

FACTS OF LIFE
ON
FRIENDSHIP
SELF RESPECT &
PERSONAL IDENTITY



Dan Celentano

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Four Negative Personality Changes
That Could Help Shape
Who You Are

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on
Friendship
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and
Personal Identity

INTRODUCTION

You're with a group of friends. Suddenly one of them takes out her iPhone and takes a picture of the group.

You go to look at the picture.

Question:

Who is the first person you look for in the picture?

Yeah, you got it,

YOU.

And 9 times out of 10, you won't like what you see.

"Ahh, man, look at me.

Look at my hair.

Look at my pimple.

Look at my ears."

Why do we look for ourselves **FIRST** in a situation like this? Why don't we check out our friends or even our boy/girl friend first?

It's probably because we know others will see the picture and we are concerned about how they will respond.

There's nothing wrong with this. We all want to feel like we have value to other people and we do what we can to get people to see us in a positive light.

In fact, we as humans are almost addicted to this notion of being accepted, liked, needed and wanted by others.

So much so that if we don't feel like we are,
we become a little anxious.

This is especially true with teenagers.

Truth is, some teenagers become so anxious if they don't feel anyone cares about them that they completely change their personality to compensate for their insecurity.

There are

FOUR MAJOR CHANGES

some teenagers make when they don't feel anyone could accept or like them for who they are.

People who make these changes are not "bad people."

Most simply have a misplaced understanding as to where their value lies.

After all,

everyone

no matter who you are,

EVERYONE

wants to feel like they have value to others.

The following are the four changes.

See if you recognize yourself in any of them.

1

PUT UP A FRONT

The idea behind this first change of
PUTTING UP A FRONT
is simple:

*“If people aren’t going to like me for who I am,
maybe they will like me for what I **do**...
the wrong things I do.”*

These are people who feel that the only way others will like or accept them is if they **DO** certain things; usually things that are wrong or unlawful.

So, I go to a party, I drink alcohol with my friends, people join me, I feel like I belong.

I bully weaker people, my so called friends laugh, I feel like I belong.

I smoke some ‘weed’ with my friends, there are people around doing it with me. I feel like I belong.

Etc., Etc..

Some how, some way, the person feels like they have value to others by doing things such as this.

Everyone is looking at me,

Everyone thinks I’m cool,

Therefore I am accepted and people like me.

And what better way to get attention than to do something that *isn't expected, not very smart, or against the law.*

You see this all the time when movie stars are desperate to keep their name in the eye of the public.

From sex tapes to outrageous dress.

From public affairs to lawless behavior.

Their line of thinking is simple:

“do something stupid or shocking no matter what it is and the media will cover it and the attention is on me. Don't matter if I lose self respect in the process. Just as long as they're looking.

Can you think of any singer or movie star who does this?

You know you can.

Let's be real:

**WHEN YOU DO DUMB OR UNLAWFUL THINGS
TO GET PEOPLE TO LOOK AT YOU,**

THEY'RE GOING TO LOOK.

YOU WILL GET ATTENTION.

However, the attention you get is

SHALLOW

because you lose something far more important
and
something that would last a whole lot longer.

You lose...

RESPECT

And for those reading this now, hope the people you hang out with have **RESPECT** for you **FIRST as a person** or otherwise chances are good they will either

USE YOU OR LOSE YOU.

Putting it another way,

ANY TIME FRIENDSHIP

is

'BUILT ON SAND'

and

THE RAIN COMES,

the friendship get's

WASHED AWAY.

That's just the way it is.

That's why you want to
hang out with people who like

YOU FOR YOU

AND NOT JUST FOR WHAT YOU DO.

By doing this, you build friendship on a **ROCK.**

This goes especially for dating.

MAN, does this go especially for dating.

Go to the ebook library and read

SEX, LOVE AND BEING USED

to see why.

2

STREET PUPPETS

The next change some teenagers make when they feel they have little value to others is to become a

STREET PUPPET.

You might have read the book

ARE YOU A STREET PUPPET

at the ebook library at choicesforteens.com.

If not, let me explain:

A puppet is something that must be controlled by someone else.

If I put a puppet on a table, it can't do anything on its own.

In order to give this puppet **any kind of value**, I must pick it up, put it on, and **it is I who makes it work and gives it value**.

There are some teenagers who act just like this puppet.

