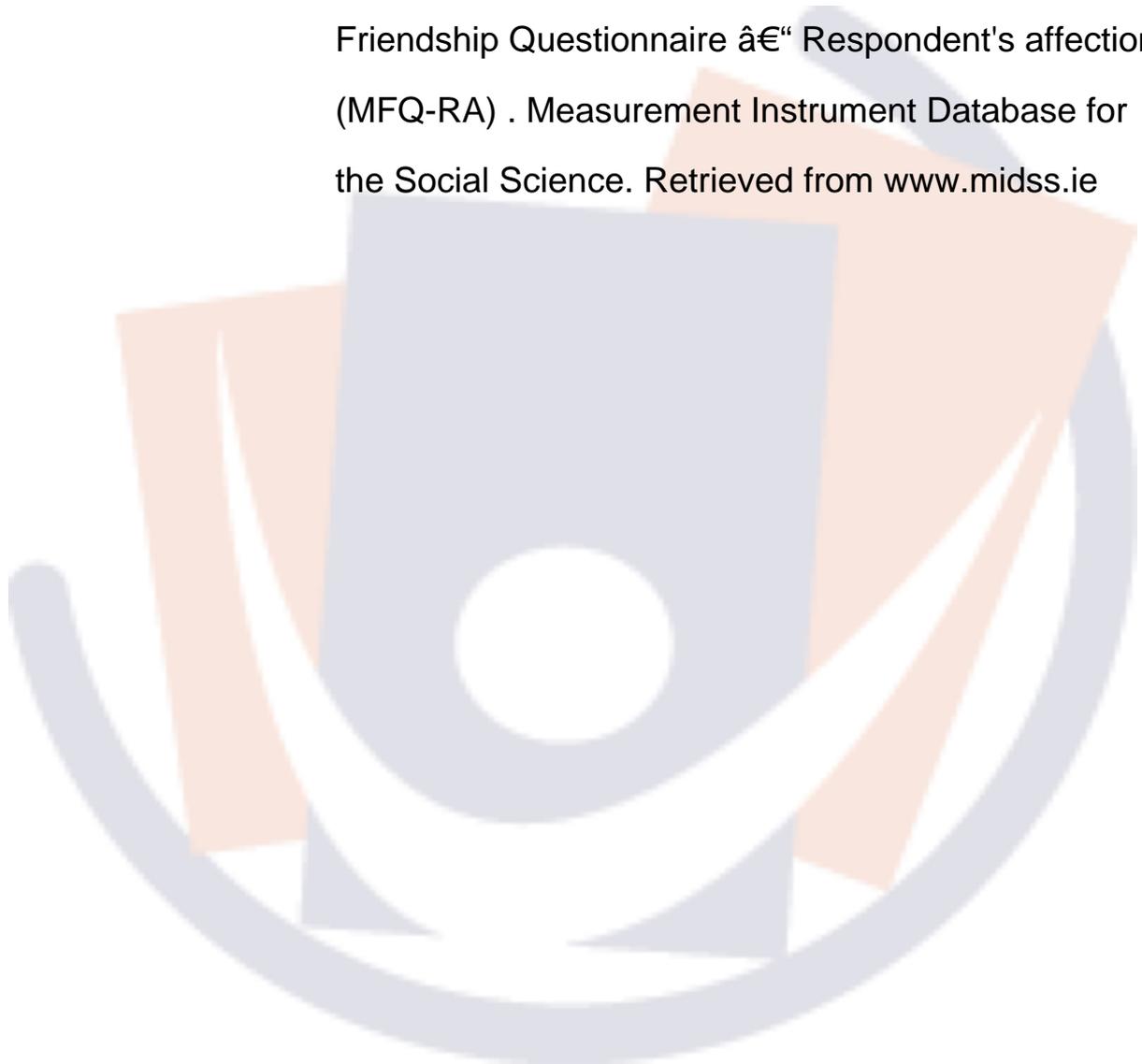


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Measuring Friendship Quality in Late Adolescents and Young Adults:

McGill Friendship Questionnaires¹

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Abstract

Two studies established the psychometric properties of two friendship questionnaires; one taps respondents' feelings for a friend and satisfaction with the friendship, the other, respondents' assessments of the degree to which a friend fulfills six friendship functions (stimulating companionship, help, intimacy, reliable alliance, self-validation, and emotional security). Factor analysis confirmed the subscale structure of each questionnaire. The subscales showed high internal consistency, distinguished best from casual friends, and did not covary with social desirability. They did covary with the duration of being a best friend and with a self-esteem subscale regarding close friends, but not with other self-esteem measures. Women reported higher positive feelings for their friend than did men, and evaluated the friend higher on friendship functions. Finally, positive feelings and satisfaction covaried with each friendship function subscale.

The research here concerns the development and validation of two multi-scale friendship questionnaires--one concerning a respondent's feelings for a friend and friendship, the other concerning the respondent's assessment of the degree to which the friend fulfills six friendship functions. The studies grew out of work on friendship quality in children and young adolescents (Aboud & Mendelson, 1996; Mendelson, Aboud, & Lanthier, 1994). The goal here was to design measures, based on a similar model of friendship, suitable for late adolescents and young adults.

Friendships, like other relationships, vary in quality. Although it is difficult to judge friendship quality in behavioral terms, length of the relationship and reciprocated versus nonreciprocated nominations are gross criterion measures of friendship quality. Furthermore, individuals can specify types of friendships, distinguishing, for example, between best friends, good friends, casual friends, and acquaintances (i.e., nonfriends); and such distinctions are also gross criterion measures of quality. Gender also provides a criterion for validating friendship measures, because there is ample evidence that gender differences do exist, with women's friendships characterized by better overall quality, closeness, enjoyment, intimacy, and nurturance (e.g., Bell, 1991; Jones, 1991; Sapadin, 1988; Wright & Scanlon, 1991). Thus, any friendship measure should be sensitive enough to differentiate women's and men's friendships.

At the most general level, relationships can be assessed as positive or negative. In these terms, friendship scales have been developed to assess attachment to the friend and conflict.² Attachment refers to the special

¹This paper was completed in 1997; we subsequently published a brief version (Mendelson & Aboud, 1999). Part of the research was presented as a poster (Measuring Friendship Quality in Late Adolescents and Young Adults) at the American Psychological Association, Toronto, ON, August, 1996.

