

Parenting
is
Heart
WORK

Video Series

Leader's Guide

*With Questions
for Group
Discussion*

Written to
accompany the
video series by



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Welcome

Dear Leader,

The videos you are about to use teach parents a different way to think about their kids. Changing the heart is a powerful way to help children make lasting changes. God is ultimately the one to change a person's heart but the day-to-day work of parenting is often used by God to do the long-term work.

This video series challenges parents in the most common areas of family struggles. Parents are using strategies right now for giving instructions, correcting kids, addressing bad attitudes, and setting limits, but some of those parents are frustrated because their techniques are often counterproductive. Increased anger and yelling, for example dominate many homes.


These videos are full of practical strategies to help parents with plans to rely on instead of anger. Praying for children and asking God for insight and wisdom often results in a deeper understanding of a child's heart and needs. These videos will help parents get to know their kids better on a deeper level and parents will discover ways that they can move their children along toward greater maturity.

Children are all different and a cookie-cutter approach to parenting doesn't work. These videos give parents tools that they can use as they work on the heart of each of their kids. Parenting is hard work because parenting is heart work.


As a leader, your job isn't to have all the answers to the parenting dilemmas. You want to offer hope and encouragement. As parents wrestle with the concepts provided in the videos you'll see them imagining how these ideas will work in their families. Encourage parents to try new things. It's affirming to work with kids on a heart level. Kids love it and responsiveness follows.

As you try to help others develop a more heart-based approach to parenting, don't be surprised when your own heart is challenged, stretched, and strengthened. As always, teachers learn the most. You'll be blessed as you help families grow together in their relationships with each other.

Blessings,



Scott Turansky



Joanne Miller

How to Use This Leader's Guide

This manual is divided into eight sessions to correspond with the eight videos. Each session has three parts. First it contains suggestions for you as a leader. The second page is a handout to photocopy for each participant. The third page of each session gives you questions for discussion after the video. Feel free to photocopy these pages also and hand them out to your group.

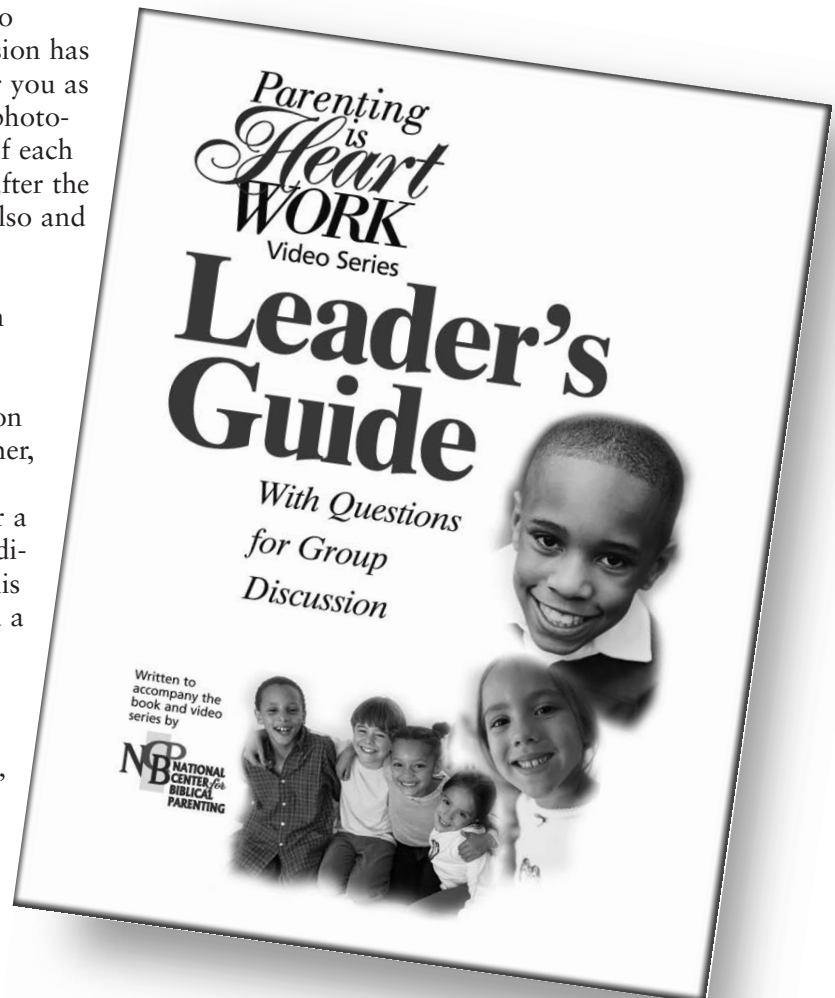
You'll probably want to take an hour to an hour and a half to cover each video lesson. This will allow thirty minutes for the video and the remainder of the time for interaction and prayer. After watching the video together, you'll want to break into small groups for discussion and then come back together for a concluding time, allowing the groups or individuals to report things they've learned. This will be an affirming way to review and end a meeting.

