

Tips for Teens

(Helpful reminders for Adults as well)

- **Be kind in words and deeds.** Watch how you speak to people and how you treat them. Be kind and speak to others respectfully, or do not say anything at all. Demonstrate love and kindness in everything that you do.
- **Be grateful.** Express gratitude to those who have done things for you, especially parents / guardians, teachers, and so on. It would make them feel good if you expressed how much you appreciate everything that they do for you. Demonstrate your gratitude by doing nice things for them.
- **Treat others the way you would want to be treated.** Watch how you speak to others and how you treat them. You should NEVER say or do anything to others if you would not like them saying and doing such things to you.
- **Try to see things through other people's eyes.** Whenever you are interacting with others, try to understand how they feel and try to see what their perspective may be. It is not a battle of who is "right" and who is "wrong". You know how you feel about things, but you should also try harder to know how other people feel about things. Working together in cooperation will achieve so much more for everyone, instead of only thinking about yourself and wanting things to go your way.
- **Give respect first; do not expect it first.** Give respect to everyone . . . family, friends, teachers, strangers, and so on. Give respect even when others may not necessarily deserve it. Give it, and most of the time you will get it in return. And even if you do not, then it does not matter . . . keep giving it anyway. You must strive to be your Best Self at all times, regardless of how others treat you.
- **Listen first and then speak.** Let others share their thoughts without interruption, and they will usually extend the same courtesy to you. Try to understand what others are feeling, and they will usually try to understand what you are feeling. Good communication is the key to solving so many problems. Remember that every conversation can be done respectfully and never needs to become an argument, even when discussing serious issues or trying to settle disagreements.
- **Stay calm and try to keep your peace.** No matter what someone else has said or done to you, and no matter what is happening in your life at the time, try to always remain as calm as possible. Nothing good ever comes from losing your cool. You cannot control others; you can only control yourself.
- **Work on self-control and anger management.** Yelling, swearing, fighting, or even getting angry are poor strategies for trying to solve problems. Work harder to maintain control of your thoughts, emotions, words, and actions. It is better to walk

away and cool off than to say or do something that will get you into trouble or hurt someone else. You hurting others should feel worse than others hurting you. Choose someone from history who you admire (and who is known to have been a “Good Person”) and ask yourself if THEY would have said or done what you just said or did. If you cannot imagine that they would have, then you need to work harder on improving your self-control.

- **Forgive and be forgiven.** Everyone makes mistakes in life. You should admit when you have said or done something wrong . . . apologize . . . and then find a way to make up for it. The more we forgive others, the more likely others will be to forgive us. When we forgive those who have wronged us, we are freeing them from having to continue feeling guilty . . . and we are freeing ourselves from them and the hurtful situation. We want to live in peace, joy, and freedom . . . and forgiveness is very powerful in providing them. We know how good it feels to be forgiven for something we have done; others will feel the same way when we forgive them. We should strive to forgive others (and ourselves) quickly and completely. Unforgiveness can cause us to be stuck in the past . . . instead of living in the present and planning for the future. Let it go and move on!
- **Be Selfless, not Selfish.** You will feel much better about yourself (and will help to make the world a better place) by being the good person that you are and living in a way where you want to help others and not spend too much time only thinking about yourself. We do need to take care of ourselves, but we can do so without being self-centered. We should focus more of our attention on how we can help others. A worthy goal is to become a “Selfless Servant” who loves All of Life and voluntarily seeks to help other people, animals, and the environment . . . without any desire to be rewarded.
- **Be Confident, not Arrogant.** There is a big difference between these two. Believe in yourself and your talents, but do not boast or pridefully seek attention. Let your actions speak for themselves. Humility is one of the greatest virtues. Most people do not like being around those who are arrogant, but they do like being around those who are sincerely humble and self-effacing. True self-confidence is about how you feel within yourself; it is not about feeling good or bad because of praise or criticism from others. Help others to feel better about themselves as well, until they develop a strong sense of self-belief and no longer need reassurance / validation.
- **If you want to be treated like an adult, then you need to act like one.** Make sure that you are helping out at home with cutting the lawn, washing dishes, washing clothes, cleaning up the house, feeding pets, and so on. Make sure you try to do everything at home, school, work, etc. with excellence. Be responsible and do such things as soon as you are asked (without forgetting). Better yet, get into the habit of doing such things without even having to be told to do them. Take the initiative and do whatever you see needs to be done. Be helpful; be kind; and be respectful. Strive to do your best in all things. Demonstrate self-discipline and obedience to the rules of the house, school, and work to earn more “freedom”. Act like a mature and responsible adult if you want to be treated like one.
- **Earn your money.** If you want money for different things and your parents or guardians give it to you, then you should earn it by doing things at home and not just expecting that they give it to you. Do not get upset if they do not give you spending

money. Maybe they are low on money, or they want you to be more responsible and earn it. If you want more money, get a part-time job. When we are no longer children, we must stop expecting to get everything for free (even from parents). It will also feel good for you to become more independent and self-sufficient.

- **Handle setbacks with honor and dignity.** If you do not get something, or if something does not go your way, do not get upset or throw tantrums like a toddler. No matter what happens, you must work to stay peaceful and maintain your self-control. You will feel better about yourself, will be able to deal easily with most situations, and will get more of what you want in life . . . if you learn to control yourself. It is easy to be happy and demonstrate a “good character” when things go well; the true test is to be that way when things are not going well. Keep your peace, stay positive, be respectful, and look for ways to work harder at getting whatever it is that you wanted. It is not just about achieving our goals that matters; it is also about HOW we achieve those goals.
- **Be a Victor, not a Victim.** No matter how difficult your life may be, just remember that other people have lives that are worse. And even when you are dealing with your own difficulties, stay positive and work hard to change things without getting angry or feeling like you are not being treated fairly. Accept that life is not always fair; instead of complaining and/or quitting, keep working hard and find other ways to fulfill your dreams. Look at obstacles as a good thing, because overcoming them can help us to become strong / resilient and achieve success in ways that we never imagined.
- **While you live at home, you should follow your parents’ / guardians’ rules.** They pay the bills, cook the meals, wash the clothes, etc. until you are old enough to start doing some things for yourself. The rules in place will be reasonable, and it is important for them to help teach you self-discipline and to maintain order. Do not argue with them or rebel against the rules like little children who do not get their way. If you do not like some of the rules, then act like a mature adult and politely have a conversation with them about changing the rules. The more self-controlled, responsible, and mature you become, the less rules your parents / guardians will have at home. Remember that to “earn” more freedom, you must demonstrate more self-discipline. Do not expect what you have not proven you can handle. That is for your own safety / well-being / development . . . and not adults “being controlling”.