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²Conflict, which might be considered the opposite of attachment, can certainly be an important aspect of any relationship. Indeed, friends often have conflicts, but may nonetheless be able to resolve them equitably and without bad feelings (Hartup, Laursen, Stewart & Eastenson, 1988). Thus, numerous friendship measures have subscales related to conflict or conflict resolution (Bukowski et al., 1994; Furman & Adler, 1982; Furman

feelings that individuals have for a friend. Mutual liking has often been used as a criterion to identify a friend, but a separate subscale may be used to assess liking in greater depth (cf. Bukowski, Hoza, & Boivin, 1994; Sharabany, 1974; Wright, 1991). One of the measures reported here, taps positive feelings for the friend and satisfaction with the friendship, which will be viewed as criterion measures of undifferentiated friendship quality. Although the two measures are conceptually distinct, they should covary highly because they are both assumed to reflect overall friendship quality.

However, an important assumption guiding research on friendship is that it is possible to assess specific qualities of friendships. Consideration of the theoretical foundations of various scales suggested that a framework based on friendship functions (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985; Parker & Asher, 1989)--rather than specific behaviors (Bukowski, et al. 1994; Sharabany, Gershoni, & Hofman, 1981) or motives (Wright, 1991)--is preferable for a number of reasons: It provides a broader scope, yields a better ideal for a mature relationship, and makes it possible to develop analogous, if not identical, measures for different developmental stages. Within a functional approach, a friend is seen as a source of certain social, emotional and instrumental resources that a person seeks (Asher & Parker, 1989; Weiss, 1974).

In a review of existing measures (Aboud & Mendelson, 1992), we sought to define friendship functions that were theoretically distinct, that distinguished between friends and nonfriends, and that were associated with affection/satisfaction. We identified six relevant functions (stimulating companionship, help, intimacy, reliable alliance, self-validation and, emotional security). It is assumed that individual friends fulfill some, if not all, of these functions, so measures of the different functions should covary. Nonetheless, the following definitions describe what are clearly six conceptually distinguishable functions of friendship:

Stimulating Companionship refers to doing things together that arouse enjoyment, amusement, and excitement. This quality seems to be an important expectation of friends at all ages. Some measures have focused mainly on doing things together (Buhrmester, 1990; Bukowski et al., 1994; Parker & Asher, 1989; Sharabany, 1974), but it seems important to stress the fun and excitement in common activities (Jones, 1991; Wright, 1991).

Help refers to providing guidance, assistance, information, advice, and other forms of tangible aid necessary to meet needs or goals. Thus, it need not be reciprocal (Jones, 1991). Help has been assessed in specific subscales (Bukowski et al., 1994; Parker & Asher, 1989; Wright, 1991) and it has also been combined with support (Bukowski et al., 1994; Sharabany, 1974). However, the instrumental aspect of support tapped by help is distinguishable from other aspects of support tapped by Emotional Security and Self-Validation.

Intimacy refers to sensitivity to the other's needs and states, providing an accepting context in which personal thoughts and feelings can be openly and honestly expressed, and openly and honestly disclosing personal information about oneself. A number of researchers have Intimacy subscales (e.g., Buhrmester & Furman, 1987), although Mannarino (1976) and Buhrmester (1990) assess it as a composite along with companionship. Sharabany's (1974) Sensitivity and Knowing subscale stresses the importance of knowing without any explicit disclosure. Wright (1991) does not include such a subscale except as it pertains to self-affirmation or the expression of true feelings.

Reliable Alliance refers to being able to count on the continuing availability and loyalty of the friend. This was an important dimension underlying Selman's (1980) distinction between a fair-weather friend who would end the relationship if conflict or strains arose and a more durable friend. It is assessed in a specific Conflict and Betrayal subscale (Parker & Asher, 1989) and in a Trust and Loyalty subscale (Sharabany, 1974). Bukowski and colleagues' (1994) Reliable Alliance subscale concerns self-disclosure, which is referred to here

& Buhrmester, 1985; Parker and Asher, 1989; Wright, 1991). However, these constructs are not theoretically analogous to the six friendship functions considered here. Therefore, we are currently developing separate instruments to tap negative feelings for a friend and the incidence of conflict and conflict resolution in a friendship.

as Intimacy; but they combine it with a Transcending Problems subscale that is closer to the definition of Reliable Alliance.

Self-Validation refers to perceiving the other as reassuring, agreeing, encouraging, listening, and otherwise helping to maintain one's self-image as a competent and worthwhile person. This is often achieved through social comparison and consensual validation of one's attributes and beliefs. Similar items have been referred to as Attachment (Sharabany, 1974), as Ego Support and Self-Affirmation (Wright, 1991), and as Reflected Appraisal (Bukowski et al., 1994), although that was combined with an Affective Bond subscale as part of Closeness.

Emotional Security refers to the comfort and confidence provided by the friend in novel or threatening situations. Although the emotional support provided by a friend is considered to be important, only Wright (1991) includes items in a Security subscale to assess perception of the friend as safe and unthreatening because he or she does not betray one's trust or draw attention to one's weaknesses.

Besides assessing the respondent's feelings for the friend and satisfaction with the friendship, it seems important to choose between assessing the functions that the friend is perceived to fulfill and the functions that the respondent reportedly fulfills. Most, but not all, of the items in the reviewed subscales focus on the respondent's perceptions of the friend, which is a better orientation for a number of reasons: It incorporates the functional approach to friendship quality. It avoids the attributions and inferences that are necessary for respondents to rate functions that they fulfill for a friend. Finally, it allows for empirical studies that test the validity of the qualities in enhancing rater's feelings for the friend and satisfaction with the friendship.

The goal of this research was to develop one questionnaire to assess feelings for a friend and satisfaction with a friendship and another to assess the degree to which a friend fulfills the six friendship functions. Study 1 involved an initial affection questionnaire and a long version of the functions questionnaire; Study 2 involved a revised affection questionnaire and a short version of the functions questionnaire. In each study, the subscale structure of the questionnaires was examined through factor analyses, and the internal consistency of the subscales was tested through Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Finally, the validity of the measures was examined in several ways: in Study 1, through the degree to which responses covaried with social desirability scores and through the difference in scores for best and casual friends; in Study 2, through the degree to which the friendship measures covaried with the length of the friendship and with self-esteem measures; and, in both studies, through gender differences and through the degree to which affection and satisfaction covaried with the friend's fulfilling the friendship functions.

Study 1. McGill Friendship Questionnaires: Subscale Structure and Validity

The aim of Study 1 was to develop and validate two questionnaires: one tapping affection for a friend and satisfaction with the friendship and one tapping six friendship functions.