You might want to start each meeting (except session 1) with the question, "What did you do this week that worked?" Or, "What do you remember from last week that was helpful?" Those questions and their answers help parents see the new concepts come to life in others' families.

In preparation for the discussion time, encourage people to break up into groups of five to seven. That means some groups will be a little larger and some a little smaller but that size is generally best to allow several people to speak but not make people feel too uncomfortable by being put on the spot.

It's not necessary to designate leaders because leaders tend to surface. However, many find it helpful to spread out the mature or experienced parents to provide maximum benefit to smaller discussion groups.

Make prayer an important part of your meeting. Parents need to rely on the Lord for their strength and regularly ask him to bring the changes necessary in them and their kids. Remember that some people have a hard time praying in front of others, so be careful about



putting people on the spot.

You may purchase copies of the book "Parenting is Heart Work" for 25% off the \$12.99 retail price directly from the National Center for Biblical Parenting. The books are not necessary but they are a helpful reinforcement. You can either have people read the suggested chapters in advance or you can have them read them during the week after the video presentation. Either way works.

Please photocopy pages from this book as handouts and discussion questions so that people can take notes and jot down things to consider in the coming week.



Contents

Session 1 Teaching Kids to Listen and Follow Instructions	1
Session 2 Reaching Deep Into a Child's Heart	5
Session 3 Correction Ideas that Touch the Heart	9
Session 4 A Toolbox of Consequences	13
Session 5 Ending Discipline Times with Impact	17
Session 6 Teaching Children to Accept No as an Answer ..	21
Session 7 Attitude: A Window Into a Child's Heart	25
Session 8 How to Start Connecting with the Heart	29

Leader's Guide

To accompany
the video series,
"Parenting is Heart Work"

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Session 1

Teaching Kids to Listen and Follow Instructions

Summary of the Video

A heart of cooperation is important in any family, but many children resist the simplest requests. In this lesson you will learn five steps to a good Instruction Routine. Five parts for the parent and five parts for the child provide families with direction in this essential area of family life. Learn how your work teaching cooperation and responsibility will produce excellent employees for the future and how to help your children learn to listen to God as well.

Read Along in the Book, "Parenting is Heart Work"

The Introduction to Parenting is Heart Work motivates parents to look past behavior to the heart. Too often parents focus on the behavior because that's what they see. The heart is a little more complicated, but teaching children to follow instructions has some definite heart implications. Chapter 4 helps parents see how working on behavior the right way can actually contribute to heart change. Behavior is a symptom. In fact, sometimes working on behavior becomes a way to get to the heart. The two are linked closely together. In order to gain the most from an instruction routine parents must keep an eye on the heart. Character qualities like cooperation and responsibility grow out of a good instruction routine.

Suggested Introduction

Take a moment and write down five things that frustrate you about working with your kids. I'm sure there are a lot of good things happening in your family but if you could just change a few of the dynamics, what would they be? (Give parents a few minutes to write.) How many of you on that list put something like "My kids don't listen." "I have to tell them over and over again." "My kids don't follow instructions." Well, you're in for a

treasure, because in this session you're going to learn some practical things that will help you and your kids in this area.

Suggested Transition

I'm sure you have some thoughts about things you liked or questions that you have in response to this session. As you form into small groups for a discussion time be prepared to share your thoughts and listen to others as you work through the questions provided. Try to identify one new thing that you will try with your kids in the next day or two. Be careful that you don't spend too much time on what your kids do wrong because we haven't yet learned about a good correction routine. That's yet to come. Be sure to save some time to pray for one another too.

Goal of the Discussion

Focus on the importance of teaching cooperation and responsibility to children. Guide the dialogue into practical ways to help children adjust the way they receive instructions. No doubt people will want to know "What do I do if my children don't respond?" The answer to that question is the topic of future weeks, so encourage people by telling them that the correction routine is yet to come.

Suggested Conclusion

Name one part of the Instruction Routine that you would like to try this week. What's one thing that you particularly found helpful in this session? (Allow several people to share with the group.) I encourage you to try something new, and then come back next week prepared to share some of your experiences. Remember that established routines are hard to break. You're trying to start some new ones. You may find that your children welcome the changes. Others may resist. Hang in there with your kids. They need you.



