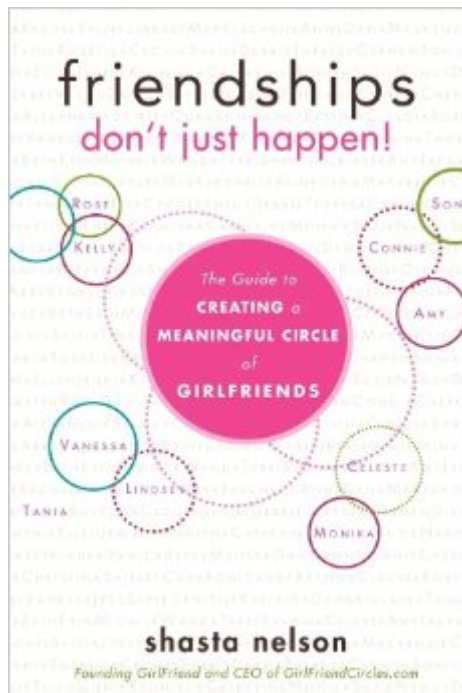


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# Friendships Don't Just Happen!: The Guide To Creating A Meaningful Circle Of GirlFriends



## Synopsis

This essential go-to guide reveals how women can enhance their lives by creating valuable friendships in today's busy, mobile world, from nationally recognized friendship expert and CEO of GirlFriendCircles.com. Every woman is searching for a happier, healthier, more fulfilling life. Many realize the significant role that an intimate, tightly knit circle of friends plays in creating a more fulfilling life, but with hectic schedules, frequent moves, and life changes, it's more important than ever for women to establish natural, meaningful friendships that will contribute to their overall wellbeing. In *Friendships Don't Just Happen!*, Shasta Nelson, friendship expert and CEO of GirlFriendCircles.com, reveals the most important proven steps, processes, and secrets vital to establishing the five different levels of friendships, or Circles of Connectedness, that women "no matter their age or relationship status" are longing for in today's stressful and mobile culture. This revolutionary, engaging guide will also benefit women who already feel rooted to fabulous friends, with insightful principles that will help them maintain and enhance their current friendships. Full of practical how-to tips, fun activities, guiding questions, and step-by-step instructions, *Friendships Don't Just Happen!* highlights several areas of developing lasting friendships, teaching women how to:

- Evaluate their current circle of friends
- Recognize what types of friends they are seeking based on career, interests, location, and relationship status
- Create a prioritized friendship action plan
- Find extraordinary friends "where to look and how to approach them"
- Take initiative to jumpstart friendships and face fears of rejection
- Establish "friendintimacy," trust, and happiness through conversation and activities
- Maintain meaningful friendships and determine which ones are worthwhile

Excerpt from *Friendships Don't Just Happen*: There is a lie out there that real friendship just happens. When I was new to San Francisco eight years ago, I remember standing at a café window on Polk Street watching a group of women inside, huddled around a table laughing. Like the puppy dog at the pound, I looked through the glass, wishing someone would pick me to be theirs. I had a phone full of far-flung friends' phone numbers, but I didn't yet know anyone I could just sit and laugh with in a café. It hit me how very hard the friendship process is. I'm an outgoing, socially comfortable woman with a long line of good friendships behind me. And yet I stood there feeling very lonely. And insecure. And exhausted at just the idea of how far I was from that reality. I knew I couldn't just walk in there and introduce myself to them. "Hi! You look like fun women, can I join you?" I would have been met with stares of pity. No one wants to seem desperate, even if we are. We don't have platonic pick-up lines memorized. Flirting for friends seems creepy. Asking for her phone number like we're going to call her up for a Saturday night date is just plain weird. All the batting of my eyelashes wasn't

