



FAMILY toolbox

WITH

Dr. Scott Turansky

AND

Joanne Miller, RN, BSN

**A Parent Training Program
for Parents of Children 10 and Up**

Leader's Guide

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Video Series

Leader's Guide

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Welcome

Dear Leader,

Thank you for your commitment to strengthening families. Today's culture makes family life tough. We all need God's grace, a lot of prayer, and a commitment to growing individually and together as parents. Without continual work to move the family in the right direction, all kinds of negative patterns can develop.

In this video series you'll meet three families. These families have significant challenges and they all need help. The solutions are big and require more than simple changes on the outside. Each family lacks significant heart qualities that can only develop over time.

Most parents feel uncomfortable with the complexity of the challenges faced in their own homes let alone in these videos, but through the teaching and the discussion, they'll learn how to avoid going down similar paths.

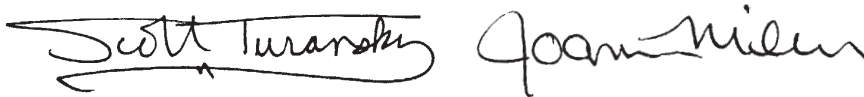
God's Word is powerful and has the ability to change any family. The lessons learned in these studies will equip families with powerful tools for success. The regular meetings with you give families opportunities to discuss real and practical solutions to the challenges they face.

To that end, we offer this video training program. We've taken eight of the top challenges in homes and offered some practical and relevant solutions. We've been working with families of all kinds for many years. We know that the family can have a lot of different forms. We want to care for single parents, blended families, grandparents raising the kids, adoptive homes, as well as traditional families with a dad and a mom living in the home.

We all have one thing in common. We need God's grace and strategies to raise children most effectively. We use the word "parent" generously throughout this program recognizing that the term may actually be referring to a step-parent, grandparent, or other caregiver.

Most importantly, it's all about the heart. If we can capture our children's hearts and help them make changes that go beyond their behavior, they'll develop the skills they need for the rest of their lives.

Sincerely,



Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN
Co-founders of the National Center for Biblical Parenting





How to Use The Family Toolbox

- This curriculum is divided into eight lessons. Each lesson has two videos and a series of discussion topics. One video is a dramatic sketch of a family in action. The other video is a teaching segment to watch after the discussion of the first video. Each of the dramatic sketches illustrate a common challenge in family life, with problems on the part of the parent and the child. After showing the sketch, discuss the problem. Adults can form into groups to answer the questions provided in this manual.
- After a brief discussion of the problem, show the teaching portion of the video. Then give people an opportunity to go back into their discussion groups to interact about the solutions suggested.
- Each lesson is designed to last between 25-45 minutes depending on the time available. If time permits, have a large group conclusion, by asking the question, “What’s something that you’re finding helpful in this lesson today?” Allow short responses or testimonies. You might even ask, “What’s something you might try to work on this week?” These questions provide affirmation of the process and help draw parents toward conclusions about actually using the things they’ve learned and discussed.
- At the start of each lesson you might want to begin with the question, “What did you try that worked out in some positive way?” or, “What do you remember from last time that was helpful?” Those questions and their answers are good for review but they also help parents see the new concepts come to life in other families.
- For the discussion, it’s usually best to divide into groups of five to seven people. That means that some groups will be a bit larger and others a bit smaller, but that size is generally best to allow several people to speak but not make anyone 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 benefits to smaller discussion groups.
- This manual contains reproducible handouts for parents. First, you’ll find discussion questions about the problem. Next, you have discussion questions for parents to use when interacting with the ideas presented in the second video, focusing on solutions.
- Parents need encouragement. The emphasis on discussion in this program allows them to interact together. One of the most common statements from parents is that they appreciate the program because it helps them realize that they’re not the only ones who are challenged with this particular problem. Discussing solutions helps them focus positively toward the future instead of just complaining about their kids.
- We hope you find great encouragement as you help parents grow in their work with their children.



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Lesson 1

Leader Preparation

QUESTION: How can I effectively help my child mature and develop?

ANSWER: Focus on the heart.

It Starts with the Heart

The following comments will help you as the leader. Some of these ideas explain what's happening in this lesson and other comments give you specific suggestions about what you, as the leader, can actually say.

Suggested Introduction to this Lesson

Motivating kids to do what's right is often a challenge. Sometimes it's schoolwork, other times it's chores, and sometimes it's teaching kids to be kind or responsible. Parents may find themselves begging, or yelling, or bribing, or threatening their kids to move forward. Let's look at Jamaal, Jarod, and Grandma, as they face this common problem in family life.

