

## Ep #177: How to Make Friends as an Adult



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Kori Linn**

## Ep #177: How to Make Friends as an Adult

This week we're talking about how to make friends as an adult.

The *Satisfied AF* podcast is the place to learn how to create a life and career that's wildly delicious. Want a steamier sex life? We've got you. Want a more satisfying career? We'll cover that too. And you can be sure we'll spend lots of time talking about how to build connected, fun relationships that can handle life's ups and downs. No matter what goals you're working on, this show will help you create a one of a kind life that is just right for you. Join me, life and career coach Kori Linn and each week I'll give you lots of practical tips, tools, and proven strategies to help you create all the satisfaction your heart desires.

Hello, hello, hello, happy Wednesday. I hope you're having a gorgeous day. I'm in such a good mood, and part of the reason why is because I had so much fun over the weekend with my friends. And that's really key for this episode, since we're talking about how to make friends as an adult.

And two of the friends that I saw this weekend are folks that I made friends with since I moved to Sacramento. So I'm very excited to talk to y'all about how I did that and how you can make friends too. And some of the reasons that people sometimes don't have success making friends as an adult.

This is a topic I see folks talk about all the time online, about how hard it is to make friends as an adult or not being really a good fit with friends you used to have when you were younger, but not wanting to let those relationships go because of feeling fear about your ability to make friends now. And I think it would just be so much easier if you had a guide. And so that's what I am going to give you with today's podcast.

So first things first, what makes building adult friendships hard and how do you overcome that? I've read a lot about this topic anecdotally, and I have my own life experience and I also have the experience of people I've coached. But one thing that I've seen is that as kids, we kind of went to the same places over and over. Like we went to school, right, with the same people over and over, often for years.

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And for a lot of us, that was not a particularly enjoyable experience in a lot of ways. But going into that group often did result in friendships. And I've also heard it talked about that when you're a little kid it's so easy to make friends because you're like, I like pink and you like pink, let's be best friends. And that is the level at which you're connecting. Whereas in adulthood, you may be looking for something more complex in terms of compatibility, versus having the same favorite color.

Also, adults are often super fucking busy, right? If you have a career, if you have kids, if you are caring for aging parents, if you have to commute and you're spending time like that, if you are partnered, that's a place where a lot of people put a lot of energy. It can be really hard to kind of fit it all into an adult life, and a lot of people struggle with that even before adding friendships.

And so I think it can be kind of daunting, the idea of like, how am I going to have time for that? How am I going to have time to pursue friendships? How am I going to then have time to be in the friendships? And then on top of that, I think there's this other layer of like, I shouldn't have to make friends as an adult, or it's weird to make friends as an adult, or even just this really common narrative, it's hard to make friends as an adult.

I think sometimes that actually makes it harder. And what we want it to be is easier, but we kind of build it up in our head that like, oh, it's so hard. It's so awkward. I don't want people to think I don't have friends. I think all that can also create a lot of resistance to building new friendships.

And then there's also the vulnerability piece of getting to know someone and letting them get to know you. Friends are obviously very fun and satisfying. It's a very enjoyable relationship to have. And also that time when you're getting to know someone, it can feel really exhilarating and it can also feel kind of scary. And that's true when we're in romantic relationships, but it's also true in friendships.

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And I think sometimes in our heads and culturally we are like, oh, friendships are these super easy relationships and romantic relationships are kind of harder and more serious and they take more work. But in my experience, both of them can be hard and fun and take a lot of work and be challenging and be rewarding. And I think a lot of the skills that work in one can work in both, but sometimes we're reluctant to apply those skills in friendship.

So I think the number one thing, if you want to make friends as an adult, is just to decide that you can. And maybe that sounds silly and maybe that sounds oversimplified, but if you believe you can't do something, you won't try. You won't put effort in because you're smart, why would you put effort into something that's impossible?

Whereas if you're like, oh, for sure, I can make friends as an adult. And if I want to, that's available to me. Then it's like, okay, that's an option. That's something we can do. It's not pointless, it actually is possible. And if it feels really hard for you, I would just own that and then like, add something to it. Like, oh, it feels really hard to me to make friends as an adult and I'm so brave for trying. It feels really hard for me to make friends as an adult, but good thing I can do hard things.

