The joy of the age-gap friendship

Modern life makes it hard for the old and the young to meet, and even harder to become best friends. What's the secret?

Dilys on Sian

I met Sian at an event where we were both speakers, and we just clicked. I could see she was just a great person, and smarter than most. She was a glamorous, lively woman, who talked about being an entrepreneur and her love for her father.

She started inviting me to different places. I went to the races with her – not the sort of thing I usually do. She brought fun back into my life when I was working hard to run a charity. The new experiences we share help to keep me alive. When I was sick last Christmas, she really rescued me. She came in like a hurricane, with decorations, firewood… I was feeling sad and afraid, and she told me that wasn't allowed.

▲ Dilys and Sian

"She brought fun back into my life."

Sian's full of energy and warmth. I feel I understand her because she represents my younger self. Mine wasn't a typical path; I always wanted to be a little different. I was a dancer and taught the art of movement. I got married within six weeks, but divorced when my only son was seven. I've got the life I wanted, but it isn't always easy. I try to offer that perspective to Sian.

Sian on Dilys

I met Dilys in Cardiff, where we both live, at an event called Superwoman. We were both invited to speak and were at the same table. Dilys did a lot of charity work with disabled people, as well as being the world's oldest female solo skydiver. I was there to talk about my media marketing company. We hit it off; I thought she was amazing and the way I want to be as I grow older.

We love to sit with take-out food and listen to Mozart. We like movies and the theater. She has a huge amount of energy and can dance for longer than me. She even persuaded me to do a skydive, despite my fear of heights. When we're in a cab, taxi drivers ask how we met, but we never think of our age gap. She advises me on my love life, work, and how to be a better person.

"She's the way I want to be as I grow older."

I often walk into Dilys's house when I'm stressed and within seconds I'm more relaxed. She calms me down when I'm angry, and teaches me to see things from other people's point of view. [illegible] or bad happens. My family says how much good she does me.

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d Now read the article, where each woman talks about how they met and about their relationship. Who are the following sentences true for? Write **S** (Sian), **D** (Dilys), or **B** (both of them).

1 ☐ She admires the other person.
2 ☐ She cheered the other person up on one specific occasion.
3 ☐ She got along immediately with the other person.
4 ☐ She has done an extreme sport.
5 ☐ She has helped the other person to be more open-minded.
6 ☐ She has introduced the other to things she hadn't tried before.
7 ☐ She likes cultural activities.
8 ☐ She manages an organization that helps people.
9 ☐ She runs a company.
10 ☐ She's good at giving advice.
11 ☐ She's very energetic.
12 ☐ She doesn't like being in high places.

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