

Friendship: New Meaning In The Digital Age? | Allan Besselink

Written by Allan Besselink
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`<div class="zemanta-img">` `<p class="zemanta-img-attribution">``````` Friendship. It's a word that used to have a fairly consistent meaning amongst people. There are certain things you would do and wouldn't do to your friends. There was a certain responsibility to the process of friendship because you had a great deal of accountability and very little anonymity.

`</p>` `<p class="zemanta-img-attribution">`But that was back when our friendships were defined by our face-to-face interactions.

`</p>` `<p class="zemanta-img-attribution">`In the present day world of social networking, it has come to mean something, well, completely different. It's a strange new world out there now that social media is a part of our daily lives.

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`</p>` `<p class="zemanta-img-attribution">`But then there was email, followed shortly thereafter by Prodigy, America Online, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter the list goes on. Now, you have a digital filter. Now, you have a degree of anonymity behind the monitor. Now, you have LOL and LMAO and emoticons. Now, we're faced with the context of a digital existence dovetailing with your life. The journey that is friendship shows some tricky new twists and turns. Or does it?

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`</p>` `<p class="zemanta-img-attribution">`When, in real life, do you just remove a friend from your friend list without them even knowing why? Now you have to truly be aware of the fact that it is too convenient, too easy, to just hit the un-friend button without a proper discussion or true communication.

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that might not have existed otherwise. And yes, great ♦real-world♦ friendships evolve from these social media interactions. Yes, it does allow you to re-connect with people you♦d never intended to lose contact with in the first place. Social media also presents many great new tools and opportunities in the business world. So don♦t get me wrong ♦ there is a huge value to the relationships we develop (and maintain) in the context of a digital world. </p> <p>Maybe it♦s not so much about social media as it is about those who partake in it, and how they do so. Perhaps the challenge of effective communication, and how it presents itself in the digital era, really isn♦t that much different than our bygone past after all.</p> <p>Photo credits: <a title="Edwin Dalorzo on Flickr"

href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/11199743@N07/2285609188/">Edwin Dalorzo</p>

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