

THE “FRIENDSHIP CODE” IN ADOLESCENCE

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Abstract: This scientific article highlights the psychological, pedagogical, and social significance of friendship during adolescence, as well as its role in personality development. Adolescence is a crucial stage in an individual’s psychological, social, and moral maturity, and the phenomenon of friendship occupies a central place in this process. The article analyzes the meaning and principles of the concept of the “friendship code” and its impact on adolescent personality from a scientific perspective.

Keywords: adolescence, friendship, friendship code, personality development, socialization, psychological growth, mutual respect, trust, loyalty.

Introduction

Friendship is one of the oldest and most sacred social relationships in human life. Since humans are inherently social beings, the need for friends exists throughout their lives. Friendship is a close relationship between two or more people, based on mutual respect, trust, sincerity, and loyalty.

Friendship differs from ordinary acquaintances or relationships based on interest. Its essence embodies the following principles:

- **Sincerity** – friends genuinely value each other and are sincere in word and deed.
- **Trust** – the foundation of friendship, which includes keeping secrets and avoiding deception.
- **Loyalty** – supporting one’s friend in both good and difficult times.
- **Mutual respect** – valuing a friend’s personal opinions, values, and decisions.

From a psychological perspective, friendship is vital for personal development, socialization, and moral growth. Especially during adolescence and youth, friendship plays a major role in self-awareness, shaping personal values, and strengthening willpower.

Friendship is not just about spending time together; it is a strong social relationship based on mutual support, care, and loyalty. The role of a true friend in one’s happiness and psychological stability is invaluable.

Adolescence (ages 11–16)

Adolescence is one of the most complex and dynamic stages of human life. During this period, self-awareness, the formation of personal values, and the pursuit of social independence intensify. Psychological literature often refers to this period as the “second birth” of personality. In adolescence, peer groups and friendships gain central importance, serving as a decisive factor in the process of socialization.

Psychological Features of Adolescence

Adolescence is a time of physical and psychological changes, during which the process of maturation accelerates. Significant changes also occur in the inner world of the individual: self-awareness deepens, future plans are contemplated, and the drive for independence increases. Psychologists such as L.S. Vygotsky and D.B. Elkonin have interpreted this stage as the period in which social factors have the strongest influence on personality development.

The Phenomenon of Friendship and Socio-Psychological Theories

The phenomenon of friendship has been interpreted differently in sociology and psychology. It is viewed as a special form of close interpersonal relationships. In adolescence, friendship serves as a source of identification, self-affirmation, assimilation of social norms, and emotional support.

In Erik Erikson’s psychosocial theory of development, adolescence is described as the stage of “identity vs. role confusion.” Friendship plays a crucial role in successfully forming one’s identity during this stage.

The Concept and Principles of the “Friendship Code”

Friendship among adolescents is formed on the basis of unwritten rules, which can be conditionally referred to as the “friendship code.” This code encompasses the following principles:

- **Trust** – friends keep each other’s secrets and avoid betrayal.
 - **Loyalty** – a friend is not abandoned in times of difficulty.
 - **Mutual respect** – valuing a friend’s personal opinions and values.
 - **Solidarity** – sharing common interests and goals.
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- **Support** – being responsive to a friend’s problems.
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Positive and Negative Effects of Friendship

Positive aspects of adolescent friendship include strengthening self-confidence, increasing social activity, shaping moral values, and ensuring emotional stability. Negative aspects may arise under the influence of unsuitable friends, leading to behavioral disorders, inclination toward harmful habits, and deviant social behaviors.

Pedagogical and Psychological Approaches

Teachers and parents should not remain indifferent to adolescents’ friendships. From a pedagogical perspective, supporting and guiding healthy friendships is vital for ensuring personal development. The psychological approach focuses on studying adolescents’ interpersonal relationships, resolving conflicts, and fostering positive social experiences.

Conclusion

In conclusion, friendship and the “friendship code” play an invaluable role in the socio-psychological development of adolescents. Properly formed friendships contribute to the growth of a well-rounded individual, while poorly chosen friendships can lead to negative consequences. Therefore, in pedagogical and psychological processes, paying attention to adolescents’ friendships is an urgent and significant task.

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