Summary of the Problem as Described in the Dramatic Sketch

Jamaal has a lot of potential to do well at school, but he just isn't motivated to get his work done. His grandma can't believe that he's failing. He did so well last semester when she motivated him with an MP3 player. Now he's not motivated again. She's frustrated. He wants another incentive. Grandma feels like she's playing Let's Make a Deal continually to get her grandson to do anything.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion of the Problem

How many of you find yourselves frustrated sometimes because your kids don't seem to be motivated to do what's right? It's a common problem. Spend some time answering the discussion questions in the box before we move forward to look at solutions.

Summary of the Teaching

When parents only use behavior modification to try to change their kids, they end up with some significant problems. A more effective approach is to focus on the heart. A heart-based parenting strategy provides parents with a whole new bucket of parenting tools.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion After the Teaching

Several ideas were shared in that teaching. I'm sure those ideas are getting your mind moving. Some of you are already thinking of things you're going to do differently. Others may feel a bit confused about how to take those ideas and apply them to your family. Go back into your groups and discuss the questions on your sheet.

Goal of the Discussion

As parents are discussing their kids, it's helpful to focus on ways to bring about positive change instead of just complaining about their family. Brainstorming about specifics is often helpful. By analyzing their own children using the three column chart or by trying to identify a positive quality they'd like to see developed in a child, parents are forced to think in practical terms about specific solutions. Then, going back to the video illustration helps parents brainstorm heart-based solutions, giving them practice at broadening their thinking past simple reward and punishment.

Suggested Conclusion

All children have challenges and it's our job as parents to help kids overcome them. Using rewards and punishment with kids isn't wrong but there are other ideas and strategies that change children on a deeper level. Talking to kids, practicing a heart quality, and affirming them when they make changes are all helpful parts of a plan. It's easier to just take privileges away from kids but it's often more productive to work on the heart. As you work with your kids in the next week, look for some heart-based solutions. We'll plan to share some of your experiences during the next time we get together.

Lesson 1

Notes

QUESTION: How can I effectively help my child mature and develop?

ANSWER: Focus on the heart.

What are some weaknesses of only using Behavior Modification to change children?

Here are a few tools used in a heart-based approach.

- identify the heart quality a child needs to develop
- dialogue about the heart quality at non-discipline times
- use firmness to require a demonstration of the heart quality being worked on
- practice
- give the child a vision for change

A heart-based approach allows parents to be more positive because it focuses on the goal instead of the problem.

After watching the scene of Jamaal, Jarod, and Grandma, answer the following questions:

- What is Jamaal's problem?
- What is the danger of allowing Jamaal to continue in this course of action?
- What suggestions might you give to help Grandma work with these boys?



“Taking privileges away from kids can be helpful to motivate change but if that’s all there is to discipline, it often doesn’t work. Parents need more tools that focus on the heart, an approach that brings lasting change.”

Lesson 1

Discussion Questions

Dr. Turansky and Mrs. Miller offer several suggestions for helping reach the heart of your child. Take some time and work through these questions in your group.

- 1 • What might be some disadvantages of only using behavior modification (reward and punishment) with children without trying to reach them on a heart level?
- 2 • When you work on the heart of a child, what other questions do you think about in order to bring about change?
- 3 • Using the list at the right for ideas, what is one heart quality you'd like to see your child develop?
- 4 • Use the following chart to identify negative behaviors, positive heart qualities that you'd like to see your child develop, and some ideas for bringing about that change.

Negative Behaviors	Positive Heart Quality	Strategy Ideas

- 5 • Many parents spend more time talking about the problem instead of focusing on the solution in a child's life. How is this heart-based approach more helpful for parents and children when it comes to what parents actually say to their kids?
- 6 • Using the ideas in this lesson, what advice would you give to Grandma to help her as she works with Jamaal?

QUESTION: How can I effectively help my child mature and develop?

ANSWER: Focus on the heart.

Responsibility
 Self control
 Kindness
 Patience
 Responsiveness to Authority
 Diligence
 Thoroughness
 Sensitivity
 Compassion
 Respect
 Cooperation
 Integrity
 Humility

“The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”
 — 1 Samuel 16:7

Lesson 2

Leader Preparation

QUESTION: How do I get my kids to listen when I tell them to do something?

ANSWER: Tighten your Action Point to clarify expectations.

Follow Instructions Well

The following comments will help you as the leader. Some of these ideas explain what's happening in this lesson and other comments give you specific suggestions about what you, as the leader, can actually say.

Suggested Introduction to this Lesson

How many of you would say that you get frustrated with your kids sometimes because they don't follow instructions, do an incomplete job, or have bad attitudes in the process? That's what we're going to focus on in this lesson. There are some specific things that we can do with our kids to be most effective in this area of giving instructions. Let's look at this dramatic sketch of Rudy with his mom and see if you can identify what the problem is in their situation.

