

**BUILDING FAMILY BONDS ACROSS THE GENERATIONS**

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**Resource:**

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## ***Leader Guide Preparation Steps***

### ***BUILDING FAMILY BONDS ACROSS THE GENERATIONS – LEADER GUIDE***

#### ***Lesson objective***

Understanding what we can do on an individual basis in order to bring family peace can be the most important thing you can do in your life. In this lesson participants will learn five simple but powerful things they can do to reduce stress and conflict and bring generations in their family closer.

#### ***Lesson Planning***

- The Leader will need to become familiar with the information in this leader's guide.
- Introduce the lesson by acting out a scene of a family having an argument or another activity that would apply to this lesson.
  - Enlist at least two club members to participate in this activity.
  - Have them choose a topic they feel comfortable acting out.
  - Just before you introduce the lesson have them begin their dialogue.
- Begin the lesson by reading the lesson objective.

#### ***Lesson Handout***

- Distribute the "Building Family Bonds Exercise" activity sheet.
- Go over the two activities to complete to make sure everyone understands the exercise.
- Pass out pencils or pens as needed.
- Allow 5 to 10 minutes for participants to complete the exercise.
- Allow 5-10 minutes for participants to discuss their answers.

## ***Leader Guide Lesson Plan***

### **BUILDING FAMILY BONDS ACROSS THE GENERATIONS**

#### **Introduction:**

Introduce the lesson by acting out a scene of a family having an argument or another activity that would apply to this lesson.

- Enlist at least two club members to participate in this activity.
- Have them choose a topic they feel comfortable acting out.
- Just before you introduce the lesson have them begin their dialogue.

#### **Objective:**

Maybe world peace is a little out of your reach this year, but family peace isn't. Understanding what we can do on an individual basis in order to bring family peace can be the most important thing we can do in our lives. In this lesson we will learn five simple but powerful things that we can do to reduce stress and conflict and bring generations in our families closer.

What is a family? Webster's dictionary defines a family as a group of people united by certain convictions or a common affiliation, a group of persons of common ancestry.

There are also concepts of family that break with tradition within particular societies or those that are transplanted and form a society or a family unit. The word "family" is often used to simply classify groups. Today we have many types of families we have become familiar with such as the extended family, the adopted or blended family. There are small and large families and many families are separated by distances. These are characteristics of families that we will need to consider in order to help us understand what we need to do in order to bond.

Discussion Question: What type of family do you have?

Another aspect of family life we want to look at is what are our family's traditions and habits. What things have we done through the years to establish our family traditions? Perhaps it is a weekly family meal, morning or bedtime routines, weekly, monthly, or holiday gatherings.

Discussion Question: What does your family do on a regular basis to stay connected?

#### ***Five Steps to Reduce Stress:***

1. Listen first
2. Once a week goal
3. Second changes
4. Less TV, more books
5. Give and Take

When we think of our family time together we want to make sure we are enjoying ourselves and not in conflict. Conflict will bring separation and we want to establish a bond across the generations in our families.



### ***Listen First***

Take time to hear what the other person is saying – listening requires that we allow others to have opinions different than our own. Allow those new opinions to be expressed and hold your own advice. Many times a family member may want to share their thoughts or fears without receiving advice. Ask questions that might promote further conversation like, “tell me how you feel about ...” or “How did that make you feel?” These types of questions require more than a “yes” or “no” answer and can lead to a meaningful conversation.



### ***Once a Week goal***

Family time is the key to building and maintaining family bonds. A good way to make sure your family bonds and keeps that bond is to schedule regular time to be together. Families that live close to each other might plan to eat one meal together each week. Grandparents could schedule a date day each week with grandchildren that live within a short drive. This not only establishes a wonderful bond with the grandchildren it provides the parents with some “alone” time. Remember when you had young children and needed a few moments to yourself? In this wonderful world of technology we live in we have the opportunity to make a special phone call each week if distance prohibits face-to-face visits. Another way to communicate with your grandchildren, children, and other relatives is by e-mail, facebook or one of the other social networking avenues.

Discussion Question: Do you have a special once a week idea you would like to share?



### ***Second Chances***

We all need a second chance sometimes. Give family members a second chance. Evaluate your feelings. Are you angry with a family member for something that happened a long time ago? Don't find reasons to justify your anger. Find a bigger reason to let go of a bad experience and put the relationship first.



## ***Less TV, More Books***

Research has shown that Americans watch far too much television. Books are a wonderful way to develop an ongoing conversation with family members. Start your own family book club. Allow each family member the opportunity to choose a book that will be read and discussed in the club. Even the younger children should be allowed to choose the book that everyone will read. Family book clubs are a great way to build children's reading skills and provides an opportunity to bring up many important topics for discussion.



## ***Give and Take***

Relationships involve giving and taking. No matter what the age of a person being able to give and take will greatly determine the extent of family bonding. Grandparents can agree to baby-sit. Parents can take the time to send a thank-you note for this act of giving. Building goodwill between family members sets a positive model for children to follow.

Discussion Question: Do you have an example of how your family gives and takes?

### **Conclusion:**

### ***Benefits of Family Bonds***

When families take the time to establish bonds the entire family unit will benefit.

- Respect - Family members will learn respect, for themselves and for others.
- Identity – Family members will establish a sense of belonging.
- Connection – Family members will develop an emotional and physical connection.
- Security – Family members will develop a feeling of security in the world they live.

Discussion Question: Can you think of other benefits of family bonding?

### **Handout:**

- Pass out the Building Family Bonds Exercise.
- Allow 5-10 minutes for the discussion questions.
- Allow 5 minutes for participants to complete the written portion.
- Ask participants if they would like to share one of their goals they have set in order to build family bonds.

*Building Family Bonds Exercise*

*Evaluate Your Family Building Bonds techniques*

*Ask your members to discuss the following questions:*

*How do you listen to your family members?*

*How can you improve in listening to your family members?*

*Are there any activities you would like to begin in your family in order to build family bonds?*

*Do you need to get a second chance or give a second chance?*

*What are some books you would like your family to read and share?*

*Set Goals for Building Family Bonds*

*List two goals you would set for your family in order to build lasting bonds*

1.

2.

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