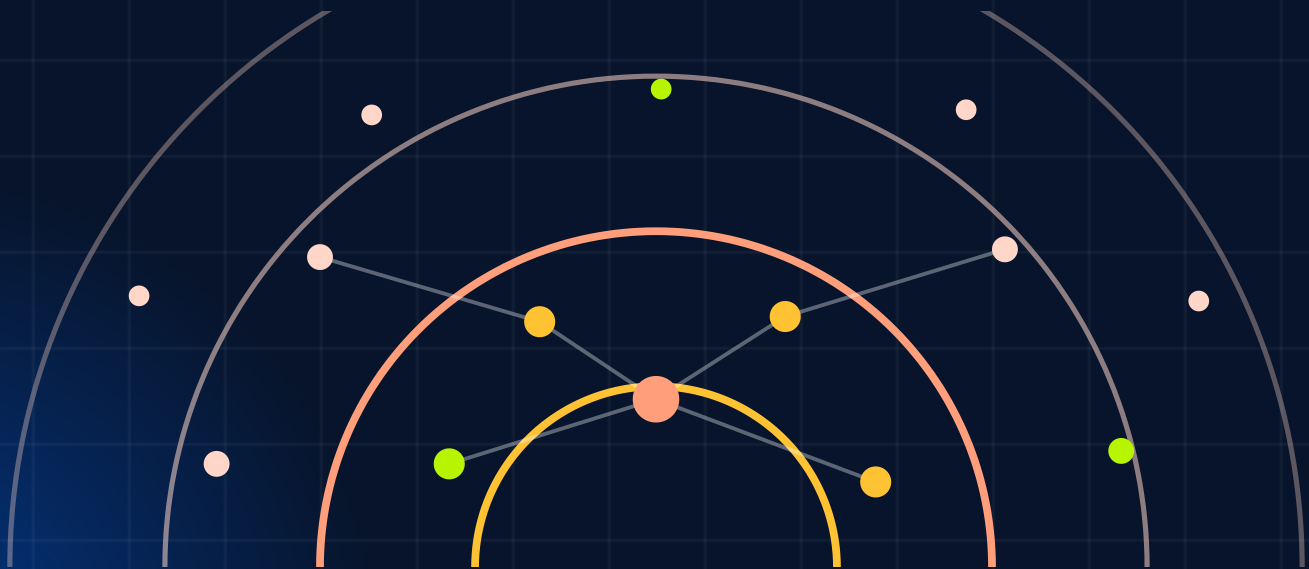


The Friendship Reset

How to make, keep and deepen friendships as an adult, in 30 days of small, comfortable steps.



3

R's: reconnect,
reinforce, recruit

30

day reset plan

60

things-to-do-
together slips

40

ready-to-send
messages



● SKILLNUGGET FRIENDSHIP WORKBOOK

The Friendship Reset

How to make, keep and deepen friendships as an adult, in 30 days of small, comfortable steps.

2026 edition · Large print · Printable

● THIS BOOK BELONGS TO

Name: _____

Started the reset on: _____



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This is a practical guide to friendship. It is not therapy or medical advice. If loneliness is affecting your health, or you are struggling, please talk to a doctor or a licensed counselor. Research findings are summarized in plain English; references are on the Sources page. Example messages and conversations were written for this book.

FREE SAMPLE

Inside this free sample

Three chapters from The Friendship Reset.

This sample includes the Welcome, Chapter 2 (how friendships are made), Chapter 3 (your Friendship Map) and Chapter 4 (reconnect). The full book has 14 chapters, the 30-Day Friendship Reset, and a printable toolkit with a map poster, 40 ready-to-send messages and a little surprise.

GET THE FULL BOOK

skillnugget.com/course/friendship-reset

WELCOME

Friendship, on purpose

How this book works, in five minutes.

When did you last make a new friend? Not an acquaintance, not a colleague you like, not a friend of your partner's. A real friend, the kind you'd call with good news.

If you had to think about it, you're in very good company. Making friends as a child happens almost by accident: you sit next to someone, you play, and suddenly you're best friends. As adults, the accidents stop happening. Work, family, moves, schedules and screens quietly take their place, and one day many of us look around and wonder where everyone went.

