HOME

According to Science, Your “Meanest” Friend Is a Keeper

By bestfolkmedicine · 07/07/2019 · 2 min read



One thing’s for sure, at least for most of you who are reading this, we all have one friend who enjoys “roasting” us for no obvious reason. But, these tough-love friends don’t “hate” you- in fact, they appear to want only the best for us and science is on their side.

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Namely, a recent study by the University of Plymouth concluded that people who tend to "insult" their friends on a regular basis aren't doing this because they are mean- they just want you to do your best.

Mean Friends Are Your Best Friends?

For the purposes of the study, the scientists surveyed 140 adults about hypothetical situations. For example, fear of failure in a loved one who is procrastinating rather than studying.

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The individuals who were mean to their partners were discovered to be more empathic and had a genuine wish for the other side to succeed.

The head researcher, psychological scientists Belen Lopez-Perez said that they have shown that people can actually be cruel to be kind or to make someone feel worse in order to do them good.

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So, your friend, who is constantly telling you when you have bad outfit combinations or how you suck at math is actually doing this because she is a good friend.

According to the findings of the study, these friends are not jerks; they are actually empathic and they say the things they believe will help us be more successful. Wait, really?

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Even though they know we don't like to hear about how our butts look bad in some pants, they have the best intention in mind- they want us to wear the best outfit that will make us look and feel good.

To test their theories, the team asked from the participants to perform several tasks in a gaming system with an anonymous partner. They were allowed to make descriptions of the game in ways that framed emotions in their partners.

The end results discovered that the ones who empathized with their partner when making game decisions focused on encouraging specific feelings in them. These feelings varied depending on the game's goal.

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The players who were instructed to remain detached induced no emotions and this may helped them in the game; however, those who empathized triggered fear and anger in their partners to help

them play better.

Lopez-Perez stated that these findings reveal a lot about social dynamics and help us realize why we often try to make our loved ones feel bad if we think this emotion can be of use for them to achieve a goal.

Sources:

NEW YORK POST

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