

Rachel: Welcome to part 2 of our conversation with Paul Sanders. In this episode we are going to talk about how to create friendships, and not just any friendships, but intentional friendships. Everyone says as I said in the last episode that you are the average of the five people that you spend the most time with, and so it's important that you surround yourself with people who elevate you. So Paul and I are going to talk about different things you can do to make sure that you are surrounding yourself with people that you want to surround yourself with, different ways to find potential friends, things that you can talk about, we talk about finding common ground, how to follow up with people and the types of things to say.

Paul shares his weekly rituals for following up with people, which is a very tangible action step you can do to make sure that you are actively working on your social life, how to exchange information with people, what you can say to make it feel really natural for people to give you their contact information so you can follow-up, and then how you can make plans with them down the line that they are going to actually want to join, and then ways to strength that relationship and really have long-term friendships. We covered so much here too and I think this is really valuable if you are trying to meet new friends, maybe you've just moved to a new area, so this is new for you, or you are just now kind of learning about this world of personal development, you want to be around like-minded people or whatever it is hopefully you get a lot from this show. Let's get into it.

So I was reading one of your reports and you made such a good point about why friendships are so powerful, and one of the things that you said that really just spoke to me was how on average there is the lonely people, and not lonely people, and they both have the same amount of problems, but when you are lonely the problems stress you more because you can't really flush them out and share them with people. You were sharing about, with people who are lonely, that it's actually more dangerous, scientists have found, than air pollution, obesity or excessive drinking. Wow! This is really crazy I understood that connection was important, but I didn't understand that it was that much bigger than obesity and excessive drinking. So let's dig in. We've touched a little bit on some places you can find potential friends. What are some good ideas and not goods ideas when it comes to finding people to get together with?

Paul: For the first time or meeting people you already know?

Rachel: Meeting people just for making new friendships.

Paul: Making new friendships, okay. Actually what I teach people is I really try to give things that anyone can do even if they are super, super busy. I don't like to share things that take too much time or too much motivation or too much pro-activity. So what I would do is, as I said before, focus on places where you are going to go and others are also there to make friends. What happens often is people give you advice that you can make friends anywhere, on the street, on a bar, et cetera. That's true, it's possible, but it's very hard. It's relatively very hard if you compare it with going to places where others are there to make friends. That's really the hard way to make friends, and I would recommend that you just give up on the idea that you can make friends anywhere you go, unless it's important for you and you want to do social experiments, then go ahead, I

recommend it. But if you don't have a lot of time, I would recommend that you go to places where others also want to make friends, even if it's professional networking events. You can meet people and you can make friends.

So that's the first lesson, go where others are also there to make friends. I know people have heard it, but it can't be stressed enough.

Rachel: So everyone says it's important to make sure that you have the first five closest people around you be people who are elevating you. How do you like consciously make friends with people who are elevating you? [Meetup](#) groups are pretty random, right?

Paul: Yeah, of course. So this is about updating your social life and your social circle and always going up and up and up of more interesting people or different kinds of people, and what you do here is, even if you go to Meetup groups, you don't make friends with anybody or you don't make friends with everyone. When it comes to this concept of the close people to you, first step is have a clear idea of the kinds of friends that you want. For example it might be something like, I just want some friends that are well-traveled, that have seen the world and traveled enough. That's one thing. The other can be just people who are more successful, professionally speaking. When you start to have that first focus, then that's great. This is the first thing that will orient you to choose event, and when you are having this first conversations with people, this quorum quote small talk, you will know if this is the right person, if this is the kind of person that you want to have as a friend.

Rachel: So if had a Meetup group and let's say there's 20 people there, and you talk to the first five people and you quickly find out that they are not your type of person, would you just quickly go and talk to like 6 through 20 or if you talk to number 6 and that is the type of person you want to become friends with, do you have a longer conversation with them? How does that work?

Paul: So you said the first five are not what you are looking for, the sixth is?