Session 1
Teaching Kids to Listen
and Follow Instructions

Step 1 • For the Parent	Step 1 • For the Child
Get close to the child	Learn to come when called

Principle: Close proximity increases the felt value level of instructions

Step 2 • For the Parent	Step 2 • For the Child
Consider the timing	Always be ready to receive an instruction

Principle: Cooperation is fostered when instructions are given in the context of relationship

Step 3 • For the Parent	Step 3 • For the Child
Give the instruction	The child answers

Principle: Word cues help clarify instructions for children

Step 4 • For the Parent	Step 4 • For the Child
Wait expectantly	Do the job as if on a mission

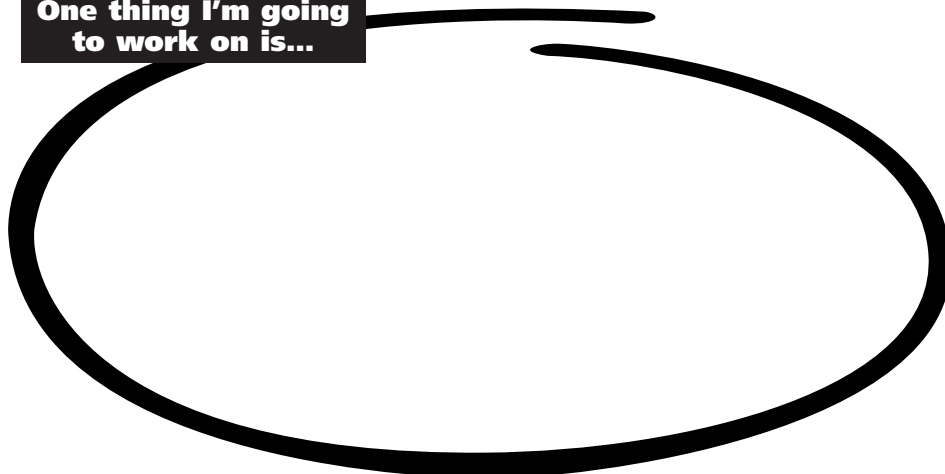
Principle: Responsibility is the uncomfortable feeling of unfinished business

Step 5 • For the Child	Step 5 • For the Parent
Report back	Inspect and Release

Principle: Children learn what you expect by what you inspect

Principle: A release gives children freedom in their hearts

One thing I'm going to work on is...



Session

1

Questions for Group Discussion

- 1 • Why is it important for children to learn cooperation?
- 2 • In Galatians 5:13 the scriptures say, "Serve one another in love." What similarities are there between an attitude of service and an attitude of cooperation?
- 3 • In what ways do you see that your child is responsible already? What is it that motivates your child to be responsible in that area but not in others?
- 4 • Which one of the five skills would you like to work on first with you child?
- 5 • Which of the five skills would you like to see improved in you, as the parent?

Session 2

Reaching Deep into a Child's Heart

Summary of the Video

Children believe things in their hearts that are counter-productive. Thinking errors lead to bad attitudes, rebellion, and other parenting challenges. Learn how to influence what your children believe and gain several practical ways to do the deeper heart work in a child's life. Parents love this session because they know that behavior change is not enough, children need to believe different things in their hearts.



Read Along in the Book, "Parenting is Heart Work"

Chapter 9 introduces the biblical concept of talking to oneself in the heart referencing several Bible stories and scriptures that give greater understanding. Some children are internal processors and it's hard to know what's going on in their hearts sometimes. Other kids are external processors. They say everything that's going on inside and they act out to solve their problems. Both children are wrestling with heart issues. Chapter 11 elaborates on meditation and how to help children develop healthy thought patterns. We usually think of meditation as a spiritual discipline, and certainly it is. But people meditate on anger, fear, worry and all kinds of unproductive things. Four suggestions are given in this chapter to help children change how they meditate.



Suggested Introduction

Children believe the strangest things and those things sometimes create problems for them in life. In fact, kids say things to themselves that talk them into anger, fear, worry or other relational problems. As you watch this session try to see if you can figure out some of the things your children believe. Dr. Turansky and Mrs. Miller will give you practical ways to begin influencing the things your children say in their hearts, before they come out in their behavior.

Suggested Transition

This is one of those sessions that hits close to home, doesn't it? This isn't only a child problem, but we as parents sometimes struggle with issues of the heart. The discussion questions help you consider yourself first and then consider your children so take time and share with each other what's going on in your heart. Your personal examples will help others understand more about this new way of thinking about the way we process life and come to conclusions that affect how we relate to others.