Summary of the Problem as Described in the Dramatic Sketch

Rudy has a hard time doing anything without hearing it over and over from his mom. Mom is frustrated because her son doesn't listen to her until she raises her voice. Of course, Mom has other things to do in life such as help Marisol fix her broken doll. The situation deteriorates as Mom resorts to yelling at Rudy to get him to put away the laundry.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion of the Problem

It looks like Rudy and his mom have quite a problem. Take a few minutes and discuss the questions on your sheet to see if you can analyze the problem a bit.

Summary of the Teaching

Tightening an Action Point is an important part of a parent's interaction with a child. An Action Point is the point where you stop talking and start acting when giving an instruction. Unfortunately, many parents use anger to communicate their Action Point. Firmness is a better solution than anger, but many parents think firmness and harshness are the same thing. The point of this lesson is to encourage parents to say what they mean and mean what they say as they give instructions to their kids.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion After the Teaching

So, we all have Action Points. Let's take some time and evaluate what an Action Point is and then try to figure out how best to make some changes as we work with our kids.

Goal of the Discussion

As parents work with this issue of their own Action Point, it tends to have an impact on the responsiveness of their kids. Parents will explore the idea of being firm without being harsh, a challenge for most. Then they'll put their ideas into practice by brainstorming solutions for Rudy's mom to counsel her to make some changes.

Suggested Conclusion

Look at the quote at the bottom of the page. Sometimes we feel like we're being held hostage by our children and their negative behavior. That quote helps us realize that we can help our children change. By making changes in the way we work with our kids, we force them to make some changes as well. I want to encourage you to take some time this week to evaluate the way you give instructions and consider if you need to tighten your Action Point, then see what changes take place in your child as well. The next time we get together let's plan to share some of the results.

Lesson 2

Notes

An Action Point is...

QUESTION: How do I get my kids to listen when I tell them to do something?

ANSWER: Tighten your Action Point to clarify expectations.

Anger is dangerous as an Action Point because...

After watching the scene of Rudy and his mom, answer the following questions:

- What is Rudy's problem?
- How might Mom be contributing to the problem?
- What suggestions might you give to help Mom be more effective with her son?

Instead, give a clear instruction and then follow through.

A tight Action Point helps parents because it focuses on a heart-based approach and teaches children responsiveness to authority in practical terms.

Firmness and harshness aren't the same thing.



"Parents often have to change the way they parent before kids change the way they live."

Lesson 2

Discussion Questions

Dr. Turansky and Mrs. Miller offer several suggestions for tightening your Action Point. Take some time and work through these questions in your group.

- 1 • What is an Action Point?

- 2 • Why is it important to tighten your Action Point?

- 3 • What are some common ways that parents make mistakes in this area of Action Point?

- 4 • What might a tight Action Point look like in practical terms when working with a child?

- 5 • Although anger works as an Action Point, what are its disadvantages?

- 6 • What are the advantages of tightening your Action Point?

- 7 • What is the difference between firmness and harshness?

- 8 • What advice would you give to Rudy's mom to help her change the interaction between her and her son?

QUESTION: How do I get my kids to listen when I tell them to do something?

ANSWER: Tighten your Action Point to clarify expectations.

“The anger of man doesn’t accomplish the righteous life that God desires.”
— James 1:20

Lesson 3

Leader Preparation

QUESTION: How can I reduce conflict and still get things done?

ANSWER: Turn problems into tasks instead of escalating them into conflict.

Handle Pressure Without Losing Your Cool

The following comments will help you as the leader. Some of these ideas explain what's happening in this lesson and other comments give you specific suggestions about what you, as the leader, can actually say.

Suggested Introduction to this Lesson

Today we're going to look at conflict and how to reduce it. In particular we'll see how to help make morning times less stressful. We can all use the strategies we learn in this lesson to help our kids make some changes. Let's look at this mom and her three kids as they're just trying to get out of the house.

Summary of the Problem as Described in the Dramatic Sketch

It's morning and Mom is trying to get everyone out of the house to get to school so that she can get to work. Merilee is stressed because she can't find her report. Mark is moving slowly because it's morning and Madison is not helping at all. Mom can't find her keys. All of this sets the stage for an intense beginning to the day.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion of the Problem

Spend a few minutes analyzing this family interaction and answer the questions in the box on your page.

Summary of the Teaching

Mornings can be tough with considerable tension slowing things down and preventing any sense of closeness as the day begins. In this lesson parents learn the difference between tasks, problems, and conflict. Tasks are the normal jobs that need to get done in family life. Problems are obstacles that get in the way. Parents can move problems back down to tasks instead of allowing them to escalate into conflict. Some valuable suggestions help parents understand how to do that.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion After the Teaching

Take some time now and evaluate how you might apply these ideas to your family. Understanding the difference between tasks, problems, and conflict helps reduce some of the tension we experience.

Goal of the Discussion

It's important for parents to realize how they respond to situations can make all the difference between whether tension increases or decreases when challenges arise. The discussion helps parents evaluate their own patterns of handling the challenges they face.