Rachel: Like are you going to go like boom, boom, boom, try to talk to a bunch of different people and then once you hit somebody, you'll talk longer. I guess I'm just curious how that works.

Paul: The way it works is you have to be more strategic when it comes to making friends or a certain kind of friend or certain kind of friends. Of course you will be proactive and maybe write down as a goal, I want to have friends that are well traveled, for example, or more successful than me. For example you are going to write it and it can be a clear objective. But when you go out, you have to put that out of your mind a little. You have to be a little more dynamic and enjoy your time because it's not a work thing. You are there to have fun. And when you are talking to the first people, enjoy yourself. You don't need to be too proactive in one event or in one week when you go out. Actually you just orient yourself to go to the Meetup groups or meetings or the events that will contribute to you meeting those friends.

It's like an indirect thing. You have to think long-term when you're talking about types of friends. So let's say you say to yourself, "I want this kind of friends," then you decide

what you will start to do, something that becomes a habit. And you have to be okay with the fact that sometimes you'll go out and nobody will be the right person, but you have to be okay with that. That shouldn't be a bad experience. It should be fun. It should be okay. If you put too much expectation, you don't have fun. It's supposed to be fun.

Rachel: Yeah, that's great. I'm really glad I asked you that question because I love that perspective of it not having to be some formula or something, but actually where you are going to enjoy yourself no matter what.

Paul: Exactly! Be proactive for the long-term, but for the very short-term, just enjoy yourself because this is how it works. We are talking about relationships here. We are not talking about work or something that is like ABC type of thing. Relationships are more dynamic. Of course I can give you the steps of what to do, how to keep the conversation going, how to find things in common, mention that you have things in common and then how to, for example, end a conversation go talk to somebody else and then come back and then exchange contact information and then contact them later and meet them later and then develop the friendship. All that if fine, I can do that, but on the very short-term, you have to be a little less proactive.

Rachel: I'm glad you mentioned what you just said, because those were actually some of my next question. So how do you get somebody's contact information and then follow up with them?

Paul: Okay, before I answer that, I'm just going to go back to your earlier question about what happens if I talk to five people and only the sixth one is the most interesting I find. What you do there, of course you would talk to them longer and then you start to have a feel of whether they want to talk to you longer or maybe they just came and they want to talk to you longer or may they just came and they want to talk to the others as well. Just trust your instinct and look at their body language. For example if they are looking around, they are dynamic in how they move and everything, maybe they want to meet others and you should let them. Of course you should let them go meet others. But maybe they are interested in talking longer, and then you can do that. It happens to me.

Sometimes I go to events and I'm not really interested or I'm not feeling it, but I know that there is one person that I want to get their contact information, so I may, before I leave, I just tell them that it was nice meeting them and I would love to stay in touch and then I get their contact information.

Rachel: Have you ever had anybody not give it to you?

Paul: No, it doesn't happen. It never happens. They have to be really, really, really rude to do it, unless we are talking about dating situations. Of course it happens when you are talking about dating. For example if I'm approaching a woman and I'm talking to her, of course she's got to know that I'm interested in a romantic way, so of course she can tell me that she's taken or she's engaged or something. I will be okay with that. But when it comes to making friends, it's almost never happened.

Rachel: Okay, so then how do you follow up?

Paul: Before we go too far ... sorry I'm taking it step by step, but I was just answering the one case where only one person is interested and the others are not or you are in a hurry or you don't feel like staying in the event, but now when it comes to generally how you get contact information of the people as we said before, you keep the conversation going which makes you find things in common and mention that you have these things in common and mention your opinion about this stuff, anything. For example somebody told you that they moved from the East side to the West, side you can give your opinion. You have to give some opinion about it. You give some basic information about yourself that has to be done. You should be a little succinct if possible just so they have a clear idea of who you are, what you do, et cetera.

I want to share with you how people can prepare that point where they exchange contact information. Is that cool with you?

Rachel: Yeah.

