

Leaves on Trees

I have been on several journeys throughout my life, but this is one that I think almost anyone can relate to. It is the emotional roller coaster, best day ever, thing that we all call friendship. Friendship is like a tree. Sometimes, leaves fall off, but there will always be new ones sprouting, or getting ready to sprout.

The train of my journey starts at the first drop off. It is the first day of kindergarten, and being an only child at the time, I am ready for some new leaves to start sprouting. The day starts off great, with a ton of free time, art, and even a nap in the middle of the day next to my new friends. Starting off the year, I don't even think about how annoying friends that are four years old could really be. But the days come when they fight you for toys, leave you out of their game of house, and paint over your drawing of a flower when you are in the bathroom. As much as I could, I tried to bring a positive attitude to school with me every day, tried not to get annoyed, and made the best of the situation that we call kindergarten.

Fast forward the train a couple of stops, and we land in the town of third grade. This was a big year for me, because I had just moved from a small country town with the cow population outnumbering the people, to the city of Wauwatosa. I did have time to settle into the new "city ways" of life during the summer, but all of my leaves were still on the ground. I walked into my new teacher's classroom, and sat down. It was the usual first day of school, all about me posters, icebreaker questions, and picture day. We were walking to get our pictures taken when I felt someone looking over my shoulder. A girl that I recognized from my class was shoving her picture money in my face showing me her address. Sure enough, we only lived one block from each other, and we have been best friends ever since. Even though we seem like the perfect pair of friends, like every other human being, we have our quarrels. We are both very sarcastic people, which cause many problems of not knowing if the thing that was said to us by the other person was true or not. But, in the end, we worked it all out. Because my friend had been going to the school for five years already, she introduced me to all of her other friends. Finally, with all of these people, I felt that my tree was really blossoming with leaves and even some flowers.

My friend introduced me to two people that ended up creating a club with us. In the fifth grade, we created a club called "the smart girls," and helped each other with questions that we had on school work and projects. We were all super close up until middle school. Then we broke off into groups of two when my first friend and I got every single class except for two in our first year of middle school, and we didn't get any with the other two girls. With this sadly being in place, it actually helped my friend and I grow closer to each other not just academically, but also personally. I hope that we continue our journey through life together as long as we can.

Unfortunately, as this year's train came by, I got that little voice in my head saying to be more outgoing and to try to become popular. I got into the "popular" group pretty easily, because I already knew about half of the kids. I had mostly abandoned my budding flowers

from elementary school to hang out with my new leaves that I had known for less than a year, but something didn't feel right. The people in the "popular group" were using me. Because we were friends, I did help them with studying for tests, but I soon realized that they really didn't want my friendship, they only wanted my correct answers. Also, their ways of friendship were badly influencing my behavior at home. I was having a constant attitude and opposition toward my parents. I had made the wrong decision, so I left the "popular group" behind, and went back to my caring, sentimental group of friends from elementary school. Thankfully for me, they took me back with their arms spread wide open.

The journey of friendship definitely has had its days where it might seem like the most annoying thing in the world, but things always turn out ok. Friendship is also one of the places where you have to make sure that you make the right decisions, and I figured that out the hard way. I did not make the right decisions, and that badly influenced not just my friendship life, but also my life at home with my family. These choices made me realize just how lucky I really am, and will definitely remind me to keep a positive attitude at all times. If you are ever having a period of time when all of the leaves on your tree have fallen, just remember that you always have some beginning to sprout, or some that you might have to discover to have them mature. Because friendship is always changing, I think it is the most exciting journey that I have ever been on, and I hope to continue on it for the many years to come.