The only way some teenagers feel they can be accepted by others is to just go along with the crowd when the crowd wants to do something wrong or stupid.

One of the things that make being a Street Puppet hard to resist is the fact that it is usually being driven by the desire to put up a

FRONT.

If I have a strong ‘**Need to Please**,’ chances are good that it won’t take much to display it when someone asks me to do something wrong.

Let me give you an example:

I used to work with a 16 year old boy who didn’t have very much confidence in his ability to make friends. As a results, he had a pretty bad **FRONTING** problem.

One day his “friends” dared him to drink some gasoline...

and he did...

...and he almost died in the process.

When I came to the hospital to visit him, he had tubes up his nose and in his arm as he laid there sleeping.

When I saw him, I felt sorry for him. Not necessarily because he drank the gasoline, (I mean you make the choices in life and the choices will turn around and make you).

I felt sorry for him because of the way he tried to get attention and be accepted by his so called friends.

Can you imagine wanting to be accepted so bad that you would drink gasoline in hopes others will like you? Did this boy really think people were going to **RESPECT** or even **ACCEPT** him for drinking gasoline? Really?

There are teenagers who **DO** things just as dumb and actually think they can be respected for it.

I mean do you really think people are going to respect you because you smoke ‘weed,’

or bully someone who is weaker than you,

or drink to a point where you make a fool of yourself?

Don’t you think people would respect you more if you thought **FOR YOURSELF** and did your own thing?

When you allow **others** to make decisions for you that get you in trouble, you give up your freedom to choose what is right or wrong for **YOU**.

And any time you give up your freedom to choose, be prepared to take the consequences for **OTHER PEOPLES** bad choices.

The *true story* of Anthony is a great example of what I mean.

Anthony was a slender 16-year old boy who never thought he’d find himself in the kind of trouble he was in.

After all, he had never even been sent to the principal’s office much less to juvenile jail. As he stood looking out the narrow window from his cramped jail cell, Anthony kept asking himself the same questions over and over again:

“What am I doing here? How did I get into this mess? How could I let this happen? Stupid!”

Anthony's problems started when his family moved from North Carolina to a small town in Minnesota. His father had a new job that required him to travel quite a bit.

Once again Anthony found himself in a new his high school. Being new, he wanted very much to be accepted.

One day, a small group of boys came up to Anthony and asked him if he wanted to go to a beer party that evening. Never before in his life had Anthony gone out drinking.

He didn't like the taste of the stuff and never saw a need to do something he didn't like just to hang out with friends.

But being in a new school Anthony put aside those things and decided to go.

At the party, Anthony drank just one can of beer. Even that was tough for him to take. It took him most of the party just to do that.

Anthony seemed to fit in pretty good so his friends ask him to another party a few weeks later.

He went to that party and drank. Then weeks later, to another party and drank. And to still another party after that.

It got to the point where Anthony wasn't drinking just one can of beer anymore.

He was drinking a six-pack, some vodka" and some rum.

Anthony liked hanging out with his new friends even though they did things that were totally against what he believed in.

Hanging out with these people gave Anthony a sense of importance, of acceptance—like he was

SOMEBODY to SOMEBODY.

This also gave Anthony a feeling of security: something he had never had before in his life. There were people around and if it took drinking to make this happen, so be it.

In time, Anthony actually believed that the people he was hanging out with were the kind of friends who would be there for him if he ever really needed them.

Truth is, they were more “drinking buddies” than actual friends.

Anthony couldn't see this at the time, but it wouldn't take long for him to discover it.

There was something else Anthony was about to discover.

You see, the boy who'd never been drinking before, who had always tried to do the right things in life, who had put aside his values just to be accepted, was now developing a drinking problem.

Anthony was at a point where he would drink just about anything his friends would put in front of him.

When you're having fun and people are hanging out with you, you don't think of those things.

Little did Anthony realize that when friendship is built upon **sand** instead of **rock**, it doesn't take long before the **rain** washes it away.

And the rain in Anthony's life was about to come down and come down hard.

It all started on a Saturday evening, two days before his birthday.

Anthony went to one of his parties thinking nothing of it. Just another party to him.

When he walked into the house, he saw his "friends" sitting in a circle on the living room floor. Not giving any thought to it, Anthony sat with them.

