

## **Chapter 3 – PREPARATION**

### **Improving Communication**

**Time: 2 Hours**

#### **What to Expect:**

Improved communication is what just about every parent of a teenager wishes for and this chapter provides hands-on learning opportunities. In order to get the most out of the chapter, it will require that parents be very honest in their own self-evaluation.

#### **Objectives:** Participants will:

- Take a brief look at what good communication looks like in a family setting.
- Learn about communication by highlighting obstacles and examining elements that are inherent in good communication.
- Study several different strategies to enhance communication with their adolescent.
- Examine the recommendations of two experts with regard to setting limits and consequences.

#### **Materials:**

- Please Stop the Rollercoaster!* (PSR)
- Leader's Guide

#### **Preparation:**




- Read PSR, Chapter 3, and complete the exercises; familiarize yourself with the Group Discussion Questions on page 97.
- Read Leader's Guide, Chapter 3.
- Communication is a very important topic, and parents know it. Try and help parents improve their skills by being specific and concrete as you lead the discussions.




## **Chapter 3 – PREPARATION, cont.**




### **Preparation, cont.**

- Try to develop a role play to demonstrate active listening.
- Think of a personal story or experience that provides humor or poignancy that you can share to open the meeting.

### **Notes:**

<h2>Chapter 3</h2> <p>CONDUCTING THE LESSON</p>	<i>Est. Time</i>	<i>Reference</i>
<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p><b>Welcome</b> participants back.</p>	--	
<p><b>Review of Chapter 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Refer</b> participants to “take-aways” from Chapter 2 on page 68.</li> <li>• <b>Ask</b> them to share with the group how they were able to put into action what they learned at the last meeting.</li> </ul>	10 min.	PSR, p. 68
<p> <b>Group Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Explain</b> that we’ve listed several elements (in PSR on pages 76- 78) that make up good family communication: give and take, respect and honesty, trust, and humor. <b>Ask</b> the group what other elements they would add to this list.</p>	10 min.	PSR, pp, 76-78
<p> <b>Group Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review</b> the list of obstacles to communication found on page 79.</li> <li>• <b>Ask</b> participants to share which obstacles impact their communication.</li> <li>• <b>Discuss</b> why <b>praising</b> and <b>diagnosing</b> appear on the list of obstacles.</li> </ul>	10 min.	PSR, p. 79
<p> <b>Group Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Ask</b> participants to share which communication guidelines they identified in the exercise on page 75. [If they did not complete the exercise, ask them to re-examine the obstacles discussed on pages 79 – 81 and write their guidelines now.]</p>	15 min.	PSR, p. 75

Chapter 3, cont.	Est. Time	Reference
 <b>Group Discussion</b> <p><b>Discuss</b> the various techniques presented in PSR on pages 82 – 87. Ask for input as to how each approach can improve communication in a family. <b>Ask</b> participants to identify which approach holds the most promise for them.</p>	10 min.	PSR, pp. 82-87
<p>[Choose <u>one</u> of the following options.]</p>		
 <b>Option 1 - Role Play Exercise</b> <p>[In order to make this learning as concrete as possible, it is helpful to facilitate some role playing, or other hands-on application of the techniques described on pages 82 – 87. Depending on the group dynamic and your facilitation skills, a role play can be very helpful.]</p> <p>If you can, <b>model</b> a role play to demonstrate active listening skills. <b>Review</b> the techniques on page 84, and <b>ask</b> two members of the group to create a role play based on a realistic situation with their teenager. <b>Coach</b> them to improve their active listening skills; <b>ask</b> group participants to come up with additional open-ended questions.</p>	15 min.	PSR, pp. 82-87
 <b>Option 2 – Group Discussion</b> <p><b>Discuss</b> the quote on page 72 from A. Rae Simpson. Try and encourage parents to see how important it is that they take the “emotional high ground.”</p> <p>[To improve communication in their families, it is important for parents to see that they must be willing to change themselves.]</p>	15 min.	PSR, p. 72

Chapter 3, cont.	Est. Time	Reference
 <b>Group Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Refer</b> participants to page 82 and read the teen quote aloud.</li> <li>• <b>Discuss:</b> How can parents approach serious topics without making a “Big Deal” about it?</li> <li>• <b>Develop</b> some strategies for this together.</li> </ul>	5 min.	PSR, p. 82
 <b>Group Discussion</b> <p><b>Discuss</b> the difference between natural consequences and punishment, using the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When might each be an appropriate response for parents?</li> <li>• Does this change depending on the age of the teenager?</li> <li>• Do you and your teen’s other parent agree on issues of discipline? If not, encourage them to engage in an open discussion about the topic <u>before</u> the next meeting.</li> </ul>	15 min.	
 <b>Group Discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discuss</b> the two communication techniques shared on page 96.</li> <li>• <b>Brainstorm</b> as a group to come up with several other good ideas that you can share with one another to improve communication with your teenagers.</li> </ul>	15 min.	PSR, p. 96
<b>Take-aways:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Refer</b> participants to page 98.</li> <li>• <b>Ask</b> them to spend 5 minutes writing about their observations and what they learned based on the reading and discussion today <u>and</u> what they intend to do differently as a result.</li> <li>• <b>Ask</b> them to share their take-aways and plans with the group.</li> </ul>	10 min.	PSR, p. 98

<b>Chapter 3, cont.</b>	<b><i>Est. Time</i></b>	<b><i>Reference</i></b>
<p><b>Wrap Up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Announce</b> the time and place for the next meeting.</li> <li>• <b>Provide</b> a brief preview of Chapter 4</li> <li>• <b>Announce</b> their assignment: Read Chapter 4 and complete the reflective exercises in the chapter.</li> <li>• <b>Thank</b> participants, etc.</li> </ul>	5 min.	