Off to college and losing touch with friends

Alice,

Help me! I left my two best friends at home when I went to college. Now don't get me wrong, I love college! I'm making new friends and I even love some of my classes. I just feel like I'm forgetting these friends. I only get to talk to them for like 15 minutes, if that, a week. I feel like we are losing touch and I don't want that to happen. Can you help me? Thanks!

? Losing touch

Answer

Dear Losing touch,

The transition from high school to college is often hard. As you know, one of the most difficult things about this time is making new friends while maintaining old friendships. To top that off, all of this happens in the midst of taking classes, dealing with dorm life, and managing other activities. The first thing to keep in mind is that friendships will continue to change over your lifetime, something that you are seeing first hand right now.

Despite all the hubbub, there are some tried and true ways to keep in touch with old pals. Tech-savvy friends keep in touch through the web, email, text messaging and phone. Some use snail mail, and others rely on good old-fashioned in-person hanging out. In the end, it's probably best to use a combination of these methods to keep in touch.

First, let's talk technology. You have a lot of options here! You can use Gchat or other instant messaging applications to send quick notes. Sending pictures and/or text messaging can be great ways to quickly let friends know you're thinking of them. For more in-depth communication, you can call your friends or write longer emails (with pictures) about what's going on in your neck of the woods. You can send these to a group of friends or individual friends (which seems more personal). Why not set up weekly afternoon coffee dates on Skype [2] with your besties? And, of course, social networking sites like Facebook [3] can help keep you in touch.

Techie ways to stay connected may be nice and convenient, but there's something special about sending and receiving letters and small gifts through snail mail. Friends love to receive birthday cards and/or trinkets in the mail. Keeping a list of important birthdays in your planner or calendar will remind you of these opportunities to send some love through the post office.

Finally, it helps to plan and set aside some time to hang out with old friends. Many colleges
and universities have overlapping holiday breaks. Will you and your friends be in your hometown during these times? It might be fun to plan mini-reunions during your breaks. Maybe you and your friends could take turns planning so that each person gets a chance to organize a little get-together.

Even with all of these great ways to stay in touch, remember that it's natural for friendships to change over time—especially when friends move away for college. You might notice, as time goes on, that you mostly keep in touch with a few close buddies from home. These are your special friendships, the ones that have withstood the test of time and distance. Keeping up with your best friends and making new friends can be a tough balancing act, but also an opportunity for growth. Enjoy your friends, wherever they are!

Alice!
Category:
Relationships [4]
Friendship [5]

Related questions

Long distance relationship: Taking the sting out of separation [6]
Curfew on break? Is my mom joking?! [7]
Homesick and having trouble adjusting to college life [8]
Long distance and lacking communication [9]
Friends coming to town? hosting anxiety? [10]
Getting in touch during an emergency [11]
Published date:
Feb 23, 2007
Last reviewed on:
Aug 30, 2013

Source URL: http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/college-and-losing-touch-
Links