NEWS LESSON

Why a Simple Coffee Takes Two Free Weekends



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Where do adults get a chance to see the same people regularly?
2. What makes it easier to turn an acquaintance into a friend?
3. Would you rather meet one person for coffee or join a group?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**loneliness**	☐	A	not normal or not the same as most things
2	**volunteering**	☐	B	a lot of, many
3	**trust**	☐	C	the sad feeling of having no one to talk to
4	**contacts**	☐	D	people you know and can send messages to
5	**unusual**	☐	E	working for free to help other people
6	**impossible**	☐	F	done again and again
7	**repeated**	☐	G	a feeling that you can believe someone
8	**dozens**	☐	H	not able to happen at all

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

At school you see the same people every day. In 2025, the World Health Organization reported that about one in six people worldwide felt lonely.

1 When you are at school, making friends can feel natural. You see the same people every day, and there is usually time to talk. As an adult, things may be different. Work, family, moving house and busy schedules can make meeting people more difficult.

2 Many people notice this change in their thirties. Friends get married, have children or move to other cities. A simple plan to meet for coffee suddenly requires several messages and two free weekends. Some friendships become less close, even when nobody has done anything wrong.

3 Loneliness is a much bigger issue than one age group. In 2025, the World Health Organization reported that about one in six people worldwide experienced loneliness. Younger adults actually reported loneliness more often than older adults in its estimates. So difficulty with friendship is not only a problem after 30.

4 There is a difference between being alone and feeling lonely. Some people enjoy spending time by themselves. Loneliness happens when we want more or better social connection than we have. Someone can even feel lonely while living with other people.

5 Making new friends usually takes repeated contact. Joining a class, walking with a group or volunteering can create chances to meet the same people again. But building trust takes time, and not every friendly conversation turns into a close friendship.

6 Modern technology can help people keep in touch when they live far apart. This is particularly useful when someone moves abroad or works unusual hours. Still, sending messages is not always the same as spending time together. A person may have hundreds of contacts and very few people they can call when something goes wrong. Good friendships usually need more than occasional likes on social media.

7 They involve listening, helping and finding time to meet when possible. Sometimes a friendship changes because two people's lives move in different directions. That does not mean it was not important. Other friendships can begin later in life, in places we might never have expected. There is no age at which making a new friend becomes impossible.

8 Perhaps we should treat friendship as something worth planning for, not just something that happens by accident. Sending a message, suggesting a simple walk or accepting an invitation can be a small beginning. A strong social life does not always need a large number of friends. Sometimes one dependable person matters more than dozens of contacts online.

Sources: World Health Organization. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. The WHO reported that about one in six people worldwide felt lonely. T F NG
2. Loneliness only affects people over thirty. T F NG
3. Someone can feel lonely while living with other people. T F NG
4. Most new friendships begin at work. T F NG
5. In the WHO estimates, younger adults reported loneliness more often than older adults. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

abroad	colleague	invitation	occasional	regularly	requires	schedules

1. Both of my friends have very busy _____ , so it is hard to find a free evening.
2. Thank you for the _____ to your party, but I am away that weekend.
3. We only have an _____ coffee together, perhaps twice a year.
4. Many people go to live _____ for work, so their friends stay behind.
5. Making a new friend _____ time and patience.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. Last year, my best friend _____ to another city. (MOVE)
2. We _____ each other every day when we were at school. (SEE)
3. She _____ me a message yesterday to suggest a walk. (SEND)
4. I _____ a new friend at the cooking class last month. (MEET)
5. Last weekend we _____ for a long walk in the park. (GO)

7 Language focus: collocations

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Some words naturally go together. Learn the pair, not just one word.

build	close	do	make	pay	spend	strong

1. It is hard to _____ friends when you move to a new city.
2. Good friends _____ time together, even when they are busy.
3. It takes a long time to _____ trust with someone new.
4. She is a very _____ friend, so I tell her everything.
5. A _____ social life does not always need a large number of friends.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. What would make someone feel welcome after arriving in a new city?
2. Can a regular small plan do more for friendship than a big occasional one?
3. Which matters more for staying friends: shared interests or making time?

9 Role-play: finding time for a friend

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the busy friend

You work long hours and you're tired at the weekend. You'd like to stay friends, but you don't want a big plan. Suggest a short coffee or a video call. Say what you can and cannot do.

Student B · the friend who misses you

You haven't seen your friend for three months. Messages are not enough for you. Ask to meet face to face, for a walk or a meal. Try to agree a date before you finish.

Useful phrases

- How about we meet on Saturday?
- I'd love to, but I'm busy that day.
- Let's make a plan before we say goodbye.
- I don't want us to drift apart.
- That works for me.
- Could we meet halfway?

Afterwards, tell the class: what plan did you agree, and was it fair to both of you?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 C · 2 E · 3 G · 4 D · 5 A · 6 H · 7 F · 8 B

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 F · 3 T · 4 NG · 5 T

5 Vocabulary

1 schedules · 2 invitation · 3 occasional · 4 abroad · 5 requires

6 Verb forms

1 moved · 2 saw · 3 sent · 4 met · 5 went

7 Language focus

1 make · 2 spend · 3 build · 4 close · 5 strong

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