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## Honoring Differences

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*Adapted by Barb Backler from the Iowa Peace Institute.*

*“Much of the vitality in a friendship lies in the honoring of differences, not simply in the enjoyment of similarities.” --James L. Fredericks*

It is comfortable for us to exclusively surround ourselves with friends that acknowledge our ideals, our visions and our opinion. It is also possible that doing so may diminish our growth potential. Do we view friendship in terms of what can we gain from it, or rather what we can give to it? It is by giving of ourselves that we are enriched. When we take off the blinders that allow us to see only similarities we notice that differences have much to offer a friendship.

Exploring others' creative ideas and viewpoints will allow us to expand our own vision. In brainstorming sessions we seek all ideas and ask that none be evaluated until the list is complete. Brainstorming may challenge us to accept ideas that we have never considered, allowing for new and vibrant ideas.