If it doesn't feel really true for you that it's hard, I would stop telling yourself that. I would be like, maybe it can be easy. Maybe it can be fun. And if it is hard at moments, again, I can be brave. I can carry myself through that, but maybe it's easier than I think it could be.

So that's at the level of like mindset, right? These are the mindsets we're going to think about, but there's also actions we're going to take, right? Because if all you do is sit around and think about like, maybe I can make friends even if it's hard. If we think about three actions to start taking to make new friends, one action is to put yourself out there. And you can put yourself out there any way you want.

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So you can put yourself out there by talking to people in line next to you at the grocery store. That's going to give a lot of you the ick, but it's an option you could do. You could put yourself out there by going and working in coffee shops and starting up conversations with people sitting near you. You can put yourself out there by talking to people online, either through an app like Bumble BFF, which is what I use, or on forums.

You can put yourself out there by asking your friends if they know other people living in your city that might be a good fit for you. Like sometimes maybe if you have friends who aren't in your city, but they might know people who are there, that's an option.

There's a million different ways you could put yourself out there. There's going to be some ways that you're like, ooh, yeah, that sounds good. And there's going to be other ways that you're like, blech, I'd rather lay down on the floor. Like, no. There's going to be some ways that are going to feel good to you. There's going to be some ways that are terrible. There's probably going to be some that you're like, ooh, that sounds like fun, but kind of scary.

Honestly, there might not be any that sound great. And I think that's okay because sometimes when we're afraid, everything just seems a little terrible. But you kind of want to pick whichever ones seem like something you could do without it being a terrible fight with yourself. So that's the one action, you've got to put yourself out there.

A second action you need to take is you've got to tell the truth about who you are and what you're looking for. So whether you're meeting people in person or you're meeting them through some kind of app, if you're not honest about who you are and what kind of friendship you're looking for, you're probably not going to get friendships that feel really good to you.

And this can feel super vulnerable. It's not always very enjoyable, especially if there's something to be honest about that you're afraid of being rejected for. But I saw, I think it was a TikTok, and I would love to

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credit the creator, but I saw it so long ago I have no idea who it was. But it was this woman and she was talking about in dating, I think. She was talking about how if there's something about you that you think is going to be a turnoff for people, put it front and center immediately on your profile.

So her example was she had a friend who was vegan and the friend didn't have that on their profile. And they would go on dates and then it would come up that they were vegan, right? Then it was weird and she felt like people were weird about it. So the creator was like, okay, just put a sweatshirt that says vegan on your first picture or something like that. Like make it very clear, or you can even put it in the bio. Who are you? So that if there are people who that's not going to be a good fit for, they can self-select out.

And you know what's great about this? If you do this on an app, they can self-select out without you having to know that they've self-selected out. And something that's really nice about that is if you feel kind of sensitive to rejection, you don't even have to notice them rejecting you, right? Like you swipe right on a bunch of people, and this example was for dating but I'm talking about friendship because I use Bumble BFF for friendship.

So if you swipe right on a bunch of people, some of them are going to match back with you and some aren't. And the ones that don't, you don't know if they swiped left or if they haven't been on the app in like six months or if something else happened, right?

So I think the sense of being rejected is lower versus if you get to know someone or meet up with them and then they're like, not for me. So I kind of love using the app, and like putting it front and center gives people a chance to opt out without it feeling really so personal, right?

Okay, so thing one is you got to put yourself out there. Thing two is you have to tell the truth about who you are and what you're looking for, right? So who you are, but also what kind of friendships do you want? Do you want to get brunch every weekend? Do you want to have deep and

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meaningful conversations about what it's like to be alive on the planet? Or are you like, no, I just really want someone to go thrift shopping with, and then we're going to get coffees after?

What I like about the app, again, you can be clear about who you are, but you can also be really clear about what kind of relationships you're looking for. And then people can just opt in or opt out to that. You can also do that in person. The apps are just like, they kind of make it very easy to have it all kind of laid out there. Whether you're having the conversation or not, it's just all there and clear.

And then number three is you've got to keep going, right? So you're going to make friends. You're going to meet people. You're going to go on first friend dates. And some of it's going to be amazing. You're going to be like, this person is great. And some of it you're going to be like, didn't need to spend my 90 minutes doing that. But you've got to just keep going, right?