Suggested Conclusion

Look at the quote. It's interesting that we often react poorly when we're surprised. If we spend a bit of time planning ahead and deciding how we'll respond in situations, we can often strengthen our parenting. Look for practical solutions this week in your mornings and in the other surprises you face with your children. We'll report back next time with some success stories you may have experienced.

Lesson 3

Notes

Conflict happens in family life in several areas.

QUESTION: How can I reduce conflict and still get things done?

ANSWER: Turn problems into tasks instead of escalating them into conflict.

It's important to understand the difference between these three challenges:

Tasks –

Problems –

Conflict –

After watching the scene of Mark, Merilee, Madison, and their mom answer the following questions:

- What is the problem in this family dynamic?
- How might Mom be contributing to the problem?
- What changes might Mom make to encourage a better morning routine?

Plan for surprises by adding margin to your life.

Some practical strategies for the morning routine.

- develop a plan for morning
- set checkpoints in the morning to break up the time into easier pieces to manage
- discuss the plan with your children in advance
- be firm with children to keep the plan on track



"If parents have time to think they can often plan the best response to a situation. The problem is that the surprise of the moment catches them off guard, resulting in responses that are counterproductive."

Lesson 3

Discussion Questions

Dr. Turansky and Mrs. Miller offer several suggestions for reducing conflict in family life. Take some time and work through these questions in your group.

- 1 • Why is it helpful to think of challenges in terms of tasks, problems, and conflict?
- 2 • How might parents prepare for the element of surprise in their parenting?
- 3 • What are some practical ways that parents can add margin to their busy schedules?
- 4 • What are some ways to make the morning routine flow more easily?
- 5 • Why is it even important or helpful to have a smoother morning routine?
- 6 • What advice would you give to Mark, Merilee, and Madison's mom to help her approach her morning routine more effectively?

QUESTION: How can I reduce conflict and still get things done?

ANSWER: Turn problems into tasks instead of escalating them into conflict.

“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.”
— 1 Peter 4:12

Lesson 4

Leader Preparation

QUESTION: How can I maximize correction so that my kids change?

ANSWER: Use a Positive Conclusion to process offenses.

The Value of Correction

The following comments will help you as the leader. Some of these ideas explain what's happening in this lesson and other comments give you specific suggestions about what you, as the leader, can actually say.

Suggested Introduction to this Lesson

Correcting children can be a draining experience. How do you know when they've changed? How much punishment is enough? What else is needed to help kids make significant changes when we try to discipline them? We're going to learn some answers to these questions in today's lesson. But first let's look at Grandma, Jarod, Jamaal and the boys' father and see what's going on in their family.

Summary of the Problem as Described in the Dramatic Sketch

Jarod is being disciplined by having to stay in his room, but he's hungry and wants to eat dinner. Grandma is frustrated with Jarod and tries to be firm with the discipline. Jamaal is not helping matters with his intruding comments and sarcastic remarks, and Dad has no time to deal with the situation. The interaction illustrates the need for some kind of plan for ending discipline situations in a constructive way.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion of the Problem

Take some time now and discuss in your groups the questions in the box about the dramatic sketch.

Summary of the Teaching

A Positive Conclusion ends discipline times well. It asks three questions and makes one statement. The first question is "What did you do wrong?" and emphasizes the importance of confession and taking responsibility for your own actions. The second question is "Why was that wrong?" helps children understand heart issues related to the offense. The third question, "What are you going to do differently next time?" helps children and parents develop solutions for the next times of life. And the final statement, "Okay, go ahead and try again" helps children develop confidence that they can do better next time.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion After the Teaching

The Positive Conclusion has several parts to it. Take some time now in your groups to analyze the Positive Conclusion and talk about the benefits of using it.

Goal of the Discussion

Parents love this tool. Helping them go through it one piece at a time will cement the ideas in their heads so that they can use it most effectively. They'll identify specific problems that the Positive Conclusion addresses such as blaming or not taking responsibility for self. Their brainstorming about helping Grandma with Jamaal and Jarod will give them some practical experience with the process.

Suggested Conclusion

Look at the quote about the Positive Conclusion. Most children don't process offenses very well and they need specific help. This Positive Conclusion has the added benefit of teaching children a way of thinking rightly about their offenses and mistakes. Look for ways to practice the Positive Conclusion this week and then next time we get together we'll talk about how it went.

Lesson 4

Notes

Discipline isn't complete until the debriefing takes place.

QUESTION: How can I maximize correction so that my kids change?

ANSWER: Use a Positive Conclusion to process offenses.

After watching the scene of Grandma, Jamaal, and Jarod, answer the following questions:

- What problems do you see?
 - How might Grandma be contributing to the problem?
- What might be a better solution?

