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I help you connect with yourself & your ancestors

HOW TO GET OUT OF TOXIC FRIENDSHIPS

Breaking up with someone you love is a complicated process. But what's more difficult to comprehend is ending a friendship. When you consider the amount of **history both of you share, you might feel tempted to stay put in a toxic relationship.**

That may mean putting up with a lot of drama, unhealthy events, and unnecessary competition.

You may think it's a small price to pay for fear of finding out how your friend will react. Or worse, you might worry they will share your darkest secrets with the world.

Regardless of your thoughts and fears, ending a toxic friendship -- or a friendship that is just not working -- is possible.

So how do you release yourself from a toxic friendship? Try these strategies:

1. Start by slowly fading them out. If you were involved in an unhealthy situation, don't suddenly end the friendship. Instead, set boundaries that are realistic but strong.
 - **For example, you may decide that you will only talk to your toxic friend through email and limit your phone conversations to topics that don't bring up painful past emotions.** You might decide to reduce the amount of dialogue you hold with them.
 - Lower the frequency from three times a week to once or twice a month. As your friendship diminishes, some of your most painful emotions will come up. This feeling is normal and expected.
 - Once you acknowledge and accept those feelings without judgment or

resistance, you can let those emotions also go.

2. End it officially when the slow fade fails to work. Although you may attempt to let your friend go gradually, that might not work. You might want to take a more direct approach.

- **Sit down with your friend and explain that you need more time and energy for other things in your life. Then, give them a final warning, and if they don't respond kindly, end the friendship.**
- The direct approach may feel unnerving while you're at it, but don't let yourself feel intimidated. The good thing is you allow yourselves the chance to talk things out first and come to an understanding. Soon enough, you'll realize how freeing it feels.

3. Remove all sentimentality from the situation. The fact that you want to end a friendship means you've realized that it's no longer beneficial to you. Don't let that taint your message, though. You still need to present your case as objectively as possible.

- Be professional and courteous throughout your conversation. **Nostalgia can cause you to reminisce about the good times you had together. However, those memories don't excuse their behavior. Remain as calm and collected as possible throughout your conversation.**

4. Stay honest with yourself. You may not want to get yourself involved in a drawn-out conversation. But you must talk to your friend about how you feel. Remember, you have good reasons to end your friendship.

- If you don't, maybe you can try to work things out. But if you realize that things won't work out, then it may be best to end it.
- **Be honest with yourself and your friend. The sooner you know it's time to leave, the sooner you can get rid of the toxic friendship.**

Toxic friendships are difficult to let go of, especially if you've been friends with them

for a long time. But sometimes, when you realize that your friendship isn't benefiting you anymore, it's time to move on.

Think about why people around you have such a negative impact on your life and decide whether you want to keep associating with them. Then, tell them it's over and politely explain that things just aren't working out anymore.

The negative feelings associated with the toxicity will not vanish overnight. But with time, everyone involved will begin to heal and grow stronger.