

Connection Connoisseur Episode 10 – Soul Sisters

Hey Soul Sister!

Does one of your closest personal friends live far away or for some other reason you are not able to see each other often? This person knows you, your family, and your heart, however they aren't present in your everyday life. These women are our soul sisters, and they are very important to our wellbeing. Soul sisters hold very special cherished place in our lives.

In this episode we will talk about our soul sisters and why we need them. Stay tuned because I will share 15 little ways to be a better long-distance friend!

We all have important friendships that we don't have access to on a regular basis. These women would most likely be members of our Tribe if not separated by time and space. Often these friendships once enjoyed both proximity and regularity. You share history and fond memories. However, something happened that physically separated the two of you. This may have involved a promotion or job change that required a move. Or perhaps one of your lifestyles or interests changed. Some examples might include:

1. You started a family, and your friend didn't or doesn't plan to.
2. You previously worked together every day but now you don't.
3. You were roommates in college but don't connect regularly since graduation.
4. You were childhood friends and only see each other around the holidays when you both go home to visit.
5. You were inseparable for a season of your life but one of you had to relocate.

This layer of friendship I call our soul sisters because of the strong emotional connection we share. The cool thing about our sisters in this

group is that when you do connect, it's as if you haven't skipped a beat. You are right back where you were when you last met. You often spend time reminiscing over fond memories. The time and space that has separated you has not damaged your connection. Although these relationships are now slow to evolve, they do not lose ground.

Long distance best friends are so important to our wellbeing and wholeness, and here are 8 reasons why.

1. They can offer advice as a neutral third party.
 - a. This is where the physical distance is a benefit! She isn't there to see and know the details of what is happening in your life so when you explain a situation she can focus in on your perspective and your feelings.
 - b. She may not personally know the players in your dilemma, so her advice won't be jaded in any direction. Her council will come from an unbiased position.
 - c. Even if you are totally in the wrong, she won't judge you and love you anyways.
2. They give it to you straight.
 - a. First, see above.
 - b. She is going to listen first. Talk you down later.
 - c. Then, she's going to agree with everything you said. She'll tell you that everything you're feeling is totally valid. (Bring on the warm fuzzy feels.)
 - d. Then, she is going to slap you out of it and help you find solutions. (Bring on the wake-up call.)
3. It's always like no time has passed.
 - a. No matter how much time goes by, the second you hear her voice or see her in person, it's like you've been together every day for the past 10 years.
 - b. Everything falls right into place like it used to be.
 - c. There's a soul nurturing comfort level there that you don't have with other friends, which makes the time incredibly enjoyable and relaxing.
4. When you do meet up, it's like a soul filling mini vacation
 - a. You always remember your meetups.

- b. You don't need to be entertained or do anything fancy. You just love "being" together.
 - c. Your meetups are a time that feels fun, easy-going and you can totally read each other's minds. What's not to love?!
- 5. You have a friend for life.
 - a. This is the friend you'll have by your side through the thick and thin, and the distance will never matter because they are just a phone call away.
 - b. Nothing will keep them from you in your hour of need. A plane trip across the country is nothing for this friendship.
 - c. You basically won the friend lottery if you have connected with someone so deeply that time and space doesn't hinder the connection.
- 6. They make a great excuse for a trip.
 - a. Did anyone say girls' weekend? Well...if you insist!
 - b. Road trip? I'm in!
 - c. Long distance best friends reunited
 - d. You're moving to a remote Island with Wi-Fi? Fantastic! Now I get to take a trip there. Just force me to become a world traveler why don't you. Okay...you win! I'm there!
- 7. You cherish what it means to have an amazing friend.
 - a. You feel unconditionally loved and supported
 - b. You call her on her birthday. Regularly text her. Zoom on occasion.... And let's not forget the snail mail and surprise packages.
 - c. She does not need constant reassurance of your friendship. She doesn't need to talk once a week, once a month, or once every six months.
- 8. You feel special when you're with her.
 - a. In normal, everyday life you don't feel unusually important, but she treats you like you're a big deal, and who wouldn't want to stay friends with someone like that.
 - b. When you're with her, you feel validated, valued and worthy.

c. This is a beautiful safe space, whereby the time you have invested in each other led you to know the ins and outs of each other's lives.

These friendships serve us beautifully and add great value. They are the people who know who we used to be. They understand our roots and continue to follow our journey from afar. They can say "Remember when..." and have us tapping into our former selves instantly. We are excited for and look forward to our infrequent yet fulfilling reconnects. These occasional opportunities to meet are cherished. If we really needed them, our sisters would be there for us even though we haven't spoken for a while.