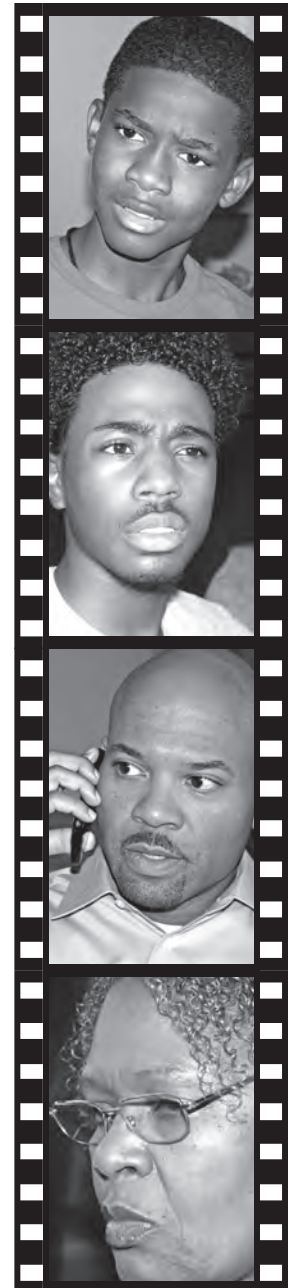
A Positive Conclusion has three questions and one statement.

- What did you do wrong?

- Why was that wrong?

- What are you going to do differently next time?

- Okay, go ahead and try again.



“Ending discipline times well decreases the lingering tension in relationships. It also increases conscience development and teaches children a more effective way to process offenses. This is one of the single most effective correction tools we know.”

Lesson 4

Discussion Questions

Dr. Turansky and Mrs. Miller offer several suggestions for ending discipline times. Take some time and work through these questions in your group.

- 1 • Why is a Positive Conclusion helpful in the discipline process?
- 2 • Why is the first question, “What did you do wrong?” helpful?
- 3 • Why is the second question, “Why was that wrong?” helpful?
- 4 • Why is the third question, “What are you going to do differently next time?” helpful?
- 5 • Why is the final statement, “Okay, go ahead and try again,” helpful?
- 6 • Using the information you learned in this lesson, what advice would you give to Grandma to help her as she works with Jamaal and Jarod?

QUESTION: How can I maximize correction so that my kids change?

ANSWER: Use a Positive Conclusion to process offenses.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”
— 1 John 1:9

Lesson 5

Leader Preparation

QUESTION: What consequences can I use to get my kids to change?

ANSWER: Add non-confrontational correction to your toolbox.

The Importance of Responsibility

The following comments will help you as the leader. Some of these ideas explain what's happening in this lesson and other comments give you specific suggestions about what you, as the leader, can actually say.

Suggested Introduction to this Lesson

Correction is a challenge for most of us as parents. It tends to be an interruption to our day and we often feel like it's hindering forward progress in family life, especially when kids respond poorly. When it comes to correction we need all the tools we can get. Let's first look at Jamaal and his father and see what happens in the real world.

Summary of the Problem as Described in the Dramatic Sketch

Jamaal needs to be disciplined. He continually forgets to take out the garbage. Dad is fed up with it. He wants things to change and now. Typically Dad takes away privileges from Jamaal to motivate him to change. In this case, Dad decides to take Jamaal's cell phone away. Things escalate as Jamaal and Dad argue over how long a cell phone should be taken away because he forgot to take out the trash.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion of the Problem

Take a few minutes and discuss in your groups the questions posed in the box about Jamaal and his father.

Summary of the Teaching

In this lesson parents are introduced to the Break as a correction tool. Often parents use consequences too quickly and too often. The Break can be more effective at reaching the heart of a child. The Break transfers responsibility to the child because the child is sent on a mission to change the heart. The child helps determine the length of time in the Break, further requiring inner change before moving forward. Consequences aren't wrong. They simply have a limited useful life so parents must use them more creatively. One way to make the most of removing privileges as a consequence is to require the child earn the privilege back by demonstrating progress or trying to move in a positive direction.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion After the Teaching

We could spend hours listening to experts talk about correction and finding tools to make it work more effectively. Let's evaluate the Break and look for ways to understand it and apply it in family life.

Goal of the Discussion

Parents often have objections to the Break such as "What if my child won't take a Break?" Or, "What if my child has a temper tantrum in the Break?" Those are good questions because parents are imagining the Break used in their own homes. The discussion will allow parents to brainstorm ideas for applying the Break in practical ways. Once parents have the basic idea of what makes the Break work, they can use it in a number of contexts and places.

Suggested Conclusion

Take a look at the quote. It's interesting to think about correction as valuable. When parents have calm but firm talks with kids in the correction process, then they often end up with some great interaction with our kids. I suppose sometimes we would benefit as parents from taking a *Break* in order to keep ourselves under control in order to approach correction more effectively.