And I would say don't stop when you have one friend, keep going until you build multiple. And especially keep going when you have some disheartening situations. And I think it also applies inside friendships, right? It's like, keep going and keep showing up if you want the friendship to survive and be a friendship, versus this really cool person you had drinks with one time.

So you've got to put yourself out there. You've got to tell the truth about who you are and what you want, and you just have to keep going. I guess let's maybe also add a fourth thing, which is you've got to listen too, right?

So you're going to put yourself out there and tell the truth about who you are and what you want, and then they're going to tell you some things. So it's also that skill of being able to listen and see if you're a good match and you want to continue to invest and see if you're like, oh, I was clear about what I wanted and what I'm looking for and they're being clear about what they want and what they're looking for, but it's not a match.

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So the listening thing is great because it's a great skill to have in an ongoing relationship and it's also a great skill to have to let you know if that's a relationship you are going to want to be in. And then keep going, keep going, keep going, keep going. That's a great skill for life.

And it's not like do the same thing over and over. It's like take some action, see what happened, see what the takeaways are, refine your approach if necessary, and then take some more action.

Okay, let's talk about the exact strategy I use to build new friendships. I'm going to talk specifically about Sacramento, but I've built new adult friendships over and over because I've lived in a few different places. And I think building friends is such a fun skill and such a useful skill once you get the hang of it. But if you haven't built new friendships ever as an adult, I think it can feel really scary. But once you get the hang of it and get going, it can be a really good time.

Okay, so when I first moved here the first strategy I used was I already knew someone who lived here. And so this is kind of just like business, tap your network. I already knew someone who lived here and I knew people who had lived here before, right? So I got in touch with the person who already lived here and the people that I knew who knew people, I was kind of like, who do you know? Can I be friends with them?

And then my one friend who already lived here, she's got a huge friend group, she's been here for a long time. So I made some friends through her. She highly encouraged me to do improv. So I did improv classes and I made some friends through that.

And I think in my head, I was kind of like, ooh, maybe this will be like my whole friend group, just add water from these improv classes. And while I did make some really good friends in improv, about a year after I'd started improv I was kind of looking around going like, okay, I have some great friendships. I don't have as many friendships as I want. How am I going to get some more friendships?



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And I think around that time I had seen a TikTok about someone using Bumble BFF to make friends. And so I felt inspired and a little scared, but I was like, cool, I'm going to do that. And I got on Bumble BFF and I did that thing the creator talked about. So for me, I was like, I like to go out to dinner really early and I like to go to bed really early. And I want to be home in the later part of the evening.

So I made my profile and I tried to make myself look cool and interesting. And then I went back and was like, okay, stop trying to look cool and interesting, tell the truth about who you are and what you're looking for. And so I put something like my ideal Saturday night is going to dinner at 5 PM and being on the couch in my comfies by 7:30.

And that might not seem super vulnerable to anyone hearing it now, but it felt vulnerable to admit that. Like, oh, there's a certain kind of person who's not going to want to be my friend. I'm like, that's probably true, one, but two, that's the point. That was the whole point, is to connect with people who were actually interested in me as I deeply am and the kind of experience I deeply want to have.

And I have no judgment if other people want to go out late, I'm just not going to do it. So they can go to dinner with me at five and then they can go clubbing all night long. That's their business, but I'm not doing it. So it was really interesting because it felt vulnerable to me to put that in there, which I think is a great example because the things that might feel vulnerable to you, might not seem vulnerable to other people. I don't think anyone else saw that and was like, ooh, that's vulnerable. I think they were like, oh, she knows what she wants.

But I got so many people who swiped right on me that the first thing they said was you had me at dinner at five. And here's what was so wonderful about that, immediately I felt much more connected, much more like, yes, we're on the same page. Much more like, oh, they actually want to be my friend based on something that felt true and vulnerable to me versus like,

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you know, sometimes we try to make a profile that's pleasant in a way that almost makes it bland. It's almost kind of boring.

