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Is there true friendship between unequal people?

In my view, true friendship can exist even between non-equals. Human beings are created in a manner that they cannot exist without true friendship. Different individuals are created differently. We all have a specific kind of quality that we are always looking for in the friendship we are looking for. What one might see in another who they consider as a friend is totally different from what another person might be looking for when looking for a friend elsewhere. It is possible for someone to have a true friend who is from a different race, education background, social class, political affiliation or economic background. The mutual understanding between the two friends is what determines what true friendship they share (Amoroso and Noyed).

According to Aristotle, real friendship can only be between equals. This means that, if two people are unequal in terms of wealth, status and virtue, the likelihood of a friendship developing between them is minimal (Marc and Patricia 83) . He claims that friendship can never exist between individuals who are not in the same level. In his line of thought, a black man cannot be friends with a white man, a rich man and a poor man, and neither can a man and a woman have true friendship if they are not lovers.

Friendship should be based on ethical character, mutual admiration and sharing of perspectives in my view of life. By grounding our friendship on those foundations, we are not restricting ourselves to a single view of the human good. This gives rise to a more pluralist view of ways in which human beings can be good. We will also be free to admire different people in various ways (Amoroso and Noyed). Individual perspective or vision is closely linked to the individual character hence the importance of grounding friendship on

a shared perspective or vision.

He claims there are various reasons why one may like someone. You may like someone because of their goodness, usefulness or just for pleasure. The reasons for liking someone form the basis for friendship (Marc and Patricia 79). Friendship can be based on usefulness, goodness or pleasure.

Friendship grounded on pleasure or usefulness of the other person, can be easily dissolved because the person is only liked because of the usefulness or pleasure he offers. He is not liked in person. There is no friendship in for such reasons and the friends are only wasting each other's efforts (Marc and Patricia 83). That kind of friendship can easily die and might not have been there in the first place.

The fact that friendship can be based on the usefulness or pleasure offered is not a reality because both the individuals in the friendship are consenting individuals. When you have decided to be friends with another person you take time to consider every possibility of the friendship coming to an end. The various factors that support the friendship are considered and you are aware of the character of the person who is your friend. Basing my argument on this view, there could be no true friend who can be in a friendship for a convenience purpose (Amoroso and Noyed).

Aristotle views that a friendship that is perfect can only exist between good people who are similar in their virtuousness. Meaning that, two people ought to be disposed well towards each other for there to be friendship and they must be aware that this is the case. A perfect friendship is whereby one wishes his or her friend good for his or her own sake. Friendships of this kind last long because virtue is a stable thing. Since the two friends are good, the

friendship is both pleasant and beneficial hence the three reasons for friendship are united (Marc and Patricia 75) .

He also states that equality in friendship context and justice context are different. According to justice, equality is primarily in accordance to merit whereas in friendship it is about quantity primarily. This means that, if two people are more unequal in terms of virtue, wealth, and status they are unlikely to become friends (Marc and Patricia 48) . Because many people enjoy being liked more than to like, they end up liking flatterers, friends in an inferior position. This is because liking is allied to honouring.

Aristotle observes that perfect friendship is about loving more than being loved. This tendency allows the unequals to become friends since in this way they can be equalized. The criteria he relies on for equality is relevant to friendship in that friendship can be based on equals or on superiority. For example between rich and poor, parents and children, rulers and subjects. Friends should love one another according to the position they are in friendship based on superiority. In friendship based on equality there should be equal disposition of love for one another (Marc and Patricia 57).

The idea that true friendship can only take place between equal people is not plausible. True friendship can be shared by anyone as long as they share the same view of life (Amoroso and Noyed). We should not limit our view of friendship to equality in life because everyone might be looking for something different in friendship rather than just focusing on being equal to the friend.

In conclusion, friendship involves virtue. It is a basic necessity to life since nobody would consider living without friends even if he/she had all the

necessary material goods one requires in life (Amoroso and Noyed). Friends provide a source of refuge in times of misfortunes and poverty; they offer assistance in guide the young from error, they help old people in their weaknesses and assist those in their prime ages to carry out noble actions. Children have a natural friendship in their parents and to a certain extent to those who are friends to their parents. It is through friendship that the world is united. When we are all friends, there is no need of justice. Friendship is not only a sufficient condition to life but also a necessary condition (Amoroso and Noyed) .

Works cited

Amoroso, Cynthia, and Robert B Noyed. Friendship. Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, 2003. Print.

Marc Cohen and Patricia Curd and C. D. C Reeve. Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy, 4th Edition, 2001. ISBN (10): 1603844627 ISBN (13): 978-1603844628