

Old Friends

The times with old friends have formed bookends to the chronicles of my life. And the benefits of old friends and of long-term relationships become clear:

- Old friends provide continuity to our lives. They love us through good times and bad.
- As we grow older, and parents die or spouses fall to divorce, lifelong friends are the only ones who remember us as children or young people. They can see past graying hair and bald spots to the ponytails and crewcuts.
- Old friends offer context, reference points, while current friends know only who we are today. When we worry aloud about children (of any age), old friends can remind us that we were once just as unwise and we survived.
- They can provide puzzle pieces of our past. They remember people, places, circumstances that we've long forgotten.
- Lifelong pals, with their stories and memories, help prove to children, or grandchildren, that we really were once their age.
- Old friends can help us see the progress we've made in life. In youth, we dreamed of what we'd be; old friends are in the best position to cheer when we reach our goals.
- They help us process the stages of life as we intimately share our joys and fears and heartaches.

These precious times with old friends were proffered pieces of the past and the promise of the future, all at once.

In hopes that all of us will have many more times together, I pray that it will be so.

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