

Teens ~ *It's Time to Grow Up*

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RE-GRESS **1** OR PRO-GRESS

The great thing in the world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving.

– OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

You Can't Go Back page 11 ►

Teens recognize possible regressive tendencies and adopt more mature ways to meet needs. Teens differentiate between security blankets and true well-being; between emotional pacifiers and real sustenance.

Whom Do You Trust? page 13 ►

Through a simulated talk show or newspaper interview, teens address past and present trust issues, trustworthiness, and faith in self. Additionally, teens may portray trust via posters, mock videos and commercials, slogans, songs and poems.

INSTANT GRATIFICATION page 15 ►

Teens are encouraged to value future rewards and character development over quick fixes. Realistic situations address impulsivity, aggression, peer pressure, quick money, unethical gains, etc. Teens consider diligence, self-respect, compassion and other attributes.

Then and Now page 17 ►

With a Jeopardy-type game, teens apply some of Erikson's stages of development to their past, present and future. Teens give real life examples related to autonomy, initiative, industry, identity, intimacy, and other concepts.

Crawl or Walk Tall? page 19 ►

Using game format, teens consider whether they crawl or walk tall through life. Passive responses to situations are provided; teens verbalize assertive alternatives. Teens are encouraged to take healthy risks and be authentic. In a team game, teens handle break-ups, loneliness, setbacks and other challenges.

Whine or Affirm? page 21 ►

In a team game, teens change hopeless, helpless self-talk to empowering adult assertions. Teens see a choice: to blame the past, feel doomed, remain a victim, compare self with others, etc.; or to take inventory about self, rise above adversity, celebrate uniqueness, advocate for self, learn to cope and take other positive actions.

You Can't Go Back



- 1. During infancy, all of your needs were probably met. How do you now try to return to an easier way?**

Example: *Expect parents or care-providers to clean my room, cook, pay for my car and gas.*

- 2. What is your current ineffective security blanket?**

Example: *Wearing the latest trends; alcohol and drugs.*

- 3. What is your current real source of security?**

Example: *A sense of self-worth, competence and purpose.*

- 4. What is your current emotional pacifier?**

Example: *A person; unreal because no one person can provide everything; eating to forget troubles.*

- 5. What is your true emotional nourishment?**

Example: *Positive self-talk.*

You Can't Go Back

FOR THE FACILITATOR

I. Purpose

To recognize possible regressive tendencies and consider more effective ways to meet needs.

II. General Comments

Teens want to grow up yet seek some comforts of infancy.

III. Possible Activities

- a. If possible, show a picture of a baby thumb-sucking or ask a volunteer to draw one.
- b. Ask why some babies suck their thumbs; (to self-soothe).
- c. Ask teens in what ways they seek comfort.
- d. Distribute the *You Can't Go Back* handout and allow time for completion.
- e. Encourage teens to share their responses.

IV. Enrichment Activities

Encourage teens to elaborate on their responses and/or to discuss concepts below.

1. Examples of return to an easier way:
 - Whine to get what you want instead of asking politely or working to afford what you want.
 - Expect others to do your homework or projects for you.
 - Expect constant compliments, success in every endeavor, unconditional acceptance.
2. Examples of current ineffective security blankets:
 - Food.
 - Popularity at all costs.
 - Attractiveness, latest fashion clothing and shoes, cars.
 - Superficial friends.
 - Excessive social networking.
3. Examples of current real sources of security:
 - Feelings of self-worth, competence, purpose.
 - Supportive family, true friends.
 - Coping skills to deal with stress and disappointment.
4. Examples of current emotional pacifiers:
 - Electronics, social networks, designer clothes, status symbols, etc., unreal because they are external and temporary.
 - Attention or acceptance for going along with the crowd (acting against your beliefs).
5. Examples of true emotional nourishment:
 - Faith; spiritual strengths.
 - Appreciation of nature, art, music, literature.
 - Participation in nature, (gardening, etc.); creative endeavors.
 - Satisfaction in being your best self.
 - To work for a cause greater than you – charitable deeds, social, political, environmental activism.



Whom Do You Trust?



As an infant you had no choice of care providers. Depending on whether they fed, clothed, and comforted you when you cried, you learned to trust or distrust. You now can choose people you think are trustworthy.

As a child, in what ways did you learn to trust or distrust?

How did your experiences influence your current expectations of people and relationships?

List at least three qualities that make someone trustworthy.

Share circumstances where you might not trust yourself.

In what ways do you absolutely trust yourself?

Whom Do You Trust?

FOR THE FACILITATOR

I. Purpose

To consider past and present issues regarding trust.

II. General Comments

Teens may ask and answer questions in an interview format or write responses privately.

III. Possible Activities

- a. Ask teens to describe their favorite talk shows.
- b. Explain they will be answering questions privately or in an interview format.
- c. These are very delicate questions and if too revealing for a talk show or newspaper article format, the page can be used as a journaling activity.
- d. Remind teens when journaling or sharing aloud to use name codes.

Journaling Format

- Distribute the *Whom Do You Trust?* handout and allow time for completion.
- Allow teens to share their responses within their comfort levels and as appropriate for a group setting. (Remind them to use name codes).

Talk Show Format

- Teens take turns sitting in pairs at the front of the room; one reads the questions and the other answers; then the guest who responded becomes the interviewer.
- Only the first host reads aloud the statement at the top; subsequent interviewers read only the questions.
- Peers in the audience may ask questions or provide feedback.

Newspaper Article Format

- Teens sit in pairs and take turns reading the questions and writing the partner's responses.
- They may re-convene and share their articles aloud with the group.

IV. Enrichment Activities

- a. Encourage teens to brainstorm trustworthy traits; a volunteer lists their ideas on the board. Possibilities include a person who ...
 - Carries out a responsibility.
 - Keeps a promise.
 - Keeps a secret (unless it involves harm to self, others, abuse, suicidal thoughts, etc.).
 - Demonstrates honesty, loyalty, reliability.
 - Acts in private the way he/she would with the world watching.
- b. Encourage teens to address trust issues through activities:
 - Making posters.
 - Composing slogans, poems or song lyrics.
 - Performing mock videos or commercials.
 - Trust walk – blindfold and walk with a sighted partner over a simple, safe obstacle course.