Here's the good news. **Adult friendship isn't luck, and it isn't a personality trait.** Researchers know a surprising amount about how friendships form, what keeps them alive and why they fade. Once you know how it works, you can do it on purpose, in small, comfortable steps.

That's what this book is for.

What you'll be able to do

- **See your friendships clearly** with a simple Friendship Map: who's close, who's drifting and where the gaps are.
- **Reconnect** with old friends, even after years of silence, without it feeling awkward.
- **Turn acquaintances into friends** by making the invitations most people wait for someone else to make.
- **Meet new people** in places where friendships actually grow.
- **Deepen** friendships from "nice to see you" to "I can tell you anything."

- **Keep friends for life** with easy rhythms and rituals, through moves, babies, divorces and retirements.

How the book is built

Part 1 explains how adult friendship works, and helps you draw your Friendship Map. **Part 2** is the heart of the book: the three R's, *Reconnect*, *Reinforce* and *Recruit*. **Part 3** is about keeping friends through life's changes and through the hard patches. **Part 4** is the 30-Day Friendship Reset: one small action a day that puts it all into practice.

START WITH THE MAP

Even if you skip around, do Chapter 3 first. Ten minutes with your Friendship Map will tell you exactly which chapters you need most.

A SMALL SURPRISE

Your toolkit includes a printable surprise. Don't open the file called **The Friendship Jar** until you reach Chapter 5. You'll understand why when you get there.

CHAPTER 2

How friendships are made

Hours, repeat places and the power of next door.

Friendships feel like magic: chemistry, timing, luck. But researchers who study how friendships form keep finding the same ordinary ingredients. Once you know them, you can put them together on purpose.

Friendship is built from hours

In 2019, communication researcher Jeffrey Hall at the University of Kansas studied adults who had recently moved to a new city, and students in their first weeks at university, to see how acquaintances became friends. His widely reported estimate: it takes roughly **50 hours together** to go from acquaintance to casual friend, around **90 hours** to become a real friend, and **more than 200 hours** to become a close friend.

The exact numbers vary from person to person. But the lesson is clear: **friendship is made of time spent together**. Not just any time, either. Hall found that hours spent together at work or school didn't build closeness in the same way unless people also spent time together in other settings: talking, joking, hanging out.

STAGE	ROUGHLY	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE
Acquaintance	First meeting	You know their name and a few facts
Casual friend	~50 hours	You chat easily and see each other sometimes
Friend	~90 hours	You make plans on purpose and enjoy each other

Close friend

200+ hours

You call them with good news and bad

Fifty hours sounds like a lot. It's a weekly two-hour activity for six months. Or a weekend trip plus a dozen coffees. It's very doable, *if* you plan for it.

The three conditions

Rebecca Adams, a sociologist who studies friendship, has described three conditions that sociologists have long seen as key to making close friends:

- 1 **Proximity:** being physically near each other.
- 2 **Repeated, unplanned interaction:** bumping into each other again and again without having to arrange it.
- 3 **A setting that lets people relax and let their guard down.**

These three conditions explain why so many lifelong friendships are made at school, university, in the military, on a team or at a first job. They happen automatically there. As adults, we have to recreate them on purpose.

The power of next door

In a classic study from 1950, Leon Festinger, Stanley Schachter and Kurt Back looked at friendships in a housing development for married students at MIT. Residents were far more likely to become friends with the people who lived right next door than with people a few doors away. People whose doors were near the staircases, which everyone passed, made more friends too.

Distance is destiny, in a small way. **Who you see often is who you become friends with.**

So what actually works?

Put the research together and you get a simple recipe:

Repeat

See the same people again and again: same class, same club, same café, same time.

Relax

Choose settings where people talk and laugh, not just sit side by side in silence.

Reach out

Turn repeated meetings into real plans. Someone has to invite. Let it be you.

Return

Keep showing up. Friendships are built in the third, tenth and fiftieth hour.

The rest of this book is about doing each of those four things, starting with the friends you already have.

