**My best friend!**

[Huzaima Bukhari](https://dailytimes.com.pk/writer/huzaima-bukhari/)

December 12, 2020

“Walaqad khalaqnal insaana wa na’alamo maa tuwaswiso behi nafsohu wa nahno aqrabo ilaihi min hab’l an’wareed And indeed it is We Who created humankind, and fully know what their souls whisper to them, and We are closer to them than (their) jugular vein”—Al-Quran 50:16 (Translation by Dr. Mustafa Khattab) The United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture has concluded that solitary confinement beyond 15 days constituted cruel and inhumane punishment. So tortious it is to be alone and to overcome this situation the importance of other beings cannot be disregarded. This is the reason that people live in colonies and reach out to one another for comfort and togetherness.

We cannot choose our relatives but we can choose our friends, is a commonly understood statement but in the presence of relatives (not that relatives cannot be pals), why is there a need for friends? Well, for one thing, humans love to interact with other humans. The ones who are closest in proximity are parents and siblings who are most of the time taken for granted because they are there to stay forever no matter what the circumstances. As far as parents are concerned relationship with them is hardly on equal footing because of their dominating stature and with brothers and sisters, the association is more in the nature of duty of care, although many share their problems with each other but with the objective of getting solutions that are obligatory rather than mere suggestions. Again, this familial connection is bound to differ from family to family because of various socio-economic and cultural factors.

As children mature they are attracted to their peers because of same age and/or interests and which culminates in a social circle we refer to as friends. In most instances, connections are easily established and it is discovered how superbly communication takes place. Having a friend is one of the most cherished feelings of a living being’s life. Even animals are known to befriend both humans and other animals. Those who keep pets know how helpful they are in cheering up forlorn moments, plants thrive when people treat them well and friends brighten up doleful times with their exuberance.

So when I am alone, I find solace in conversing with my best friend, the God within, whose existence flows through miles long channels of my veins

Among friends there is further division between ordinary friends and best friends forever, popularly called BFF. This means that there is a certain group with which one can have get-togethers, fun or as in the modern parlance, with which one can ‘chill’ and wear off the sultry hours. During these periods of interaction, the atmosphere is usually quite superficial as whiling away the time does not necessarily mean serious emotional discourses. Rather, indulgence in activities of mutual interest and pleasure, is the prime objective of such gatherings.

The more intimate group comprises best friends. Well, usually there is just the BFF who could be referred to as the one who is the closest, the confidante. Why? The reasons could be many. The first and foremost is the feeling of comfort in the company of the BFF. The fact that a BFF takes you as you are, is disparaging, though not always but at the appropriate time and is never judgemental. A BFF will patiently and smilingly listen to your blabber, no matter how irrational, will promptly respond to your need, will be full of encouragement during critical times, will be a source of inspiration when you are down, will stay behind your back when you are caught in a difficult situation, will understand if you are having a bad day and are moody, will readily give a shoulder for you to cry on and help you to vent your grievances, will go out of way regardless of any inconvenience suffered. What a blessing indeed! A world without friends and a BFF is simply unimaginable. One has to be an utter xenophobic to not enjoy the company of friends.

Despite all kinds of advantages associated with a BFF/friend relationship, one cannot expect to confide every single thing, share every bit of feeling, thought or moment even if the BFF is one’s own spouse. This is simply not a possibility and there cannot be a counter argument to deny this truth. However, there is one ‘Being’, who claims access to every breath we take, every move we make and every thought we think because the proximity is inseparable. Now here is where the secret of friendship lies. A connection that is indestructible is the highest form of companionship. No person can ever asseverate this kind of camaraderie, this closeness and this deep intimacy. When Omnipresence is within our own existence, then there is no question of loneliness. Here is a confidante who is witness to each movement, who stays awake while we sleep, who has complete access to our hard drive and all the data that is stored therein, even that fleeting idea which crosses our minds for a fraction of a second, who understands whatever gibberish we mumble and the irony is that we think that we are without a friend.

Clearly, a physical chum is most desirable, for a human is a human, who desires companionship with another human, but when left by oneself we should immediately turn inwards to seek that friend who keenly and placidly waits to be acknowledged, addressed and understood. Just imagine, there is a buddy who has to be told verbally whatever ordeal one is passing through or whatever problems there are in life or whatever misunderstandings have been created on account of an unintentional remark, expression or act or whatever fears there are in your mind related to certain persons or apprehensions about the future etc. and there is another who is fully cognizant of every aspect of your life, who does not need any clarifications and who understands exactly what you want needless to say that not all wishes can be granted. Sometimes even a BFF is helpless in carrying out the demand of a friend.

So when I am alone, I find solace in conversing with my best friend, the God within, whose existence flows through miles long channels of my veins, whose presence is felt with each heartbeat and every incoming and outgoing breath, whose rebuke lashes out with every pinch of the conscience, whose love manifests itself in each tingling emotion, whose care is evidenced in every encounter with an adversity, whose appreciation emits in every feeling of contentment and who is there at the precise moment of my need.

This BFF is the only one who actually gives me the strength to fight the battles of my life, the inspiration to live, the motivation to do good, the ability to move on, to stay happy and positive howsoever bleak the situation, to atone for committal of any deliberate or unconscious offence and to be grateful for the innumerable blessings without which it would be impossible to survive. Befriending humans is no doubt a matter of pride and pleasure but establishing a bond with God, is divine. In any case, God will keep transmitting the signals of friendship, whether we receive them with acceptance or ignore them in disbelief.

*The writer, lawyer and author, is an Adjunct Faculty at Lahore University of Management Sciences ( LUMS )*