

Session 5

Ending Discipline Times with Impact

Summary of the Video (from the Leaders Guide, page 27)

“Having a tool that helps end discipline times well is great. How many times have we disciplined our children and felt some lingering tension or asked ourselves the question, ‘Is he learning from this?’ The debriefing at the end of correction has a lot of potential for change on a heart level. It helps parents and kids discuss the offense and approach 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.”

Introduction

- *Debriefing after discipline is important for maintaining relationship. If a parent realizes they were harsh, it allows the parent to apologize.
 - *Debriefing helps answer the question, “Are we getting through?”
 - *Without a positive conclusion through debriefing, tension and frustration may linger.
 - *This lesson provides a routine for ending a discipline session.
 - *It is critical to end correction times well.
 - *Without debriefing, parents and kids go their separate ways with anger or guilt. Maybe children are left with thoughts of revenge.
 - *A false idea is that this tension will naturally dissipate. But, walls can be built over time through unresolved tension.
 - *A positive conclusion makes reconciliation possible.
- “In 2nd Samuel chapters 11 and 12, Scripture tells the story of David and Bathsheba. They sinned and their judgment was by death of their baby. But God’s prophet, Nathan, told them the name of their second baby was to be Jedidiah (loved of the Lord). In this way God brought a positive conclusion to their time of correction. God was saying, “Let’s move forward.” We should do the same.

What is a Positive Conclusion Routine?

****Discipline is different from punishment.***

Punishment focuses on the negative, on the past, what child did wrong.

Discipline focuses on the future, on what the child can learn from the experience.

Punishment is often motivated out of anger.

Discipline is often motivated out of love.

Punishment focuses on “justice”, on deserved consequences.

Discipline focuses on learning wisdom, growing mature children, developing heart qualities.

*Use the positive conclusion routine every time.

*Positive Conclusion = Debriefing.

The Positive Conclusion Uses 3 Questions and 1 Statement

(You should always use these exact questions with young children, but you will want to be less rigid in the language you use with older kids.)

Question 1: What did you do wrong?

- *Do not ask this question in a harsh or mean way; ask in a gentle way.
- *This helps the child take personal responsibility.
- *Even if several children are involved, each child should take responsibility for their part.
- *For example, if two children are fighting in another room, the adult tries to judge based on what they think or from facts that are not clear. Instead, have both children take a break. Ask one child the first question. Defer excuses until later (e.g. “We’ll talk about what your brother did wrong later. Now, tell me what you did wrong.”) Pursue the behavior(s). Identify each child’s selfish action. This is teaching your children the skill of confession.
- *Confession is a spiritual skill and the first step toward change.**
- *Confession helps us to change more quickly (first step.)
- *This teaches your kids to admit a wrong, which takes courage. It lays groundwork for strong relationships. Even if a child is only 10% of problem, admitting that much is important.
- *Child may not know (at first); may not want to admit anything. Send them on a break. If they truly don’t know, then you tell them what they did wrong. Then ask them again. If they aren’t willing even after that, use the break. “Blamers” always shift the blame.—this is a real problem.
- *Skit—Chrissie—homework—wants others to do all the work for them.

Question 2: Why was that wrong?

- *Gives parents a chance to teach/explore your family’s values.
- *With young children, identify three basic values or rules, as follows:
- *Obey, show respect, be kind. Almost any offense falls into one of these three.
- *Older children may explore deeper values or issues.
- *In an example: Joanne’s 8 year old; Dave disobeyed her rule, “don’t go down by the water.”
- *Reinforced/Rehearsed boundaries—her first and only step that day.
- *Dave broke rule again—“a bigger problem was obvious.”
- *Discipline time was followed by the three questions. She used the debriefing time to explain the value of trustworthiness, how trust can be broken, how we can’t continue to trust.
- *Serious offense caused pain in mom’s heart. She saw a significant heart-impact on her son. Repetition of the routine may be needed, and this is what training means.

Question 3: What are you going to do differently next time?

- *This question allows the child to imagine a positive alternative, a better response.
- *Discuss the “next times” in life. Prepare for future situations where a child will be tempted.
- *Sometimes in discipline we only deal with our current anger or our hurt feelings. Better to focus on/conclude with a look at the “next times” in life.
- *Children learn by repetition—may take many occasions to change patterns; Don’t get frustrated with this need for repetition.

Statement: Go ahead and try again

- *A statement of affirmation. This frees the child to try again.
- *In John 8:11, Jesus did this when He said to the woman, “Go and sin no more.”

- *Unfortunately, we too often send children out with negative message such as “I can’t believe you messed up again,” “You’ll never change,” or “Are you ever gonna change?”
- *Instead, this statement says, “I believe in you. You have a clean slate.”
- *This is not “going easy” on misbehavior because we dealt with the problem with the first two questions, with a better possibility in the third question, and now we can put that behind us.
- *Sometimes one big crisis (misbehavior/correction) changes a child. Usually, though our child needs many repetitions to learn to confess.
- *Change presentation as children get older.
- *This routine gives kids a pattern for dealing with problems—owning our part of a problem, looking for ways to do it differently and going forward confidently and hopefully.
- *At first, using this routine takes time— as time goes on, we might use a 30 second version with our children who understand the routine.
- *Adults would benefit from this “Three question pattern”—it would reduce our own negative self-talk and replace it with constructive, problem-solving self talk.

Benefits of the Positive Conclusion

- *The Positive Conclusion is the basis for a mature apology. You can help your child learn to present a mature apology by rephrasing the answers to the three questions into a statement of apology, such as:
 “I understand that _____ was wrong because it _____. Next time, if the same situation arises, I plan to _____. So, would you please forgive me?” In the example, Dr. Turansky and the boy practiced this mature apology. When he used the apology with his Mom, she cried, and admitted her own failures. This routine touches hearts.
- *A Mature Apology can be used with other relationships—friends, siblings, workmates.
- *In whatever discipline event you choose, using words, taking a break, or giving consequences, follow up with a positive conclusion: Three questions and one statement.
- *As God forgives us, we need to convey forgiveness to our children, and this routine does that.
- *It takes work, but it has the potential to change hearts.
- *What if you think your children are just going through the motions in this routine? Even then, we are building structures for better responses (Instruction routine, Taking a break, Coming when you are called, etc.) The Positive Conclusion is another such routine.
- *Pray for God to give power to those structures
- *This routine is a tool for children to use even without their parents.