

# Legacy Tips & Tools

## The Gift of Friendship

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### Expressing the preciousness of friendship opens our hearts

#### Reflection:

How profound and important our friends are throughout our lives. This Tips&Tools focuses on expressing appreciation to them and sharing what their friendship means to us.

Songwriters help us feel these relationships. Sing the refrain of Carole King's "You've Got a Friend" in your head to remind you of the miracle of a trusting friendship:

"You just call out my name  
And you know wherever I am  
I'll come running to see you again  
Winter, spring, summer or fall  
All you have to do is call  
And I'll be there  
You've got a friend."

And listen in your heart to Dionne Warwick:

"Keep smilin,' keep shinin'  
Knowin' you can always count on me, for sure  
That's what friends are for  
For good times and bad times  
I'll be on your side forever more  
That's what friends are for."

Finally hear Bill Withers on the mutuality of friendship in his: "Lean on Me":

"Lean on me, when you're not strong  
And I'll be your friend  
I'll help you carry on  
For it won't be long

'Til I'm gonna need  
Somebody to lean on."

Here are some thoughts and questions to prompt your reflection about the value of friends and friendship in your life....

What values and special qualities do you most appreciate in your friends? What defines your relationship with your best friend(s)... What do you value most about your friendships?... How do your friendships sustain and define you?...

What challenges have you faced in friendship: Letting go of a friend? Changing your relationship with an old friend? Building a new relationship with a friend? Having to give difficult feedback to a friend? Sustaining a friendship through a difficult and life-changing transition?

May Sarton, examining her friendship with a dying friend, wrote: "Deep down there was the understanding, not of the facts of our lives so much as of our essential natures." What is your experience when you are 'met' in your essential nature, and when you meet a friend in hers?

#### Practice:

1. It is said that one is rich if she can count a handful of friends...how many do you count? List their names.
2. Next to each write a short description of the qualities and nature of the relationship.
3. Choose one friend from your list and write a 15 minute letter of description, blessing, and expression of your appreciation of the relationship.
4. Share the letter as a gift to celebrate the relationship or at a special moment in time, like a birthday.
5. As a part of your legacy writing, write letters to others you count as friends.

Register for a winter 2008 retreat -- in Temecula, California

Introductory Legacy Writing Retreat Jan 27-Feb 1, 2008 or an

Advanced Legacy Writing Retreat to continue your legacy writing, February 3-8, 2008

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