Method

Participants

The participants in Study 1 included 253 undergraduates, of whom 246 designated their gender (149 women and 97 men); the under-representation of men in the sample presumably reflects males' inhibitions about volunteering for research on same-sex friendship (Lewis, Winstead, & Derlega, 1989). The participants were, on average, 22.4 years old ($SD = 2.3$ years; Range: 18 to 29 years), with 82% from 20 to 25 years. The participants majored in a wide range of departments in Arts, Science, and Engineering, although 28% of them were in Psychology. They were recruited primarily from large classes and were encouraged to participate by an offer of a ticket to two \$50 raffles.

Measures

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Respondent's Affection (MFQ-RA) (Appendix A). A 16-item questionnaire was designed to tap affection for a friend and satisfaction with the friendship. Some items were

adopted from earlier scales (Asher & Parker, 1989; Bukowski et al., 1994; Furman & Buhrmester, 1985; Wright, 1991) or adapted to sample the domains of interest; new items were written to yield eight items per subscale; and some items were changed after piloting. The items are positive statements about feelings for a specific friend or the friendship, and the respondent indicates degree of agreement on a 9-point scale (-4 to 4), on which four points are labelled (-3 = very much disagree, -1 = somewhat disagree, 1 = somewhat agree, and 3 = very much agree).

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Friend's Functions (MFQ-FF) (Appendix B). A questionnaire was designed to assess the degree to which a friend fulfills the six friendship functions. Again, items from other subscales (Asher & Parker, 1989; Bukowski et al., 1994; Furman & Buhrmester, 1985; Wright, 1991) were adopted or adapted; new items were written to yield eight items per subscale, but with the intention of reducing the subscales to five items; and some items were revised after piloting. Each item is a positive statement about a specific friend fulfilling a friendship function. The respondent indicates "how often [the] friend is or does what the item says" on a 9-point scale (0 - 8), on which five of the points are labelled (0 = never, 2 = rarely, 4 = once in a while, 6 = fairly often, and 8 = always).

Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale is a 33-item questionnaire that taps the extent to which respondents tend to describe themselves in favorable, socially desirable terms to achieve the approval of others. The scale has high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .88), high 1-month test-retest reliability ($r = .88$), and good validity (Robinson & Shaver, 1973).

Procedures

Approximately 450 sets of questionnaires were distributed to large psychology classes or by approaching students individually. The purpose of the study was explained, and students were asked to take the questionnaires with them, fill them out, and return them before a designated date. At the beginning of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to write the initials of a best same-sex friend, a good same-sex friend, a casual same-sex friend, and a same-sex acquaintance, which ensured that respondents distinguished among their friends. They were then instructed to complete the questionnaires with reference to their best same-sex friend (on about half the sets) or with reference to their casual same-sex friend (on the other half); that is, respondents were randomly assigned to the best- or casual-friend condition.

All sets of questionnaires contained the MFQ-FF and the MFQ-RA in that order, either before or after two questionnaires not relevant here. About 30% of the distributed questionnaire sets ended with the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. The type of friend and questionnaire order were counterbalanced across distributed sets. About 56% of the sets were returned. Of those, 137 concerned a best friend, and 116, a casual friend; 130 had the MFQ-FF and MFQ-RA first and second, 123 had them third and fourth; and 87 sets included the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale.

Results

Subscale Structure, Descriptive Statistics, and Internal Consistency

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Respondent's Affection. The 16 items of the MFQ-RA were factor analyzed to confirm its subscales structure. Oblique rotation was used here and in subsequent factor analyses because we assumed that the subscales, although conceptually distinct, would be empirically related. The resulting three-factor solution (eigenvalues = 68.5, 7.0, 6.6) accounted for 82.1% of the variance (68.5%, 7.0%, 6.6%); the intercorrelations among the factors ranged from .34 to .60 ($M_r = .46$). The analysis did not support the two a priori subscales. Rather, five affection items (2, 3, 8, 9, 14) and five satisfaction items (7, 10, 12, 13, 16) loaded higher on Factor 1 than on the other factors (all reported loadings $\geq .40$). Nine of these items were combined into a Positive Feelings subscale. The tenth item (10) was close in wording to the satisfaction items (1, 4, 5) that loaded higher on Factor 2 than on other factors, so it was combined with them into a Satisfaction

scale.³ Three affection items (6, 11, 15) that concerned the respondent's opinion of the friend loaded exclusively on Factor 3; they were not analyzed further because they seemed to tap an evaluative aspect of person perception unrelated to our goals.

As in all the measures reported here, the score for each subscale was the mean of its items (not weighted by factor loadings). Table 1a shows the descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alphas, and mean inter-item correlations for the two retained MFQ-RA subscales. The obtained ranges were large, but the distributions were negatively skewed, with means in the top sixth of a scale from -4 to 4. The internal consistency for the subscales was very good. Although the subscales covaried, $r(251) = .83$, $p < .01$, they were analyzed independently because they tapped conceptually distinct constructs and their correlation coefficient was lower than their Cronbach's alpha coefficients.

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Friend's Functions. Factor analyses with oblique rotation were used to verify the subscale structure of the MFQ-FF and to reduce the number of items per subscale from eight to five. A six-factor solution was applied to the 48 items, and we retained the five items on each subscale that loaded highest on the factor for the subscale and lowest on the other factors.⁴ The 30 retained items were subjected to another six-factor solution (eigenvalues = 18.0, 1.5, 1.3, 1.0, .9, .8), which accounted for 78.8% of the overall variance (60.2%, 5.1%, 4.4%, 3.4%, 3.0%, 2.7%); the absolute values of the intercorrelations among the factors ranged from .29 to .61 ($M_r = .45$). With only one exception, the five items from each subscale loaded ($\geq .40$) on a single factor (Factor 1: Reliable Alliance; 2: Stimulating Companionship; 3: Help; 4: Emotional Security; 5: Self-Validation; and 6: Intimacy). One item from the Intimacy subscale (15) also loaded on Factor 4 with the Emotional Security items. The factor analysis provided excellent support for the subscale structure of the reduced 30-item MFQ-FF, and all subsequent analyses were conducted with the 5-item subscales.

