

You know that healthy friendships are an essential part of your mental health and well-being, but it feels like making friends as an adult should be easier. Why does it seem like everyone else has it figured out and you're just sitting there hoping for someone to adopt you and be best friends forever and never have to make a new friend again?

## THIS IS SUCKER PUNCHED

I'm pretty simple when it comes to clothes. Give me a soft t-shirt with linen pants or a pair of joggers and I'm a happy girl. This is exactly why I love Rothy's shoes. I can add a pop of color or dress up an outfit without sacrificing comfort. I've got three pairs and am always eyeing their new designs. I continue to be impressed by the durability and comfort of a shoe made from recyclable materials and I adore having a fun pop of color on my feet. My first pair were cherry red and I think they're still my favorites! And when they get tired and sad looking? Throw them in the wash for a refresh and they'll look good as new. You deserve comfortable, sustainable, and stylish shoes and Rothy's got them for both men and women in several incredible styles. Get \$20 off your order when you use the link [BeckyLMcCoy.com/Rothys](https://BeckyLMcCoy.com/Rothys). That's [BeckyLMcCoy.com](https://BeckyLMcCoy.com), slash, R-O-T-H-Y-S.

My family moved to a new town a couple nights before starting high school. I knew no one and spent the majority of my 9<sup>th</sup> grade year eating lunch alone. I've never been someone that's been able to make myself fit in so it was really challenging to find the people I vibed with.

No matter how old you are, making friends can be really, really difficult.

Based on the conversations I've had with many of you, we all thought that it would get easier as we grew up. And maybe if adult friends were like childhood friends it would feel more natural. Not that kids and teenagers don't have stress or aren't facing challenging life circumstances, or that adult friendships have to be serious and avoid all things fun, but there's something about adult friendships that have the potential to be...messier.

We have more demands on our energy and time. Some of us have kids, some have challenging jobs, others are caring for ailing family members, living with chronic illness, or dealing with any number of other kinds of loss, trauma, or

stress. And so making new friends is scary, because what if they aren't willing to handle our biggest challenges with care? What if they're too bogged down by their own stuff or believe they're too perfect to even have their own stuff?

(psst...EVERYBODY has stuff that feels too heavy even if they're really good at pretending.)

But the question remains: how do you find true, deep, adult friends you can trust with your mess and they can trust you back?

When my husband was in the Air Force I had a lot of practice and here's what I learned: your gut knows who your friends will be. There was a group of people we really wanted to be friends with. We tried to join their ranks, ignoring every instinct that told us it was never going to be a good fit, until there was eventually a massive fallout that included them telling us we'd never be part of their inner circle. Ouch. But it taught me to listen to that little voice because I could've avoided that whole situation.

And there were times when I listened to the voice. When we were in Las Vegas for my husband's residency, I saw another spouse with an infant who was incredibly pregnant. She looked really kind and really overwhelmed and I thought to myself, she probably could use some help, we should be friends. She is still one of my closest friends over a decade later. When we were stationed in Maryland I started a book club through our church and, while standing in the produce aisle, got a phone call from a new mom who giggled and said, "I just really need friends." She's the one I called right away after Keith died and the one who took my oldest when the second kid was born.

I take it back, it's about more than just listening to your gut (your gut is still the right place to start, though). Making those lifelong friendships is as much about being intentional and open about what you're looking for and what you need. Since we aren't in school or after school activities like we were as kids, we have to grab on to opportunities to make friends wherever we meet them.

When you feel that gut feeling that you'd get along well with someone, jump on it. Tell them you'd like to get to know them better, that you think you could be great friends. And model what you need. Ask them questions. Follow up. Create opportunities for quality time since quantity isn't always an option. Share your dreams and your fears and your losses and joys, slowly if you need to, and observe how they respond. Anyone who responds with equal vulnerability (without either of you trauma dumping - even the best of friends deserve healthy

boundaries) is showing you they understand what it means to be a trustworthy, caring friend who isn't afraid to traverse the mountains and valleys of adulthood together.

Here are two books to help you work on listening to your gut and being vulnerable in your friendships:

- Discernment by Henri Nouwen
- Daring Greatly by Brené Brown

You'll find links to these along with a full transcript of this episode at [BeckyLMcCoy.com/podcast/74](http://BeckyLMcCoy.com/podcast/74)

How fun would it be to have matching shoes (or bags?!) with your friends?! One friend and I are always drooling over which new Rothy's patterns we want. Their original flat is an award winner and I've been eyeing the driving loafers for years now (I've already got the flat and the point). Get \$20 off your order when you use the link [BeckyLMcCoy.com/Rothys](http://BeckyLMcCoy.com/Rothys). That's [BeckyLMcCoy.com](http://BeckyLMcCoy.com), slash, R-O-T-H-Y-S.

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If you found this episode encouraging or helpful, share it with a friend and remember: finding friends who aren't afraid of mess isn't impossible; listen to your gut, be intentional, and get vulnerable. You're doing great.