



Best Friends Forever: Surviving a Breakup with Your Best Friend

Irene S. Levine

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For the first time, a guide for women recovering from a breakup with their best friend-an indispensable addition to every woman's library

Men, jobs, children, personal crises, irreconcilable social gaps-these are just a few of the strange and confusing reasons that may cause a female friendship to end. No matter what the circumstances, the breakup of a female friendship leaves a woman devastated and asking herself difficult questions. Was someone to blame? Is the friendship worth fighting for? How can I prevent this from ever happening again?

Psychologist Irene S. Levine, Ph.D., offers this groundbreaking and heroically honest book for abandoned friends seeking solace. Perfect for women of all ages and from all walks of life, "Best Friends Forever" covers:

Why friendships fall apart

Coping with getting dumped

How to end a friendship that can't be fixed

Moving forward after a traumatizing breakup

Dr. Levine draws from years of research and the personal testimonials of thousands of women to provide anecdotes and solutions to these complicated situations. Full of tools for personal assessment, case stories, and actionable advice for saving, ending, or re-evaluating a relationship, "Best Friends Forever" is an indispensable addition to every woman's library.

Best Friends Forever: Surviving a Breakup with Your Best Friend Details

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Author : Irene S. Levine

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Claudia says

I'm not going through a bff breakup (thank goodness!) but I've definitely lost some friends along the way, whether because of moving or something else. Even if you're not going through a close friend breakup this is a very helpful book. It really made me want to be a better friend and encouraged me to reach out to those friends who for one reason or another Aren't as close as they used to be. I LOVE reading about female friendship and yup, this one definitely has motivated me to be a better friend.

Lynn says

I thought that this book was rather helpful in addressing some of the nitty gritty details in a friendship without getting too personal. Her choice of words are pretty good.

However, as things should be, some parts of the book made me sad. It's like a low mood thingy, but of course it should. It's speaking of toxic friendships and all.. it shouldn't induce euphoric feelings, right?

And there's the part about friendship audit. I sorta skimmed over it because I don't do that check and balance thing believe it or not. Maybe I should. But I read there was Ben Franklin's moral algebra and this one is summat like it.

Okay. I liked her very recent references as well as book recommendations. I think current research cited is really impressive.

Did it help me? Yes, a bit. I can't gauge how much it's helped, but I guess it gave me the feeling that I am not alone in this. The sense of comfort and the tips on having a healthier friendship are quite indispensable.

Kristen says

Grabbed this book to learn more about friendships and attachment and found the research to be interesting on how women view formation and sometimes the ending of friendships.

Elaine says

Two things I realized while reading this book. 1) I miss having a girl BFF--I haven't had one since a particularly bad "breakup" in college. Haven't really trusted a woman since. 2) My ex-boyfriend is such a girl. He had about 9/10 of the "girl behaviors" of friendship breakups in this book! Too funny. I knew there was a reason I'd never marry that man... ;) I'm sure I'll post about it on Library Gremlin in detail.

Kristine says

As a 39-year-old woman with friends from various facets of my life, including different cities I've lived in, I have been pondering friendships as of late. Some friends I met only last year while others date back to grade school. What are the qualities of a good friend? Why do some friendships last while others fail? How can you remain in touch despite geographic and lifestyle barriers? Irene's book helped me learn that it's okay when a friend slips out of my life. This is -- to put it simply -- life. Some friends don't fit the next phase we are entering while others -- who are no doubt savvy at keeping in touch -- will ride the waves with us.

Lori says

Somewhat helpful to know others have gone through similar painful experiences -- I'm not crazy or overreacting!

Megan Stoner says

I'm about half way through the book and the stories have been very moving. Unfortunately, I'm reading this book because I've suffered from a cataclysmic best friend breakup. It has affected me for 6 years, but really longer than that. To say my heart was crushed would be a gigantic understatement ... this is the first thing I've read that has provided some comfort.

This book sheds light as to why certain friendships turn toxic... why certain friendships don't weather every season. I think the key components are the following -- it's never just one person's fault; sometimes things aren't meant to last forever -- big things like college graduation, jobs, marriage, loss, and death can greatly alter even the best of friends. Most importantly, I'd say this book does best.... shedding light on how it's OK to have substantial pain on this topic. So many people allow you to grieve for a romantic breakup, but will not allow any such grieving for the loss of a friend. This has always been a particular sensitive subject and one I couldn't even start processing till just recently.

... this has given me the opportunity to reflect as to why it happened. It's also nice to know that I'm not alone in this "hell." I would highly recommend this book to anyone going thru a difficult road with a friend. I wish I had read it ten years ago as it might have saved my friendship.

Thank you, Dr. Levine.

Kris Hintz says

Dr. Levine's book is a treasure. The author truly understands the depth and meaning of female friendship. Her book validates and normalizes the feelings of confusion, disappointment, shame, anger, pain and loss when a female friendship ends, especially without explanation.

I have read other books on this subject which trivialize and stereotype female friendships, summing up endings as just a feeling of puzzlement when a shopping companion finds another gal pal with whom to

browse the mall. This is not that kind of book.

Dr. Levine appreciates the devastation that a woman can feel when a close friendship of many years fails to be a "BFF" (Best Friends Forever). She offers empathy and helpful advice to work through the hurt, accept the loss, and move on to build new friendships.

I recommend this book to all women on the planet, who have---or will--experience the loss of a close female friend.

