

Key Learnings from...

The Science of Friendship

The Fundamental Concepts of Friendship

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Fundamental Concepts of Friendship

- 🌱 Friendship is not a static concept, but an ever-changing, crucial part of human experience across time and culture. It is a reciprocal form of connection and interaction.
- 🌱 Optimal friend relationships have four important elements:
 - 🌱 High levels of hope for one's self and the relationship itself
 - 🌱 High levels of trust of others
 - 🌱 High levels of self-disclosure
 - 🌱 High levels of satisfaction in the relationship
- 🌱 Alliances in Friendship are freely chosen and... research shows that we choose friends whom we believe will help us to become our optimal selves.
- 🌱 The quality (depth) and quantity (breadth) of our friend network is calculated as social capital.
- 🌱 High social capital is strongly correlated with success and well-being.
- 🌱 Social Intelligence, or our social competence, is a measure of individuals' ability to successfully navigate interpersonal interactions.

Friendship in America

- 🌱 More Americans live alone, and many postpone marriage and childbearing until later in life:
- 🌱 31 million Americans live in a single-person household
- 🌱 Up to 17% of all American women have no children at all (2002 Current Population Survey)
- 🌱 50% of the US population lives in a state other than where they were born (2010 U.S. Census)
- 🌱 Greater mobility in American population = Greater need for friend networks

Health, Well-Being and Material Benefits of Strong Friendships

- 🌱 The field of neurobiology is demonstrating that human friendships are vital to health and well-being. Our brains and nervous systems repair themselves via interactions with others.
- 🌱 Cognitive function increases and depressive symptoms decreases among the elderly with strong social networks.
- 🌱 A Duke University study discovered that "isolated" individuals (unmarried and/or with no friend network) were up to three times more likely to die of coronary artery disease within five years.
- 🌱 Friendship is especially good in the workplace, although often discouraged by management.
- 🌱 In a massive ongoing Gallup research project with more than 8 million, Tom Rath found that:
 - 🌱 Employees who report having a best friend at work are seven times more likely to report high engagement in their work.
 - 🌱 Those with more than 3 close connections at work were 96% more likely to report high levels of overall life satisfaction
- 🌱 Recent Research Demonstrates the. Individuals with strong friendships in childhood are more likely to be successful in adulthood and report higher rates of well-being as adults.

About The Science of Friendship

In the age of digital connectedness, **what does it mean to be a... friend?** The implications touch all aspects of social culture and business. Using the latest research and data, integrating the available literature on the topic, and conducting original primary research, **The Science of Friendship** project will illuminate how we are engaging with each other in the digital era when it comes to the relationship we call friendship; and what this means to businesses, brands, and ourselves.

The scope of our work covers **Wellness** and how we treat ourselves and others, **Social** connections, networks, and communication dynamics, and **Neurobiology** and the aspects of it that fuel connection, friendship and bonding. We term this, the **three-fold framework of friendship**.

About The Authors

Chief Friend: Sean X believes in the future and the ability to make our most optimistic ideas of the future a reality. He inhabits what is best described as the lunatic-fringe of marketing, and is routinely sought out by clients to consult and speak on digital strategy and relationship dynamics that affect brands. In addition, he lived and taught for several years at a center in San Francisco that explores sexuality, communication and relationships, where he researched boundaries surrounding the concept of friendship.

Chief Social Scientist: Christine Brooks, is Associate Professor and Chair of the Residential PhD and MA programs in Transpersonal Psychology at Sofia University. Her scholarship is focused on issues of diversity in transpersonal psychology and related fields, and exploring the potential for social transformation and social justice. Additional areas of interest include women's adult development, friendship, and transformational education and leadership.

The logo for Tagged, featuring the word "TAGGED" in a bold, italicized, sans-serif font, enclosed in a white rectangular box with a slight drop shadow.

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