



newsletter for nurturing support groups

April, 1986

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 35th issue of **WE**, a newsletter for and about groups of people who get together for the purpose of giving each other personal support. This issue includes:

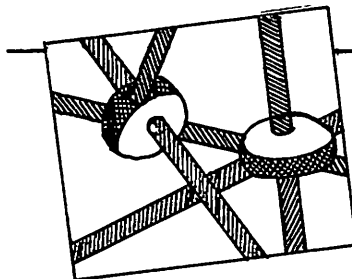
- a suggested format for group meetings
- suggested activities for group meetings, and

This issue focuses on **STRUCTURE**, what it is, what it provides, and how to improve it. The **STRUCTURE CONTINUUM** is a long, in-depth exercise, and the learnings from doing it far exceed the awareness from reading it. Follow the directions carefully and keep it moving. The learnings are well worth the effort.

In the next issue, **WE** will present ideas on a companion piece, the **NURTURE CONTINUUM**.

Jean Illsley Clarke

Jean Illsley Clarke, Editor



STRUCTURE: What It Is and Does

The dictionary says a structure is a building, a construction, a composition, or a form, an orderly arrangement.

The structures we are talking about in this issue of **WE** are not built of wood or concrete, but of experiences, decisions and habits. We are talking not about the buildings in which we live, but the patterns by which we live.

What do our structures do for us? They give us security and freedom to feel safe, to grow and to relax, or they oppress us, depending upon how well we have chosen them.

Think about which of your own structures are helpful to you. Lead and participate in the **STRUCTURE CONTINUUM EXERCISE** to learn more about how to identify which patterns are helpful and which need updating.

How To Lead A Suggestion Circle

The person leading the Circle will:

- Ask people to sit in a circle.
- Ask a member of the group to write down the suggestions for the person asking for help.
- Ask people to respond to the question with their best suggestion and stop them if they ramble.
- Ask people not to comment on each other's responses and will interrupt them if they do.
- Offer people the right to pass without being challenged.

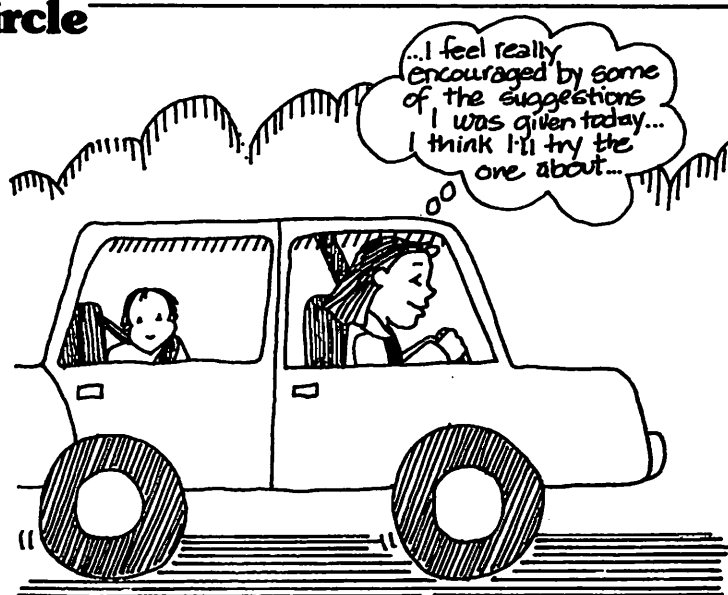
The person asking for a Suggestion Circle will:

- State the problem in a clear, short statement.
- Respond to each member's suggestion with a "thank you."
- Go home and think and act.

The group members will respond with one short, quality answer or pass.

by Harold Nordemann

From *Help for Parents of Children Ages 6 to 12 Years*, Harper and Row.



Suggested Activity
STRUCTURE CONTINUUM
EXERCISE
 by **Jean Illsley Clarke**

To the leader:

This role-play exercise usually takes from one-and-a-half to two hours to complete. I recommend that you do it the first time with friends or colleagues who will support you and help you learn how to run it. Once you become familiar with it, I think that you will find that it flows smoothly and is easy to direct. Of course, the better your own understanding of structure and the broader your knowledge of child development, the more "one line" teaching you can do during the debriefing sessions.