Like I remember one time making a dating profile, this was years ago and saying like, I like tacos. And my friend was like, don't put that, everyone likes tacos. Like that doesn't say anything about who you are and what kind of person you're looking for and what kind of relationship you want. Tacos are not bland, but putting "I like tacos" is bland, okay?

So that's what I did and that's what I recommend you do, is find these things that are really deeply true about yourself and what kind of relationships you're looking for, what kind of friendships you want to build and then share them. And if you're on the apps, you can share them like I did. And if you're meeting people in person, you can also just use your words out of your face hole and tell people things like this.

Okay, what then did I do? So the strategy I used would be to swipe a lot and then stop swiping and kind of nurture the connections that came in, in phases, right? So I'd swipe a lot and then people would match and then I would talk to them. And then it was interesting, I think I actually invited almost all of them to meet up. That was like a big difference for me with dating. I was like, oh, some of them I only talked to a little, some of them I talked to quite a bit.

But I noticed very few people invited me. So I was like, oh, well I'm here to create relationships and friendships. And so if no one's asking me, I'm going to ask them. So I guess that's like an additional action step, is to be willing to be the one who takes action because if you want friendships, like I think if there's this thing sometimes of like, is everyone putting in equal effort? And that's, I think, a really good thing. Like we don't want to be putting in way more effort than another person and creating an uneven relationship dynamic.

But I think in the very beginning, being willing to risk like, hey, do you want to meet up? That can feel really risky for people. And so I was like, okay,

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first of all, we're all on this friend app to make friends. So if they say no, that's fine. But it's not super weird of me to be like, do you want to meet up? Because that's literally what we all came here for. But second of all, like I was just willing to be the one to take action.

Now I'm not going to be that way in the whole length of the friendship over and over. That probably doesn't feel good to me. But I can be the one to take action first until I kind of like kick the ball forward to see if it can go somewhere. That's something I did.

And then the next phase is more of the same, which is I tried to show up as much like myself as possible with as little people-pleasing as possible. I wasn't rude or unkind to people, I was kind and friendly but I have some people pleasing in my past. And so I tried to be very careful not to people please in these brand new relationships I was trying to form.

Sometimes when we have relationships we've had for a long time that we've done a lot of people-pleasing in, it can be kind of difficult to get out of that. We maybe kind of have to titrate out of it, like gently move away from the people pleasing. But the great thing about building new friendships and new relationships is you're starting from scratch. And so I wanted to start from scratch with kind of the most aligned to my vision and values behaviors.

So this is an interesting thing too, being myself, being authentically me, but being authentically the person I want to be and I'm becoming, not being authentically the person I was 15 years ago when I started some other friendships, right? So getting to opt out of behavior patterns I've had in other friendships that I don't think are what I want to be doing and who I want to be moving forward, I can leave those out. That's not being inauthentic.

And so there were a lot of times with these new friends when it would be like, oh, maybe I need to cancel on them or maybe they're like, do you want to do this? And I really don't want to do that. And so kind of navigating this,

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like how do I be honest and kind at the same time and help cultivate a relationship I actually want to be in?

Something I see all the time is that people show up in relationships in ways that they don't like. And then they build a relationship that they don't want to be part of because through the actions that they've taken, they have trained the relationship to be something they don't want. And people-pleasing does this a lot.

When we have people-pleasing behaviors, we will engage in those and then later we'll be resentful that we engaged in those. So this is, I think, actually an incredibly important thing, is to use building a new friendship as a way for you to be like, okay, who do I want to get to be in this relationship? And how do I lay the groundwork for that to be what's normal and expected of me here?

And so it looked like things like saying to a friend, I'm really excited to see you and also can we push back because I feel really crunched for time this week? Or being willing to say, I really want to see you, I just want to check in and make sure you're feeling really healthy because I'm feeling very germ-conscious right now.

That's something I said to people a lot. I have mentioned this before, but Alex and I are pretty Covid cautious. And so there was a part of me that when I was building these new friendships did not want to admit that because of course, humanly, I did not want to be judged. I didn't want people to think I was being too much. I didn't want people to think I was high maintenance, right?

These are all these things that women are conditioned to think we are and to be afraid of being. But what was so cool, is when I was able to own that these are my preferences, even if I feel a little uncomfortable sharing them. By and large, people were very accepting and cool about it. Actually, I don't think anyone was like, oh no, that's weird. Everyone was really accepting and cool about it. And also if they hadn't been, that's probably not going to

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be a good fit for me because these are the things that actually matter to me.