Table 1b shows descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alphas, and inter-item correlations for the MFQ-FF subscales. The obtained ranges spanned virtually the entire possible range, although the distributions tended to be negatively skewed, with means between 5.9 and 6.6 out of a possible 8. The internal consistency was very good

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of McGill Friendship Questionnaires in Study 1

Scale	Theoretical Range	Observed Range	Mean	SD	Alpha	Inter-item r
(a) MFQ-Respondent's Affection						
Positive Feelings	-4 -4	-1.7 - 4	2.9	1.3	.96	.74
Satisfaction	-4 -4	-3.5 -4	2.5	1.6	.92	.74
(b) MFQ-Friend's Functions						
Stimulating Companionship	0 - 8	.4 -8	6.3	1.5	.91	.67
Help	0 - 8	.0 -8	5.9	1.6	.89	.63

³ The decision to combine the four items on the Satisfaction scale was supported by the fact that they were the only items that specifically mentioned friendship, by the finding that the internal consistency of the Satisfaction scale was, if anything, improved with Item 10 on it (alpha = .92 vs. .91), and by the factor analysis of the revision to the MFQ-RA in Study 2.

⁴ Two other methods were used to eliminate three items from each subscale: reiteratively computing factor analyses and reiteratively computing Cronbach's alpha coefficients and dropping the worst item on each iteration. These methods yielded results virtually identical to those reported in the text.

Intimacy	0 - 8	.0 -8	6.1	1.9	.94	.75
Reliable Alliance	0 - 8	.8 -8	6.6	1.6	.95	.79
Self-Validation	0 - 8	.4 -8	6.0	1.6	.91	.68
Emotional Security	0 - 8	.4 -8	6.1	1.7	.92	.71

for the six subscales (alphas: .89 to .95; inter-item r s: .63 to .79). Although the subscales were intercorrelated [$M_r(251) = .74$; Range: .68 (Intimacy and Stimulating Companionship) to .83 (Intimacy and Emotional Security)], they were analyzed independently because they tapped conceptually distinct functions, because the subscale structure was supported by the results of the factor analysis, and because their intercorrelations were lower than their Cronbach's alpha coefficients.

Validity

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Respondent's Affection. Social desirability scores did not predict Positive Feelings, $r(82) = -.07$, $p > .05$, or Satisfaction, $r(82) = -.01$, $p > .05$. That is, respondents' reports of their feelings for their friend or their satisfaction with the friendship were apparently not influenced by a tendency to respond in a socially desirable way, which supports the discriminant validity of the two subscales.

The two subscales were subjected to a Type of Friend x Gender MANOVA. Type of friend was significant multivariately, $F(2,241) = 43.39$, $p < .01$, and univariately for both subscales (Table 2a). Participants responding with reference to a best friend rated their positive feelings for the friend and their satisfaction with the friendship higher than did participants responding with reference to a casual friend. Gender was also significant multivariately, $F(2,241) = 3.70$, $p < .05$; women reported slightly higher positive feelings for the friend than did men (3.0 vs. 2.7), $F(1,241) = 6.73$, $p < .05$, but they did not differ from men in satisfaction with the friendship (2.5 vs. 2.4), $F(1,241) = 2.22$, $p > .05$.

Table 2

Means (and Standard Deviations) of Friendship Measures for Casual and Best Friends

Variable	Friend				F
	Casual		Best		
(a) MFQ-Respondent's Affection					
Positive Feelings	2.2	(1.4)	3.5	(0.8)	84.51**
Satisfaction	1.7	(1.7)	3.2	(1.1)	66.74**
(b) MFQ-Friend's Functions					
Stimulating Companionship	5.6	(1.6)	6.8	(1.0)	54.44**
Help	5.3	(1.7)	6.4	(1.3)	30.98**
Intimacy	4.9	(1.9)	6.9	(1.2)	95.01**
Reliable Alliance	5.7	(1.7)	7.3	(1.0)	81.89**
Self-Validation	5.3	(1.7)	6.6	(1.2)	48.58**
Emotional Security	5.2	(1.9)	6.8	(1.3)	62.76**

Note: ** $p < .01$.

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Friend's Functions. None of the MFQ-FF subscales covaried with social desirability scores [$M_r(82) = -.09$; Range: $-.16$ (Reliable Alliance) to $.00$ (Self-Validation), p s $> .05$]. Thus,

participants' reports of the degree to which a friend fulfilled six friendship functions were also not influenced by social desirability.

The six subscales were subjected to a Type of Friend x Gender MANOVA. Type of friend was significant multivariately, $F(6,237) = 19.08$, $p < .01$, and univariately for all subscales (Table 2b). Participants who responded with reference to a best friend rated their friend higher on all the friendship functions than did participants who responded with reference to a casual friend. Gender was significant multivariately too, $F(6,237) = 2.69$, $p < .01$. Women rated their friend higher than did men on Stimulating Companionship (6.3 vs. 6.0), Reliable Alliance (6.7 vs. 6.4), Self-Validation (6.2 vs. 5.8), and Emotional Security (6.1 vs. 5.7) and marginally higher on Intimacy (6.1 vs. 5.9), $F_s(1,237) = 2.79$ to 6.03 , $p_s < .10$ or $.05$, but equally on Help (5.9 vs. 5.9).

An individual's feelings for the friend and satisfaction with the friendship are assumed to be criterion measures of friendship quality. Therefore, as a final test of the construct validity of the MFQ-FF subscales, zero-order correlations were computed between each of them and each MFQ-RA subscale for the 246 participants who designated their gender. As predicted, Positive Feelings and Satisfaction were highly correlated with each of the six friendship functions, $r_s(244) = .64$ to $.82$, $p_s < .01$. This remained so even when the type of friend and the respondent's gender were partialled out, $r_s(242) = .55$ to $.74$, $p_s < .01$. It was also the case for subsamples who responded with reference to a casual friend, $r_s(110) = .57$ to $.74$, $p_s < .01$, or a best friend, $r_s(128) = .45$ to $.70$, $p_s < .01$, partialling out gender; and it was the case for women, $r_s(145) = .44$ to $.76$, $p_s < .01$, and men, $r_s(93) = .58$ to $.74$, $p_s < .01$, partialling out type of friend. Thus, positive feelings for the friend and satisfaction with the friendship were consistently related to the degree to which the friend fulfilled the friendship functions.

Because the six MFQ-FF subscales were not independent of each other, a question remained as to whether the friendship functions each account for independent sources of variance in the MFQ-RA subscales. Therefore, Positive Feelings and Satisfaction were each subjected to a hierarchical multiple regression, in which type of friend (best or casual) and gender were entered in Step 1 and the six MFQ-FF subscales in Step 2 (Table 3). (The Type of Friend x Gender interaction was not significant and will not be discussed further.) As indicated in Step 2 of the regression equations, Stimulating Companionship, Intimacy, and Reliable Alliance independently predicted both MFQ-RA subscales. These data support the hypothesis that at least three of the six MFQ-FF subscales tap functions that independently contribute to positive feelings for a friend and satisfaction with the friendship.