- Be sure the **posters** are easy to read as people refer to them throughout the exercise: 1) Structure points 2) Ground rules 3) Rules
- You may want to add examples to the **hand out** referring to incidents that are common to the group (page 6).
- There are three roles: "Kids", "Adults or Parents or Teachers", and "Observers".

Say:

The **STRUCTURE CONTINUUM EXERCISE** gives us a chance to think about how we provide structure.

Structure is the bones and boundaries of life. Too much and we experience the tyranny of rigidity, too little and we experience the tyranny of neglect. Young children who play in a school yard without a fence around it tend to stay away from the edges of the yard. When there is a fence, they use the whole yard. Structure is the fence around our personal school yard.

One of the jobs of the 6-12 year old is to explore structure—to test it, find out about it, and learn to build it. This is a time when children need to internalize structures that will help them now and later, when they no longer have parents telling them what to do. They need to develop their own structures, that is, their own rules, directions, strengths, boundaries and guidelines.

Children who are younger than six need much of their structure supplied by the adults in their lives. Children who are teenage continue to take more and more responsibility for their own structures, but even adult children need to know where their parents' boundaries are.

Throughout life, all of us need to know:

- What are the rules?
- Which rules apply to me?
- When does this rule apply?
- Is it mine or someone else's?
- What happens if I break it?

This exercise is not about being "good or bad," it is about being "competent or incompetent." It's not what morals and values you hold, but how to implement your morals and values.

We will explore six points on a structure continuum or a line of parenting styles so each of us can think about what structures we offer and what structure children need. (Point to the poster 1.) Read the points.

POSTER 1

6 STRUCTURE POINTS

- ↔ • Rigidity
- ↔ • Criticism
- ♥ • Non-Negotiable Rules
- ♥ • Negotiable Rules
- ↔ • Marshmallowing
- ↔ • Abandonment

Pass out copies of the hand-out sheet, page 6.

Say:

The six points are rigidity, criticism, non-negotiable rules, negotiable rules, marshmallowing, and abandonment. These points are not about the hugs and pats we give. They are about the "how to's" we teach children. Some of us will role-play these structure points, a few of us will role-play children reacting to the structures.

- Please remember the Ground Rules for this exercise and remember that you can choose to pass at any time (Point to poster 2.) and read the rules.

POSTER 2

GROUND RULES

- Everyone Participates
- Right to Pass
- All Beliefs Are Honored
- Mutual Respect
- Confidentiality

- Before we form a structure circle to do the role play, take a moment to focus on a particular child. Since we use structure somewhat differently with very young children, will each of you think about a child you know well who is between three and twenty-two years old? See him in your mind's eye. Think about how he moves, talks, thinks, and feels. What does he like to do? What does he not like? How does he respond to adults? How does he get what he wants?

If you don't know a child well, be sure to stay in the parent ring of the exercise or observe. Do not go into the center of the circle. (Leader, enforce this carefully. If people role-play themselves, they could get into therapy issues.) I will give you a couple of minutes to think about your child.

- For 2 or 3 minutes share with the person next to you what age child you thought of and something about that child.
- Write the age and name of the child on your name tag so we can know what age child you are thinking about.

JANE DOE
Age 7 - Jason

- Everyone stand in a circle. People who want to observe will stand outside of the circle. Will about a fourth of you volunteer to be in the middle of the circle and role-play the kids you thought about? Be the kid, NOT yourself, at that age. You can leave the role-play and become an observer at any time. (Leader, check to see that the ages represented in the middle of the circle cover as wide a range of ages as possible from 3 to 22.)

- Will the rest of you form a circle around them?

1. Point one—Rigidity

- **Kids**—Stand in the center of the circle. Each think of something you want to do. When we start the role-play, ask one of the adults if you can do it. Think about how you feel. Try to get out if you want to—but this is *not* a contest to see if you can get out—it is to see how you feel.
- **Adults**—Lock arms firmly and move in on the kids. Think about what a scary world it is and how important it is for them to follow the rules. Think of accidents, kidnapping, sexual assault, nuclear threat, and how *much* you would like to protect them. Don't worry about what they want. Do not let them out. They could get badly hurt.
- After about one minute, say, "Stop, drop your hands and move back to your places." (If one of the "kids" tries vigorously to get out, stop the role-play immediately and let him out and then start it over again.)
- Interview each of the "kids." Start with the youngest and work up to the oldest. Use this opportunity to give some information about child development by pointing out how their responses relate to developmental tasks.