Goal of the Discussion

The ideas presented in this session are often different than what people are used to. In fact, they tend to be a new way to think and relate to children. The discussion time is important because it allows people to explore the teaching and then integrate it into their lives. Some will find this concept a little challenging so allowing dialogue gives others opportunity to illustrate the truths in practical ways helping all group members to understand a little better.



Suggested Conclusion

Remember, take it slow. You might just want to spend some days this week watching and listening to your kids. Let the new material we've learned today sink in for a bit. Hopefully you'll have some interesting interaction with your children this week as you continue to process what you've learned. It will be exciting to come back next time and hear some of the things you've learned. And, if you would like to talk more about getting to know God personally, I'd like to talk to you more about it.





The Heart is...

Children Talk in Their Hearts

What Children Meditate On
Effects How They Live

Children Process Things
in Different Ways

How God Changes a Child's Heart

- Parents
- Scripture
- Prayer

Important Things to Remember

- Focus on the heart, not just behavior
- Track thinking errors
- Be patient

**One thing I'm going
to work on is...**



Session

2

Questions for Group Discussion

- 1 • What's one thing you're trying to work on in your life right now? (diet, exercise, anger management, being assertive, etc) What different things do you need to say internally in order to make that change?

- 2 • What's one thing you're trying to help your child change in life right now? (anger control, helpfulness, following instructions, etc.) What different things does he/she need to say internally in order to make that change?

- 3 • Share a Bible verse that's been helpful to you over the years and explain why. How would you say that verse affected your heart?

- 4 • Is your child an external or internal processor and what are the advantages and disadvantages for your family?

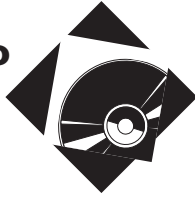
- 5 • What part of the library does your child tend to meditate on? Is that helpful or not helpful and why?

Session 3

Correction Ideas that Touch the Heart

Summary of the Video

The Bible uses the term “repentance” to describe a change of heart. Many children change their behavior but you can tell by looking at them that their hearts are still in the wrong place. This session suggests practical tools for correction that put the responsibility for change on the child instead of on the parent. Use these tools alone or in combination with consequences to bring about lasting change in your child.



Read Along in the Book, “Parenting is Heart Work”

Correction is foundational to any parenting strategy. In fact, God values correction as he works with us. Over and over again, God corrected people in the scriptures. He wanted heart change and he called it repentance. Chapter 14 takes apart the biblical concept of repentance and helps parents understand it in practical ways. You’ll learn some practical tools for helping children change on the inside, not just their behavior. Chapter 15 discusses how a Break can be an excellent parenting tool to touch the heart. In particular, the Break transfers the responsibility for change to the child, a welcome concept in most homes.



Suggested Introduction

Correction is an opportunity to help children change their hearts. That statement is rather foreign to many parents. Parents don’t like correction. They are usually angry when they correct their kids, and they want to get it over with so they can go on with life. This session will give you another perspective on correction and some practical tools for putting it into practice in your family. As you watch the video, be thinking about ways you can help your children but also how you might even change the way you think about the daily correction you must do with your kids.

Suggested Transition

This idea of a Break to help the heart change is an interesting one. I’m sure we can all think of times when we’ve been forced to wait or had to sit for a while in our lives and God used that to do some significant work in our hearts. Your discussion time will focus on how to implement this with your kids.



Goal of the Discussion

The Break idea is often met with resistance by parents as they imagine what will happen when they start to implement it at home. The Break takes time and determination to develop as a routine in family life. The discussion time may reveal concern on the part of parents. Gently encourage them to try it. Use the discussion time to explore the idea of the Break and how parents might try it in their families.



Suggested Conclusion

Next time we’re going to learn more practical correction ideas. In fact, we’re going to look at seven categories of consequences to get kids’ attention and touch their hearts. But before you get to consequences, take some time this week and begin to practice the Break. Plan to come back next time and let us know how it went.