Summary and Discussion

The results of Study 1 were encouraging. The subscale structure of the MFQ-RA was reasonably close to our a priori subscales. However, the Satisfaction subscale was weak; it had only four items, and one actually loaded on the factor with the Positive Feelings items. The subscale structure of the MFQ-FF was nicely confirmed by factor analysis.

The subscales of the MFQ-RA and MFQ-FF were reliable as indicated by their high internal consistency. They were also valid in that they did not covary with social desirability scores and they distinguished between best and casual friends. Moreover, women reported higher positive feelings for a friend, and rated their friend higher than did men on five of the six friendship functions, which adds to other sex-differences reported in the literature, even if such differences are quite small (Wright, 1988). Finally, the subscales of the MFQ-RA covaried with those on the MFQ-FF.

Table 3
Regressions of MFQ-RA Subscales (N = 246)

Predictor	B	SE B	β	ΔR^2	R^2
(a) Positive Feelings					
Step 1					
Type of Friend	1.35**	.14	.52		
Gender	-.39**	.14	-.15	.29**	
Step 2					
Stimulating Companionship	.10*	.05	.11		
Help	-.01	.04	-.01		
Intimacy	.15**	.05	.22		
Reliable Alliance	.35**	.05	.43		
Self-Validation	.01	.05	.01		
Emotional Security	.10	.05	.13	.45**	.74**
(b) Satisfaction					
Step 1					
Type of Friend	1.54**	.18	.48		
Gender	-.29	.19	-.09	.23**	
Step 2					
Stimulating Companionship	.14*	.07	.13		
Help	.11	.07	.11		
Intimacy	.17*	.07	.20		
Reliable Alliance	.36**	.07	.35		
Self-Validation	.05	.08	.05		
Emotional Security	.01	.08	.01	.40**	.63**

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Study 2. Friendship Ratings and Self-Esteem

In Study 2, we first sought to improve the Satisfaction subscale of the MFQ-RA, by replacing the three evaluation items with items directly related to satisfaction with the friendship. Second, it was important to confirm the subscale structure of the short version of the MFQ-FF with an independent sample. Third, although subscales on the MFQ-RA and MFQ-FF distinguished between casual and best friends in Study 1, we wanted to verify that they would distinguish among best friends; to this end, we determined if subscale scores would covary with the length of the friendship. Fourth, to extend the age range of participants in Study 1, we obtained data from a somewhat younger sample of late adolescents. Fifth, a different method of subject recruitment was used to reduce possible self-selection biases of men (cf. Lewis et al, 1989) that may have attenuated sex differences in Study 1.

Finally, we further assessed the convergent and discriminant validity of the friendship measures by examining correlations between them and subscales of the Self-Perception Profile for College Students (Neemann & Harter, 1986). Harter (1985) suggested that self-esteem should include not only a global component concerning the perception of one's worth as a person, but also judgments of one's competence or adequacy in specific domains. Given our focus on friendship, we therefore considered the global self-worth as well as self-evaluations in four relationship domains (close friends, social acceptance, romantic partner, and parents). We predicted that measures of the quality of an individual's best friendship would correlate with self-evaluations concerning close friendships more than with self-evaluations regarding other relationships or with global self-esteem. It should be noted, however, that such correlations would not trivially reflect overlapping constructs between Neemann and Harter's measures and ours, because the measures differ in focus. Their measures focus on the respondent's competencies vis à vis general others or the respondent's general global self-evaluations. In contrast, our measures focus on the respondent's feelings for a specific friend or on the respondent's evaluations of a specific friend's contribution to the relationship.

Method

Participants

The participants in Study 2 were 227 junior-college students (118 women and 109 men) who were enrolled in one of eight psychology classes. They were, on average, 18.2 years old ($SD = 1.0$ years; Range: 16 to 21 years), with 86% from 17 to 19 years. Questionnaires were distributed in class; the goals of the study were explained; and students voluntarily filled out the questionnaires on the spot. Eight participants did not provide complete data, but, where possible, the data they did provide were included in the analyses. Nonetheless, as expected, the recruitment procedure yielded a sample with approximately equal numbers of men and women.

Measures

Self-esteem. The Self-Perception Profile for College Students is a measure of self-esteem with good psychometric properties (Neemann & Harter, 1986). Six of the subscales were included, but only five of those were relevant here: Close Friendships (SE-Friend), Social Acceptance (SE-Social), Romantic Relationships (SE-Romantic), Parent Relationships (SE-Parent), and Global Self-Worth (SE-Global). Each of the subscales has four items, except for SE-Global, which had six. Respondents first determine which of two contrasting items pertains to them (e.g., Some students like the kind of person they are / Other students wish that they were different); they then assess whether the choice is "really true" or "sort of true" for them. Thus, each item can be scored on a 4-point scale (1 = really negative; 2 = sort of negative; 3 = sort of positive; 4 = really positive). Subscale scores were obtained by computing the mean response for the items. Cronbach alpha coefficients computed for the present sample indicated adequate to good internal consistency for all five subscales (SE-Friend: .76; SE-Social: .73; SE-Romantic: .84; SE-Parent: .80; SE-Global: .87), with inter-item correlations from .40 to .56 ($M_r = .49$).

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Respondent's Affection (Revised) (MFQ-RAR) (Appendix A). The nine items from the Positive Feelings subscale of the MFQ-RA and the four items from the Satisfaction subscale were retained. The three items that loaded on Factor 3 in Study 1 were replaced with items meant to tap a respondent's satisfaction with a friendship. The instructions and scoring of the MFQ-RAR were identical to those on the MFQ-RA.

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Friend's Functions (Short) (MFQ-FFS) (Appendix B). The 30 items of the MFQ-FF identified in the factor analysis in Study 1 were used here as a short version of the questionnaire. The instructions and scoring were identical to those used on the MFQ-FF.

Procedures

Participants completed the Self-Perception Profile for College Students (Neemann & Harter, 1986) and a questionnaire not relevant here. They then identified their best same-sex friend and indicated for how long they

had been friends and for how long they had considered the friend as their best same-sex friend. They subsequently completed the MFQ-FFS and the MFQ-RAR in that order with reference to their best same-sex friend.