CHAPTER 3

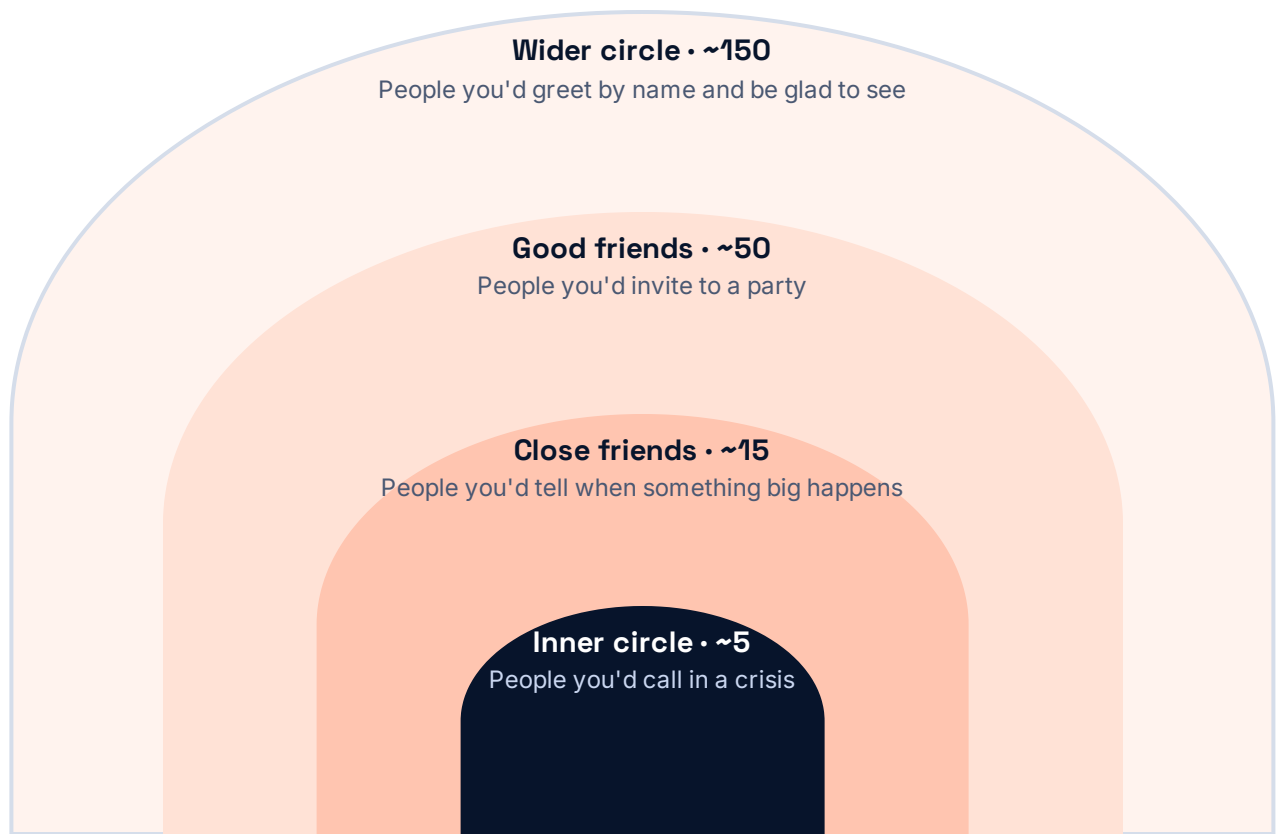
Your Friendship Map

See who's close, who's drifting and where the gaps are.

You can't improve what you can't see. In ten minutes, the Friendship Map will show you who's close, who's drifting and where you'd like more connection. It's the most useful page in this book.

The circles of friendship

Anthropologist Robin Dunbar has proposed that our relationships tend to sit in layers of roughly predictable sizes: an innermost circle of about **5** people, then about **15**, then about **50**, and a wider circle of about **150**. The numbers are approximate, and everyone's circles are different. But the idea is useful: friendship comes in layers, and each layer needs a different amount of time.

