Dear Maddy,

I am happy to hear you are settling into your new apartment in Orlando, Florida. I completely understand how weird it feels to not have any friends down there right now, but that's okay. Forming new friendships is a natural thing you just have to get past the nervous. Also, long-distance friendships can still be good friendships you just have to put effort into them. And not every friendship is a good friendship.

Forming friendships can be a little nerve racking but as Lewis says [[1]](#footnote-1)“Friendship is in a sense not all derogatory to it--the least natural of loves; the least instinctive, organic, biological, gregarious and necessary.” This just means when we are in an affection or a romantic relationship we have something natural to guide us. However, with friends we don’t have butterflies in our stomachs, we don’t have some biological reason on why we like a certain person. We have a different kind of free will on choosing our friends. Friendship is love, we love our friends but this love is a different kind of love. In romantic relationships, the lovers are facing each other and are consumed into each other, but in friendship, you are side by side with them and are consumed by a common interest instead of the person themselves. We make friends by having something in common with them, a common interest. That's how the relationship starts but they end up being another emotional support system for us. [[2]](#footnote-2)“Children with friends are more cooperative and self-confident and more altruistic and score higher in emotional perspective taking than children without friends.” So if you allow yourself to open up to people and find the common interest, the friendship will certainly follow afterward.

Even if you have a common interest with someone it doesn’t mean you are automatically going to be friends or that you will be friends at all. There are three types of friendship [[3]](#footnote-3)“Those who love each other to wish well on the other. Those who love for utility and what they can gain. And those who love for pleasure because they feel good around them.” The best kind of friendship you can get from these loves, in my opinion, is the love that wishes well upon the other, this seems the most sincere. However, to have a true friendship, it will have all three of these because there has to be pleasure in a relationship and utility. People who have wrong tendencies won't have any true friendships and you will be able to tell. As you get friends Maddy you will have to enjoy being around them which is the pleasure part. And by receiving pleasure from this friend you are gaining something which is a utility. And by being friends you will wish well on them and success and they will do this to you. As friends you better yourselves by bettering each other. A person who is not capable of having a true friend wouldn't be able to build a relationship like this with you. And when you find a friend you don’t think what can I get out of this but how can I grow from this. [[4]](#footnote-4)“Friendship includes something that cannot be expressed in words, calculated through reason, or limited to something good it will do for us. One does not choose a true friend, and certainly not because of his or her worth or value.” Yes, we have the free will to be friends with whoever we choose but sometimes friends just happen and that's okay. And sometimes you can’t be near the friend but you can still have a solid friendship.

A true friendship has each person in that group wanting to better the other person, they each have a role in the group dynamic. But sometimes things change and you have to be flexible with it or the friendship won't last. Maddy it's okay to still be friends with your other friends back home still, you just have to be willing to still put the effort into the relationship. [[5]](#footnote-5)“It is suggested that two dimensions of closeness – feeling close and behaving close – allow friends to maintain feelings of emotional closeness despite long periods without behavioral interaction.” Friendships can survive without you physically being there but it won't last if you just stop talking and doing what you normally do with your friends. Your friendship will change a little with the physical part of the relationship but with technology, you will be okay. A way to help any insecurities is to actually reassure your friends because they are having to readjust without you as well. [[6]](#footnote-6)“On the relational account, love consists in valuing a person and one's relationship with that person and in seeing that relationship as an appropriate reason for such valuing.” As long as you and your friends still see the value in your friendship long distance shouldn't be an issue. This could also be used in the new friendships you make her in Orlando.

Maddy, you will have plenty of friends in no time and you will pick great people to be friends with. You now know what goes into a real relationship and what to look out for. I hope you stay in contact with your other friends but you will also have many more there in Orlando. I hope everything goes well in Florida.

Sincerely Faith Harris

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