Results

Subscale Structure, Descriptive Statistics, and Internal Consistency

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Respondent's Affection (Revised). The 16 items of the MFQ-RAR were subjected to a factor analysis with oblique rotation. The resulting two-factor solution (eigenvalues = 10.1, 2.0) accounted for 75.3% of the variance (63.0%, 12.3%), with the factors intercorrelated, $r = .62$. The analysis supported the two a priori subscales. Factor 1 consisted of the seven Satisfaction items and only one Positive Feelings item (9). Therefore, the seven Satisfaction items were averaged to form a Satisfaction subscale. Factor 2 consisted of the eight other Positive Feelings items, which were averaged to form a Positive Feelings subscale.

Table 4a shows the descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alphas, and inter-item correlations for the two subscales. The obtained ranges were surprisingly large given that participants responded with reference to a best friend, but the distributions were negatively skewed, and the means fell in the top ninth of the scale. The internal consistency for the two subscales was very good. Again, the subscales covaried, $r(221) = .66$, $p < .01$, but the subscales here were analyzed separately for reasons noted earlier.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics of McGill Friendship Questionnaires in Study 2

Scale	Theoretical Range	Observed Range	Mean	SD	Alpha	Inter-item r
(a) MFQ-Respondent's Affection (Revised) (N = 223)						
Positive Feelings	-4 - 4	-.5 -4	3.4	0.8	.93	.64
Satisfaction	-4 - 4	-2.6 -4	3.1	1.2	.96	.78
(b) MFQ-Friend's Functions (Short) (N = 227)						
Stimulating Companionship	0 - 8	3.2 -8	6.7	1.1	.84	.53
Help	0 - 8	2.0 -8	6.4	1.2	.84	.51
Intimacy	0 - 8	1.8 -8	6.8	1.4	.90	.64
Reliable Alliance	0 - 8	2.8 -8	7.2	1.1	.88	.59
Self-Validation	0 - 8	1.3 -8	6.3	1.4	.89	.61
Emotional Security	0 - 8	1.2 -8	6.4	1.3	.85	.56
(c) Friendship Duration						
Friend (years)		.2 -19.2	7.2	4.5		
Best Friend (years)		.2 -19.2	5.6	4.4		

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Friend's Functions (Short). Factor analyses with oblique rotation were used to verify the subscale structure of the MFQ-FFS. An initial six-factor solution applied to the 30 items indicated that four Emotional Security items did not load ($< .40$) on any factor, and the fifth item (48) loaded with the Intimacy items. Although the Emotional Security subscale was retained for analysis, the factor analysis was recomputed without its items. The five resulting factors (eigenvalues = 11.8, 2.2, 1.4, 1.2, 1.1) accounted for 70.4% of the overall variance (47.1%, 8.7%, 5.4%, 5.0%, 4.3%); the absolute values of the intercorrelations among the factors ranged from .25 to .48 ($M_{\text{df}} = .36$). With only two exceptions, factor

loadings ($\geq .40$) confirmed the subscale structure of the MFQ-FFS (Factor 1: Help; 2: Reliable Alliance; 3: Stimulating Companionship; 4: Self-Validation; and 5: Intimacy). One Intimacy item (4) also loaded on Factor 1, and one Help item (25) loaded only on Factor 2. Still, the results confirmed five of the six MFQ-FFS subscales. This is particularly noteworthy given that all respondents completed the questionnaire with reference to a best friend.

Table 4b shows descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alphas, and inter-item correlations for the six MFQ-FFS subscales. The obtained ranges were fairly large, but the distributions were negatively skewed, with means between 6.3 and 7.2 out of a possible 8. The internal consistency of all subscales was good (alphas: .84 to .90; inter-item r s: .51 to .64). The subscales were intercorrelated [$M_r(225) = .64$; Range: .44 (Stimulating Companionship and Reliable Alliance) to .78 (Emotional Security and Self-Validation)] to the same degree as in the best-friend subsample of Study 1 [$M_r(135) = .61$], but less than in the total sample [$M_r(251) = .74$]. The subscales were analyzed separately for the reasons noted earlier.

Validity

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Respondent's Affection (Revised). The reported durations of the friendship and of being best friends spanned 2 months to over 19 years (Table 4c). The Satisfaction subscale of the MFQ-RAR covaried with the reported length of the friendship and both MFQ-RAR subscales covaried with the length of time the friend was considered a best friend (Table 5a, Columns 2 and 3). That is, respondents who reported on a long-standing (best) friendship tended to rate the friend more positively, and to be more

Table 5
Correlations of Friendship Measures with Duration and Self-Esteem Measures

	Pos ^a	Satis	Comp	Help	Intim	Rel All	Self-Val	Em Sec
(a) Duration								
As Friends	.09	.17*	.07	.05	.05	.10	.09	.03
As Best Friends	.16*	.21**	.15*	.14*	.16*	.17*	.15*	.13
(b) Self-Esteem								
SE-Friend: r	.37**	.44**	.31**	.33**	.47**	.31**	.28**	.32**
partial r^b	.35**	.38**	.27**	.29**	.43**	.27**	.22**	.29**
partial r^c			.06	.08	.29**	.05	-.04	-.08
SE-Social	.11	.24**	.13*	.16*	.15*	.18**	.19**	.14*
SE-Romantic	.09	.08	.14*	.13	.12	.09	.11	.09
SE-Parent	.05	.08	.05	.02	.07	.15*	.04	.05
SE-Global	.03	.06	-.03	.06	-.01	.16*	.06	.03

Note: * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

^a Pos = Positive Feelings; Satis = Satisfaction; Comp = Stimulating Companionship; Intim = Intimacy; Rel All = Reliable Alliance; Self-Validation; Em Sec = Emotional Security.

^b Cell entries are partial correlations between SE-Friend and each friendship measure, controlling simultaneously for the other *self-esteem* measures.

^c Cell entries are partial correlations between SE-Friend and each friendship *function* measure, controlling simultaneously for the other *friendship function* measures.

satisfied with the friendship, than respondents who reported on relatively recent (best) friendships. Although the correlations were small, the findings support the validity of the two MFQ-RAR subscales.

