How Can I Make Friends with the Opposite Sex?

* **Kris Swiatocho, Cliff Young**
* 2015 **12 Mar**
* COMMENTS **4**

***EDITOR'S NOTE:***[***He Said-She Said***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/he-said-she-said/) *is a biweekly advice column for singles featuring a question from a Crosswalk.com reader with responses from a male and female point of view. If you've got a question about anything related to singleness or living the single life, please submit it to* ***hesaid-shesaid@crosswalk.com*** *(selected questions will be posted anonymously).*

**QUESTION**: People say I’m friendly, but I think I’m more “selectively friendly.” I can easily make friends…but only with fellow women. I find it difficult to interact with people of the opposite sex. I can interact for a REALLY short time, but it quickly makes me feel uneasy. I’m not sure if it’s because I grew up without a father, or I don’t like to appear like I’m “with” someone, but it’s so hard for me. I would love to have male friends, but I don’t know how! How can I get more comfortable being around guys in a way that doesn’t look awkward, or making others think I’m being flirtatious?

**HE SAID:**

I would venture to say most people are “selectively friendly,” however if you can easily make friends (even at this point with only women), you should have no problem making friends with the opposite sex.

Some of the keys to having friends of any kind are sharing common interests, accepting them for who they are, giving them respect, building a trust and listening. One of the ways I have found to overcome the uneasiness of meeting new people is to *ask them questions*. The more they talk the less you need to, and in the process you learn if this is a person who you’d like build a friendship with.

Guys in my perspective are pretty easy to befriend, and many do like to talk about themselves, so use that to your advantage. Find out what his interests are, how he spends his time, where he would like to go professionally and personally, and what his history is.

There will usually be the perception of a “relationship” when a man and a woman are talking, that’s just the nature of our society. If you don’t want to give off signals of being “with" a guy, refrain from being a close talker, touchy-feely, or smiling too much while brushing back your hair (I hear that can be a sign).

*Continue to love each other with true Christian love* ([**Hebrew 13:1**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/nlt/hebrews/13-1.html) NLT)

My early mentors encouraged me to treat my female friendships as I would a sister, and that instruction has served me well. It meant respecting them, watching out for their well-being, and honoring them, yet not be flirtatious nor lead them on in any way.

You can do a similar thing by looking to guys as brother figures, getting to know them as you would a [**family**](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/) member of sorts, and most importantly don’t put too much pressure on yourself for making a friendship work. As in all relationships, it takes two individuals who want it to happen for it to be successful.

**SHE SAID:**

You seem shy, and you should know that that's OK. I think women today have become too friendly with men to the point it has confused men. So with that, I appreciate your desire to find the balance. How do you build friendships with men (which are biblical! Jesus was friends with Mary, Martha, Mary Magdalene, etc) but not appear that you are chasing them?

It comes down to prayer and boundaries.

**1) Start praying for God to give you courage to build relationships with men.** If you would like to get married one day, having a friendship with a man will be very important. Ask God to help you build relationships with the men HE wants you to have. Ask him to help you discern proper behavior, how much time to spend with them, talk on the phone/text, etc. Please know, if you are seen alone with ANY man for any length of time, people are going to assume you are dating. It is what it is. So, in order to change their minds about this, you might have to tell them you are only friends (if they ask). Also, encourage smaller groups where others can see your friendship.

**2) Pray about your boundaries.** Not just how much time you are alone or on the phone but also in communication of your friendship. If you sense he is interested in something more, and you aren't (or the other way around) you need to talk about this. Please know, great marriages come from great friendships. But it won't work if you don't talk to each other. If you meet a guy that you think the Lord wants you to know more, then pray about opportunities to hang out but also, communicate that is an area you struggle with. So this way they know that you are seeking to build a friendship first, learning what that means.

Be encouraged to know you are on the right path. Don't be worried about the numbers of friendships, but the right friendships.

Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of a friend springs from their heartfelt advice ([**Proverbs 27:9**](http://www.biblestudytools.com/nlt/proverbs/27-9.html)).

***HE is …******Cliff Young****, a Crosswalk.com contributing writer and a veteran single of many decades. He has traveled the world in search of fresh experiences, serving opportunities, and the perfect woman (for him) and has found that his investments in God, career and youth ministry have paid off in priceless dividends.*

***SHE is ...******Kris Swiatocho****, the President and Director of* [***TheSinglesNetwork.org Ministries***](http://thesinglesnetwork.org/) *and* [***FromHisHands.com Ministries.***](http://fromhishands.com/) *Kris has served in ministry in various capacities for the last 25 years. An accomplished trainer and mentor, Kris has a heart to reach and grow leaders so they will in turn reach and grow others. She is also the author of* [***three books.***](http://www.thesinglesnetwork.org/bookspdfs.html)

***DISCLAIMER****: We are not trained psychologists or licensed professionals. We're just average folk who understand what it's like to live the solo life in the twenty-first century. We believe that the* [***Bible***](http://www.biblestudytools.com/) *is our go-to guide for answers to all of life's questions, and it's where we'll go for guidance when responding to your questions. Also, it's important to note that we write our answers separately.*

***GOT A QUESTION?*** *If you've got a question about anything related to singleness or living the single life, please submit it to hesaid-shesaid@crosswalk.com (selected questions will be posted anonymously). While we are unable to answer every inquiry, we do hope that this column will be an encouragement to you. Click here to visit the He Said-She Said* [***archives***](http://www.crosswalk.com/family/singles/he-said-she-said/)*.*