Friendship in the Age of Loneliness
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Book Discussion Questions
In a Book Club? Hosting a friendship-themed dinner party or a virtual gathering? Here are some questions that will get the conversation started.

Intro: share your name, where you were born, and your favorite friendship ritual.

1. What do you think it means to actually be friends with someone in the digital age?

2. Why do you think play is so important for human connection? How do you embrace play in your life?

3. Do you have a correspondence ritual? Is it analog or digital? How do you stay in touch with your people?

4. Have you ever broken up with a friend? What did that feel like? What happened? Have you ever repaired a friendship with someone? How did you make it right?

5. Why do you think 60 percent of Americans are lonely? Why has the average American not made a new friend in the last five years? What can we do to solve the loneliness epidemic?

6. Have you ever lived abroad? What was unique about making friends in that culture? How was it different than what you were used to back home?

7. Have you found that technology has brought you closer with your friends or not? Are there specific apps/tools that help you feel connected virtually? Do you use them in a specific way that fosters connection? Do you think it’s possible to build a healthy relationship with social media?

8. Do you have strong male friendships in your life? How have you built those relationships? Do you have recommendations for men looking to be more vulnerable and talk about their emotions around other men?

9. Do you have strong intergenerational or interracial friendships? How have you cultivated these friendships? What is special about them and what gifts do they provide to your life?

10. Have you developed close workplace friendships? Tell us about your best friend at work. What can workplaces do to promote connection, friendship, and belonging, especially in the era of remote work?

11. What did the COVID-19 pandemic teach you about the power of building healthy relationships in the midst of social turmoil and uncertainty?

12. Have you ever experienced the death of a close friend? How did that person touch your life? How do you celebrate their legacy today?

13. What does the phrase “Be a Minister for Loneliness in Your Community” mean to you? In what ways can you become an agent for human connection in your own neighborhood or community?

Learn more: smileyposwolsky.com/friendship