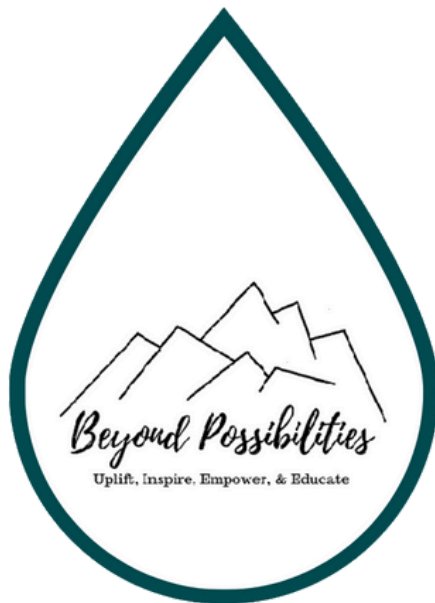


FAMILY COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP

*Putting It All
Together*



INCLUDES 16 PAGES

SECTION ONE



THINK OF A RECENT MOMENT WHEN A CONVERSATION
WITH YOUR CHILD DIDN'T GO AS PLANNED.

WHAT WAS THE SITUATION?

WHAT WAS YOUR TONE AND WORD CHOICE?

WHAT WAS YOUR CHILD'S BODY LANGUAGE TELLING YOU?

WHAT DO YOU WISH YOU WOULD HAVE NOTICED SOONER?

HOW WILL YOU WORK ON CHANGING SIMILAR INTERACTIONS IN THE FUTURE?

ANY ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS AS YOU REFLECT?

SECTION TWO

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Identify what went wrong in the scenario your group was assigned, then use additional scenarios as personal practice.

Tools:

oAwareness: Tone/body language

oWord Choice: Positive reframing/"I-statements"

oTrust: request or boundary



SCENARIO 1: THE MESSY ROOM

YOUR 13-YEAR-OLD'S ROOM LOOKS LIKE A TORNADO HIT IT—AGAIN—RIGHT AFTER YOU ASKED THEM TO CLEAN IT BEFORE DINNER.

TYPICAL RESPONSE:

"I'M SO TIRED OF ASKING YOU TO CLEAN YOUR ROOM! YOU NEVER LISTEN TO ME."

WHAT WENT WRONG? _____

AWARENESS: _____

WORD CHOICE: _____

TRUST: _____

REFRAME: _____

SCENARIO 2: THE IGNORED TEXT



YOUR 20-YEAR-OLD DIDN'T REPLY TO YOUR TEXT FOR HOURS, EVEN THOUGH THEY SAW IT.

TYPICAL RESPONSE:

"WHY DO YOU ALWAYS IGNORE MY MESSAGES? DO YOU EVEN CARE THAT I'M TRYING TO REACH YOU?"

WHAT WENT WRONG? _____

AWARENESS: _____

WORD CHOICE: _____

TRUST: _____

REFRAME: _____

SCENARIO 3: THE MISSED CURFEW

YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD CAME HOME 30 MINUTES AFTER CURFEW WITHOUT CALLING.

TYPICAL RESPONSE:

"YOU'RE COMPLETELY IRRESPONSIBLE! HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU THE RULES?"

WHAT WENT WRONG? _____

AWARENESS: _____

WORD CHOICE: _____

TRUST: _____

REFRAME: _____

SCENARIO 4: THE FORGOTTEN CHORE

YOUR 12-YEAR-OLD FORGOT TO TAKE OUT THE TRASH — AGAIN — AFTER BEING REMINDED SEVERAL TIMES.

TYPICAL RESPONSE:

"I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY TIMES I HAVE TO TELL YOU THE SAME THING! YOU NEVER LISTEN."

WHAT WENT WRONG? _____

AWARENESS: _____

WORD CHOICE: _____

TRUST: _____

REFRAME: _____

SCENARIO 5: THE PUBLIC ARGUMENT

YOUR 16-YEAR-OLD TALKS BACK TO YOU IN FRONT OF THEIR FRIENDS AT A FAMILY EVENT.

TYPICAL RESPONSE:

"DON'T YOU DARE TALK TO ME THAT WAY! YOU'RE BEING DISRESPECTFUL."



WHAT WENT WRONG? _____

AWARENESS: _____

WORD CHOICE: _____

TRUST: _____

REFRAME: _____

SCENARIO 6: THE SILENT TREATMENT

YOUR 18-YEAR-OLD SHUTS DOWN AFTER YOU BRING UP A SENSITIVE TOPIC LIKE GRADES OR RELATIONSHIPS.

TYPICAL RESPONSE:

"FINE! IF YOU WON'T TALK TO ME, THEN DON'T EXPECT ME TO CARE NEXT TIME."

