

Friend or Consequential Stranger?

Think of someone you know but aren't sure how to accurately describe the relationship. Then, choose either the A or B version of the following statements ("he" or "she" are arbitrarily alternated).

1. A: I like him but I could also replace him with someone else who does the same activity for or with me.
B: I like him, and it would leave a hole in my life if I had to replace him.
2. A: I don't know her birthday (unless Facebook reminds me!).
B: I try to remember when it's her birthday.
3. A: I call him when I have a reason to call, never just to chat.
B: I don't need a reason to call him.
4. A: I probably wouldn't have her as an overnight guest.
B: I wouldn't think twice about inviting her for an overnight.
5. A: I connect with him mostly online or by email.
B: I connect with him on and off line.
6. A: I see her mostly in public places (neighborhood, workplace, house of worship, an association).
B: We often see each other at our homes or just the two for dinner at a restaurant.
7. A: He travels in different circles than me, and is therefore someone I can count on to hear about a restaurant opening, a job lead, a new trend, a good doctor.
B: I generally know what he knows, because we tend to travel in the same circles.
8. A: I don't feel compelled to answer the phone when her name appears on caller ID
B: I always take her phone calls.
9. A: I'd help him in a pinch, but only if it was convenient for me.
B: He's someone I'd help if I could.
10. A: She's involved in only one particular aspect of my life.
B: She's a part of my life in many different ways.
11. A: He provides a paid service for me.
B: Ours is not a business arrangement.
12. A: I might call her in an emergency, but I wouldn't expect her to drop everything for me.
B: She's one of the first people I think of in an emergency.
13. A: He might make the cut if I threw myself some kind of milestone bash, like a retirement or a birthday.
B: He's always part of my special occasions.
14. A: Contemplating a social outing with her, I ask myself if I am in the mood to be with her.
B: She's a regular part of my social life.
15. A: I confide in him on occasion, usually about an issue to which he can relate.
B: I can talk to him on an intimate level about almost anything.
16. A: I genuinely like her, but I don't think about her—or miss her—when she's not around.
B: I feel sad when a lot of time goes by without seeing her.
17. A: I'd ask his advice only about something in which he has had experience or education.
B: I'd ask his advice about anything.
18. A: She doesn't know most of the people closest to me.
B: She knows almost all of the people closest to me.
19. A: I met him through another acquaintance or friend and usually see him in the presence of that person.
B: I met him through another acquaintance, but now we have a separate relationship.
20. A: Only if I knew she didn't have someplace else to go would I invite her to Thanksgiving dinner.
B: I almost always invite her to Thanksgiving dinner.