

Interview Guide (DRAFT)

The purpose of this interview is to learn more about how close same-sex friends adjust, cope or change when one friend is faced with new challenges. As I understand it, you (or your friend) became a new parent (coped with a divorce, experienced a serious illness). I hope that we can talk about your experiences further.

This interview is part of a course project for a qualitative research class. Only class members will see any portion of the original transcript, and only I will hear the interview tape. We want these interviews to be a collaborative effort and we are very interested in what you have to say.

Begin by asking participant to describe their friendship.

Possible prompts:

How long have you been friends? Could you describe the first time you met? How did you meet?

When did you meet? Where did you meet? What sparked the friendship?
Could you describe what you did the last time you spent time together?

Ask about what they do together, what they talk about, how they support each other. (Some people might prefer to the most abstract questions listed below as a place to start.)

Possible prompts:

What sorts of activities do you do together? What is your favorite thing you do together?
What kind of things do you talk about? What topics do you avoid talking about?

What do you joke about? What is difficult to talk about? Can you give an example?

How do you go about making decisions in the relationship?

How do you support each other during times of stress? How do you encourage each other? Help each other? Do you feel supported by this person? If so, in what ways?

What do you fight about? How do you resolve conflicts or problems?

Do you ever celebrate things together? If so, what do you do? What things do you celebrate together? What is the most important event that you shared?

How do you show your affection for one another? What are your rules about hugging?

What is challenging for you about this friendship?

How frequently do you two spend time together?

How do you keep in touch with each other?

Who, if anyone else, is part of this group of friends?

What do you all like to do together?

Do you and your friend share other friends?

How are your families and home lives different or the same? (Intact family, religious differences, cultural differences, etc.)

You also might want to explore general descriptions of the friend.

Possible prompts:

What do you have in common?

What are some of your differences?
What have you learned from your friend?
What do you like most about your friend? What do you NOT like about your friend?
What irks you?
Why do you consider this person a close friend?
What do you value about your friendship?
What characteristics of this friendship set it apart from others?
What phrase or word best describes your friend?
What values or qualities do you admire in your friend?
What kind of expectations do you bring to the friendship?
What kinds of things do they know about you?
What kinds of things do you share with each other?
How would you describe a close friendship? What does it mean to describe a friend as close?

Don't forget to adjust your questions so they are appropriate to the particular event (pregnancy, divorce, illness) and person.

Tell me about the moment that you learned about (your friend's pregnancy). What happened? How did you feel? What did you expect to happen?
Who did you tell first? Why? Did they tell you first? How long did it take to share information with your friend?
If not this particular friend, why not? When did you tell them? How did they react?
How did it make you feel? Did you have any fears or doubts or hopes that you discussed with your friend? What were they? Any doubts or fears or hopes that you did not discuss?
Do you remember anything specific that your friend did? Said?
What kind of support did you receive? Offer? Financial, emotional, meals?
What else was happening at the time? Did it change your relationships with other friends?

During this transition, how did your friendship change? Did the way in which you communicated change? Did the amount of time you spent together change? Did routines change?
How long had you been friends when the event occurred?
How old were you when the event happened?
Did the event create any difficulties? What were they? How did you deal with them?
What did you discover about your friendship given this experience?
Did the friendship change? If so, how?
Can you talk to me about what changed for you (your friend)?
Did this event change the dynamics of your friendship? If so, how?
Do you think your friendship would be different if this had not happened?
Where do you see your friendship going?
Has this experience changed your general feelings about close friendships? If so, in what ways?

Closing questions:

Is there anything else you would like to share?

For each friend, please record their gender, approximate age, ethnic, cultural or religious background, whether they are in a committed relationship, years of education. You might also record whether the friends have ever lived together or not.