Shortly after he sat down, someone pulled out a marijuana cigarette, lit it up, took a drag and then passed it on to the next person. This person also took a drag...and so on.

The marijuana was eventually passed to Anthony.

Everyone waited for him to take a drag. He stared at the joint for a moment, then raised his head and slowly moved his eyes around the circle. As he was doing this, his mind began to race.

"Man, I don't want this garbage," he thought. *"Drinking is starting to mess me up enough. Like I really need something else to make it worse? Forget about it!"*

He then passed the joint to the next person without taking a drag.

"What's the matter?" one boy said in a sarcastic tone, *"Too strong for you? Want a candy joint instead?"* Everyone in the circle laughed.

"Give me a break, kid!" another said.
"I didn't think you were such a wimp!"

Suddenly an uneasy feeling crept into Anthony's body. As he looked around, the faces he once knew were no longer familiar, but rather dark shadows of people he had never met before.

This made Anthony feel really uncomfortable—so much so that he wanted to leave.

But as Anthony tried to stand up, something peculiar happened. He couldn't seem to get off the floor; it was like he was glued to the carpet.

The heavy hand of possibly being rejected literally held Anthony in place. He was afraid that if he left that party, people would make fun of him, and no one would ever want to hang out with him any more.

So he stayed. The marijuana kept going around and Anthony kept passing it on. The more he did, the more uneasy he felt.

Suddenly there was a knock at the door.

“Open up,” a voice on the other side said. “It’s the police. We got a call from your neighbors that something might be wrong. Open the door.”

As everyone scrambled to get away, the police opened the front and smelled the marijuana. They then quickly came in and arrested everyone in sight for possession of a controlled substance.

As Anthony was being handcuffed, he turned to his friends for support.

“What’s up? Someone tell them I didn’t do nothing. Come on! Tell them I didn’t do nothing!”

Anthony expected his friends to speak up for him. He actually expected someone to cover his back. But no one said anything. Some just looked away while others smirked.

“Come on!” Anthony said in an anxious voice. *“Quit messing around! You know I didn’t do anything. Tell them! Tell them!”*

Once again, silence. The only thing that could be heard was the clicking of handcuffs.

Anthony slowly hung his head. A look of anger and frustration showed on his face as he was led out the front door.

“Punks,” he whispered to himself. *“I was hanging around with a bunch of punks.”*

~

After serving time at the Hyland Detention Center, Anthony was sent to an alcohol treatment facility to get help for his drinking problem.

But Anthony’s Story doesn’t end there.

About a year later, his family moved again—this time to a town in Southern Minnesota.

Anthony was new to this high school and wanted to be accepted. However, after all he has been through, he was now a lot wiser. And it didn’t take long for him to put this wisdom into action.

One day, a boy from the “in crowd” came up to Anthony’s locker and invited him to a beer party.

Anthony paused a moment as he reached up to the shelf in his locker to get a book.

He then turned, looked the boy squarely in the eye and said in a slow, soft, but yet firm voice,

“A beer party? I don’t want to go to your beer party...” Another pause.

“...And if you’re smart, kid” he said as he closed his locker door and turned to walk away,

“you don’t want to go either.”

Here's the Bottom line:

TO BE ABLE TO THINK FOR YOURSELF;

TO BE ABLE TO DO YOUR OWN THING;

**IS ONE OF THE MOST ADMIRABLE
CHARACTERISTICS A TEENAGER CAN HAVE.**

WHY?

Because most teenagers **WISH** they can do it
and thus **ADMIRE** those who can.

WHY

can't most teenagers do it?

Well, you got me there.

Maybe it's because the fear of being alone and possibly not
having friends gets in the way of logical thinking.

After all, when you think about it,
saying no to a friend when this friend wants you to do something
that could either hurt yourself, hurt others or break the law,
can only get you two responses;

“No problem, I’ll call you tomorrow.”

or

“Find someone else to hang out with.”

Either way,
YOU WIN.

If the person accepts you **FOR WHO YOU ARE**
and calls the next day,

GREAT.

If the person decides not to hang out with you because
you don’t want what they want,

GREAT.

Obviously the person only liked you for what you **DO**
and
not for **WHO YOU ARE.**

You can’t lose.

Not many choices you can make in life where by
you win either way.

Might as well take advantage of this one while you can.

For more information on this

Read the article

THE TOUGHEST TEENAGER

in the e book library.