Lesson 5

Notes

Consequences are valuable tools for correction but many parents overuse them.

QUESTION: What consequences can I use to get my kids to change?

ANSWER: Add non-confrontational correction to your toolbox.

A Break is a good tool for correction.

- The child is sent on a mission to change the heart.
- The child helps determine the length of time in the *Break*.
- The *Break* transfers responsibility for change back to the child where it belongs.

When you take away a privilege as a consequence, have the child earn it back.

After watching the scene of Dad and Jamaal, answer the following questions:

- What problems do you see?
- How might Dad be contributing to the problem?
- What suggestions might you offer to Dad to maximize his parenting in this kind of situation?



“Correction is a valuable tool for growth, but many adults and most children don’t recognize its value. Correction teaches children to take responsibility for their mistakes and offenses. The way adults handle correction can help kids change.”

Lesson 5

Discussion Questions

Dr. Turansky and Mrs. Miller offer several practical ideas for maximizing correction. Take some time and work through these questions in your group.

QUESTION: What consequences can I use to get my kids to change?

ANSWER: Add non-confrontational correction to your toolbox.

- 1 • What are the underlying principles that make the *Break* work?
- 2 • Why is it helpful to allow the child to help determine the length of time spent in the *Break*?
- 3 • Sometimes parents imagine challenges with putting a *Break* into practice such as temper tantrums or refusal to go to a *Break*. These are further indications that a *Break* is really necessary. How can parents meet those challenges and still use the *Break* as part of their correction plan?
- 4 • What do you think about the idea that consequences have a limited useful life?
- 5 • Why is it helpful to have children earn privileges back instead of taking away a privilege for a set period of time?
- 6 • What advice might you give to Jamaal's father using some of the ideas from this lesson?

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.”
— Luke 15:20

Lesson 6

Leader Preparation

QUESTION: How can I get my child to accept no as an answer?

ANSWER: Move from the issue to the process.

Accept No as an Answer

The following comments will help you as the leader. Some of these ideas explain what's happening in this lesson and other comments give you specific suggestions about what you, as the leader, can actually say.

Suggested Introduction to this Lesson

An important part of parenting is saying no to kids when they need limits set. Sometimes we say no to things because of safety, not wholesome, or it just doesn't fit into our plans or resources right now. In this lesson we're going to learn some tips on helping children live within limits and we're going to use accepting no as an answer to help make that happen.

Summary of the Problem as Described in the Dramatic Sketch

Madison is eager to go out to be with her friends. Mom is concerned that Madison will make a poor decision and go to an unacceptable movie like she did last time. Mom is setting some tight limits on Madison while Merilee and Mark, her siblings, chirp in with unhelpful comments. In the end, Madison has a difficult time accepting no as an answer and erupts with hurtful words toward her mom.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion of the Problem

Take a few minutes and discuss in your groups the questions posed in the box on the notes page.

Summary of the Teaching

When children receive a no answer they must deal with disappointment. Often that means grieving something they wish they could have and coming to a point of acceptance of the limit placed on them. That's harder for some children than others. Some kids react with arguing, badgering, or whining. They need specific strategies for addressing their disappointment. You'll learn how to limit dialogue when it's in the wrong places, move from the issue to the process, and teach whiners how to be solvers.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion After the Teaching

Let's now take some time and discuss this subject of helping children accept no as an answer. Work in your groups to look for practical applications and strategies that you might use in your own family.

Goal of the Discussion

Parents often get caught up in the dialogue when their children react poorly to a no answer. This lesson's discussion time will help parents identify areas where they need to make some significant changes. They'll not only learn what they need to stop, but they'll also learn new strategies to address the demanding responses they see in their kids.

Suggested Conclusion

Notice the quote. It seems like parents are in a dance with their kids sometimes and they don't know how to get out of it. When your child tries to suck you into the same old negative interaction, refuse to get involved. Instead, try some of these other strategies and teach them to your kids. Learning to live within limits is a life skill, and what a better place to learn it than at home.

Lesson 6

Notes

When parents have to say no to kids, children often respond with symptoms of demandingness.

When a child gets a no answer, disappointment is the result requiring that the child grieve the loss.

Kids need to learn what contentment looks like in daily life.

When children respond poorly to their disappointment it's important for parents to move from the issue to the process.

- Issue

- Process

Dialogue isn't wrong but it can end up in the wrong place.

There are two kinds of people in the world: whiners and solvers.

QUESTION: How can I get my child to accept no as an answer?

ANSWER: Move from the issue to the process.

After watching the scene of Madison, Merilee, Mark, and their mom, answer the following questions:

- What problems do you see?
- How might Mom be contributing to the problem?
- What additional suggestions would you give to Mom in this tough situation?



"It takes two to argue but it only takes one to stop. When parents make changes, kids have to change as well."