KIDS

Ask: What did you do?
How did you feel?
Were the grown-ups paying attention to you?
Did they seem to care about your welfare?

- Interview several of the parents. Use this opportunity to make some comments about how parents may use destructive behaviors from good motives. If some adults ignored the directions and responded appropriately to the "kids," remark about what a powerful habit "good parenting" is and that you noticed that.

ADULTS

Ask: How did you feel?
What did you think or notice or wish?
Were you paying attention to the children?

- Ask people to drop any feelings they had during this part to be open to the next.

2. Next do

Point six—Too loose structure or **Neglect**.

- Ask if anyone in the center wants to move to the outer circle or vice versa.
- **Kids**—You are to think of something you want to do. Try to get the adults to let you do that.
- **Adults**—Two or three of you may abandon by leaving the circle and standing away. The rest of you abandon by emotional neglect. You are to stand and talk with each other in twos or threes or read or pretend to talk on the phone and when the kids ask for something, ignore them!
- Watch the action for 2 to 3 minutes. (If some "kids" leave the room, let them go. Usually one or two come back into the circle and wait.)
- Ask the people to reform the circle. Call all the "kids" back into the center of the circle.
- Repeat the interviews from Point one.
- Ask people to drop any feelings they had during this part to be open to the next.

3. Next do

Points two and five—**Criticizing** and **Marshmallowing** simultaneously.

- Ask if anyone in the center wants to move to the outer circle or vice versa.
- Divide the circle in half. On one side the adults will be critical, the other side will marshmallow.
- **Kids**—You are to think of something you want to do and go first to one side of the circle, then the other with the same request.
- **Adults**—On the critical half, call the kids names, criticize what they want; on the marshmallow side the parents will give them what ever they want, maybe say, "This is against our rules, but just this once." Tell them, "Anything you want dear. I don't ever want you to be sad or mad. I want you to have high self esteem." If you need help playing these roles, ask other adults to help you.
- Repeat the interviews, adding the question: How were criticizing and marshmallowing the same or were they different?

Say:

Rigidity, Abandonment, Criticism and Marshmallowing represent irresponsible or inadequate or inappropriate parenting.

- Ask people to drop any feelings they had during this part to be open to the next.

4. Next do

Points three and four on the continuum, **Non-negotiable** and **Negotiable** rules which represent responsible parenting. In this case, when a child makes a request the family either has a rule (a structure) to fit the situation, or they make one (either by parent decree or by some form of family exploration or negotiation). Some of these rules are firm and non-negotiable because of safety, legality, religious or ethical principles, family tradition, or parental personal preference. Some of the rules are negotiable because of the type of rule, the situation or the age of the child.

- Ask if anyone in the center wants to move to the outer circle or vice versa. Keep twice as many people in the circle as there are in the center.
- **Kids**—Think of something you want to do or ask for. Choose a parent and go and ask for it.
- **Adults**—When a kid approaches you with a request, (point to Poster No. 3).

POSTER 3

RULES

1. What is the rule?
2. Negotiable or Non-Negotiable?
3. Negotiate or enforce.
4. Get help.

1. **Assume** the family has a rule about this. Identify the rule to the child.
2. **Decide** if the rule is negotiable or non-negotiable. Tell the child.
3. **Do something**. If it is non-negotiable, **enforce** it. Ask help of other adults if you want to. If it is negotiable, **negotiate**.
4. **Get help** if you want it. If you want to, hold hands firmly with someone to share your strength and caring. Remember, raising kids is far too important a job to do alone.
- After 4 or 5 minutes or when most of the rules have been enforced or negotiated, ask people to stop the action.

- Repeat the interviews. If people did not compare the six points during the interviews, ask:

Which point do you think most destructive for children?
Which point is most helpful?

5. Next, do a debriefing.

- If there were observers, ask them to contribute their observations at this time.
- Thank all of the people who participated in the role plays.
- Derole each of the "kid" participants. Ask each person to shake off the role of 6 year old, 14 year old, etc. and let it drop to the floor. Ask all participants to shake off any bad feelings they had at the rigid, critical, marshmallow or abandon points and let those bad feelings go. Ask everyone to keep any good feelings they had at the non-negotiable or negotiable points and to identify with the behaviors they want to continue. Give a moment or two for people to look around and see each other as competent, caring, growing adults.

