

along *OUR* roadside

BEST FRIENDS FOREVER

Teenage girls can't seem to live without one, but the number of adults who have one is on the decline. Scientists have proven that having one improves our health. What is this secret component of well-being and happiness? To coin the teenage adage, it is a BFF. That is, a best friend forever.

If we think back to our younger years, we can probably name the one friend we stuck with through thick and thin. The one we had sleepovers with, talked about boys with, basically did everything with. If we are lucky, we hang onto that friend or find a new one a little later in life.

Here are looks at some friends who appear destined to be "best friends forever."



**SUSIE EWING (L)
& HELEN GRAY (R)**
Friends for: 27 years



What Helen admires most about Susie: "You can be in the most stressful situation and she will say something and it will be funny."

Became friends: They met in 1980 when Helen started working at the Group, where both still work. They soon learned they had a lot of the same interests and began doing things together.

Ways they are different: Susie handles conflict well and Helen would rather not deal with it. Susie likes to work, even on weekends, and Helen gets more involved in organizations. Helen also enjoys crafts, while Susie does not.

Ways they are alike: Helen and Susie are lighthearted and love to have fun. They share a love for cooking, cleaning and traveling.

Fun memory: "We were in a bowling league before we had kids," Helen said. "It was Wednesday nights and we wouldn't get done until about 11 p.m. We would usually go out to breakfast and sometimes afterwards we would pull pranks on people."

What Susie admires most about Helen: "She has always been totally honest."

Favorite activity: Walking the Spring Creek trail four mornings a week. On Fridays, they share one doughnut after the walk.

Difficult time: "We lost one of our partners at work about six years ago," Susie said. "You just take for granted that people are always going to be around and even though we were grieving and sad, we were going to try to make the best of it."

Phrase that best describes the friendship: Laughter is the best medicine

We know babies.



**JODI FRASER(L)
& LISA
BUCKNER(R)**
Friends for:
23 years

Favorite activities:
Going to the movies and
visiting over coffee.

Became friends:
They met as ninth graders
at Boltz Junior High. They
admit to having nothing in
common, but there was
something unexplainable
that connected them.

**Thing people
would be surprised
to learn:** "We have
stayed friends this long."

Ways they are alike:
They dated a lot of the
same guys growing up
(including the man who
is now Lisa's husband).

Fun memory: During
sleepovers, they would
sneak out of the house
at night and do things
they shouldn't have.

Difficult time: Jodi had
difficult pregnancies and often
prefers space or solitude when
dealing with a significant
challenge. Lisa always respects
that need, but reaches out to
let Jodi know she is there when
she is needed. During those
difficult times, Lisa left gifts and
food on the porch, but did not
communicate directly.
"Lisa always knows the right
thing to say," Jodi said. "She
is great about being there,
but also giving me my space
when I need it."

**What Lisa admires
most about Jodi:** "There
is so much I admire about
her. I love how she is with
her kids. She sticks to her
morals and values and she
is straightforward with me."

**Phrase describing
the friendship:**
Opposites attract

**What Jodi admires
most about Lisa:**
"She is always there and
always upbeat and happy.
She always has a positive
outlook on things. Jodi
always makes things special."

**Phrase that best
describes the
friendship:**
Two peas in a pod

**Thing people would be
surprised to learn:**
"We do cry," Lisa said.
"Sometimes people think
that because we are
such strong women
that we don't cry. People
don't see that side of us."

Ways they are alike:
They love pink – they
both have pink offices.
They are passionate
about school reform,
reality TV, Hollywood
gossip and of course,
shopping.

**What Mary admires
most about Lisa:**
"She's my mentor and
I trust her with my life."

Mary added, "People
see that we are always
upbeat and we are
tough and roll with the
punches, but we have
really tender moments
where our hearts are
hurt and we just cry.
We feel safe to share
that with each other."

Became friends:
"It was April of 1987," Mary
recalled "We were both hired
as new teachers to open
Werner Elementary. We were
given the charge, Lisa and I
and another teacher, to write
the discipline policy for the
school. So we sat on this
other teacher's back porch.
Lisa and I just rolled. It was
just synergy. I remember leav-
ing that day thinking, 'she's
cool' and it just took off."

Fun memory: Every
year, Lisa and Mary do
what they call the Trifecta.

**MARY HASL(L)
& LISA ROSSI(R)**
Friends for:
20 years

Mary explained, "We shop in
one day, Park Meadows,
Cherry Creek and Flatirons."

Lisa jumped in, "We can do
all in one day."

Mary: "We have to coffee up
at the Buck a few times,"

Lisa: "And it usually has to be
Christmas time because they
stay open late,"

Mary: "We need the hours."

Lisa: "We did the Trifecta this
year in between storms."

**Ways they are
different:** Lisa is a
risk taker. Mary is
more practical.

Favorite activities:
Shopping.



Difficult time: In January of 2000, Mary went through breast cancer. Mary and Lisa claim they are so close, they can read each other's mind.

Mary shared, "It's a weird when you go through an illness like that. You worry a lot about being a burden on people and I didn't have a spouse, so I turned to Lisa. You need someone when you are on that journey – chemo, radiation, massive surgeries – who can read your mind. Who knows by the look in your eye, 'I'm hurting' or 'I'm afraid.' Lisa could read me through that entire process. And it was so awesome to have that. I had a voice when I was too tired to have a voice." ❖



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