Paul: So before you ask for contact information, you can prepare it. You don't go from random conversation to the point where you ask contact information, because I prefer that people have it come naturally. In fact in my [Advanced Social Skills Training](#), I share how you can get others to ask for your contact information, because that's the idea. So if we focus on how that could work, maybe it could make more sense. And how that works is that when you talk to people and you find things in common, you can start to find hook points. This is what I call hook points, which is more than just something in common. It's an opportunity to connect later. For example they say, "I contribute to a homeless shelter," for example, and you say, "I do that too" or "I do that" or "I do something similar," et cetera. "I would love to get you to check it out" or "I would love to see the place where you go, maybe I could go there someday."

When you say something like this, this is like a hook point for the future. This is an opportunity to meet again, so you say something like that. Maybe they are interested in finding a job in a certain industry and you know someone in that industry, you can tell them that you would love to send their resume to that person. You can say it's [inaudible 15:27], which will mean that later it's going to be easy to exchange contact information. But if you have no content, if you can't find a hook point, the easiest way to exchange contact information, just say that, "I would love to stay in touch, what do you think? Do have Facebook or something." It's not a question, it's not a demand like "Let's stay in touch." It's "Hey, maybe we can stay in touch, what do you think? Do you have Facebook or something?" It's an indirect way like just throwing something at them and see their reaction. This is what I advise people to do ... go ahead.

Rachel: No, I just really like that. I think that's a really good point, and I think [Facebook](#) is a very low impact ask.

Paul: Yeah, and sometimes people have the fear of rejection or they don't want to put the other person on the spot or something. This is why I advise them to just say, "Hey, what you think? Maybe we can stay in touch," or "maybe we'll run into each other later, what do you think?" Just say something indirect, not so direct.

Rachel: I see we are ending the hour. Are you okay to stay until 15 past? I know I didn't ask you that before, and if you're not, it's okay.

Paul: No, it's okay. Of course I'm happy to talk. I'm not in a hurry.

Rachel: Okay, great. Thank you. This is really awesome stuff and I'm actually really glad.

Paul: Thanks.

Rachel: Yeah, thank you. I'm really glad that you are making sure too before we move on to our next question, making sure that you get every point across with what I asked you before, because I think you are just making this super attainable for people. It's really interesting stuff.

Paul: I'd love it to be that case for everybody, because my focus is getting someone already that has the full week of stuff that they do. They specialize, they are good at something that I'm not good at, they have no time to spare. I want that person to be able to benefit from what I teach. This is my focus. I want it to work for anybody, I don't want it to work for just the person that already has some confidence or already have pretty much all the social skills but they lack just one.

No, I want it to work for everyone, even the least motivated because let's face it, it's easy to be motivated by work or about making money or something that you can do early on like in the morning or something, you already have some motivation, you have a willpower, maybe you've heard of scientists that have proved that early in the morning, you have a lot of will power compared to later in the afternoon or in the evening.

Rachel: Yeah, we just covered that on the podcast with [Steve Scott](#), about breaking bad habits and he talked about willpower. There's a name for it ... "Your Willpower Muscle," maybe, and just how it deteriorates throughout the day.

Paul: Yeah, exactly. So when it comes to socializing, I actually do it later in the day so you have less motivation, and people do it after work, so they are exhausted and they don't have a lot of energy. So I just want to teach them stuff that they can do even if they are exhausted, even if they don't have motivation, even if they have used all their willpower. That's my focus.

Rachel: I love it, thank you. So now you've got someone's contact information, you've got maybe their Facebook, whatever they gave you, how are you going to follow up with them?

Paul: So I can answer that question but I can also share a technique that is more long-term and it's a good habit to develop.

Rachel: Sure.

Paul: Okay, a very important part of what I teach is developing habits instead of just action steps. I'm sure you know how habits can really change your life more than just

action steps that have an expiration date. Habits stay with you and they have more of a chance to change your life. You agree with that right?

Rachel: Yeah.

Paul: So a habit to change and to implement is to, for example, anybody here listening ...

Rachel: I'm sorry. My phone was coming through my computer, I apologize.