After people have taken their seats:

- Ask the group to identify ways that children test rules. They may give answers such as: *Ignoring, Pleasing, Promising, Diddling, Hassling, Trickiness, Doing Things Halfway, Rebelling.*
- Ask each person to tell two positive things he learned from the exercise. Some of the things people have shared are: *I have the power to change. I will learn to negotiate. Negotiating and arguing are not the same. I can do a little bit at a time. I will learn how to negotiate so it doesn't disintegrate into arguing. I will stick around and help enforce or negotiate. I have been laying down the law and then leaving my wife to enforce.*

Ask or hand out copies of these:

Questions for further thought:

- What can I do to improve the good skills I already have?
- If I use behaviors that I want to replace, which one shall I replace first?
- What shall I do instead?
- How many times a week?
- Does providing a structure that includes negotiable and non-negotiable rules encourage children to negotiate rather than to resort to win/lose or right/wrong approaches to their relationships? How?
- How do the learnings from this exercise relate to spouse, adult children, trainees, employees, bosses, colleagues, friends?

6. Close the exercise by:

Running **Suggestion Circles** for any people who want some additional ideas about how to enforce or negotiate a specific rule. (See: How to Run a Suggestion Circle on page 1.)

Information for the leader

These are some responses that are commonly offered during the debriefing sessions.

Rigidity

"Kids" often report feeling scared, distance, oppression, lack of trust and even abandonment. "Parents" often report feeling scared, powerful, powerless, preoccupied with the rules and unaware of the "kids".

Criticism

"Kids" often report feeling angry, squashed, scared, rebellious, rejected, hurt, unimportant. "Parents" often report feeling irritated, angry, disappointed, in control, out of control, tired, impatient.

Non-negotiable Rules

"Kids" often report feeling irritated but safe, powerful, that someone cares for me and will help me. "Parents" often report feeling in charge, safe, powerful, respectful, confident.

Negotiable Rules

"Kids" often report feeling respected, cared for, listened to, loved, powerful, safe, intelligent. "Parents" often report feeling confident, excited, challenged, tired, tested, "that is makes sense."

Marshmallowing

"Kids" often report feeling scared, "like I got by with something," crazy, unloved, unsatisfied, like I need to "take care of the parent." "Parents" often report feeling neglectful, lazy, as if it is "easy," tired, "like a bad mother when the kids do things they shouldn't do."

Abandonment

"Kids" often report feeling rejected, angry, hurt, baffled, upset, unimportant, "like a non-being." "I wanted to shake my mom, I kept asking and touching." "Parents" often report feeling lost because there are no "shoulds" about parenting to count on, angry, wanted to abuse child or run away when she kept nagging. Both report the Rigidity and Abandonment are similar, child feels abandoned or ignored in both.

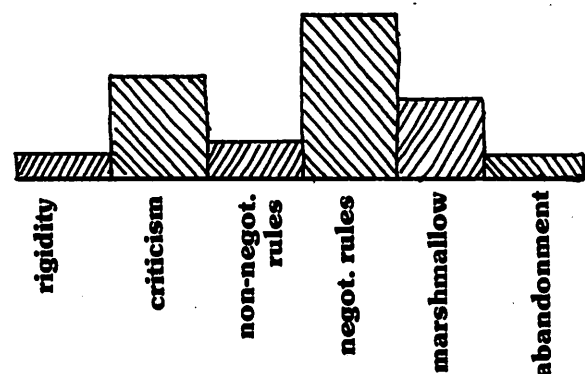
Thanks to the people in Regina and Moose Jaw, Seattle, Yakima and Minneapolis who have tested this exercise and made valuable suggestions. Thanks also to Judith Diero of Bellingham, Washington, for the example of the play ground fence.

Thanks especially to Carol Poole, Yvonne Gustafson, Annette Bodmer and Chris Ternand for helping me see the value of this exercise and challenging me to develop the "structure" of the exercise so people could gain the insights from the role-play without getting into therapy.