Amanda says

This was a good read -- while I haven't broken up with my BFF(s) and have no intention of doing so, it was quite interesting to read about the dynamics of female friendships, bffs, frenemies, toxic friendships and friendship drift, along with many good suggestions for doing friendship inventories and encouragement to put as much work into quality friendships as one would into one's romantic relationships. There's a lot of sound wisdom in this book and I'd recommend it to all of my girlfriends interested in growing in and avoiding the pitfalls that can crop up in female friendships.

Laura says

(FULL DISCLOSURE: I know the author!)

As the year winds down and we make lists (of course checking them twice), don't we also think about our friends in a slightly different light: is this a gift friend? a card friend? an invite over for eggnog friend? can I ignore them this year? and a multitude of other variations. Or am I the only one?

The reality is, many of us are, or have been, friends in unequal relationships that we still include under the rubric BFF. Then, when it goes south, we feel responsible and guilty and well, it's not necessary. It's good to get away from those toxic relationships, and this book can tell you how (and how to spot one). It would have added to the book for her to discuss the various gradations of friendship - IMVHO we leap all too quickly to the word "friend" when what we mean is "colleague" or "acquaintance."

I'd love to see a follow-up on male/female friendships, but I suspect that might be a generational thing; my mother doesn't have any males in her life that aren't family or "the husband of...".

Erin Goettsch says

I read this as part of a group meeting/discussion on shame and relationships. I found it overly simplistic, and the "insights" it draws seemed really obvious to me. Like everyone, I have lost some "best forever" friends, but this gave me no new insight or self-discovery that I hadn't already found. Overall the whole thing mostly made me feel sad and gross.

(Some of the stories and examples were heart-wrenching and full of emotion; I wouldn't mind just... reading a personal account from the people involved, hearing their feelings firsthand, as narratives with no commentary. But that would be a different book.)

Elisheva says

Another one of those subjects no one talks about. Is it wrong to want to let go of a friendship? How do you know you're in a toxic one? How do you relieve yourself and the other person of toxicity without being an asshole?

Irene Levine doesn't claim to have all the answers, but she surveyed vast amounts of women from all age and social groups and found some common themes. She assesses the female need for intimate relationships that are not romantic, helps you to identify whether a relationship is healthy or unhealthy for you, and provides some insight into how others have dealt with those once exciting but now tedious friendships.

Having gone through this recently, being on the *jilter* side of a best friend breakup, this book helped me come to terms with my decision to terminate the relationship, and not blame myself for leaving someone behind who wasn't good for me, nor I for her. So many friendships have so many different circumstances and reasons for splitting. It was strangely comforting to see that better *and worse* things have happened to other people, but ultimately each experience led to greater understanding of who they are, what they should and should not expect from future friends, and what they themselves should improve upon.

Four stars because I feel like it could've gotten a lot deeper than it did. Nevertheless, it was a great read, and I highly recommend it to anyone experiencing the loss of a close friendship.

Alexis says

I read a newspaper article that referred to this book, and so I decided to pick it up. Female friendship and the concept of female friendship has always fascinated me. This book is a little obvious and a little self-helpy, but it's written by a psychologist and she conducted her research by surveying 1,500 women and finding out about their friend break ups. I shook my head a couple of times because some of the information was really obvious, but at the same time, sometimes it's good to have obvious things pointed out to you.

I read this book basically in one sitting, because I found the information in it really interesting. We all have myths about friendships, and it turns out that lots of them just end when we don't expect them to.

There was also a chapter on toxic friendships and how to break up with a friend, or find new friends.

A lot of food for thought in this book, and I found myself thinking about my friendships, past friendships and how to be a good friend.

Really glad I read this one.

Sarah says

So I read this little book in 2 days, which is fast for me.

I thought it was fascinating and fabulous! I'm not certain that every woman needs to read it, but it was very helpful to me right now.

The author talks a lot about how everyone thinks that friendships, and especially really tight, close friendships, should last forever, should be totally static. Although the exact opposite is in fact true. Most friendships are very fluid and dynamic and not only change a lot over time, but routinely dissolve completely. She goes into the hows and whys, and most of the time, it's ugly stuff. Jealousy and envy are two of the biggest friendship killers. "Jealousy is an attitude of possessiveness when someone feels that a valued relationship is threatened. If your friend is possessive, she can't stand the thought of you having any other friends and wants you to spend all your time with her. Envy is a broader concept that can include coveting another person's characteristics or possessions. If your friend is envious of you, she is constantly comparing herself to you along material and non-material dimensions."

These two things, along with insecurity, cause people to do really hurtful things to their closest friends, ruining friendships and breaking bonds.

The fortunate part, is that you can heal and move on and you will most likely be in a better position and have healthier relationships despite these things. You will NOT probably be friends with that person again. But that's okay. :)

She does list things that you would want to do to be a good friend, but they are common-sense, and things that most people either do, because it's a part of them, or don't do, because they are socially inept in that way.

A great quote from it: "I feel like I have the power to choose my friends, not have them choose me; I deserve better."

Kate says

Most of it was fairly simplistic. There was a good list of ways to identify a toxic friendship that comprised one page out of the 200+ here. I was hoping for more help in dealing with extracting myself from a toxic friendship.

And there was a decent reminder of things that you need to do in order to be a good friend, and ways that you can look at friendship that might allow you to find new friends in different, unexpected places. Mostly, however, it seemed like it was pandering to the broken-hearted dumpee who thinks she did nothing wrong.