The next analyses examined if Positive Feelings and Satisfaction correlated specifically with self-evaluations relevant to close friendships (i.e., with SE-Friend) or more generally with self-evaluations relevant to relationships and with SE-Global (Table 5b, Columns 2 and 3). Both subscales covaried significantly with SE-Friend; Satisfaction also covaried with SE-Social. However, regression of each MFQ-RAR subscale simultaneously on the five self-esteem measures indicated that only SE-Friend uniquely accounted for variance in Positive Feelings and Satisfaction (partial correlations in Table 5b). Thus, individuals who felt positively about their best friend and who were satisfied with their best friendship were likely to evaluate their competence in close friendships relatively high; but Positive Feelings and Satisfaction were not linked to feelings of competence in social domains independently of feelings of competence in close friendships. These data support the convergent and discriminant validity of the two MFQ-RAR subscales.

As expected, a one-way MANOVA applied to the MFQ-RA subscales yielded a significant multivariate effect of gender, $F(2,220) = 9.41, p < .01$. Woman's positive feelings for the friend were higher than men's (3.6 vs. 3.1), $F(1,220) = 17.45, p < .01$, and their satisfaction with the friendship was marginally higher (3.2 vs. 2.9), $F(1,220) = 3.34, p < .10$.

McGill Friendship Questionnaire-Friend's Functions. The MFQ-FFS subscales did not appear related to the length of the friendship (Table 5a, Columns 4 to 9). However, five of them were positively correlated with the time the friend had been considered a best friend. Compared to respondents reporting on relatively short best friendships, those reporting on long-standing ones tended to rate the friend higher on Stimulating Companionship, Help, Intimacy, Reliable Alliance, and Self-Validation. These--again, albeit small--correlations support the validity of the five subscales that were identified in the factor analysis of the MFQ-FFS.

Correlations were computed between the MFQ-FFS subscales and the self-esteem measures (Table 5b, Columns 4 to 9). As a consistent pattern, the MFQ-FFS subscales covaried with SE-Friend and SE-Social, but only SE-Friend uniquely accounted for variance in the MFQ-FFS subscales (first row of partial correlations in Table 5b). Individuals who rated their best friend high on any friendship function likely evaluated positively their own competence in close friendships, but not their competence in other relationship domains or their global self-worth. Moreover, intimacy was the only friendship measure that uniquely accounted for variance in SE-Friend (second row of partial correlations in Table 5b). Individuals who positively evaluated their own competence in close friendships were particularly likely to rate their best friend as high on intimacy. Indeed, three of the four SE-Friend items concern trust or personal feelings, which are aspects of intimacy. However, the SE-Friend items focus on the respondent, whereas the MFQ-FFS items focus on the friend, so the two measures are not simply redundant. As a whole, these data support the convergent and discriminant validity of the MFQ-FFS subscales.

A one-way MANOVA applied to the MFQ-FFS subscales yielded significant effects of gender multivariately, $F(6,220) = 4.76, p < .01$, and univariately for the six subscales, $F_s(1,220) = 8.50$ to $24.60, p_s < .01$. Women rated their friend higher on all the friendship functions (Stimulating Companionship: 6.9 vs. 6.5: Help: 6.6 vs. 6.2: Intimacy: 7.2 vs. 6.3: Reliable Alliance: 7.4 vs. 7.0: Self-Validation: 6.6 vs. 6.3: Emotional Security: 6.8 vs. 6.0).

Again, Positive Feelings and Satisfaction covaried with each of the six MFQ-FFS subscales, $r_s(221) = .47$ to $.62, p_s < .01$, even when controlling for respondent's gender, $r_s(220) = .45$ to $.61, p_s < .01$, or for the separate subsamples of women, $r_s(113) = .43$ to $.62, p_s < .01$, and men, $r_s(106) = .45$ to $.68, p_s < .01$. Thus, an individual's positive feelings for the friend and satisfaction with the friendship covaried with the individual's assessment of the degree to which the friend fulfilled each friendship function.

A question remained as to whether friendship functions independently predicted the MFQ-RA subscales. Positive Feelings and Satisfaction were each regressed hierarchically on gender (Step 1) and on the six MFQ-FFS subscales (Step 2) (Table 6). Stimulating Companionship, Help, Intimacy, and Reliable Alliance

independently predicted Positive Feelings, whereas Help and Reliable Alliance independently predicted Satisfaction. This partially replicated the comparable analysis in Study 1, which showed that Stimulating Companionship, Intimacy, and Reliable Alliance independently predicted both MFQ-RA subscales. Thus, some MFQ-FFS subscales tap functions that contribute independently to positive feelings for the friend and satisfaction with the friendship.

Summary and Discussion

Study 2 supported the subscale structure of the MFQ-RAR and the MFQ-FFS (except for Emotional Security). All subscales were reliable, as indicated by high internal consistency, and valid, as indicated by the following: The friendship measures were correlated with the reported duration as a best friend (again except for Emotional Security). They also covaried more with Neemann and Harter's (1986) subscale concerning close friends than with subscales concerning other relationships or global self-worth; and the Close Friends subscale was especially related to Intimacy. Positive feelings for a best friend and satisfaction with the friendship covaried with the degree to which the friend was perceived to fulfill the friendship functions. Finally, compared to men, women had higher positive feelings for a best friend and higher satisfaction with the friendship, and they rated their best friend higher on all six friendship functions.

General Conclusions

The measures developed here were based on several assumptions: Types of friends, the length of friendship, and gender are gross criterion measures of friendship quality. Positive feelings for a friend and satisfaction with the friendship are more refined criterion measures. Friendship functions--the provision of needed social, emotional, and instrumental resources (Asher & Parker, 1989)--serve as an appropriate basis for measuring quality. Finally, respondents can report better on the degree to which another person fulfills friendship functions for them (i.e., satisfies their friendship needs) than on the degree to which they fulfill friendship functions for another (i.e., satisfy the other's friendship needs). The resulting measures, though brief and easy-to-administer, provide reliable and valid assessments of friendship.

The first measure concerns a respondent's feelings for a friend (Positive Feelings) and satisfaction with the friendship (Satisfaction). As expected, the two subscales covaried highly, especially in Study 1, which included data on both best and casual friends. However, the two measures were treated independently, because they appear to tap distinguishable constructs. In both studies, the subscales were represented by different factors in factor analyses. Although the Positive Feelings subscale was derived empirically from the factor analysis in Study 1, it was confirmed by the analysis in Study 2. Also in both studies, the correlation coefficient between the subscales was less than the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each, which was consistent with the factoring. Moreover, Positive Feelings covaried with gender somewhat more than did Satisfaction, but covaried with SE-Social somewhat less; and, at least in Study 2, Positive Feelings and Satisfaction were predicted by somewhat different sets of friendship functions. Perhaps most important, however, the two subscales tap conceptually distinct constructs--one concerning the friend and one concerning the friendship.

