



# Can You Get All Your Needs Met Through One Relationship?

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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Sometimes I hear individuals state that they do not have any friends and are sad because of this. Others tell me that they have some friends who take advantage of them. A third group talk of their thankfulness for a wonderful number of friendships that are mutually satisfying.

Friendships often develop between people who share common interests. I enjoy asking friends how they initially met each other and usually hear interesting stories about how they had been in the same class, group, or club at some point. This provides some insight for those who state that they don't have friends. I encourage them to identify one of their interests and then become involved in a group of people who have the same interest. If you are a writer, for example, join a community writer's club. If you like crafts, go to a craft store and ask what clubs are in your area. If you have a passion to help others, consider the charities where you could serve as a volunteer.

Those who feel that their friends take advantage of them, might need to examine the quality of the friendship. If you are happy doing all the giving while receiving nothing in return, you might want to continue with things as they are. On the other hand, you may want to add to your friend list by developing some new relationships. It is also important to consider whether those unbalanced friendships are healthy. You may need to end some of them.

The people who tell me that they have a number of healthy and satisfying friendships usually understand that you cannot have all your needs met in one relationship. People are busy and, in our mobile society, relocating is a frequent occurrence. Having only one friend places you at the risk of being without any should your friend move, die or decide that your friendship needs to end.

On the other hand, having several friends, provides you with freshness, variety and insight. You may wish to develop relationships from different age groups, genders and interests. That way, you can learn from them, share a variety of activities, and broaden your perspectives.

I am friends, for example, with a number of different people, of different ages, who live in different locations. During my week, I might have dinner with a friend who is also in business, laugh with another as we discuss our grandchildren, or seek advice by telephone from an older friend who serves as a mentor.

I know that I cannot have all my needs met in one friendship and therefore have developed a large and wonderful group of friends.

Years ago, after my divorce, I remember one of my friends stating, "It's lucky you had so many friends because you would have been too much for any one of us". At first, I was shocked and rather hurt but afterwards realized that her words were accurate and wise. When there is a crisis in our lives, we need to share the pain and seek counsel from a number of people.

My hope is that this article will encourage you to examine the friendships in your life. Determine if there are enough and, if not, consider how you might add to the numbers. You

might want to end unhealthy relationships or talk with the person to see if you can improve it.

It is also important that you are able to objectively examine what kind of friendship you offer to others. Is it healthy? Are you their only friend? Would you be willing to share in their pain when there is a crisis?

Friendship is a valuable asset in life, but it needs to extend beyond thinking that one friend is enough. Start building a strong and healthy friendship network where everyone can grow and have their needs met.