Paul: No, it's cool. Can I continue?

Rachel: Yeah, I had to call her back, sorry.

Paul: Great. So a good habit to develop is everybody listening here has a smart phone and they have a calendar, some form of electronic calendar, so that you go for example to Tuesday and you create an event, and you make it a recurrent event, something that gets repeated every week. But for the hour, make something like after work, like 7:00 or something and like schedule half an hour to an hour and spend that time catching up with people. That's a reminder. That weekly reminder will remind you every week to catch up with people and to follow up. Once you do that, once you press that button and say "save," you will never ever have to remember to call somebody or remember to follow-up with someone. Your phone will remind you every single week of the year. You will never have to put any effort in remembering to improve your social life or remembering to update your social life. You will always be reminded.

So I advise everyone here if they have time driving or anything, to put it right now and to create that weekly reminder. Just do it and try it in a couple of three weeks and see what kind of impact it has in your life because it's a weekly reminder and it comes after work when you have nothing to do, usually. Maybe you just relax, watch TV or watch YouTube videos, maybe take half an hour to take care of [inaudible 00:22:25]. So it's easy. It's not something hard to do. You don't have to remember. What you do when that weekly reminder pops up is first you follow up with everyone that you got their contact information if you have met some new friends lately, that's first. Second, you remember if you want to meet somebody that week. If you want to go out for example, this is why I recommend that people do it early in the week so that they can plan for something for Friday, Thursday, or Saturday.

So this is what you do, second thing is if you want to meet somebody you can send them messages, texts or anything and get in touch. The third thing that I recommend that you do is look online, and look on Facebook, look at [meetup.com](http://meetup.com) and look for stuff to do that week. It will take just half an hour, and plan what you are going to do that week. Of course it includes following up with people you just met.

Rachel: So you meet somebody at a Meetup you want to follow up ... I know we don't have a specific formulas or something, but are there general things that you want to say when you are following up with somebody for the first time?

Paul: Of course, I can give you a rule of thumbs. You don't have to follow up exactly the next day. All I advise is follow up maybe in a week at most. If you can do it in two, three days, that works, but don't go overboard like in two or three weeks. They might forget about you because they don't know you that well. So the maximum is seven days, I think, this is the first rule of thumb.

The second one is just say, it was nice to meet you. Remind them of something that you have talked about and that's it, and say that I hope we can meet some day later or soon or something like that, or if you have talked about something to do, just say I hope we can meet so we can do XYZ as we said. But even if you haven't talked about anything to do, just say this, "It was nice meeting you. It was nice talking about XYZ, I hope we can meet one day." That's it. As simple as that, and see their reaction, because you need their reaction. They have to be active socially. If you are going to make friends with somebody, you are going to wait for their response. They have to be active socially.

Rachel: And if people don't respond, do you follow-up with them a certain amount of times or is it an instinct thing or how does that work?

Paul: What I recommend here is just, for example let's say you send them a message on Facebook and they don't respond, you can for example send them a text as well. You can send a text and say exactly the same thing over text and try that. For example, try two modes of communications. If they don't respond then you can't do anything. This is especially the case because you are just getting to know them. If they don't respond the first time, I don't think you have an option. But what I also advice people to do is this is also a test, because if they agreed to talk to you and now they can't even answer a text or a message on Facebook, this is a good test for them too. This tells you that they are not very active socially. They don't have social acuteness [SP]. They are not skilled enough to be able to answer texts, because this is the minimum that you are going to have at social life. At least you are going to answer the text, you know what I mean?

Rachel: Absolutely. So how do you make plans that people want to join?

Paul: I don't have a specific answer to that ... let me just think a little bit here.

Rachel: Sure.

Paul: So first what you can do is before you exchange contact information is if you can, just talk about what they do for fun and what you do for fun and where they go out and where you go out. For example talk about the weekend and where you like to go out et cetera. It will give you a feel of what they like, at the same time you don't have to suggest something that they are interested in but you are not interested in, this is the first thing. Second thing is I would just say, just pick something casual. Say that "I am doing XYZ," and "would you like to come join me," for example. Don't say that "Let's do something." Say that you are already doing something or you are planning to go for example to a certain bar or a certain [inaudible 00:28:06] after work, and would they love to join you.