3

WITHDRAW

It's 7 am, time to get up for school.

You slowly open your eyes, throw the covers back and gently, grudgingly, get out of bed.

After getting dressed, you grab your book bag and head downstairs for breakfast.

"Morning mom," you say as you sit at the kitchen table putting your book bag on the floor next to you.

"Morning," she says staring intently at your face.

"You feeling ok this morning?" she says slowly sitting in the chair across from you.

"Yeah, why?"

*"Nothing. You just look a little pale.
Let me see if you have a fever."*

Mom reaches over and places her open hand on your forehead.

"Mom, stop!" you say, *"I'm alright. What are you doing?"*

*"Just making sure, that's all. If you feel any worse,
let the school nurse know."*

'Any worse' you whisper to yourself. 'I feel good.'

You arrive at school. However, before you go in you see your basketball coach.

“How ya doing coach,” you say.

“Fine,” your coach says staring intently at you.

“You feeling alright?”

“Yeah, I feel fine. First my mom and now you. I feel fine.”

“OK, but if you’re not feeling good, let me know before the game starts tonight.”

As your coach walks away, you stand still slowly rubbing your open hand over your face.

‘I guess I feel a little warm...maybe.’

You walk in the building. While at your locker, your date comes up to you.

“Hi. Ready for the game tonight?”

“Yeah.”

“You sure? You don’t look good.”

“Well, I’m feeling a little warm, but I’m alright...I guess. My stomach is starting to hurt a little bit, but other than that, I’m alright...I’m...alright.”

You both walk to your first class. You slowly sit down at your desk holding your stomach.

A few minutes later the teacher walks in. She puts some papers on the desk and takes attendance. After she calls your name, she pauses.

“You feeling OK this morning? You look a little pale.”

“I, I don’t know,” you say. *“I was fine when I woke up this morning. But since then, something seems to have come over me. I don’t know what it is.”*

“Maybe you better go see the nurse,” she says.

“Yeah, I feel a little warm and my stomach hurts a little. Maybe I better go do that.”

The nurse checks you out.

*“Seems like you’re alright.
You don’t have a fever or anything.
Everything looks fine to me.
I don’t know what it could be.*

Maybe if you lie down a bit you’ll feel better.”

The nurse calls your mom to tell her that you came to see her.

“I knew it,” she says. *“I told him that something must be wrong with him. Maybe he better come home for the day.”*

The point of this story is obviously clear:

If enough people give you the message that something is wrong with you, after a while you're going to believe it yourself and start to act like something really is, when in reality

THERE ISN'T.

The same idea works when someone gives you the message, either verbally or physically, that you have no value as a person; that you're not as good as other people.

**AFTER A WHILE YOU ACTUALLY
BEGIN TO BELIEVE IT,
EVEN THOUGH IT'S NOT TRUE.**

This is especially the case when it comes from people you trust like friends or family.

This brings us to the **Third Change** some teenagers make when they feel they have no value to others, and that is to

**BACK OFF FROM EVEN TRYING
TO GET CLOSE TO ANYONE.**

These are people who have been conditioned to believe that they are not as good as everyone else; that they can't compete with anyone and thus trying to make friends would be fruitless to them.

“So why even try.”

This doesn't include people who are shy. Being shy and withdrawing one self from friendship are two different things.

People who choose to withdraw from others because they don't feel they can ever have friends by just being who they are make a huge mistake.

By not allowing themselves to get close to anyone, they never show others what kind of person they really are.

And truth is
EVERYONE has a personality someone is going to like.

See why in the
LAST SECTION
of this book.

The reason some teenagers don't believe it is because they have been "told" otherwise either by what was said or done to them.

I understand it's not easy to put yourself out there after feeling rejected by others a number of times.

And yes, it may happen again.

But truth is there will always be people who will

LIKE and **RESPECT**

the kind of person you are if you'd only stop
listening to other people

and

JUST LET YOURSELF BE,
so they can see it.

4

PLAY
THE BLAME GAME

Teenagers are notorious for playing what is called

THE BLAME GAME

Many times The Blame Game starts at home when teenagers blame themselves for certain things that go wrong in their family.

From parents arguing all the time, to divorce.

From drugs or alcohol in the family,
to abuse.

From being constantly yelled at,
to a parent absent in the family.