Suggested Activity

STRUCTURE BAR GRAPH

After you have done the **Structure Continuum Exercise**, make a bar graph showing your expertise at the various points on the continuum. Be honest. You need not show it to anyone if you don't want to. Fill in the highest bar at the point at which you have the most skill. Fill in the lowest bar at the point at which you have the least skill. Then fill in the others. For example, Mr. X filled in his graph like this:



After you have made your graph, look at it and think about the implications. What do you like? What would you like to change? How can you do that? Mr. X said, "I'm proud of my high bar on negotiating rules. I view myself as a negotiator and I don't admire rigidity. I call that being a dictator. However, when I negotiate with my kids we often end up arguing and then when they are unreasonable I get critical. I don't admire that in myself, but it seems as if I need to draw the line somewhere. Maybe if I set some non-negotiable rules and learn to enforce them, I won't feel like criticizing so often."

STRUCTURING FOR SUCCESS

by Deane Gradous

One of the ways in which parents can help their children become successful is to teach them how to structure. **What is structure? It is all of the ways in which activities are organized.** Structuring for success includes all the big and little things that people do to assure positive outcomes. Children learn this skill from experiencing it, from observation and from direct teaching.

For example, how do children learn to manage money?

- by having some money of their own to spend or save
- by hassling with adults about what is worth buying
- by making purchasing mistakes with five dollars now, rather than \$1000 later
- by earning money

Most lifetime skills are learned in the same way—in small bits. One cannot learn how to earn a living all at once. One can learn how to do many small tasks productively.

Parenting the six- to twelve-year-old child presents a special opportunity for parents to model the ways they build their own structures. Children need to observe how adults organize for a task, learn new skills, stick to a job, plan a picnic, and so on through all the many skills adults use to do things successfully.

During this stage, children are building their own structures: how to get to school on time, do their homework, follow the rules, enjoy learning, and make new friends. They learn by *doing* these things. They need the support of parents and teachers who care enough to show children how to try new experiences and how to do old things more skillfully, who insist that homework be done, and who encourage responsibility by negotiating flexible rules and enforcing those rules that are firm. Parents allow children to experience the natural consequences of their behavior (unless the children will be unsafe) or parents set logical consequences and carry through with them. They start with small penalties and increase them if needed.

The steps for learning structures are important for parents to use and teach to children. These steps are:

- Define the goal.
- Divide the tasks into small pieces that build on each other.
- Practice one piece at a time.
- Visualize knowing how and doing well.
- Decide when the task is finished and when it is done well enough.
- Use mistakes as valuable learning tools for change.
- Reward small as well as large successes.
- Offer and model permission to succeed and to work easily.

Every new skill that children learn helps to raise their self-esteem. Parents facilitate their children's success in school and society by making and enforcing rules and by teaching responsibilities, new learnings, and skill building, by structuring for success. These things are worth doing.

From *Help for Parents of Children Ages 6 to 12 Years*, Harper and Row.

The Importance of Negative Feedback

Children who have never been told "No," or "Don't," or "You didn't do that well enough" will not have the opportunity to learn to recognize the difference between structure and criticism. They may then decide that all negative messages are critical or shameful, keeping themselves from getting valuable knowledge about how to do things better. When we can hear criticism and pick out the kernels of truth, or seek negative as well as positive evaluations and learn what and how to improve to make change, we can be in charge of our own growth. When we limit ourselves to hearing only positive statements about ourselves and our work or behavior, our improvement is left to chance. At best, we might stumble onto new behaviors and have them fortified. At worst we could lose the chance to improve all of the things we are doing poorly.

Opening Activity for Meetings Focusing on Structure

Hand out name tags. Choose a partner. Make a name tag for him and ask him to tell you three rules that he lives by and that are helpful to him.

Introduce your partner and tell the group one of his rules if he is willing for you to share that information.

Closing Activity that Offers Everyone a Positive Personal Message

At the end of the meeting, briefly review the activities of the meeting. Ask several people to share one rule that they have that protects themselves and other people.

Ask for resentments. Listen to resentments; do not defend or explain.

Ask for appreciations.

Summer Structure

Thanks to reader Roxy Chuchna for sharing the structure the Chuchna family developed when young adults came home for the summer.