Correction is Part of the Job

A Good Correction Routine Starts with Words

Steps of Repentance

- 1** Settle down
- 2** Admit doing wrong
- 3** Acknowledge a better way
- 4** Commit to do what's right
- 5** Feel sorrow
- 6** Desire what's right

Teach Children to Take a Break

3 Distinctives of a Break

- The child is sent on a mission to change the heart

- The child helps determine the length of time spent in the Break

- The motivation to return is that the child is missing out on the benefits of family life

**The Break
is modeled after
the way God
disciplines his
family, the Church**

Matthew 18:15-17
1 Corinthians 5:1-2
2 Corinthians 2:5-8

**Children Change
Their Hearts**

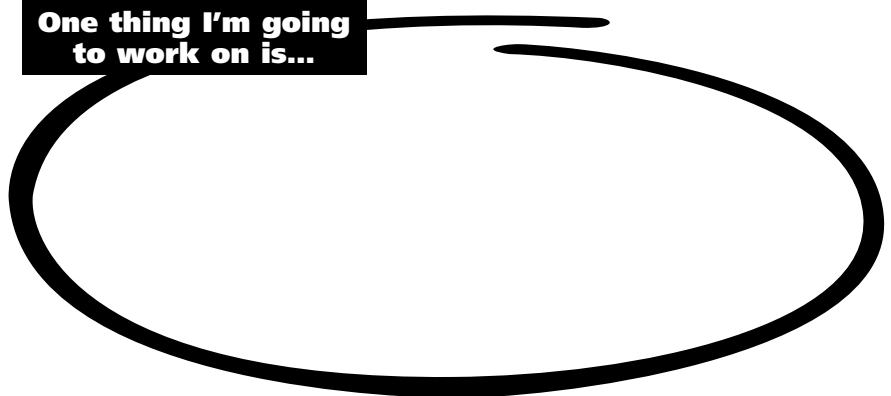
when they become uncomfortable in their present circumstances or they gain a vision for something better.

Applying the Break in Your Family

- The Break is helpful for young children as well as teens
- Learning the Break takes practice
- Even adults need a Break
- Avoid engaging with children who are angry
- Some children need help learning to settle down

Teaching Children to Take a Break Can Be Difficult at Times, But it's Worth it in the End

One thing I'm going to work on is...



Questions for Group Discussion

- 1 • The Bible uses the term “repentance” to refer to a change of heart. Using the ideas from the video and your own thoughts, how might you explain this concept in ways that kids can understand?
- 2 • One of the things that makes correction difficult is that the incidents seem to sneak up on parents and surprise them. What kinds of things can parents do to prepare themselves more so they can approach correction times with more composure and control?
- 3 • What key principles make taking a Break different than Time Out and thus make it attractive for your family?
- 4 • Share a time in your life when you missed out on benefits and it forced you to reconsider your ways and make some changes (ie: being late, irresponsible, or angry)
- 5 • Some children don’t want to address their hearts and either react to the Break or stay there a long time. Yet it’s these children who often need it the most. What might you recommend to a parent to help a child with these struggles?

Session

A Toolbox of Consequences

Summary of the Video

Seven categories of consequences provide tools for parents as they work on the hearts of their kids. Some children have deeply-rooted problems and need a variety of approaches in order to see significant change take place. Included in this session is the one category that many parents overlook. It's the part of the toolbox to use when you've tried everything else and nothing seems to work. Special emphasis on the heart shows parents how to use these tools most effectively.



Read Along in the Book, "Parenting is Heart Work"

Sometimes when people talk about the heart they assume that God only changes hearts directly, but Chapter 10 explores the value of parental teaching in helping children adjust what they believe. Lecturing is different than teaching and expressing your viewpoint is different than touching a child on a heart level. Chapter 13 discusses the value of correction and how and why correction works in anyone's life. Unfortunately children often devalue correction or see it as an enemy. It takes work to correct children, and of course the way it's done can greatly influence the outcome.



Suggested Introduction

Think for a minute about when you were a kid and you did something wrong. What was the favorite consequence of your parents? Did it work? It's interesting that some consequences work better than others. It seems like we as parents are always looking for bigger and better consequences to motivate our kids to change aren't we? This lesson is helpful because we learn about seven categories of consequences we can use as parents.

Suggested Transition

Well that sure gets us thinking. Some of those consequences will take some work to develop. The ideas though give us a great bunch of tools to guide our thinking. As you work in your groups and discuss the questions, take time to explore different ways that could use consequences in your parenting. Share ideas because it may give others the practical ways to start implementing some of these tools.



Goal of the Discussion

As parents discuss various situations and consequences they begin to discover new ways to implement the tools discussed in the video. The sharing time becomes a vehicle of exploring creative alternatives to the ruts parents sometimes get into. As you have opportunity, ask people to offer another solution to that same problem. Parents need to see that several solutions are available for each parenting problem experienced. Sometimes people get side-tracked on the subject of spanking. It elicits strong opinions at times. Be careful that you don't allow your discussion groups to miss valuable opportunities to dialogue about heart issues because of too much dialogue about spanking.