Lesson 6

Discussion Questions

Dr. Turansky and Mrs. Miller offer several suggestions for helping children who can't accept no for an answer. Take some time and work through these questions in your group.

- 1 • What underlying weaknesses are revealed when a child can't accept no as an answer?
- 2 • Why is learning to be content within limits important for children now and in the future?
- 3 • What does it mean to move from the issue to the process?
- 4 • Dialogue with children is usually helpful but in what contexts might it contribute to a problem? And why?
- 5 • What suggestion is given for helping children who whine?
- 6 • What advice might you give to Mom as she works with Madison?

QUESTION: How can I get my child to accept no as an answer?

ANSWER: Move from the issue to the process.

“I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.”

— *Philippians 4:12*

Lesson 7

Leader Preparation

QUESTION: How can I break the cycle of anger in our family?

ANSWER: Pull back instead of push forward when things get intense.

Deal with Your Own Anger

The following comments will help you as the leader. Some of these ideas explain what's happening in this lesson and other comments give you specific suggestions about what you, as the leader, can actually say.

Suggested Introduction to this Lesson

Family members are connected emotionally so when kids get angry, we as parents may also feel angry. It's important to have a plan for addressing emotional intensity in family life. Children need training in many areas and emotional management is high on the list. Before we go to some solutions, let's look at a the dramatic sketch and see if we can identify the problem.

Summary of the Problem as Described in the Dramatic Sketch

Dad gets another shift at work and asks Rudy to watch Marisol. Rudy reacts with anger because he doesn't want to be bothered by the task. As Rudy gets angry, Dad increases his intensity. They both escalate into a rage.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion of the Problem

Take a few moments and answer the questions in the box as you try to analyze the problem in this dramatic sketch.

Summary of the Teaching

In order to help children deal with their anger you have to keep the problem the child's problem. The tendency is to blame anger on others. The solution is to develop self-control and help children develop new strategies for addressing their emotional intensity. Kids and parents can measure progress by watching three things decrease: frequency of anger episodes, intensity of anger episodes, and recovery time. Children must learn to pull back instead of push forward. Parents can train their children to do this by using a Break and refusing to join into the intensity. Training children to control anger is tough and requires a firm, calm strategy.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion After the Teaching

Working in groups, answer the questions and look for strategies for addressing anger in family life.

Goal of the Discussion

Parents often have a hard time thinking clearly when it comes to anger. Kids get angry and parents react. As parents discuss the teaching and interact with the questions, they'll be able to see the danger of their own anger and identify solutions that are more helpful. Since children often have a hard time making changes in this area, the subject of hope is important, giving parents new ideas and an understanding of how those ideas can bring about positive change.

Suggested Conclusion

Changing patterns of anger is heart work. It requires calm perseverance and firmness to see constructive results. Take a look at the quote. That's a message that's not just for kids. It applies to adults as well. Look for ways to bring about some change in your children this week. It's not an easy or quick process, but when we get back together next time we'll report how things are going.

Lesson 7

Notes

Some Tips for Addressing Anger in Children

- Keep the problem the child's problem.

- Don't get sucked in.

- Train your child to pull back instead of push forward.

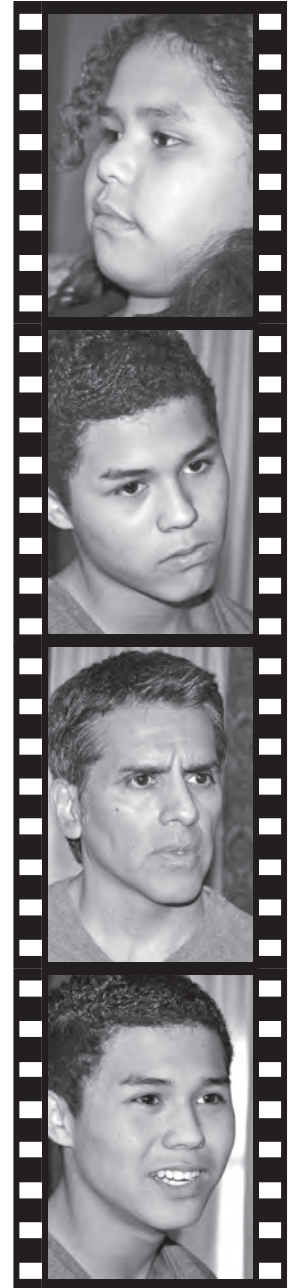
- Help kids see progress (frequency, intensity, and recovery time).

QUESTION: How can I break the cycle of anger in our family?

ANSWER: Pull back instead of push forward when things get intense.

After watching the scene of Dad, Rudy, and Marisol, answer the following questions:

- What problems do you see?
- How might Dad be contributing to the problem?
- What suggestions might you offer to Dad to better handle the situation?