1. *Dishes*—Switch every third day. Kids will handle this problem themselves.
2. *Picking up*—Everyone picks up after themselves, immediately, not later on.
3. *Ironing*—Everyone does their own.
4. *Lawn maintenance*—Kids will rotate; all three will do; Dad is responsible for lawn.
5. *Chore List*—Posted on Saturday morning; sign up by Saturday noon; completed by following week.
6. *Moped*—Fix by Shelly. Shelly can use it.
7. *Cars*—Mom's car is not to be used or asked for! Dad's, Rick's and Randy's car: do not use without permission from owner. Must return with gas used.
8. *Meals*—Menu is ready on Saturday. Sign up for them. Meal ready by 5:30. All must attend unless working.
9. *Fun*—Spend two weekends together. Take turns in planning fun evenings.
10. *Caring and Support*—We all deal with our own problems, concerns, joys and moods, so let's be aware of each other and care and support.

Chuchna Home
Summer 1985
Albert Lea, MN

STRUCTURE CONTINUUM

**Despair and Failure,
flow from**

**Protection, Safety, Freedom
and Success grow from**

**Failure and Despair
flow from**

Rigidity ↗

Behavior
won't budge

Criticism ↗

Behavior
negates, name
calls,
exaggerates

**Non-negotiable
Rules** ♥

Behavior
enforces

**Negotiable
Rules** ♥

Behavior
negotiates

Marshmallowing ↗

Behavior
neglects

Abandonment ↗

Behavior
doesn't care

Use of the Automobile

Example:
"Don't ask for
the car. I will
tell you if
you need it."

Example:
"You are reck-
less! You will
reck the car
sure."

Example:
"You must observe
the traffic laws and
not have more than
4 other kids in
the car."
(consequences
are known and
carried out)

Example:
"You may not have
the car on the
evenings I go to
work, but we can
talk about options."

Example:
"I know you want
the car. I'll
take the bus."

Example:
"Do as you like." I
am gone, drunk,
strung out, or
ignoring or teasing
instead of
responding.

Use of Alcohol

Example:
"If you ever
touch liquor
you are out
of the family."

Example:
"You are always
drunk—just like
your uncle!
You lush!"

Example:
"You may not drink
until you reach
legal age."
(consequences are
known and
carried out.)

Example:
"You may not run
with a crowd
that uses. If
you need to be
with users,
we'll talk about it."

Example:
"What a tough
experience—
you need a
drink!"

Example:
"It's your life!" I am
gone, drunk,
strung out, or
ignoring instead of
responding.

Message:
Don't be.

Message:
Don't be
competent,
successful.
Here's how
to fail.

Message:
Your welfare and
safety are
important.
Parent or other
authority figure
in charge.

Message:
We
can think and
negotiate.
Your needs are
important and
my needs are
important.

Message:
Don't be competent,
successful; I
expect you to fail.

Message:
Don't be.

Structuring for Responsibility and Independence of Adolescents

by Gail Nordeman

The basis of independence and responsibility is adequate **internal structure**. All the ways people arrange and organize their thinking, feeling, and behavioral responses make up this structure. Pre-teens develop their structure by gathering information, developing skills, and forming attitudes and beliefs about themselves, others, and the world. Some of these attitudes, conclusions, and beliefs were formed when the children were too young to fully understand what they were choosing.

In adolescence, children are faced with a variety of decisions, and are offered many opportunities to update those early attitudes, conclusions, and beliefs in order to support their growing maturity. This process often creates both internal and external conflict. One of the ways parents help their teens become responsible and independent is by encouraging them to amend and/or update earlier structures.

Responsibility is a learned skill. You do not learn to be responsible and independent all at once; rather you learn to take over and accomplish the tasks of self-care gradually by practicing many skills and by learning through failures and successes. Parents need to encourage teens to make their own choices in safe areas. There are many nonharmful areas—such as dress, hairstyle, music—in which teens can develop their separate identity. If parents attempt to control their teens' behavior in all areas (even those that are safe but not necessarily comfortable for the parents) then teens may resort to more serious activities such as drugs and inappropriate sexual activity to establish themselves as separate from their parents.

Parents who listen to the thoughts, content, and the emotional level of their adolescents' communication in nonjudgmental ways challenge them to think further, provide a structure in which young people can update immature beliefs and form new values that support them in getting their needs met.

Since adolescents, because of lack of experience, are not yet proficient in judgment, parents need to continue to set healthy limits in areas that are potentially dangerous. While teens may voice loud objections, they still need that protection. Reasonable limits provide teens with a sense of security and assurance that their parents will continue to love and protect them while they practice different ways of being independent.

