

MENTAL WELL-BEING

LESSON EIGHTEEN

Follow up *(As a family discuss the assignment for the lesson Physical Well-being.)*

1. What improvements have we made in our eating and exercising habits?
2. Did we make a plan of how we'll improve our physical well-being? If not, let's stop and decide on some ways we can do this. *(Ideas are in the Physical Well-being Lesson.)*
If we have a plan for improvement, what are we doing to follow it?

Concept

A person with good mental well-being has an optimistic outlook on life, enjoys learning, and is interested in improving his mind. He wants to know about many subjects, and he welcomes new information that will help him understand himself, other people, and the world.

One ideal way to improve our minds is to read. Through books we are taught important lessons from history, we can visit any place in the world, and become experts on countless subjects.

One good place to learn is at the dinner table. When families are all together they can talk about what they learned that day. Parents can tell about interesting things that happened at work, or discuss local and national news. Children can share the events of their day at school and play.

Instead of watching television, families can choose to enjoy activities that will improve their lives and strengthen their relationships. There is a list, "Things To Do Instead Of Watching TV," included in this lesson.

The well-known artist known as Whistler had ideas about how we can enjoy mental well-being. Whistler said, "Hang on the walls of your mind the memory of your successes. Take counsel of your strength, not your weakness. Think of the good jobs you have done. Think of the times when you rose above your average level of performance and carried out an idea or a dream or a desire for which you had deeply longed. Hang these pictures on the walls of your mind and look at them as you travel the roadway of life."

We will be contributing to our mental well-being when we think good thoughts about ourselves, our circumstances, our family, our neighbors and all we meet. Happiness is not a destination, it is a state of mind. President Abraham Lincoln said, "Most folks are about as happy as

they make up their minds to be.”

Family Survey Review

Statement #18. **We enjoy learning in our family.**

- What are some of the ways people learn that our family would enjoy?
- How do you feel about sharing one thing you learned each day at the dinner table?

Story

A man was complaining to a friend about his trials and difficulties. After a while the complaining became too much for the friend. “I see you have been living on Grumbling Street. I lived there myself for some time and never enjoyed good health. The air was bad, the house bad, the water bad; the birds never came and sang in the streets, and I was quite gloomy and sad. But I moved. I found myself a house on Thanksgiving Street and ever since, I have had good health, and so has my family. The air is pure, the water pure, the house good. The sun shines on it all day, and I am as happy as I can be. Now I recommend that you move, too. There are plenty of houses available on Thanksgiving Street and I’m sure you’d find yourself to be a new man. I would be glad to have you as a neighbor!”

Discussion

1. What does it mean to live on Grumbling Street?
2. Has our family ever lived on Grumbling Street? When?
3. What does it mean to live on Thanksgiving Street? Shall we move there? When?

Activity

For the activity, parents are to lead the following discussion:

Often television programs teach children things they shouldn’t learn. Parents wouldn’t think of letting someone come into their home and teach children to be disrespectful to adults, exhibit low moral values, and enjoy violence. Yet that is what’s happening when children are allowed to watch excessive, unmonitored TV. Educational and uplifting programs are available, and families can share special times watching together. Television can be used as a tool for learning good things. However, families need to have a plan for television watching.

Let’s talk about our family’s habits of television viewing. Do we have a problem? How do we all feel about the number of hours spent watching TV in our home? Below is a list of things to

do instead of watching TV. If our family has a problem with too much television viewing, let's decide on some limits. Then let's choose activities from the list below to do instead of watching TV. Let's schedule the activities and do them.

Breaking bad habits is difficult, but not impossible. It will bring rewards of closer family relationships and increased mental well-being.

Look at the list below and participate in some activities together.