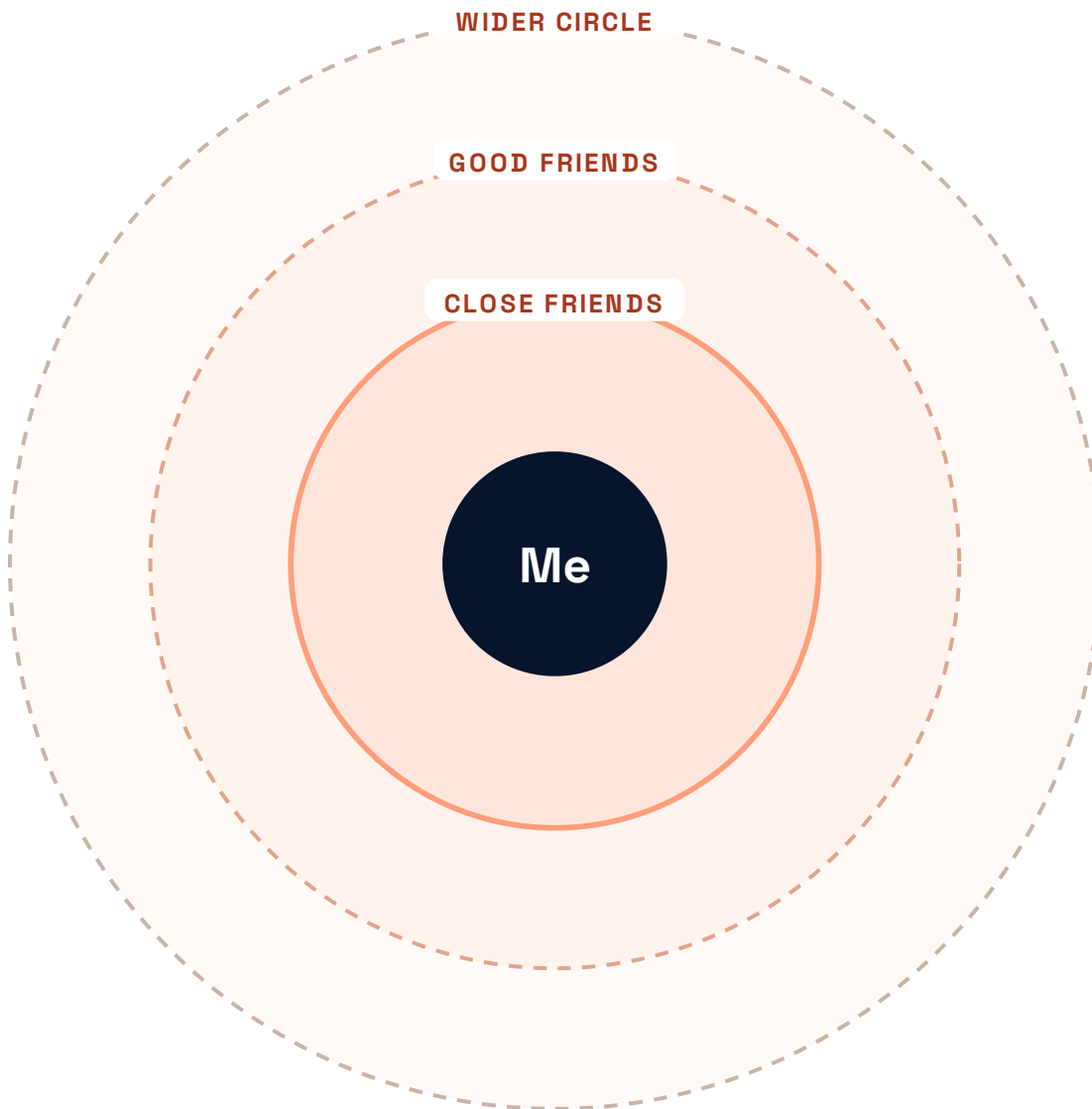


Draw your map

Your toolkit has a printable poster version. For now, use the next page, or a sheet of paper:

- 1 Put your name in the middle.**
- 2 Write the names of the people in each circle.** Include family members you're truly close to, if you like. Don't overthink it; first instincts are usually right.
- 3 Mark each name** with a symbol: ★ for someone you'd like to be closer to, ↓ for someone who's drifted and you miss, ○ for someone you've lost touch with completely but think about.
- 4 Notice the gaps.** Is your inner circle thin? Are most of your friends from one part of life (work, or your children's school)? Is everyone far away?