Teens need to learn to make responsible moral decisions about the expression of their maturing sexuality. Parents who develop competency and confidence in discussing sensitive and potentially embarrassing questions will invite their teens to discuss sexual issues openly. While parents can't make decisions for teens, they can challenge sex role stereotypes and share their thoughts, feelings, and values with their teens. By doing so, parents can encourage teens to think through their own values and make appropriate decisions for their age. Teens are capable of solving problems, becoming separate and independent, and acting responsibly. Opportunities to search out solutions to problems in a supportive, caring, and trusting environment help teens emerge as independent and responsible adults.

Remember, there are many 'right' ways to parent teenagers. Keeping in mind that each family is different and each adolescent is unique, you can use the following guidelines, as well as those already mentioned, to create the type of environment that fosters responsibility and independence.

- Visualize your teen as competent and lovable.
- Challenge through direct communication any beliefs and attitudes your teenager holds that you believe are destructive.

- Recognize, praise, and affirm all positive behaviors and attitudes. Continue to give unconditional love, and support the development of values and morals in all areas.
- Praise what your teen does well, while holding him accountable for what he does poorly. Allow him to experience the consequences, negative or positive, of his behavior.
- Give permission to and expect your teen to identify and reject destructive messages that invite diminished self-esteem and/or do not help her to be a responsible person.

Helping adolescents learn structures for independence and responsibility is a very important gift that parents can give their children. When it seems to parents that they are putting more energy into the parent-teen relationship than the kids are, that is probably true. Think back to your own teenage years and recall the most important thing about any year of your adolescence. Chances are, it was not "getting along well with my parents." The children are doing their job, which is to separate. You do yours, which is to continue to provide love, support, and a flexible structure as you separate from them.

• • • •

From *Help! for Parents of Teenagers*, to be published in Spring 1986, Harper and Row.

Needs and Values of Teenagers



There is a widely held attitude that "Adults can't tell teenagers anything; they only respond to peer pressure." On the basis of this assumption many adults stop offering structure to adolescents. Consider two sources of information that refute that assumption.

An eight-year Columbia University study reports that the role of adults and communities in shaping values and social behavior of teenagers has been underestimated. Often more consistency exists between the attitudes of parents and their teenage children than between those of teenagers and their peers. Although adolescents frequently question and challenge adult values, researchers found that most of the 300 teenagers in the sample group were seeking consistent rules in families, schools and communities. "In fact, teenagers often are desperately seeking those rules," said Francis A.J. Ianni, director of the study.

At a recent "Developmental Minithon," a form of role-play therapy for people who want to resolve unfinished issues from a specific developmental stage, five people met to set contracts for the kind of "new parenting" they wanted and to role-play getting it. In this case, the five men and women all wanted more attention, advice, support and direction on how to negotiate teenage years and how to choose careers. After the role play each said something like, "This was wonderful. The parents really listened to me and paid attention to me and told me what they thought."

If you have been assuming that your teenager isn't listening to you, think again. They may not act as if they appreciate your counsel while they set their own course, but they need it. So, listen, suggest, negotiate, be there.

A copy of the study *Home, School and Community in Adolescent Education* is available for \$5 from the E.R.I.C. Clearinghouse on Urban Education, Box 40, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027.

Facilitator Training Workshops

June 23-28, 1986
Minneapolis, MN

July 21-25, 1986
Cincinnati, OH

A week-long workshop for people who want to . . .

- Facilitate the **Self-Esteem: A Family Affair** parenting model, or
- Improve group leadership skills for working with growth, education, or support groups
- Do advanced training in Transactional Analysis in Education.

Led by Jean Illsley Clarke or Gail Nordeman.
Write to **WE** for details.

Suggested Format for Group Meetings

Place _____

Date _____

Time _____

Person in Charge _____

Program:

- Opening activity that offers everyone a positive personal message
- Ground rules
- Celebrating wins and sharing problems
- Asking for support
- Practice skills, new learnings, play
- Suggestion circle
- Plan the next meeting
- Resentments and Appreciations
- Closing activity that offers everyone a positive personal message

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- Suggested activities
- Thoughts on theory and purpose of support groups
- News from other support groups

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