Do you have a Soul Sister you would like to more intentionally connect with on a regular basis? Here are 15 Little Ways to Be A Better Long-Distance Friend

1. Keep in touch through voice memos or Marco Polo rather than text messages.

You can send voice memos easily via Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, or iMessage. They're so much easier, quicker, and more personal than a text message, and you find yourself chatting about little things you definitely would have left out of a typed message. There's also just something so lovely about hearing a friend's voice, especially on days you're missing them a ton.

Marco Polo is a video app that works when you have a moment to talk, even if your schedules don't match. Unlike other video apps, you don't need to be live. Here you get to hear and see each other as you swap messages.

2. Are you two into music? Create a collaborative playlist on Spotify and regularly add your favorite songs for them to listen to.

3. Send them cards on holidays, birthdays, and other special occasions. Cards are a lovely physical reminder that someone was thinking of you – and not just because they saw that it was your birthday on Facebook.

Plus, there's no better feeling than going into a stationery store and finding the PERFECT card for a close friend.

4. Set up a Snapchat account and challenge your friend to a streak. A Snapchat streak is a fire emoji along with a number shown next to the profile. The number shows you the number of days you have been sending snaps to each other. You can have a Snapchat streak when you send continuous snaps (photos or videos) to a friend for several consecutive days.

5. If you learn that your friend is having a particularly tough day at work, Venmo them \$4 to go grab an afternoon coffee on you. It might not be the same as meeting them face-to-face for a venting session, but it's a kind and thoughtful gesture that just might brighten their day. Maybe even do this for no reason at all!

6. Send your friend little things from the place you live to remind them of you.

My daughter has a Texas Longhorn ball cap her BFF sent her and she thinks of her every time she sees it.

7. Make an effort to learn little things about the place they live, if you aren't familiar with it.

If your friend is from a different culture or country, try to learn more about it. Not only will they appreciate the gesture, but it will also enrich your knowledge. It's a win-win situation!

8. Don't stop making plans, even if they won't happen for a really long time.

Your Soul Sister should have a standing invite to your Tribe's girls' weekends!

9. Send them links to things that remind you of them, like funny tweets or articles.

My soul sister and I met when we worked at Blockbuster Video. Once we became friends, we would arrange our schedules, so we worked at the same time and got off at the same time. We spent many nights after

closing shifts on the patio of Taco Cabana. Whenever there is a story, meme, post or joke about Blockbuster or Taco Cabana, we always share or tag each other.

10. Set a standing phone call date and stick to it, whether you can talk for two minutes or two hours. Something like every Tuesday morning or the first Saturday of each month.

11. Take the time to send a hand-written letter.

I'm still a huge fan of snail mail. I like to send my girls a classic handwritten letter every now and then, just explaining what I've been up to and checking in on them.

Sure, we still stay connected via Facebook and other social media platforms but taking the time out of your day to write a letter really shows that you care. Plus, when I receive a letter back, I know they intentionally took time out of their day to think about me and write me. I'll always love sending (and receiving) a good old-fashioned letter.

12. And add a Polaroid photo to your letter before you put it in the mail. Start a tradition of always sending letters back and forth and sticking a Polaroid of yourself doing something funny in each letter. You will accumulate a keepsake of one-of-a-kind photos taken just for you! You will love opening your mailbox and seeing a letter from her!

13. Try reading the same book at the same time. Enjoy a virtual 1:1 book-club and chat about characters and plot twists as you go.

Download the same books from the library on our Kindles, then chat via text when you're one-quarter through, halfway through, and three-quarters through. Discuss the characters, what we think will happen, and any quotes we highlighted along the way. Call each other when we're both finished to review the whole thing. Or better yet, set a bi-weekly video chat, keep the same pace and enjoy deep discussions.

14. Try and call your friend whenever you're in a specific store or destination and ask them to do the same. Devise a rule: anytime one of you is at Walmart, Target or Costco, you have to call the other. Sometimes it will just be a quick "hello" or even a voice

message saying “thinking of you” but other times the stars may be aligned, and you both can catch up!

15. If your friend lives in a different time zone, set their time in your phone, so you always know if it's a good time to text or call.

This village is an elite group of women. Similar to Tribe, our soul sisters likely amount to a handful or less in number. Again, if not for lack of proximity, these women would be our Tribe. In fact, they probably were a member of our Tribe until we were separated by circumstance. The strong bonds we share make for a lifetime of friendship.

Thank you for joining me today! Don't forget to subscribe to this channel for a new Tribe building episode each week!

When three or more gather, we are Tribe.