The second measure concerns a respondent's assessment of how often a friend fulfills six friendship functions. Again, the subscales were intercorrelated, but the subscale structure was supported by confirmatory factor analyses in both studies; and the intercorrelations were less than the Cronbach's alphas. Moreover, three subscales (Companionship, Intimacy, and Reliable Alliance) independently predicted Positive Feelings (Studies 1 and 2) and Satisfaction (Study 1); in Study 2, Help and Reliable Alliance independently predicted Positive Feelings and Satisfaction. Finally, the six subscales tap conceptually distinct functions.

Table 6
Regressions of MFQ-RAR Subscales (N = 223)

Predictor	<u>B</u>	<u>SE B</u>	<u>β</u>	<u>ΔR²</u>	<u>R²</u>
(a) Positive Feelings					
Step 1					
Gender	-.44**	.11	-.27	.07**	
Step 2					
Stimulating Companionship	.19**	.05	.25		
Help	.16**	.05	.25		
Intimacy	.09 [†]	.05	.15		
Reliable Alliance	.20**	.05	.26		
Self-Validation	.00	.05	.01		
Emotional Security	-.04	.06	-.07	.46**	.54**
(b) Satisfaction					
Step 1					
Gender	-.30	.16	-.12	.01	
Step 2					
Stimulating Companionship	.08	.08	.07		
Help	.44**	.09	.44		
Intimacy	.12	.08	.14		
Reliable Alliance	.25**	.08	.22		
Self-Validation	-.02	.07	-.02		
Emotional Security	-.06	.10	-.07	.43**	.44**

Note: [†] $p < .07$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

The intercorrelations among the subscales on each questionnaire might be deemed a shortcoming (Bukowski et al., 1994). One challenge might be to develop internally consistent subscales that are appropriately rich (i.e., tap different aspects of each construct) without ignoring aspects of feelings or functions that pervade friendship. Another challenge might be to add to the evidence provided here that supports the discriminant validity of what are expected to be interrelated subscales; that is, additional data are needed to target each friendship measure and distinguish it from the others.

Another possible shortcoming of the measures concerns the skewed distribution of subscale scores. Rating scales that yield more variability are needed. Perhaps the agreement scale for the MFQ-RAR should range from -2 to +6 on the assumption that most people have positive feelings for their friends and are at least somewhat satisfied with their friendships. Perhaps the MFQ-FF and MFQ-FFS should assess items in terms of specific frequencies within a specific time period; the 9-point scale of Never (0) to Always (8) might be replaced with a scale that refers to the last eight encounters, ranging from None of them (0) to All of them (8).

A final possible problem concerns comparisons of different types of friends. The friendship measures distinguished quantitatively between casual and best friends in Study 1; and they differentiated among best friends in Study 2, but the range of obtained responses was quite limited. Perhaps measures that apply to many types of friends will be too coarse to distinguish among best friends. One solution to this would be to adjust the response scale, as noted above. However, the possibility remains that best friends are qualitatively different from casual, or even very good, friends, in which case measures might be needed specifically for different types of friends.

Regardless, the studies reported here support the basic assumptions outlined above, which we developed in a project concerning friendship measures for children and adolescents (Aboud & Mendelson, 1992). Here, the approach was successfully extended to measures used by respondents who were predominantly 17 to 19 years old (Study 2) or 20 to 25 years old (Study 1). Thus, the prospect is good that parallel measures can be developed for use across a wide age range—from childhood through adulthood—which will facilitate longitudinal and life-span research on friendship.

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Appendix A

McGill Friendship Questionnaire--Respondent's Attachment
(Original and Revised)

Introduction

The items on this part of the form concern YOUR FEELINGS for your best/casual same-sex friend. On the scale directly to the right of each item circle the number that indicates how much you agree that the statement describes your feelings.

There are no right or wrong answers, because adults' feelings for friends differ from person to person. Just honestly describe your feelings for your friend.

Scale

Very Much Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Very Much Agree
 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 1 2 3 4

Items

#	Version			Item
	APriori	Original	Revised	
2	A ^a	P	P	care about ____
3	A	P	P	like ____ a lot
7	S	P	P	want to stay friends for a long time
8	A	P	P	prefer ____ over most people I know
12	S	P	P	are glad that ____ is my friend
13	S	P	P	hope ____ and I will stay friends
14	A	P	P	would miss ____ if he/she left
16	S	P	P	enjoy having ____ as a friend
9	A	P	-	feel close to ____
1	S	S	S	happy with my friendship with ____
4	S	S	S	feel my friendship with ____ is a great one
5	S	S	S	satisfied with my friendship with ____
10	S	S	S	think my friendship with ____ is strong
6	A	E	-	think ____ is nice
11	A	E	-	think ____ is a good person
15	A	E	-	think ____ is a likable person
6	S	-	S	feel my friendship with ____ is good
11	S	-	S	pleased with my friendship with ____
15	S	-	S	contented with my friendship with ____

^aSubscales: A = Affection; S = Satisfaction; P = Positive Feelings; E = Evaluation (unanalyzed); minus sign = unused in version.

Appendix B cont'd

		Intimacy
4	+	is someone I can tell private things to
11	+	knows when I'm upset
15	+	is someone I can tell secrets to
24	+	knows when something bothers me
28		would listen if I talked about my problems
31		would understand me if I told her/him my problems
37	+	is easy to talk to about private things
45		understands my feelings
		Reliable Alliance
6		would still want to be my friend even if I were angry with him/her
10		would stay my friend through bad times
18	+	would want to stay my friend if we didn't see each other for a few months
20	+	would still want to be my friend even if we had a fight
30	+	would stay my friend even if other people criticized me
32	+	would stay my friend even if other people did not like me
42	+	would still want to stay my friend even if we argued
44		would still want to be my friend even if I didn't have time to see her/him a lot
		Self-Validation
2		makes me feel important
9		makes me feel good about myself even when I mess up
13		makes me feel sure of myself
21	+	makes me feel smart
27	+	makes me feel special
35	+	compliments me when I do something well
39	+	points out things that I am good at
43	+	makes me feel that I can do things well

Appendix B cont'd

		Emotional Security
5	+	would make me feel comfortable in a new situation
7	+	would be good to have around if I were frightened
17	+	would make me feel better if I were worried
19	+	would make me feel calmer if I were nervous
29		would make me feel better if I were in trouble
33		makes me feel better when I have problems
41		would make me feel better if I were anxious
48	+	makes me feel better when I'm upset