Suggested Conclusion

As you work with your children this week, try to think about alternative ways to address the problems your children face. Remember that many parents use anger as their primary consequence. When you see that happening in you this week, stop and consider a different way to approach that same problem. You might even write down some different things you tried. Plan to come back to the next session and share things that worked with the rest of us.





**Consequences are Tools
to Change the Heart**

Tools in Your Toolbox

Tool 1: Natural Consequences

Tool 2: Logical Consequences

Tool 3: Restricting Freedom

Tool 4: More Parental Control

Tool 5: Spanking

Tool 6: Other Leaders and Authorities

Tool 7: Practice Doing the Right Thing

**One thing I'm going
to work on is...**



Session

4

Questions for Group Discussion

- 1 • What consequence do you typically use the most with your kids? What's another one you'd like to think about or explore a little more?
- 2 • What other authorities exist in your child's life and what could you do to encourage them?
- 3 • What kind of privileges do you typically take away and how might a child earn them back?
- 4 • Creativity is often the key to using consequences wisely. Brainstorm about times you've used a consequence and have seen it work.
- 5 • Share an area in which your child is failing and would benefit from you exerting more parental control by coming along side to help and support.

Session 5

Ending Discipline Times with Impact

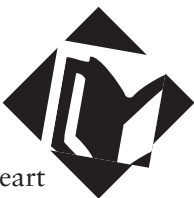
Summary of the Video

Lingering tension after discipline often creates distance between parents and children. This session will show you how to strategically end every discipline time. Children learn to take responsibility for their part of the problem instead of blaming problems on others. Practice this routine and you'll teach your children how to process mistakes both now and for the rest of their lives.



Read Along in the Book, "Parenting is Heart Work"

Chapter 2 continues to define the heart in practical ways. Once we understand how the word "heart" is used in Scripture, we're able to target our discipline in more constructive ways. Chapter 16 gives specific strategies for using a Positive Conclusion and discusses why it works as a heart tool. Confession and humility are key ingredients necessary for addressing offenses or mistakes completely. Not only does the Positive Conclusion help address the subject of repentance in children, but it also forms the basis for a mature apology. Instead of just having kids say "sorry" to one another, children learn how to apologize in a way that addresses the offense and moves on.



Suggested Introduction

In these sessions we're learning how to help children change their hearts. It's in this lesson that we help children process the mistakes and offenses. It's right here that much of the hard work of parenting pays off. Children need to change the way they process life. We're going to learn a tool to help kids in this very area. But it helps parents too know how to end the discipline time. This is the third session on correction dealing with the subject of ending correction times well.

Suggested Transition

Having a tool that helps parents end discipline times well is great. How many times have we disciplined our children and felt that lingering tension or asked ourselves the questions, "Is he learning from this?" The debriefing at the end of correction has a lot of potential for change on a heart level. It breaks down the offense and approaches alternate solutions. As you answer the questions and discuss the video, look for ways to apply the concept of the Positive Conclusion in your family. Discuss some of the benefits and ways it would help you and your children.



Goal of the Discussion

The Positive Conclusion has several parts and requires a different way to end the discipline time. As you lead discussion try to balance the "why" with the "how." Discuss some of the reasons why a Positive Conclusion might work in your family but also talk about specific suggestions that deal with how to make it work in practical ways. You may want to discuss the problem of blaming and how the Positive Conclusion can help children take responsibility for their part of the problem.



Suggested Conclusion

The Positive Conclusion turns discipline times into learning experiences. Children may just go through the motions but even those motions are good practice. Building healthy routines such as this one in family life can equip parents with the tools necessary to make significant changes on a heart level. Look for ways to put this idea into practice this week and come back to the next session with some stories of what happened.



-
- **Statement:** Go ahead and try again.

Benefits of the Positive Conclusion

**One thing I'm going
to work on is...**



Session

5

Questions for Group Discussion

- 1 • What is it about the Positive Conclusion that's most attractive for you and your family?
- 2 • Why do you think children tend to blame problems on others and not take responsibility for themselves?
- 3 • Why is confession important for children to learn? In what ways does it empower change?
- 4 • How are you doing at communicating forgiveness to your children and how might you maximize the "Go ahead and try again" part of the Positive Conclusion?
- 5 • The Positive Conclusion is a helpful way to think about mistakes and offenses even for adults. What part of the Positive Conclusion would help you process your own mistakes or offenses in a better way?

Session 6

Teaching Children to Accept No as an Answer

Summary of the Video

Everyone has to learn to live within limits and it's best when children learn it young. Accepting no as an answer teaches children the valuable heart-quality of contentment. Children have many manipulative techniques to avoid a no answer including, whining, badgering, and arguing. If you see these bad habits in your kids, this session will show you exactly what to do to bring about the change both you and your kids need.



