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Connecting: The Enduring Power of Female Friendship

Sandy Sheehy

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After years of taking a backseat to other relationships, women's friendships are finally being celebrated as never before. In *Connecting,* noted journalist Sandy Sheehy investigates *why* female friendships are so important, how they function throughout our lives, and how we can best experience the joys they offer.

Sheehy introduces ground-breaking research, drawn from more than thirty psychologists and sociologists. Their intriguing, often surprising, findings are brought home with real-life stories and keen insights taken from more than two hundred interviews the author personally conducted with girls and women of all ages, races, and walks of life.

The author provides a fascinating look at the qualities that initially attract women to their closest friends; how friendships change throughout life; and hwy female bonding is a vital part of a woman's psychological development, health, and sense of well-being at any age. Sheehy addresses such thought-provoking questions as: Why is making friends so easy for some and hard for others? How can friendships help us become better, more fulfilled people? What are the key ingredients to lasting and satisfying friendships?

Recognizing how our relationships serve different needs aat different times in our lives, the author describes the ten basic types of female friendship--from soulmates to workmates--and shows how each nurtures and supports us. Sheehy then examines the six seasons of friendships, from girlhood to old age, devoting a separated chapter to the special characteristics and rewards friendship offers each age group. Just as important, she tackles the thorny issues, delving into the challenges that can strain and even shatter friendships, and offers sound strategies for handling difficult situations. And in "Sixteen Steps to Having Friends for Life," Sheehy shares the secrets for keeping and enriching friendships.

In *Connecting,* Sandy Sheehy takes us on a journey of discovery and appreciation of the rich rewards of this special intimacy, pointing the way to growth-promoting, life-enhancing relationships--to becoming the best of friends and enjoying the best of friendship.How do friendships between women evolve at different stages of life? How do they differ from men's? Why can some women make friends easily while others have none at all? What are the key ingredients to lasting and satisfying friendships? Drawing on recent psychological research and her own firsthand interviews with more than 200 girls and women from all walks of life, journalist Sandy Sheehy takes an engaging and insightful look at these questions and more. She probes the nature and history of female friendships, pinpoints the major types, and shows how they function during the four main stages of women's lives and how they insure our healthy development. This book reads like an intimate and informative conversation with a close girlfriend. It will validate and reassure women about their friendships as never before.

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