

✘ Positive Peer Influence ✘

YOUNG PERSON'S BEST FRIENDS MODEL RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR.

By Elizabeth Tweeton

Edited by Lyle Griner and Marie Sundet © 2006 EveryDay LLC, Bloomington, MN

Elizabeth, the true Miss Congeniality, comes from a small town in Minnesota and actively engages in the summer-long International Turtle Fests held there; she has only lost once! She is a student at Augsburg College and hopes to one day graduate with a major in Youth and Family Ministry and someday fulfill every Miss America contestant's dream of world peace!

Philippians 2:1-5

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my...



- What are the goals that various voices are telling you to reach for? (Parents, media, church, coach, society, friends, etc?)
- What are some of the goals you seek? How do you choose these goals?
- How do you decide to listen or not listen to various voices around you?
- What are positive ways you have been guided by friends and family?
- You and a couple of friends who go to your church are hanging out at school planning events for the evening. One of your friends is not allowed to leave his/her house because parents are very strict about school night outings. The "leader" of the group is pressuring him/her to sneak out. Your friend is starting to give in, but then asks you what you think... what do you say?
- How do such a situation relate to the activity done earlier?
- How do you live out the golden rule from day to day?
- How does the faith voice guide your goals and decisions?
- What differences could you make if, like Paul says, "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit ... "?
- For what do you want to be remembered?
- What are some ways you are a positive role model for others?
- In what ways can you use this positive influence to better the communities around you?

EXPLORE

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| Matthew 18:4 | Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest... |
| John 16:33 | In the world you face persecution. But take courage... |
| Job 8:7 | ...your beginning was small, your latter days will be very great |
| Psalms 25:9 | He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble... |
| Psalms 147:6 | The Lord lifts up the downtrodden; he casts the wicked to the ground |
| Psalms 122: 8 | For the sake of my relatives and friends I will say, "Peace be within you." |

So What?

Pick one of the following that best describes your reflection on this discussion and complete the sentence with your own thoughts.



- I need...
- I hope...
- I learned...
- I will pray...
- I am still wondering...
- I am feeling...
- I will take action by...

Candle Time

Holding a ball of yarn offer a sentence prayer. Hold the end and toss the ball to someone else in the circle. That person offers a prayer, holds on to the string and tosses the ball to another. Continue until all have participated. Close by thanking God for the connected faith community.



Leader Page

Discussion Goal

Recognize that everything we do influences another person.

Background

When people think of youth and peer pressure often negative images such as drinking, drugs, cliques, sexual activities and even tattoos, or clothing styles come to mind. But peer pressure may also be positive or even neutral. Philippians 2:1-5 encourages positive influences by living a life in Christ, being comforted by God. Paul also tells us that we should “not do anything from selfish ambitions or from a cheap desire to boast, but be humble toward one another, always considering others better than yourselves” (vs.3). It is the golden rule that we have all learned, “do unto others as you would have done to you.”

Inside most want to believe that it is possible to turn the other cheek when someone has hurt us. It is our responsibility, according to the word of God that we need to put other’s interests before our own. Reality is that many, if not most people, watch out for themselves. The purpose of this asset is to help youth recognize that positive peer influence IS possible. Help your group to realize that God is always there with them and is encouraging them to be a positive role model to those around them.

Motivate

Blindfold everyone as they stand in a line. Lead the line to a location away from your meeting space. Leaders stand around the perimeter to prevent participants from falling or tripping. The objective is for each participant to find his or her way to a designated location. The location may be an arbitrary table, set of steps or any other location. Don’t describe the goal. Simply instruct them to search for a goal and once they think they are there to stay. After about 5 minutes signal the leaders to start offering to guide individuals to the designated site. Some will accept and trust the guides while others may not. Leaders should use verbal guidance rather than physical touch.

What did you experience?

What did you feel?

What was frustrating?

How did you decide to trust or not trust the guides?



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