WHAT WENT WRONG? _____

AWARENESS: _____

WORD CHOICE: _____

TRUST: _____

REFRAME: _____

SSCENARIO 7: THE PHONE DISTRACTION

YOUR 14-YEAR-OLD IS ON THEIR PHONE DURING DINNER, IGNORING THE FAMILY CONVERSATION.

TYPICAL RESPONSE:

"PUT THAT PHONE AWAY RIGHT NOW! YOU'RE SO RUDE."

WHAT WENT WRONG? _____

AWARENESS: _____

WORD CHOICE: _____

TRUST: _____

REFRAME: _____

SECTION THREE

HOMework PART ONE

CONTINUE TO JOURNAL TWO OR THREE INTERACTIONS
WITH YOUR CHILDREN.

- WHAT WAS THE SITUATION AND THE INTERACTION?
- WHERE DO YOU NEED IMPROVEMENT?
- WAS IT DIFFERENT FOR DIFFERENT AGES?
- WHAT DID YOU DO WELL?

NOTE PROGRESS AND SIGNS OF GROWTH



Lined writing area with horizontal lines.



A series of horizontal lines for writing, spanning the width of the page.

SECTION FOUR

HOMework PART ONE

CREATE A PERSONALIZED ACTION PLAN FOR TEACHING THESE SKILLS TO CHILDREN.

USING THE WORKBOOKS FOR SUPPORT. DESIGN FAMILY DISCUSSION TO HELP YOUR FAMILY LEARN ABOUT HEALTHY COMMUNICATION.



Lined writing area consisting of 25 horizontal lines.

Putting It All Together: Awareness, Word Choice, and Trust in Family Communication



FAMILY COMMUNICATION IS OFTEN THE HEARTBEAT OF CONNECTION. THE WORDS WE CHOOSE, THE TONE WE USE, AND EVEN THE BODY LANGUAGE WE CONVEY CAN EITHER BUILD BRIDGES OR CREATE DISTANCE WITHIN OUR HOMES. WHILE IT'S EASY TO GET SWEEPED UP IN THE RUSH OF DAILY LIFE, LEARNING TO PAUSE, REFLECT, AND INTENTIONALLY COMMUNICATE CAN TRANSFORM HOW OUR FAMILIES RELATE TO ONE ANOTHER.

OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS, WE'VE EXPLORED THE FOUNDATIONS OF AWARENESS, TRUST, AND WORD CHOICE IN COMMUNICATION. NOW, IT'S TIME TO PUT IT ALL TOGETHER — TO TAKE WHAT WE'VE LEARNED AND USE IT IN REAL MOMENTS WITH THOSE WE LOVE MOST.

AWARENESS: THE POWER OF PAUSING BEFORE WE SPEAK

AWARENESS IS LIKE TURNING ON A LIGHT IN A DARK ROOM. IT HELPS US SEE CLEARLY WHAT'S REALLY HAPPENING — BOTH WITHIN OURSELVES AND IN THE CONVERSATION UNFOLDING BEFORE US. WHEN PARENTS RECOGNIZE THEIR EMOTIONAL STATE BEFORE SPEAKING, RESEARCH SHOWS THEY COMMUNICATE MORE CALMLY, WHICH ENCOURAGES CALMER RESPONSES FROM THEIR CHILDREN AS WELL (ALEJANDRA & KATAOKA, 2017).

BEFORE REACTING TO A SITUATION — LIKE A TEENAGER MISSING CURFEW OR A SPOUSE FORGETTING TO FOLLOW THROUGH — PAUSE AND CHECK IN WITH YOURSELF. WHAT EMOTION IS SURFACING? WHAT NEED MIGHT BE UNDERNEATH THAT EMOTION?

TOOLS LIKE MEL ROBBINS' "5 SECOND RULE" (COUNTING BACKWARD 5-4-3-2-1 BEFORE RESPONDING) CAN INTERRUPT REACTIVE THOUGHT PATTERNS AND HELP YOU RESPOND FROM A PLACE OF CALM INTENTION. THIS PRACTICE OF MINDFUL AWARENESS CREATES SPACE FOR EMPATHY TO GUIDE OUR WORDS RATHER THAN FRUSTRATION.

WORD CHOICE: CREATING OPENNESS THROUGH LANGUAGE



WORDS CARRY ENERGY. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN “WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS LATE?” AND “I’M CONCERNED YOU’RE RUNNING BEHIND — IS THERE SOMETHING YOU NEED HELP WITH?” IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACCUSATION AND UNDERSTANDING.

