

# *Lifestyle*

## **ASK OUR EXPERTS...**

**I have too many needy people in my life.  
What are my options?**

This can be a challenge for all of us occasionally. Sometimes it is hard to set boundaries. You can choose to simply be too busy, but the drawback to this is you will never know if you will lose a friendship that is worth mending. So you really need to examine whether you should invest further time and effort into this relationship. This issue has two sides. The side you have control over and the side the other person has control over.

First, let us look at what we have control over: ourselves. We have choices as to how available we are, the messages we give out and how willing we are to be truthful with our friends. After all, we teach people how to be in relationship with us. The best way I have found to deal with needy people is with self-reflection. Sometimes we have known a friend/associate for a long time without being honest with them about what we need. We have not taught them how we wish to be treated or how to be in a relationship together. Friends can only take advantage of us when we have given them permission and let them continue on that path.

Can you be honest with what you need? If you can't, what does this say about your willingness to take care of yourself? This involves taking risks, however if you are not honest with yourself you will continue to feel that you are being taken advantage of. Another possibility is that you are too busy taking care of everyone else and have stopped taking care of yourself. Everyone can look needy. If you are running on empty, all your relationships can be in trouble. At this point you need to resolve what you really need for yourself.

Secondly, let's look at the other person. Perhaps they also need to take better care of themselves. If people are stuck in their problems maybe it is time to suggest a therapist or coach. When friends fall down, they may not know how needy they have become. Perhaps it is because no one is willing to be honest with them. However if they cannot hear you and are angry at the changes you are suggesting, then it's maybe time to let go because you have no control of that person.

Remember, you have every right to expect compassion, respect and support from friends.

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