“Anger is good for identifying problems but not good for solving them. It’s not good enough to be right. You also need to be wise.”

Lesson 7

Discussion Questions

Dr. Turansky and Mrs. Miller offer several suggestions for helping children control their anger. Take some time and work through these questions in your group.

QUESTION: How can I break the cycle of anger in our family?

ANSWER: Pull back instead of push forward when things get intense.

- 1 • Why is it important to remain calm even when children get angry?
- 2 • What are some ways that you as a parent can remain calm when your child gets angry?
- 3 • When children are intent on pushing forward using unkind words, or intensity, what can you do to train them to pull back instead?
- 4 • How is it helpful to recognize that some children have an extra scoop of emotion and that emotion also is experienced and demonstrated in more ways than just anger?
- 5 • What advice might you give to Dad as he faces Rudy's anger?

*“A fool gives full vent to his anger,
but a wise man keeps himself
under control.”*
— Proverbs 29:11

Lesson 8

Leader Preparation

QUESTION: Can I get my kids to contribute to our family instead of just draining it?

ANSWER: Teach them to take initiative using the concept of honor.

Consider the Needs of Others

The following comments will help you as the leader. Some of these ideas explain what's happening in this lesson and other comments give you specific suggestions about what you, as the leader, can actually say.

Suggested Introduction to this Lesson

The family is made up of imperfect people and therefore selfishness often creeps into family life from a number of different angles. One of the solutions for addressing selfishness is the concept of honor. Before we get there though, let's look at a problem in this family. See if you can figure out what the problem is and how each person is contributing to that problem.

Summary of the Problem as Described in the Dramatic Sketch

As Mom arrives home with dinner, she's trying to get the table set and food out so that they can eat. It's a busy few minutes but Rudy is just thinking about himself, unwilling to be a part of the interaction. In fact, this is a pattern for Rudy. He tends to be self-focused and seems to drain energy from family life. Dad and Mom are tired of it but Rudy doesn't seem willing to make changes. Thus the standoff continues.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion of the Problem

Take a few minutes in groups and answer the questions in the box provided.

Summary of the Teaching

Children can get self-focused and need practical teaching about how to focus on others. The concept of honor is a great tool to help children treat people as special, do more than what's expected, and have a good attitude. Honor then becomes helpful in sibling conflict, bad attitudes, and when children are thinking more about themselves than about others. The secret ingredients that help a person be successful in life are contained within the concept of honor. Honor is very practical and parents can teach it by requiring children to take initiative, sending them on assignments to add to family life, and challenging selfishness in a proactive way.

Suggested Transition to the Discussion After the Teaching

In groups, consider a bit more about what honor is and how it might be helpful in addressing many of the problems kids face.

Goal of the Discussion

Honor can be a theoretical idea until you develop practical solutions. As parents dialogue together they'll think of positive ways that they can use honor to help children make significant changes in the way they relate in family life. Teaching children to take initiative can be a challenge and kids need practical suggestions. The dialogue will help parents explore honor in practical ways.

Suggested Conclusion

Take a look at the quote. When children and parents embrace this concept of honor, relationships improve. Unfortunately, when dishonor is present, relationships become strained. Look for ways to demonstrate and teach honor in your family and good things will happen.

Lesson 8

Notes

Every form of selfishness has an honor-based solution.

Honor is treating people as special, doing more than what's expected, and having a good attitude.

One way to teach honor is to add it into an instruction requiring the child to do one extra thing.

Honor teaches children to take initiative.

When honor happens, delight is the result.

Use current examples of things you, as a parent, do that are honoring to help illustrate the concept to your kids.

QUESTION: Can I get my kids to contribute to our family instead of just draining it?

ANSWER: Teach them to take initiative using the concept of honor.

After watching the scene of Dad, Mom, Rudy, and Marisol, answer the following questions:

- What problems do you see?
- How might Mom and Dad be contributing to the problem?
- What suggestions might you give to the Dad and Mom in this family?



“Obedience gets the job done. Honor deals with how the job is done. Honor is like oil in the machine, reducing friction and making things go more smoothly.”



Lesson 8

Discussion Questions

Dr. Turansky and Mrs. Miller offer several suggestions for developing honor in your family. Take some time and work through these questions in your group.

- 1 • How is honor helpful for addressing selfishness in a person?

- 2 • What problems in family life are addressed by the part of the honor definition “treating people as special?”

- 3 • What problems in family life are addressed by the part of the honor definition “doing more than what’s expected?”

- 4 • How does teaching honor add energy to family life?

- 5 • What are some problems in family life that might find their solution in honor?

- 6 • How might the concept of honor help Mom and Dad teach Rudy in the dramatic sketch?

QUESTION: Can I get my kids to contribute to our family instead of just draining it?

ANSWER: Teach them to take initiative using the concept of honor.

“Honor one another above yourselves.”
— Romans 12:10

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