People like to join something that you are already doing. I can take it a step further, and if you are already meeting somebody, it's good to bring the third person because people

love to join you and somebody else, which will mean that there will be less pressure on the conversation. They know that they will meet you and someone else.

Rachel: Absolutely, that's a really good point and ... were you going to say something else about that?

Paul: I wanted to add something else, because some people will tell you that, let's say I'm just moving to a new city, I don't know anybody, how can I make plans with others and invite a third person. I really don't know anybody. I just moved or I just changed the address or something. In that case, I would say when you meet someone new and you meet them for the first time, bring somebody else that you are meeting for the first time. So let's say you are going to a [Meetup](#) group and you meet the first person, you exchange contact information, you meet the second person.

When you call them, call them both and say hey, I'm going to do something with this person from the Meetup group, maybe Thursday or Friday, what do you think, would you want to join us? And they will both answer, and they will be both new friends that you have never went out with, and they will both join you. So you don't have to just invite one person that you don't know, you can invite two. Even if one of them doesn't show up, it's fine. Just say they had some problem and that's it.

Rachel: Are there things that you do to strengthen relationships for down the line, strengthen friendships?

Paul: Yes of course. One thing that really contributes to building a friendship is trust and sharing personal information, sharing many secrets, like sharing things that you wouldn't share with somebody that you don't plan on seeing again. Of course these don't all have to be big secrets or something that's too personal, but you can start to share things that are a little personal or something from your life, some difficulty that happened to you, and when you show that side of yourself, that vulnerable side of yourself, people start to relate to you more.

This is something that you can do, is share secrets and show a little vulnerability. Don't give the impression that you are cold and you are strong in everything you do, everything you find, you don't find weaknesses, because people can't relate to people who don't have weaknesses. They just can't do it. They can't trust people that are open enough to share even small weaknesses, even if they are just silly pains. Do you get what I'm saying?

Rachel: I absolutely do, and I'm curious if there is a way where you can tell what's too personal or what's okay to share. Is it just kind of an instinct thing?

Paul: It is kind of an instinct, it is, but at the same time you can start with silly things. This is the safest way to start. For example maybe mistakes that you have made or something not that significant, like you ordered the wrong thing and you were embarrassed to change your order or something, not something too personal that you would only, for example, say to your romantic partner, your boyfriend or girlfriend, something that you can't share with people that you just met. As you said, it's an instinct

thing because there is a line that you can't cross. You don't need to go into creeping in because if you share big secrets too soon, it can make people a little uncomfortable.

Rachel: Awesome, Paul this has been just incredible. We've covered so much ground and I think people are going to walk away with so many really specific ... you're so good at just drilling down how to do things in a way that doesn't feel too from your leg. It feels nice and relaxed, and that's important. People can have fun while they are doing this. So again, I cannot thank you enough. I'm really pumped about all of this, and...

Paul: I really hope that I was clear. I know sometimes I'm not that clear, especially with my accent and everything, but I really hope that people can take specific things, for example the weekly reminder. It's very, very important that people that people do that. If they just implement that today, really, and try it. Just try that. Once they have the weekly reminder, they will never ever forget about improving their social life. It's just impossible to forget because you have a weekly reminder there. So this is the first step I recommend.

Rachel: Beautiful, and where can people go to learn more about you?

Paul: My website is [getthefriendsyouwant.com](http://getthefriendsyouwant.com). They can subscribe to the newsletter. I share an email every three days with different advice about things that they can do to improve their social life. We cover a lot of topics, and you receive an email every three days, and I hope they will read it. And if they have any feedback or any specific question, they can just reply to that email and I will answer.

Rachel: That's wonderful. Thank you again, this has been great.

Paul: Thank you, Rachel.

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