

## Friends and Associates

No one can or should avoid dealing with other people; some people are in fact a pleasure to know, to be associated with, and to have as friends. However, some people are pain in the neck, and therefore must be avoided. There are also other people who do not concern you, and association with them could represent liabilities you do not need to have.

Since life is never complete or enjoyable without others, everyone must decide how to allocate his/her time between people he knows and needs to live with in one way or another. There is only one rule to be followed; you have to have something in common with everyone you are associated with; people, with whom you have nothing in common, should be avoided.

As for me, I found that people that I love to have as friends and others I cannot avoid being associated with, could be divided into three major categories:

1. Relatives who, according to blood relationships and traditional obligations, cannot and should not be avoided. If you have nothing in common with blood relatives more than family relationships, association with relatives should be limited to traditional obligations; nothing more, nothing less. Any thing more will create added obligations that you might not have the time for, or the energy and money to meet; some obligations, left unrestricted, might drag you to loose some of your principles which you should never sacrifice to please others.
2. Work associates who, according to normal work rules and teamwork requirements demand that you work and meet with them regularly; oftentimes in the workplace; but sometimes outside of it as well. Association with such people should be limited to meeting the demands of doing your job as best as you can; nothing more, nothing less. Anything more might mix personal and business relationships together and cause each to reflect less favorably on the other.

3. Friends who make life enjoyable while making living an exciting journey to beautiful destinations that never stop surprising you.

People who do not fit in any of these categories must be avoided, not because they are bad people, but because association with them wastes valuable time and creates added obligations at the expense of devoting whatever time and energy you may have to fulfill family obligations, meet with work associates, and enjoy life with friends. If you are lucky, you could have a blood relative or a work associate who is good enough to have as a friend.

Since life is too short no matter how many years one lives, everyone must be selective in choosing his associates and much more so in choosing his friends. And in order to avoid unwarranted social liabilities, everyone should be blunt in rejecting relationships with people who do not fit in any of the above mentioned categories.

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