

# **GGC - Friendship**

## **June 2023**

### **Week 2: 6-12-23**

This week, I used research from Dr. Miriam Kirmayer .

Dr. Kirmayer is a clinical psychologist, writer, speaker, and relationship expert located in Montreal who has spent the past decade researching the science of connection and friendship. Here are some of her tips for making and keeping friends for the long haul!

#### **1. First and foremost, you are not the only one.**

Dr. Kirmayer emphasized that it is super common to experience difficulty making friends. It's something that we are all either currently dealing with or have dealt with in the past. We just aren't open about it, which brings me to my next point.

#### **2. We need to talk about it.**

You may be thinking it was way easier to make friends as a kid. And that's in part because the people around you were talking about it. Growing up, parents and teachers were constantly discussing our development and the now-intimidating process of building relationships. "The more we can recognize that talking about this not only helps us

to reduce the individual shame that we might be experiencing, but also actually provides the pathway to closer friendships, ultimately will really help us to build and sustain our connection,” said Dr. Kirmayer.

### **3. Get set up!**

Dr. Kiramyer says the first step in making a new friend is to decipher where you might actually meet them. This is where your existing social network comes into play — whether it be a friend, co-worker, or distant relative. Dr. Kirmayer says to think about “who are the valuable people in my social network ... that can perhaps connect me with other people I might not know?” We already have blind romantic dates, so why not a blind friendship ones?

### **4. Deepen your casual connections.**

We all have workplace acquaintances that we know deep down could be something more. Dr. Kirmayer suggests taking the leap to growing those relationships. Find a common denominator you can bond over, like a shared hobby or interest! You don't have to talk about work. “Making an effort to gradually open up about different parts of your life, that can help to deepen that sense of connection,” said Kirmayer. Talk about your life, what you like to do in your free time, etc. Perhaps set up a Zoom coffee chat with your fave colleague or schedule a hangout with the neighbor you always joke with in the hallway.

## **5. Use friendship apps. Seriously!**

Dr. Kirmayer notes her clients have seen a lot of success with Meet Up, where you can post events for people to join. Apps are a great alternative to meeting in person and more convenient since you can do it all from the comfort of your own home!

## **6. Remind yourself why you're doing it.**

Now I know you're thinking ... this all sounds so awkward. There is anxiety that comes with approaching new people. Dr. Kirmayer wants us to normalize the anxiety and awkwardness — it's part of the process. Just keep your eye on the prize: a new friend! We need to “remind ourselves that this is uncomfortable. *This makes me feel nervous. It makes me feel insecure. And I'm still choosing to do this for me.*”

## **7. Quality not quantity.**

Working to build a relationship with someone you really connect with will be the best case scenario in the long run. To be honest, it's exhausting to commit yourself to hanging out with a million different people. So focus on the people you truly want to build deeper relationships with. As Dr. Kirmayer noted, we are all too busy to be giving our whole selves to every single connection or relationship, which brings me to my final point.

## **8. Know when to let go, or at least kind of let go.**

We aren't meant to hold on to every single connection we make. Dr. Kirmayer notes it is important to deepen meaningful relationships, but it's also okay to drift from some people. Whether we're moving, growing up, or changing, sometimes we lose certain connections — and that is okay! “The more we can do to normalize and allow for that kind of change, the better able we are to shift our attention to the relationships and friendships that we really need and value.”

### **8 ways to make friends as an adult**

1. Get in a growth mindset
2. Commit to making an effort
3. Get curious and be willing to try new things
4. Accept the invitation
5. Tap into your community
6. Maintain a positive outlook
7. Be vulnerable
8. Consider coaching to overcome internal barriers