

Six Drawbacks of Bad Friends

There are these six drawbacks of bad friends. You become friends and companions with those who are addicts, carousers, drunkards, frauds, swindlers, and thugs. These are the six drawbacks of bad friends.

FAKE FRIENDS

“Householder’s son, you should recognize these four enemies disguised as friends: the taker, the talker, the flatterer, the spender.

You can recognize a fake friend who’s all on four grounds.

Your possessions end up theirs.

Giving little, they expect a lot.

They do their duty out of fear.

They associate for their own advantage.

You can recognize a fake friend who’s all on these four grounds.

You can recognize a fake friend who’s all talk on four grounds. They’re hospitable in the past. They’re hospitable in the future. They’re full of meaningless pleasantries. When something needs doing in the present they point to their own misfortune. You can recognize a fake friend who’s all talk on these four grounds.

You can recognize a fake friend who’s a flatterer on four grounds. They support you equally in doing bad and doing good. They praise you to your face, and put you down behind your back. You can recognize a fake friend who’s a flatterer on these four grounds.

You can recognize a fake friend who’s a spender on four grounds. They accompany you when drinking, roaming the streets at night, frequenting festivals, and gambling. You can recognize a fake friend who’s a spender on these four grounds.”

That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, went on to say:

“One friend is all take,

another all talk;
one's just a flatterer,
and one's a friend who spends.
An astute person understands
these four enemies for what they are
and keeps them at a distance,
as they'd shun a risky road.”

Good-Hearted Friends

“Householder's son, you should recognize these four good-hearted friends: the helper, the friend in good times and bad, the counselor, and the one who's compassionate.

You can recognize a good-hearted friend who's a helper on four grounds. They guard you when you're negligent. They guard your property when you're negligent. They keep you safe in times of danger. When something needs doing, they supply you with twice the money you need. You can recognize a good-hearted friend who's a helper on these four grounds.

You can recognize a good-hearted friend who's the same in good times and bad on four grounds. They tell you secrets. They keep your secrets. They don't abandon you in times of trouble. They'd even give their life for your welfare. You can recognize a good-hearted friend who's the same in good times and bad on these four grounds.

You can recognize a good-hearted friend who's a counselor on four grounds. They keep you from doing bad. They support you in doing good. They teach you what you do not know. They explain the path to heaven. You can recognize a good-hearted friend who's a counselor on these four grounds.

You can recognize a good-hearted friend who's compassionate on four grounds. They don't delight in your misfortune. They delight in your good fortune. They keep others from criticizing you. They encourage praise of you. You can recognize a good-hearted friend who's compassionate on these four grounds.”

That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, went on to say:

**“A friend who’s a helper,
one the same in both pleasure and pain,
a friend of good counsel,
and one of compassion;
an astute person understands
these four friends for what they are
and carefully looks after them,
like a mother with a child at her breast.**

**The astute and virtuous
shine like a burning flame.**

**They pick up riches as bees
roaming round pick up pollen.**

**And their riches proceed to grow,
like an ant-hill piling up.**

**In gathering wealth like this,
a householder does enough for their family.**

**And they’d hold on to friends
by dividing their wealth in four.**

One portion is to enjoy.

Two parts invest in work.

**And the fourth should be kept
for times of trouble.”**