

Making Friends

In Chapter 4, Dale talks about the futility of trying to make other people interested in us. They are only interested in themselves. That's a rather bleak assessment of human nature - but accurate. However, if we develop a sincere and sustained interest in other people, they will develop an interest in us: the beginning of a friendship.

How do we do that? Dale says, "If we want to make friends, let's put ourselves out to do things for other people - things that require time, energy, unselfishness, and thoughtfulness... If we want to make friends, let's greet people with animation and enthusiasm."

"A show of interest, as with every other principle of human relations, must be sincere. It must pay off not only for the person showing the interest, but also for the person receiving the attention."

When we begin a conversation with someone, we express an *interest* in them. We are not trying to gain *knowledge* about them. Those are two very different things. If we gather knowledge without interest, what we're doing is trying to gain leverage over them by the things we learn. The other word for that is *manipulation*. It is phony, it is rude, and it is unacceptable behavior. You will never build lasting relationships by using people for personal gain.

But if you learn to love other people by being sincerely interested in them for their own sake, you will gain an area of influence and friendship you never thought possible. In that fertile field, you will find your seed will take root, and the payback is going to be extraordinary. It will accrue first to the benefit of those you help because you are sincerely interested in them, and then it will accrue to you. That's when you're going to learn to love what you do.