STUDIES CONSISTENTLY SHOW THAT POSITIVE WORD CHOICE IMPROVES FAMILY CONNECTION AND STRENGTHENS RELATIONSHIPS OVER TIME (FAMILY STRENGTHS: COMMUNICATION, 2020). USING “I-STATEMENTS” IS ONE OF THE SIMPLEST AND MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO DO THIS. INSTEAD OF BLAMING OR LABELING, “I-STATEMENTS” EXPRESS FEELINGS AND NEEDS WITHOUT PLACING THE OTHER PERSON ON THE DEFENSIVE (THE IMPORTANCE OF “I-STATEMENTS IN RELATIONSHIPS,” N.D.).

FOR EXAMPLE:

“I FEEL WORRIED WHEN I DON’T HEAR FROM YOU. CAN WE AGREE THAT YOU’LL TEXT WHEN YOU ARRIVE HOME?”

THAT SMALL SHIFT CREATES COLLABORATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION — AND THE TONE OF THE CONVERSATION SHIFTS FROM TENSION TO TEAMWORK.

TRUST: BUILT IN THE EVERYDAY MOMENTS

TRUST IS NOT BUILT IN GRAND GESTURES — IT’S BUILT IN CONSISTENCY. EVERY SMALL, RESPECTFUL INTERACTION LAYS A FOUNDATION FOR EMOTIONAL SAFETY AND BELONGING. RESEARCH FROM OUYANG AND CHEUNG (2023) FOUND THAT WHEN PARENTS FOSTER TRUST AND MODEL EMOTIONAL REGULATION, YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCE FEWER DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS AND STRONGER FAMILY BONDS.

NONVERBAL CUES LIKE TONE, POSTURE, AND FACIAL EXPRESSIONS OFTEN SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS (WINSBERG, 2022). WHEN WE MODEL OPENNESS, CHILDREN LEARN THAT VULNERABILITY IS SAFE.

THIS KIND OF SAFETY ALLOWS OUR TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS TO DEVELOP INDEPENDENCE WHILE STILL FEELING SUPPORTED — A BALANCE ESSENTIAL FOR HEALTHY FAMILY DYNAMICS (BUSBY & CHIU, 2017).

IT'S EASY TO OVERLOOK THESE SMALL DAILY EXCHANGES, BUT THEY ARE THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF RESILIENT RELATIONSHIPS. AS ONE REVIEW FROM PRECISION FAMILY THERAPY (2025) PUT IT, STRONG COMMUNICATION NURTURES EMPATHY, MUTUAL RESPECT, AND ADAPTABILITY — QUALITIES THAT MAKE FAMILIES THRIVE EVEN THROUGH CHALLENGES.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

IMAGINE THIS SCENARIO: YOUR 17-YEAR-OLD BORROWED THE CAR AND DIDN'T TEXT WHEN THEY GOT HOME. YOUR INSTINCT MIGHT BE TO SAY, "YOU NEVER THINK ABOUT HOW WORRIED I GET!" BUT INSTEAD, YOU PAUSE. YOU TAKE A DEEP BREATH. YOU RECOGNIZE THAT YOUR REACTION COMES FROM FEAR, NOT ANGER.

THEN YOU REFRAME:

"WHEN I DON'T HEAR FROM YOU, I WORRY BECAUSE I CARE ABOUT YOUR SAFETY. HOW CAN WE MAKE A PLAN THAT WORKS FOR BOTH OF US?"

THIS REFRAME INTEGRATES AWARENESS (OF YOUR OWN EMOTIONS), WORD CHOICE (USING "I-STATEMENTS"), AND TRUST (INVITING COLLABORATION). THE RESULT? CONNECTION INSTEAD OF CONFLICT.

GROWTH, NOT PERFECTION

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION IS NOT ABOUT MASTERING PERFECTION — IT'S ABOUT MAKING CONSISTENT, SMALL SHIFTS THAT RIPPLE THROUGH OUR RELATIONSHIPS.



EACH MINDFUL PAUSE, THOUGHTFUL PHRASE, AND INTENTIONAL ACT OF TRUST BRINGS US CLOSER TOGETHER.



AS FOREVER FAMILIES (2020) BEAUTIFULLY EXPLAINS, COMMUNICATION IS BOTH A SKILL AND A REFLECTION OF LOVE — ONE THAT STRENGTHENS EVERY TIME WE CHOOSE UNDERSTANDING OVER REACTION.

SO, TAKE A MOMENT TODAY TO REFLECT:

- HOW CAN YOU PAUSE MORE OFTEN BEFORE RESPONDING?
- WHAT WORDS CAN YOU REFRAME TO EXPRESS CARE INSTEAD OF CRITICISM?
- WHERE MIGHT TRUST NEED A LITTLE REBUILDING — OR ACKNOWLEDGMENT?

AWARENESS OPENS UNDERSTANDING.

WORD CHOICE OPENS DIALOGUE.

TRUST OPENS HEARTS.