

Friendship Productivity Planner

Connection Connoisseur Episode 8

Hello! Thanks for joining today. My name is Brenda Ridgley and you have tapped into the Connection Connoisseur. Here we converse about friendship. How to find, attract, and nurture friendships with a handful of women who will be there for us through thick and thin.

These women are our cheerleaders, encouragers and have our back. They even call us on our crap when we get off track. The intention is to build a small Tribe of women of besties to support us throughout our life.

In episode 7 we discussed how to find new friends and I shared 9 specific things you can do to meet new people. I will add a link to that episode in the description.

Today we will talk about implementing a strategy that will keep us on track in our friend-finding journey.

Please subscribe and share this with someone that could benefit from this information. Stay tuned, later I will share three tips to make your friend finding mission a success!

Ok friends, what strategy can we implement that will increase our chances of finding and building meaningful friendships? Lets call it our Friendship Productivity Plan.

To start, take a mental note or write down this acronym. D.M.O. DMO stands for Daily method of operation, and it can be an invaluable good-habit building routine to add to your friendship tool box.

I was first introduced to the Daily Method of Operation early in my career in direct sales. Your DMO is an intentional decision and plan that acts as a daily schedule of certain tasks you should be doing daily to promote growth or success in things that matter to you. The DMO includes the decision, plan and action steps that we discussed in episode 7.

Because many of us have fallen into the ‘work every waking moment trap’ a DMO specifically designed for our friendship goals can create the space in the nooks and crannies of our day.

Our Tribe can greatly benefit from this plan. We can add to our productivity and reclaim our schedule making space for things that really give our life meaning. Creating a DMO for friendship is an excellent strategy that keeps this priority on your radar and advancing toward your goal.

Once you have:

- Established a burning desire to find new friends;
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- Made the decision to find a friend and build and nurture your very own Tribe;
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- Created a plan to meet new people based on ideas in episode 7 or other’s that you have come up with
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It’s now time to take action in an intentional, strategic way.

Step one can be accomplished by simply getting out your calendar and blocking time for Friend-finding and Tribe-building. It doesn’t matter if you are old school pencil and paper, cutting edge calendar device savvy, or write it in crayon on the family schedule that hangs on your fridge. It only matters that you document your strategy. If you don’t have any kind of calendar system, get one!

Step two is also simple, fun, and can be done simultaneously with step one. Take the initiative and reach out to some current friends and schedule a date. This goes for current Tribe members and other friendships with whom you may want to go deeper.

Together find a time that works for both of you to get together one on one. The activity makes no difference but have fun with it!

This is not a *have too* appointment, it is a *get too* investment in your own well-being.

If you have a friendship that you want to develop into Tribe, consider scheduling it weekly or every other week so you can accelerate building enthusiasm, history, and depth.

Monthly is better than none, but this tactic will take longer. It takes about 40-60 hours of time spent together after meeting for people to form a casual friendship.

To transition from a casual friend to a good friendship you will need to be together for about 80-100 hours. From here to become close or best friends, it takes about 200 or more hours spent together.

You can get this done in a few short months, or stretch it over years. You get to decide how long it will take to reach Tribe status.

If you are just getting started or trying to find new members for your tribe, step two will include scheduling activities where you will meet people.

Join a running club that meets every Tuesday at the local brewery and connects over a beer after each run.

Schedule in an art class Saturday mornings at “The Y” or recreation center.

Sign up to volunteer once a month for a charity organization that has regular opportunities to help out.

You want to find recurring opportunities so that it is more likely you will see the same people a number of times.

Use open body language to make yourself more approachable. In the beginning what you do is just as important as what you say.

Stand tall and squarely face the person you are speaking with.

Maintain eye contact and gesture, nod or offer verbal affirmations occasionally to let them know you are listening.

SMILE! It makes you more attractive and inviting to others.

Avoid crossing your arms, checking your phone or standing off by yourself which implies that you are not open to connect.

Be the one who initiates conversation and follows up each time you see them with a warm greeting.

Don't be interesting, be interested. Keep most of the attention on the person you are talking with. This demonstrates interest and selflessness in conversation.

Being likeable is as easy as listening to people and asking them to tell you more. Everyone appreciates being seen and heard.

You can solidify a friendship by showing them that you care rather than how much you know.

Take the initiative to get to know someone better. Set the next encounter in motion by proposing another meetup outside the current event. This will send a clear message that you are interested in building a friendship.

Maybe you feel that meeting new people and being the inviter is scary.

You may be apprehensive and your ego, that little bully voice in your head, tells you: "They probably won't like you. Don't go out on a limb. They will most likely reject you and your invitation."

The more we think about it the scarier it seems. This initial trepidation develops into a mental fear which can take on a life of its own. This fear keeps us from making new friends. F.E.A.R. is False Evidence Appearing Real.

Instead, assume people will like you!

Let me take this opportunity to remind you, you are awesome! Rather than fearing the worst, expect that most everyone in this group of strangers will love you and find you interesting.

You can create your own self-fulfilling prophecy because we often get what we expect. If you go into social situations with a positive mindset it is more likely that the outcome will be positive as well.