Things To Do Instead Of Watching TV

1. Read.
2. Do a kind deed for someone.
3. Exercise.
4. Help with the housework or the yard work.
5. Work on a hobby or begin a new hobby.
6. Visit someone who is sick or shut in.
7. Do your school work.
8. Practice a musical instrument.
9. Write a letter.
10. Play a sport.
11. Invite a friend to visit.
12. Finish an unfinished project.
13. Cook.
14. Play a board or card game.
15. Listen to music.
16. Go to a movie, play or concert.
17. Put together a puzzle.
18. Go on a hike or picnic.

Assignment

The assignment for this lesson is to do one of the things listed below to increase your mental well-being:

1. Take a trip to the library.
2. Enjoy an evening reading as a family with the television off.
3. Assign family members to bring one item of educational interest or information about a current event to discuss at the dinner table.
4. Give a lesson which teaches a moral value.
5. As a family discuss what to do in case of a fire or other emergency.

If time and interest allow, do the activity on the following page: Family Yearbook and/or



Dr. Paula Fellingham's

Solutions
FOR FAMILIES

Part of the **TOTAL LIFE EXCELLENCE** program

read the Additional Solution For Success: Family Esteem.

ACTIVITY

FAMILY YEARBOOK

Now and then it's enjoyable to reflect on important, often life-changing family events of the past. This activity can help you look back and recall past times, discuss the important things that have happened in your family, and renew a long-term perspective and appreciation for one another.

Activity

1. At the end of the year, gather together all the photos taken of your family that year.
2. Choose the photos that best show favorite past events.
3. Decide how to organize the photos. You may want to use them
 - in the order they were taken.
 - in sections for each member.
 - in sections according to themes (trips, school, etc.).
4. Secure the pictures and write captions.
5. Include other mementos such as postcards, invitations, or announcements if you like.
6. Have pages at the back of your yearbook for everyone to write their name and comments about the year.

ADDITIONAL SOLUTION FOR SUCCESS

FAMILY ESTEEM

Just as individuals need to feel good about themselves in order to be successful, families need to have a feeling of worth and value about themselves as a group. They need to be able to look to the future with confidence that they can be successful.

Families can learn to believe in themselves and their ability to solve problems and be happy. This belief begins with an understanding that each family is unique with their own special talents and strengths.

In all the world there isn't another family exactly like yours. There isn't any other family made up of exactly the same people, with the same combination of talents, skills, challenges, etc. No other family has had just the same experiences, felt the same joys, or experienced quite the same disappointments. Your family has its own terms for certain things, private nicknames for each other, and your own stories and jokes. Of all the families that have ever been formed, or will be formed in the future, there has never been, or ever will be, another one exactly like yours.

In addition to appreciating their worth together, strong families value each individual family member. They know that each person contributes something to their family that no one else can. The family's belief in each one of its members creates a great sense of self-worth and security for each individual. In turn, the self-esteem of each individual contributes to the whole family's sense of worth.

For those who value their family, how they see themselves is more important than what others think of them. Believing in and accepting who we are is one of the most difficult challenges in life. We are constantly bombarded with messages like "What makes you think you can do it?" "Kids your size can't be on the team." "You're too fat to be a cheerleader." "Why doesn't your family get a decent car?" We must have a personal awareness of our worth regardless of how other people judge us. If we can believe in ourselves, the self-defeating messages from all sides of who we ought to be, or what we ought to be like, cannot damage our sense of worth.

When the great scientist Albert Einstein was ten years old, he was told by his school teacher, "You will never amount to much." Einstein later wrote, "Try not to become a man of 'success' but rather a man of value." He was able to be himself, ignoring the false opinion of others. Like many other successful people, Einstein believed that no one can make you feel inferior without your consent. In other words, what other people think of us isn't important unless we let it be. When a

Solutions FOR FAMILIES

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family is determined to believe in themselves, it is easier for each family member to believe in himself, too.

The poet, e. e. cummings, recognized the same challenges when he wrote, “To be nobody but yourself, in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else, is to fight the hardest battle there is. Never stop fighting.”

In reality, to base our sense of worth on what others think of us is to be more responsible to them than we are to ourselves. Let’s not allow our family’s esteem be determined by outside influences.