To circle back to the keep going, I would go through these phases where I would go in, I would swipe a bunch, I would get a bunch of matches, and then I would kind of nurture them and then see which ones were going to move forward into meeting up in person. Maybe I would do the asking, a lot of the time I did. Meet them in person, see if it seemed like a good fit, ask them to meet up again if it was, continue to build that relationship.

And then every few months, if I felt like I had more bandwidth for friends and building friendships, then I would go back into Bumble BFF and do it again. And that is how I have built friendships in Sacramento. And I'm probably not done. There's probably going to be another period of time eventually when I go back into Bumble BFF and I do another round of swiping on new people, trying to see if there are interesting people who want to connect with me that I want to connect with.

But I will say, I've made some really incredible friends. Over the weekend we had dinner with two friends, one of them is someone I met on Bumble BFF. And I have several other friends that I've now been friends with for a while, we see each other on a regular basis that I made through Bumble BFF. I still have friends I see that I made through improv.

And I think it's like, you just continue to put the effort in. Both you continue to put the effort into the friendships that you've built and that you've started. And you continue to put the effort in into seeking new friendships if you have room and bandwidth for those.

So to review, the action steps are showing up places, right? Like putting yourself out there, being honest about who you are and what you're looking for, and then keeping going. And with a side of becoming a good listener, both so you can listen to see if it's a good match and so you can listen because listening is just a great skill to bring to any relationship.

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And you can do this on the apps, like I did. You can do it by meeting people in person. I know a lot of people have resistance to the apps, but I actually think it's great because it's like this forum where everyone has gone there because they are expressly looking for new friends. And that might feel a lot more comfortable and easy to you than trying to chat somebody up in person, which I think can feel a little stressful. Especially for somebody, if you have any people pleasing, if you have any perfectionism, if you have any fear that you're bothering people, I think meeting in real life can be kind of more challenging.

So if you are open to it, I would suggest the apps. But really the key thing at the end of the day is, what feels good to you? What feels doable to you? What of these action steps are you like, okay, I could do that? And you can start with as big or as small as you want. But if you take nothing else away from this podcast episode, what I want you to take away from it is you can make friends as an adult and you can make great friendships as an adult.

You can make deep friendships as an adult. You can make silly friendships as an adult. You can make friendships as an adult where you feel comfortable being your whole self. And the way you do it is bit by bit, by continuing to put yourself out there, to tell the truth about who you are and what you're looking for, to listen and hear what other people are saying, who they are, what they're looking for, and just keep going.

I think sometimes we want this friendship that's like, just add water, right? Like it's immediate, like you go from not knowing them to being really close. I think we see that modeled on TV a lot. If that happens, it's super fun. But I think most friendships and relationships are actually built slowly, just like bit by bit over time. And sometimes it can start out as a casual relationship and end up being a really close relationship.

And I think the slowness of them can actually be part of what makes it sustainable. I've had a lot of relationships in my life that went from not serious to very serious, very fast, mostly these were romantic relationships. And a lot of times those relationships then went on to fizzle out, right?

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So that kind of experience can be very fun and very intoxicating. But I think when it comes to building lasting relationships, being able to just add a little bit at a time and deepen a little bit at a time and feel more connected a little bit at a time, I think that can create something really lasting and wonderful.

And if you want customized, guided support in building friendships or seeking a long-term partner or feeling less stressed at work or getting a new job, that's exactly the kind of thing we do in one-on-one coaching. I do have room for a few new clients right now, and I would love for you to be one of them.

So if you want to have a conversation with that, you can go to [korilinn.com](http://korilinn.com) and sign up for a consult call, and we can talk about what it is you would love for coaching to help you create. And if it seems like a good fit, I'll tell you how I'm currently working with clients.

All right, y'all, that's what I have for you this time. I will talk to you next week. Bye.

Thank you for joining me for this week's episode of *Satisfied AF*. If you are ready to create a wildly delicious life and have way more fun than you ever thought possible, visit [www.korilinn.com](http://www.korilinn.com) to see how I can help. See you next week.