Although it may feel uncomfortable at first, know that your efforts to reach out will be appreciated. It is likely those new friends may feel the same way and are grateful to you for reaching out.

While you are worried about the impression you are making, they are worried about the impression they are making. They are just as scared as you are.

Share something about yourself and then ask them to share. Be the hero and save the connection! Have a playful attitude about it. This can be fun. If you decide to have a good time, or decide you won't, either way you will be right. Decisions are powerful.

Beyond planning dates and friend finding activities, also schedule quick check-in's, thinking of you's, and phone calls.

These drops in your friendship drip system are meaningful ways to build a tribal foundation of support and validation. They send a message that you are there for them, and they are on your mind even when you aren't together.

A check-in can be achieved by scheduling reminders on your smartphone to send a quick text, email an inspirational quote or leave a voice message sharing a bit about your day.

Plan a call to follow-up on a conversation you had where she shared a concern with you. Ask her how it is going, encourage her or offer help. Receiving a call like this is extremely validating and communicates that she has an ally in a tough situation.

Ok, you may be thinking to yourself... Geeze... really? Put it in the calendar?

Adding this to your calendar may seem a bit calculated at first and it is. We are establishing a good friendship habit. Soon it will become natural and you will do it without thinking about it, let alone needing to schedule it.

Once you have done steps one and two, you have created your daily method of operation. The final step three is simple and challenging at the same time. Now you have a plan of action. You have blocked and scheduled Tribe and friendship time. Step three is to protect those appointments at all costs! Guard them with your life!

It may seem harmless to allow urgent demands and requests to side-swipe your plans with Tribe. "Oh my friend will understand." My boss asked me to work late and I could use the extra cash. My kids need a chaperone at the recreation center because the parent who set up the play date had something come up. My husband needs me to pack for his business trip... BLAH BLAH BLAH! "Can we reschedule?"

As we begin to establish our new priority as it relates to Tribe, we must honor it with inflexibility! Lack of organization on the part of others should not constitute a contingency of your important friendship plan.

As you begin to politely decline these urgent requests, you will be sending a message to those offenders that you value your Tribe time - Don't Tread on Me!

On the other hand if you allow it, you can expect those emergencies to continue to pop up. Either way you go, you are sending a clear message to your friend where she fits into your priorities.

I recommend setting a time each week to plan and review step one and two of your DMO. It is helpful to review your calendar each week to look ahead and strategize and schedule your priorities.

Without a plan, your days and weeks may fly by at the whim of others' agendas. A solid DMO schedule will set you up for success maximizing the time you can spend on the things you care about.

I believe it is clear you care about friendship because you are here right now.

Remember a defining feature of friendship is that it is voluntary. It is not connected by wed, blood or employment. It is a relationship of great freedom and one that is retained only because we value it and intentionally give it our attention.

Adults friendships don't happen organically and that is why we need to implement a strategy.

Our Friendship Productivity Plan for Tribe has been thoughtfully and strategically designed with our new DMO. Now for the fun part. It is time for implementation.

Carpe diem..Seize the day! You will want to show up to your friendship dates with positive energy and enthusiasm.

Here are the tips I promised to make your mission successful.

1. A few hours before your meetup, **do something that puts you in a good mood**. Take a walk, listen to some energizing music, play with your kids or pets, give yourself a few minutes of quiet time.

As you are traveling to see your future friends and friendships think about all the things about them you are grateful for.

2. The same method applies if you are going out to meet new people. Get yourself in a positive mood and then **think about what strengths you are bringing to the new friendships that you seek.**

Are you funny, insightful, loyal or reliable? Whatever your strengths may be, keep reminding yourself of them.

As you walk into the event tell yourself that people will like you and be excited to meet you. This is pre-paving the way in your mind setting the stage for the outcome you desire to be realized.

3. The last tip I would like to suggest adding to your Tribal toolbox is **to be consistent.**

As with any other worthwhile goal in life, friendship can benefit greatly from a persistent daily effort.

I am reminded of a poster on the ceiling of the dentist I would visit as a child. You probably saw the same one. The message burned it's image in my head as I was undergoing cavity removal. It said, "You don't have to floss all of your teeth, just the ones you want to keep." A good dentist would say that you should floss your teeth daily.

Like any other, good habits come from doing them daily. What one friendship habit can you do every day to benefit your Tribe? Maybe it is as simple as sending a daily text to one of your BFF's to let them know you care.

Connect in some small way with one of them each and every day.

I would love to hear from you! If you have any comments or questions, please add them to the conversation in the comment section. I will be picking future episodes from some of our subscriber questions. Don't forget to subscribe for a new episode each week!

Next week we will discuss one of the top reasons that women choose not to go deep and keep other women's friendships superficial. Don't miss it!

This episode was about establishing new habits that will create the Tribe of women you are longing for. Trying something new and doing things differently can be challenging.

It will require that you leave your current comfort zone for short periods of time. This may be awkward especially as you get started. I want to encourage you and to say that your dream is worth the effort.

Your future Tribe is calling out to you and waiting for you to take these steps towards them with intention. What are you waiting for?

When Three or More Gather, We are Tribe.

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