

When friends leave you without closure

ANGELINA NODEE FRANCIS

When you're friends with someone, you start adoring them, love spending time with them, and end up trusting them. You feel the need to share details of how your day went and be there for them when they need you the most.

However, sometimes some friendships end in a very bitter manner, and friends leave without saying a word.

Questions often remain unanswered. Some days, you will blame yourself for things going wrong, leading you to send a series of long apology texts, even when you know they will remain unseen or unanswered.

Why do people enter our life suddenly, become an important part of it only to leave us one day, without so much as an explanation? How do they sleep at night knowing that the friend they used to share everything with, is shedding tears and staying up all night, drowning in an ocean of questions unable to find an answer to this deafening silence?

They shared everything with you, from the things that made them happy to the things that made them cry. During their most vulnerable moments, they might have told you something which nobody knew about, so why did they have to leave like this? To be quite honest, I still do not have a proper answer for that question. Sometimes, no matter how hard we try to hold on to certain people, they will leave.

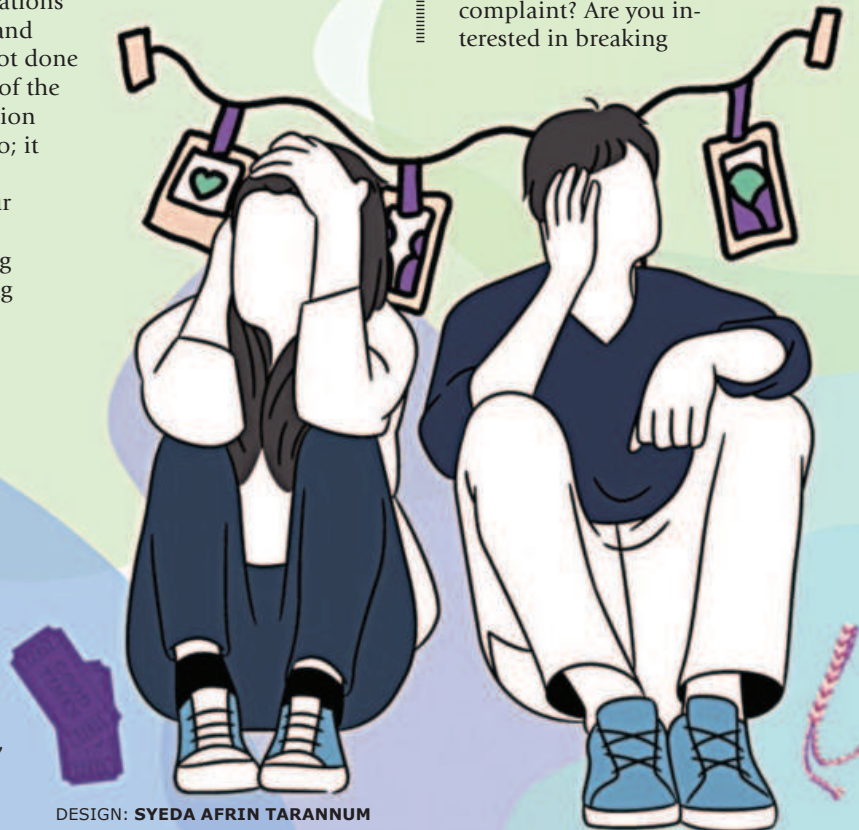
My friend of two years left me within a few minutes. I remember asking him what happened and why he pulled himself away like this. All I received as an answer was, "We shouldn't talk as much as we do now." It sent me into a state of shock because someone I used to talk to for hours, had devalued my friendship within minutes.

I used to go through our old conversations right after he left me, and read each and every text, just to ensure that I had not done something wrong. Reaching the end of the conversation had led me to a realisation though: There was nothing I could do; it was not my responsibility.

Here is the takeaway: it is not your business anymore. To ask how that person is doing, to ask them anything at all. You don't have to keep blaming yourself for their actions, the burden is not for your shoulders. It will hurt and you might not be able to trust someone else for a while. Every time you befriend someone, you will wonder if they will hurt you the same way. Take your time to come to terms with it, it's not easy to let someone go with all those questions circulating in your mind.

Good news is, if you have made it this far without that friend, you will probably make it further.

Angelina Nodee Francis enjoys cracking self-deprecating jokes and running away from her problems. Send her memes at angelinafrancis004@gmail.com



DESIGN: SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM

How to let friends go, gracefully

FABIHA AFIFA

While going through old photos, I found a picture of a toddler me cuddling with a fellow toddler friend on our old sofa. Keeping the nostalgia aside, I realised: while I was taught to build and maintain friendships before I could even fully comprehend the world around me, never in my 18 years of life have I been guided on how to end them.

Over the years, like most people, I have lost plenty of friends and in most cases, the process was unnecessarily ugly. Some friendships have perished in icy silence, others in fiery feuds. However, from each of these experiences, I have picked up a lesson or two so if you're someone wanting a graceful exit from a friendship, read on.

Know your reason(s).

Sometimes, you just know it's time to say goodbye. At other times, you're not so sure and that's when it's best to take a step back and ask yourself some questions.

Have you communicated your issue to your friend? Is the issue actually important enough to make you want to terminate the friendship? What has their response been to your complaint? Are you interested in breaking

up with them altogether or do you just want a break?

Revising your situation thoroughly will give you the clarity and confidence to make up your mind and follow through with your decision.

Tell them the right way.

Depending on how close you and your soon-to-be ex-friend were, and the gravity of your circumstances, pick a suitable way to break the news to them. If you're looking to avoid confrontations and need time to compose your thoughts, you can tell them via text or maybe even a letter. Call or meet them if you want to gauge their reaction and want a live conversation.

Hear them out.

Even if you think they are in the wrong, remember that they reserve the right to defend themselves. Try your best to avoid accusatory language that could only prolong your strife. However, if you feel that you're being gaslit or that your views are being disregarded, feel free to politely call an end to the conversation.

Be ready to miss them.

It is only natural to mourn the demise of a friendship that once meant a lot to you. What you need to keep in mind, however, is that it would be unfair to yourself to stay in a friendship in which you feel disrespected. In case you find yourself second-guessing your decision to call it quits, now is the time to keep reminding yourself of the reasons you brainstormed.

At the end of the day, you're the only friend you'll have forever so it's your wellbeing that matters the most. Anyone thinking or making you think otherwise must go.

Fabiha is sick of "malding" and considering shaving her head. Send her hair regrowth tips before it's too late at: afifafabiha01@gmail.com