

STUDENT LIFE

Platonic Schmatonic?

Keys to the "Just Friends" ideal

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In 2005, Roger Kumble directed the romantic comedy *Just Friends*, starring Ryan Reynolds (*Van Wilder*), which wrestled with the ancient topic that many relationship professionals and hopeless romantics alike struggle with today. In the movie, Reynolds' character plays an obese love-stricken teenager who has fallen in love with his best friend, played by Amy Smart (*Starsky & Hutch*, *Varsity Blues*). After years living in California, the transformed romantic returns to try, once again, to win the love of his former best friend.

Not only does this film properly assess the struggle with both gender-platonic relationships, but it also offers legitimate insight on the genuine struggle men and women have with passionate emotions. At the conclusion of the movie, many questions arise as critics evaluate the plot, and viewers decode the meaning. The most important on the minds of most viewers is: Can a healthy relationship survive between men and women as "Just Friends?"

The key to understanding what attracts men to women and vice versa can be found in the scientific study of the

human pheromone chemical that is found in perspiration. Since the dawn of civilization, back to when males used their sense of smell to attract women, there have been many chemical methods of attraction. This study also leads back to the aforementioned question of whether or not platonic relationships are feasible.

Through much experience and watching plenty of Ashton Kutcher movies, I have found that remaining friends with a woman is rather difficult. No matter how many times a person says that they are "just friends," physical, emotional and mental means of attraction are always prevalent. It's the natural attraction between men and women that makes it practically impossible for opposite sexes to act in a platonic manner. As hard as it is to understand, the key to maintaining a platonic relationship (and not going crazy) deals with more complex thoughts and comprehension.

To my knowledge, from years of experience, the best method in maintaining a platonic relationship is to understand the situation and review your personal thoughts and emotions. The most prominent manner through which I have failed many times is being overly selfish. In most cases, specifically when your

platonic friend is currently in a relationship, the most important thing to evaluate is the method that would benefit the two.

As difficult as it seems, selfishness is the most widespread route to a failed friendship. Wanting only what you want and totally disregarding the other person's feelings and needs is the unhealthiest practice in relationships.

Genuinely and honestly caring for the other person is the most successful route for friendship to travel upon. There have been many times when I thought a platonic relationship of mine could advance and bloom into a more open and more-than-friendly dating relationship. That, of course, was my downfall. It was my own thoughts and not the best idea for the given circumstance.

Overcoming selfishness is the most difficult task that is asked of most people. I am a firm believer in the cliché phrase that "there is someone out there for everyone." With that in mind, it is better to focus your attention on maintaining a healthy platonic friendship than selfishly desiring something more physical and, oftentimes, sexual. Relationships come and go, but true friendships, male or female, if maintained correctly, can thrive and prosper.

Pajama party? Puh-lease.

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Between the ages of around sixteen until about twenty-two, the majority of young people would be lying if they said that they were not, in some part, governed by socially fashionable trends. Young women break their ankles for the sake of high heeled stilettos. Young men send up red flags in the form of popped collars on polo-style shirts. I will not revisit the overly "destroyed" jeans that resemble scraps more than pants or Uggs boots... Nevertheless, there are times when one simply has to overlook what is claimed to be fashionable and simply resort to the comfort of hooded sweatshirts and sweatpants with sneakers. This is an especially popular look around college campuses as students move from class to class throughout their days. There is, however, a fine line between going to class comfortable and going to class in what you sleep in.

Some slide under the registrar's radar, but for most college students, at some point during their respective undergraduate curriculums, they will fall victim to classes at 8 in the morning. That being said, one must note that the average college student does not make his or her way to bed until 1-2 a.m. In addition, the average college student has become very well acquainted with the snooze button on his/her alarm clock and thus, do not wake up until the very latest. Here, strategic practices like showering the night before and eating quick meals in packages like Pop Tarts come in handy. In such a short amount of allotted time before class, it makes sense that one would not want to put much time and effort into his/her

appearance. Here, sweats and hooded sweatshirts seem the logical option.

In addition, it is an 8 a.m. class. Aside from the mere desire to "feel pretty" or "look hot" on the part of the wearer, there is no actual need to dress up for class or put more than a little effort into that type of attire. I will openly admit that I am an advocate of the hooded sweatshirts and sneakers when attending my 8 a.m. math class. First, I figure, who do we as wearers of this clothing need to impress at that time of day. Second, who is fully awake at that particular time of day to take notice of what you are wearing? Too much time and effort put into an outfit would have been done in vain since students are running on caffeine or have altogether given up the fight and are asleep on their textbooks.

While being comfortable is a very good and productive thing, comfort does not mean bedroom attire. No one needs to see your Care Bear pajama bottoms as they fight to keep their eyes open in early morning classes on post-colonial literature or polynomials. Bedroom wear is called that for a reason. In addition, students of the Behrend college, at least while in school, reside in the Erie, Pennsylvania area. If some have not taken notice, the white fluffy material that falls from the sky from time to time throughout the months of November until, at times, mid-May is snow. Snow is cold. Boots work better than your slippers. While it is silently understood that upon enrolling in college we are all injected with a sloth-like disease that makes us incredibly lazy. If you can't even toss on actual pants you might as well just stay in bed.



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