My Friendship Map



Drawn on: _____ Look again on: _____

Reading your map

WHAT YOU SEE	WHAT IT MIGHT MEAN	START WITH
Lots of ↓ arrows	Friendships drifted through life changes	Chapter 4: Reconnect

Many good friends, few close ones	You're likable but rarely go deeper	Chapters 5 and 8: Reinforce and deepen
Small circles overall	You need more people to choose from	Chapter 6: Recruit
Everyone is far away	You need local friends too	Chapter 6, and Chapter 10 for long distance
All friends from one setting	Your friendships are fragile if that setting changes	Chapters 6 and 7: a new "repeat place", or host

Your three R's

Every name on your map belongs to one of three projects. Pick a few for each:

Reconnect: people I've lost touch with and miss

Reinforce: acquaintances and friends I'd like to be closer to

Recruit: places or groups where I could meet new people

You now have your plan. The next three chapters show you exactly how to do each one.

CHAPTER 4

Reconnect

Wake up the friendships you miss, even after years.

The fastest way to more friendship isn't meeting new people. It's the people you already know and miss. Old friendships come with history, trust and inside jokes already built in. All they need is someone to go first.

Why we don't reach out

We tell ourselves stories: *It's been too long. It'll be awkward. They've moved on. They'd have called if they wanted to.* Remember the reaching-out experiments from Chapter 1: people consistently underestimated how much a message from them would be appreciated, especially when it came out of the blue. The longer it's been, the bigger the pleasant surprise.

**The awkwardness of reaching out lasts about ten seconds.
The regret of not reaching out can last years.**

The reconnect message

A good reconnect message has three parts, and it should be short enough to read in one glance:

- 1 A specific memory or reason.** "I just walked past the café where we used to study..."
- 2 A warm, honest sentence.** "...and realized I really miss you."
- 3 An easy, no-pressure next step.** "No pressure at all, but I'd love to catch up sometime. How are you?"

TEXT MESSAGE

Hi Rosa! I just found a photo of us at the lake in 2015, sunburned and laughing. I miss you. How are you? I'd love to catch up properly if you're up for it.

TEXT MESSAGE

Hey Tom, I heard that song we used to play on every road trip and thought of you straight away. How's life? Would love a call one of these weekends.

TEXT MESSAGE

Hi Mrs. Patel, it's Anna, your neighbor from Oak Street. I was thinking about you and your amazing roses. How are you keeping?

Answers to the usual worries

INSTEAD OF	TRY
✗ "It's been too long. It'll be weird."	✓ Say so, lightly: "I know it's been ages! I've thought of you so many times."
✗ "They'll think I want something."	✓ Ask for nothing. A message that only says "I thought of you" can't be misread.
✗ "We drifted because of something that happened."	✓ You can acknowledge it: "I know things got strange after the wedding. I've missed you anyway." (Say the Hard Thing has scripts for bigger repairs.)
✗ "What if they don't reply?"	✓ Then you sent a kind message to someone. That's not failure. Many people reply weeks later.
✗ "I don't know what to say on the call."	✓ Ask about their life since you last spoke, then share yours. Old friends pick up faster than you'd think.

From message to meeting

A message reopens the door. A plan walks through it. If they reply warmly, suggest something specific within the next couple of weeks:

TEXT MESSAGE

So lovely to hear from you! Are you free for a call on Sunday afternoon? Or if you're ever near the city, lunch is on me.

If they live far away, set up a call, a video chat or a long-distance ritual (Chapter 10). If they're nearby, a walk or a coffee is the easiest first meeting: short, low-cost and easy to extend if it's going well.

Reconnecting in batches

Many people find it easier to reconnect with several people at once. Try this: pick five names from your map with a ↓ or ○, and send one message a day for five days. By the end of the week, several of those friendships will be alive again.

My reconnect list

- | | |
|----------|-------------------------|
| 1. _____ | Memory or reason: _____ |
| 2. _____ | Memory or reason: _____ |
| 3. _____ | Memory or reason: _____ |
| 4. _____ | Memory or reason: _____ |
| 5. _____ | Memory or reason: _____ |