Suggested Transition

You likely saw some things you can relate to in that session, and not just for your kids. We, as parents, sometimes have a hard time accepting no as an answer. As you discuss the things you're learning and thinking about, look for ways to address the heart, not just behavior with children. You must set limits on the behavior and so you'll get some good ideas for that, but you must also address the heart. Please keep that in mind as you answer the questions.



Read Along in the Book, "Parenting is Heart Work"

Chapter 3 explores the will of a child. Some kids have strong wills and others lack motivation. All children fall somewhere on that continuum. One of the ways the will is revealed is when children can't have what they want. In these moments children often challenge their parents and look for ways to get around a no answer. You'll learn how a heart-based approach will help those children. Chapter 7 discusses the heart as the place where emotions reside and give parents ideas for addressing them. When emotions create intensity simple conflict can turn into a war. Be careful as you approach this important area of the heart both in your children and in yourself.



Goal of the Discussion

Demandingness in the heart is revealed through the actions of children. When parents see demandingness they need to do the hard work of setting limits, saying no, and disciplining for inappropriate actions and responses. During the discussion parents will learn some practical ways to set limits on children's demandingness but hopefully they'll also learn how to bring their discipline down to a heart level. Try to guide the discussion to the heart issues whenever possible.



Suggested Introduction

One of the struggles of family life is when kids won't accept no as an answer. Either they keep trying or they become mean and angry, posing a challenge to the sanity of their parents. In this lesson you'll learn why accepting no is so difficult for some children and what challenges in the child's heart must be addressed. It's helpful to know what's going on behind the scenes and then you'll hear some practical suggestions for addressing the symptoms.

Suggested Conclusion

Keep the heart in mind as you work with your kids this week. That doesn't mean that you become lenient. In fact, sometimes firmness is just what your kids need to address some of their own weaknesses in their hearts. Don't be too quick to act though if you think you're going to lose control or overreact to your children. Keep calm, plan your responses, and challenge your children in ways that will help them change their hearts.



Develop a Plan to Teach Contentment

- Look for ways to help decrease emotional investment

- Use a scale of 1-10 to lower intensity

- Teach the difference between a demand, a desire, and a wish

- Encourage children to bring requests in the planning stage

**One thing I'm going
to work on is...**



Session

6

Questions for Group Discussion

- 1 • How does your child typically respond to disappointment? Knowing this, how might you parent differently?
- 2 • When is it appropriate to change your mind and say yes, and when is it most helpful to stick to your no answer?
- 3 • What are some things that your child must grieve over? How successful has he or she been at letting go?
- 4 • When are you most susceptible to “giving in” to your kids even though you know it isn’t best?
- 5 • What will motivate you to hang in there and be firm with a child who is demanding?

Session 7

Attitude: A Window into a Child's Heart

Summary of the Video

You see them. You don't like them. In fact, sometimes they make you angry. Bad attitudes bring a stormy climate into any family. It's much easier to get kids to do the right thing than it is to get them to do it with a good attitude. This session is an essential for any family where bad attitudes exist. You'll learn the three components of an attitude and practical ways to change them. Attitudes are essential because they are windows into a child's heart.

Read Along in the Book, "Parenting is Heart Work"

Chapter 5 addresses the value of emotions. Since emotions are one part of an attitude, it's helpful to understand their purpose and how to respond well emotionally. Many children choose responses based on feelings, turning disappointment, frustration, and anger into resistance, meanness, and aggression. Instead of trying to get rid of emotions, parents learn to sort out the good side of feelings from their negative counterparts. Chapter 12 describes ways to use the scriptures in child training. Since another part of attitudes has to do with thinking errors, continually giving children scriptural guidance allows them to develop healthy paradigms and thinking patterns.

Suggested Introduction

One of the biggest challenges parents face has to do with attitudes. Kids are resistant and it's obviously a pattern that seems predictable. We get frustrated with our kids and then sometimes we don't react in the best way. In this session we're going to learn what makes up an attitude along with some specific ways to change bad attitudes in our children. Be thinking of your family as you listen to this session and imagine some things you might do to address the attitude issues you face.

Suggested Transition

Part of what we have to do as parents is to change our own hearts. We need to have a constructive attitude toward bad attitudes. That means we have to have a prepackaged response to them that will work. So, this is the time to work out some ideas and talk about some new strategies for dealing with the attitudes you see in your kids. As you listen to other people share, see how you might be able to apply their ideas to your family as well.

