

## Friendship by Paul Constant

"Friendship and the spiritual search." Those are the words emblazoned at the top of the home page on TAT's website. The words were carefully selected—not to convey a sense of organizational prestige or uniqueness—but to express a principle that runs even deeper than planet earth's timeless spiritual teachings. Richard Rose said it best: *There is no religion greater than human friendship.*

It's hard enough walking the edges of life in the search for Reality. With pride, we may feel that "going solo" is simply less messy. But an extraordinary practicality arises when a spiritual seeker takes the bold step of befriending a nucleus of sincere, like-minded companions...

First, the basic stuff: assembling together serves as a reminder that we collectively desire similar goals. It's a fundamental understanding among all walks of life and a thread that is weaved through humanity's countless endeavors. In the case of spiritual endeavors, even if we don't all agree on the nuances, we at least know there's something deep in our hearts that brings us together.

Next, working together fosters a bond that may survive well beyond the death of a teacher. The TAT Foundation serves as a shining example of students dedicating their lives to the spiritual search. Following the passing of Richard Rose—TAT's founder and teacher—the group lives on to provide rare opportunities for finding and sharing inspiration. Through the past 40+ years, the depth of friendship among TAT members has manifested in the form of seekers who became Finders, mortar and loose bricks that were forged into a retreat center, and energy that continues to transform into retreats, conferences, and workshops.

A subtler but more powerful aspect of spiritual friendship manifests as the "x" factor. The "x" factor is conditional on one criterion: a deep sincerity for wanting to know our true nature. When seekers gather with such intentions, most feel a palpable *something* in the air or in themselves. If the bonds run deep enough, we become less selfish by putting the wellbeing of others first. The "x" factor then evolves into the "x<sup>2</sup>" (x squared) factor—the palpability becomes exponential. If only for a few moments, friends disappear through the vastness of their hearts into something much grander than all our sweat, tears, and confusion. Our friendship becomes Love...



~ Read Paul Constant's essays [No Religion is Greater Than Friendship](#) and [Spiritual Rapport](#) for more perspectives on friendship.