Some how, some way, to them they had something to do with it. What exactly it is, they're not really sure. Someone either told them it was their fault or they put the blame upon themselves out of a false sense of guilt.

Either way,

the truth is a vast majority of the problems they were supposed to have caused

**HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THEM
IN THE FIRST PLACE.**

In fact, if one were to stop and ask themselves why they are blaming themselves for what happened, they would see it made no sense.

Don't get me wrong, this is not to say teenagers are perfect and shouldn't take the blame for certain things **THEY HAVE CONTROL OVER** like doing their homework or getting home on time or doing household chores, etc..

But for things like divorce? Or parents who fight all the time? Or alcohol or drug abuse by certain family members? Or a parents absence?

I DON'T THINK SO.

In any event, when teenagers begin to blame themselves for things they have no control over, it can carry over to other situations such as friendship and being accepted.

For example,

when things go wrong with a friend or girl/boy friend
or
when you're put down or ignored by a group of friends,
or
there is cyber bulling going on,
it's so much easier to blame yourself and feel like a loser
because you've '*played the game before.*'

As it was at home, where you most likely had nothing to do with the thing you're blaming yourself for, so too is it with friends.

Like I said earlier, there are things teenagers need to be responsible for. No one is perfect. If this is the case, you do what you gotta do to fix it like anyone else and then move on with your life.

No big deal.

But things like cyber bullying or being put down
in front of others?

Again,

I DON'T THINK SO.

Think about it:

Taking the blame when someone does something mean, hurtful or disrespectful to you for no real reason is like blaming yourself for a car accident because you happen to be on that street the day before.

Makes no sense, right?

2 MORE
FACTS OF LIFE
on
FRIENDSHIP,
SELF RESPECT
and
PERSONAL IDENTITY.

FACT I

You don't need to do anything dumb to get people to accept and respect you.

The reason for this is simple:

Everyone was born with **CHARACTER**.

The natural **characteristics** you **already have** defines who you are as a person and are ones that will draw people to you.

That's just the way it is.

From someone who's cool
under pressure

to

someone who's not
afraid to stand up for what is right.

From someone who never quits

to

someone who's loyal.

From someone who never says
bad things about anyone

to

someone who thinks for him/her self.

From someone who
has compassion

to

someone with a great sense of humor.

Everyone has something about their personality that defines who they are and impresses someone, somehow, and which has **nothing to do** with how you **LOOK** or what you **DO**.

For more examples, read the book

**CHARACTERISTICS THAT MAKE
TEENAGERS GREAT**
in the e book library.

Not only do you already have something about you that attracts others to you, but you'd be amazed at those who admire your character from a distance and you don't, **and won't**, even know it.

This is not just talk, it's a **FACT**.

Don't be surprised that in 10 years from now at a high school reunion someone says something like,

*“You know, I always admired you.
You were so cool under pressure. Seemed like nothing bothered
you. I had a lot of respect for that. It's something I wished I
had.”*

I don't care if you think no one could ever admire **anything** about you, truth is I've seen this happen **many times**.

By just being who you are, certain people will be attracted to certain characteristics you have and want to hang out with you.

This brings us to the second fact.

FACT II

As much as you may want it to happen, not everyone is going to like you.

Sorry about that.

Truth is, most won't like your type of personality enough to want to hang out with you.

This doesn't mean that they don't like you personally.

It simply means they are not attracted enough to your *type of personality* to want hang out with you. **BIG DEAL.**

NO ONE has a personality everybody likes.

If you think so, you're watching too much TV.

Let's be real here:

If everyone in your school had a personality everyone else liked, everyone in your school would be hanging out with everyone else.

Make sense?

Fact is, if you have a few good friends, you're doing pretty good for yourself.

A survey given to 600 high school students backs this up.

Among the questions was the following:

How many close friends do you have?

The survey went on to clarify this question by saying it was
talking about

CLOSE FRIENDS;

friends you can confide in,
friends who are there for you when you need them.

THE ANSWER?

1 - 2 close friends.

No surprise here.

If you have 1 - 2 close friends, you're doing pretty good.

If you have more, count your blessings.

**CONTACT
INFORMATION**

Want to discuss anything in this book?

Have any questions?

Have any comments?

We'd love to hear from you.

You can contact us at

uptoyou@copper.net

or

the **new** twitter account

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