Goal of the Discussion

Attitude is a tough area of the heart. Sometimes children's attitudes can be pretty stubborn. Parents need help with ideas to change those prepackaged responses. However, a behavior approach is too simple and won't help make the deeper changes necessary. Parents must address the heart. Use the discussion time to draw out the heart issues and be careful to not get stuck on simply changing behavior.

Suggested Conclusion

See what you can do this week in this area of attitude. Start with yourself and look for ways to change your own attitudes. Then take on an attitude you see in your child and try to make some significant changes there as well. Try some different approaches. Remember, attitudes aren't usually changed by just one confrontation. They take time. Use different strategies to touch this area of your child and be ready to share some of the things you tried next week.

Corrective Solutions

- Confront directly
- Make observations
- Consider the timing
- Teach children a better response

As Parents We Need to Look at Our Attitudes Too

One thing I'm going to work on is...



Session

7

Questions for Group Discussion

- 1 • What are the cues that your child has a bad attitude and how do you typically respond to it?
- 2 • Some influences are hard to remove from a child's life. In that case, what kinds of things can you do to counteract the influences that lead to negative attitudes?
- 3 • Which of the proactive solutions would be best for you to focus on with your child in order to do the deeper heart work necessary for real attitude change to take place?
- 4 • Which one of the corrective solutions would be best for you to emphasize?
- 5 • Think of an example of a pre-packaged response you have to something in life. What are some ways you might go about changing that attitude?

Session 8

How to Start Connecting with the Heart

Summary of the Video

Learn what makes a heart hard and ways to begin the softening process. Whether your child is 3 or 18, this session will give you practical ways to connect with your kids on a deeper level. Parenting is a challenge much of the time, but a few things can make all the difference between distance and closeness. Put these principles into practice in your family and your kids will be glad you did.

Read Along in the Book, "Parenting is Heart Work"

Chapter 6 gives several more ideas of ways parents can connect with their children emotionally. Use the ideas to stimulate more practical ways that you can build relationship with your children. You might even begin to make a list of things that work with each child. Chapter 8 teaches parents how to use the Gratefulness Principle and also helps parents communicate with kids, especially when resistance makes talking and listening more difficult. Children need to develop gratefulness in their lives. It's a heart quality and a higher form of motivation than the reward/punishment model children often require.

Suggested Introduction

We've learned a lot about the heart and how to correct and instruct our children in ways that put pressure in the right places. One essential piece is missing from the heart puzzle and that's what we're going to learn about in this session. It has to do with relationship and is an essential piece for a heart-based approach to parenting. In fact, this is the place where many parents need to start.

Suggested Transition

Two different ideas can get us going in discussions now. One has to do with the overindulgence idea and looking for ways to foster gratefulness, and the other has to do with building solid relationships. Be sure you talk about both and share ideas that have encouraged closeness in your family. Each of you likely have different strengths or special ways to celebrate your family. Sharing those will help spark ideas and creativity as all participants look for ways to connect on a deeper level.

Goal of the Discussion

Parents may get sidetracked on overindulgence and how to put limits on ungratefulness they see in their children. Although this may be helpful, don't miss the importance of developing relationship. Come back to the question, "What can you do to open your child's heart?" That discussion will reap the most benefit in family life. Be sure to allow several people to share about ways they're able to connect in that special way with their kids.

Suggested Conclusion

Parenting is a learning process. It's like going back to school all over again. But when we spend time learning new things and honing down our parenting skills then good things happen. Children change and so do we. As you continue to grow in your parenting I hope you'll keep the heart in mind. It's easy to get focused on the behavior in the busyness of our lives. But we need to take time to parent our kids from a heart-based perspective.



**Some Roadblocks
to connecting with
your kids:**

- Tired
- Busy
- Don't know how
- Afraid of rejection
-
-

Relationship Opens a Child's Heart

Connecting Emotionally Takes Work

Ways to Connect with Your Kids

H

E

A

R

T

The Gratefulness Principle

Overindulgence

is giving kids more than their character can withstand.

The Overindulgence Trap

One thing I'm going to work on is...



Session 8

Questions for Group Discussion

- 1 • On a scale of 1-10 how open would you say your child's heart is to you?
- 2 • What are the things that get in the way of you connecting emotionally with your kids? What's something you can do to work around those roadblocks?
- 3 • Name a time recently when you saw openness in your child? What caused it? What did you do or could you have done to encourage connect-edness during that moment?
- 4 • What meaningful ways have you connected with your child?
- 5 • What might you do to encourage gratefulness in your child when you see signs of overindul-gence?