

Real Men Need Male Friends

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*Who would you call if you found out that your job was being eliminated?
Is there someone in whom you could confide if your marriage was having problems?
Who would you talk to if your son or daughter were in trouble?
If a serious health problem or accident disabled you, who would be there?*

Most men cite their wives as the most common person they talk to when a problem occurs, although many women wish their husbands had a close male friend on whom they could rely as well.

Men often have guy friends with whom they talk business or sports, play golf or tennis or show off their newest gadget, but they do not have a close friend they could tell anything. Showing feelings, exposing shortcomings, admitting faults or revealing insecurities are considered weaknesses by many men. As men, we hide these realities and hope no one notices. This denial of ourselves causes us to fall prey to the *imposter phenomenon*, believing that “if anyone fully knew the real me, they wouldn’t like me.”

This misassumption could not be farther from the truth. Even research indicates that a person who voluntarily reveals a genuine shortcoming about themselves is viewed by others as more credible and personable. There are not many things more affirming than to realize that some other guy knows all about me, and we’re still great friends. Most women have enjoyed the benefits of this profound insight for many years, which is why they often have such close relationships with their female friends.

Men try to gain friendships by competing, excelling and being the best at something as if performance merits acceptance by their peers. While performance may warrant respect, it does not guarantee closeness to another person. Men have to open up, take some risks and let another guy get to know who they really are including the good, the bad and the ugly, and then the opportunity for a true friendship can be forged.

D. Charles Williams, Ph.D. is a Licensed Psychologist, Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, AAMFT Approved Supervisor and Executive Coach based in Athens, Georgia. Dr. D. Charles Williams specializes in men’s issues, premarital & marital counseling, depression, adolescents (16+), addiction & recovery, spiritual issues, management coaching for success and workplace issues. He completed his undergraduate training in psychology at Clemson University and graduated with a Ph.D. in counseling from the University of Florida. Dr Williams began his career as an Assistant Director of the North Florida Evaluation and Treatment Center, and later the Director of the Adult and Older Adult Clinics at the Central Florida Community Mental Health Center in Gainesville, Florida. He received three years of post-graduate supervision and training from the Director of Training at the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic in marriage and family therapy. After moving his private practice with Family Counseling Associates from Gainesville, Florida to Atlanta, Georgia, he joined the Atlanta Network for Individual and Family Therapy. He also provided business consulting for RHR International as a Consulting Psychologist in Atlanta providing coaching to executives and managers in Fortune 1000 companies. Dr. Williams is the author of *The Eight Toughest Problems Parents Face and How to Handle Them*; *Forever A Father, Always A Son: Discovering the Difference a Dad Can Make*, as well as many articles on marriage counseling. Dr. Williams’ Athens Psychologist office is located at 1751 South Lumpkin Street Athens, Georgia 30606. Phone: (706) 543-5552. Fax: (706) 354-8904. Email: DrWilliamsCoach@aol.com. Or visit www.DrWilliamsCoach.com