is incredibly crucial, according to Theunissen (2014), in dealing with “ stressful life events,” which is another reason why friendship is so important: psychosocial support. The second reason friendship is important is because it provides psychosocial support. Psychosocial support refers to the support given to an individual during difficult times. This includes but is not limited to loss of friends/family, natural disasters, and traumatic experiences. A social network serves as a powerful support system during the hard times because grief can be shared between individuals and the necessary compassion is provided. Without the support system, the negative effects on the psyche that occur during traumatic events have no opportunity to rebuild themselves. This support is especially important coming from peers because according to Salles & Barros (2013), peer support “ is related to empathy and understand the situation of another person from experiences of psychological and emotional distress shared” (p. 2129). Thus friendships, which are oftentimes formed with peers, help to promote a degree of empathy between people forming strong bonds and ability to cope with the difficult times. This can also be beneficial in solving personal problems. Psychosocial support from

peers provides much needed empathy but also individuals who have potential suffered similar traumatic events. Typically, friendships are formed with people who have a relatively similar living situation, and there is always a chance that someone in the friendship circle has also suffered something similar. Thus, one individual may have insight into what another friend is experiencing. This all promotes a healthy psyche through friendship. These psychological benefits often have additional benefits on the physical body, which is the third reason friendship is important.

The third reason friendship is important is that it can reduce illness in individuals. There is an abundant amount of research correlating positive mental health to physical well-being and living a healthy life. Friendship and its positive effects on mental health is no exception to this rule. As outlined previously, higher self-esteem and psychosocial support are both incredibly beneficial to the individual. Some of the ways that these benefits take physical form are in regards to stress. Strong friendship bonds have been studied to both lower blood pressure and to limit the instances of depression. A study done by Sawka et al. (2013) found that “ those reporting low social support from family and friends are more likely to be insufficiently active for health benefits compared to those with high levels of social support” (p. 130). These results make plenty of logical sense. Without a social network of friends, psychosocial support is limited or nonexistent. This can lead to issues with depression or low self-esteem. Common symptoms of depression are lethargy, lack of motivation, negative thought processes, etc. This makes physical health a difficult task, especially when depression also leads to obesity. It becomes a vicious cycle of negative psychological effects

transferring to physical effects and back again.

Friendship is important for many reasons, but this explains three of the most important reasons: heightened self-esteem, psychosocial support, and physical health. The fact of the matter is that friendship and companionship are a necessary part of a healthy life. Most of the benefits from companionship occur psychologically, but this connects directly to the physical.

Regardless of the scientific evidence supporting such claims, having close friends and family with whom you can share both negative and positive experiences make life feel more meaningful.

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