going to send the right signals. And so I turned away from the scene of laughter and walked away. No, unfortunately, friendships don't just happen. We Value Belonging Friendships may not happen automatically, but what we crave about them sure seems to! We all want to belong that need to be connected to others is an inherent desire. We live our entire lives trying to fit in, be known, attract acceptance, and experience intimacy. We desperately want to have others care about us. This book is about that hunger. And more pointedly, it is about listening to it and learning how to fulfill it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Where was this book 5 years ago?! 10 years ago?! I could have really used it. With my children leaving home and my wife fighting clinical depression, I found myself feeling very alone. When the routine of sports, dance, and youth group events diminished, so did my circle of acquaintances. And friendships from the past had atrophied from the neglect of "busy and coping." The author extols the health and well-being benefits of friendship throughout the book. The new found joy in our household is living proof of the transformative power of friends. We need them. Big duh, right? What makes "Friendships Don't Just Happen! The Guide to Creating a Meaningful Circle of Girlfriends" important is that it teaches how to classify, grow and maintain friendships. It teaches that friendships do not need to be left to chance; we can grow them. If friends are like food and flowers in our lives, this is the ultimate friendship gardener's guide. The author argues that not all friends are meant to be BFF's and that this is not only OK, it is to be expected. I've already used her 5 Types of Friends concept in my classroom. It is useful, as it shows friends of all types are to be valued. It also forms the foundation of her strategies for growing one type of friendship into another. Toward the end of

the book she has a section called "Friendships Don't Just Keep Happening: Be Intentional," where she covers the five friendship threats--jealousy, judgment, non-reciprocation, neglect, and blame--and helps the reader end the book with a clear plan of how to move toward the friendships that matter most to her. In my early, awkward efforts to rediscover friendship in my middle age, my lack of understanding about these threats resulted in the loss of a very good friend.

If you're one of those extroverts that is still having weekly girls nights with all your sorority sisters or with your Moms' club and there just aren't enough hours in the day for all your social activities, then this probably isn't the book for you. But for the rest of us, it's pretty valuable. Personally, I'm a 40-something who had good friends growing up and into my 20s, but then I moved across country to a city where I didn't know a soul. Twice. Combine that with a job that requires you to put in 60 hour weeks and to travel regularly and you wake up one day and realize that you've got a bunch of acquaintances, but no close friends. It's a recipe for loneliness. While it seems some people don't like the idea of the five circles of friendship, I think that was probably my favorite part. It made so much sense to me and explained why, when I thought I'd made good friends at work, those relationships never lasted after one of us moved on to the next job. Those situations often left me crushed and feeling like something was wrong with me. This book made me see that this was not uncommon and explained the ways in which I'd failed to expand that friendship in ways that might have allowed it to live on past the commonality of working in adjoining cubes. This book also gives you a framework for expanding friendships beyond the casual stage if you feel that's something you lack in your life (E.g., got plenty of people in your life that you might have cup of coffee with or share a joke on Facebook with, but not one that you could ask to pick you up at the airport or at the dentist when you've just had root canal and are still under anesthesia? Then you need to expand your friendships!). It helps me understand why this can be a process that takes such a long time.

This is one of the best self-education books I've ever read! If you ever feel the slightest bit of loneliness, or dis-satisfaction in your friendship circle, or doubt in your ability to build social connections, I can't recommend this enough. The book will help you figure out what \*you\* need more of, what's stalled your progress in the past (your unhealthy myths, fears, behaviours etc.), and most importantly what you can do to change it! I never write reviews like this and I never make it all the way through this sort of book, so the fact that I am and I did says a lot! If you're sceptical, take a look at the blog on her website and if you like it you'll like this. I've had so many realizations that make me understand why people have not always seemed super friendly towards me, and I can

SEE the difference in how people respond to me now (a week after starting the book). I've taken on the advice and practical steps in this book and it's really changed how I think about things E.g.: There's no shame in wanting to make friends with more people. My [activity] friends who I only see at [activity] are still real friends! If I act really enthusiastically towards somebody or send a message for no obvious reason, they'll probably feel good rather than think I'm weird. And so on! The best part is that the rewards are so quick in coming. I enjoy outings with friends more because (i) I can see that they're enjoying the time with me, (ii) they offer me more support and fun and joy because \*I\* do that more for them, and (iii) because it just feels good to grow wonderful friendships. The book starts by telling you how important friends are for happiness, and boy do I \*feel\* that joy pouring into my life now!

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