

Is your best friend making you sick? Test Yourself...

Great friendships actually extend life. A 10-year long Australian study showed that participants with solid friend groups were 22% more likely to live longer. But what about friendships that sap your strength and drain your life force. How do you know if you're in the friendship from Hell?

1 She sets you up to compete with her other friends for best friend status

She shares information about the other friend that suggests the other friend gives her more or is more fun or shares interests that the two of you don't have.

2 There's an imbalance in talk time

She has lots of time for you to tell you about her issues, but when you start to talk she has to go.

3 She tells you what's wrong with you without sensitivity

Honesty is important in any relationship, but the brutal truth is still brutal and damaging. No wonder you feel awful.

4 You are reaching out more than she is

Relationships get toxic when the other person isn't as invested in you as you are in them. If you're reaching out far more often than your friend, they may not be that into you.

5 It's all about how you need to change

But she sees no need for her to change. It's about what's wrong with you. If only you changed it would be fine.

6 She promises to give you things, time, but it never seems to happen

You're generous with gifts, you see something and have to get it for her, save it for a special occasion if you can wait, which you generally can't. She gives you gift certificates for time together or special presents you'll make together but they never or rarely come to pass.

7 You're walking on egg shells.

You watch every word to avoid saying the wrong thing, to be careful not to offend her feelings.

8 You're riding a friendship roller coaster

You don't know what to expect, when she's going to get upset with you. When it's good it's great, but then, for some unknown reason you're on her s**t list and watch out! The inconsistency and lack of predictability leaves you insecure, off balance. It's maddening.

9 You feel a vague sense of something's wrong but not sure what

And, it's usually that there's something the matter with you that makes you feel yucky about yourself. You were excited to see her but you're left feeling kind of down and can't figure out why.

10 She's an emotional bully

She uses your feelings as weapon to bring you down. She tells you you're overreacting and rolls her eyes, sighs deeply, shakes her head when you seem unhappy, or concerned about an interaction with her.

11 It's all about her

She's happy to talk to you as long as you listen. When it's your "turn," she has to go or get off the phone with some excuse about work or the kids or her husband, something clearly more important than you.

12 You're somatizing, actually feeling ill.

When you're in a great friendship, your immune system is boosted. But toxic friendships are sickening. If you're experiencing anxiety, headaches, IBS or other physical symptoms after an encounter with your friend, she may actually be negatively affecting your health. Relationships do have ups and downs, but if it's a wild roller coaster ride, you may want to think about hopping off before you turn green.

GET LOST GIRLFRIEND!



Dr. Sharon Livingston

