



FALL 2023 FREE RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

Activity #1

Body Language Charades – to help read the emotions of others.

This game can be played with any age, but for younger ages, it might help to create a deck of cards from 3 x 5 notecards and write a feeling on each card, such as: SAD, HAPPY, SCARED, CONFUSED, JEALOUS, ANGRY and so on. Older children can exhibit more complex emotions such as EMBARRASSMENT or EMPATHY. Whoever is “it” can choose an emotion or draw a card to act out the emotion while the group tries to guess what emotion they are acting out. Whoever guesses correctly can be “it” next. After 30 minutes, applaud all efforts at charades!

Activity #2

Visioning Board – Self-esteem, decision-making

This activity is often introduced to adults, but it can be great fun for early readers and up! Everyone should be allowed to dream even at an early age and to create a strong visual of their dreams.

Locate a small poster board, glue, and scissors. Gather a collection of old magazines and photos that you do not mind donating to the project. Invite the child or children to sit quietly for a few minutes with their eyes closed. No peeking! Have them think about what they want their life to be like when they are 28 years old. Ask: What are you doing? Who are you with? Where are you doing this? Are there smells and sounds you can imagine? Memorize the images and the feelings of loving your life at age 28! Then have them open their eyes and locate pictures to represent this dream life.

Encourage anything they want to do or be—anything goes! Allow them to share and display their board(s) when done.

Activity #3

Family Council – democracy at work, developing decision-making and leadership skills within the family.

This activity is based on the last chapter in Dr. Rudolf Dreikurs' legendary book, *Children: The Challenge*. There is a reason it is the last chapter. This activity requires well-developed communication skills on the part of the parents, so do not attempt this unless you have participated in a well-regarded parenting class or feel confident you have the fundamentals of open, non-threatening communication skills. The rules are simple:

- This is a meeting of the entire family where problems are aired and solutions sought out.
- This meeting occurs on the same day at the same hour each week. The time should not change without the consent of the entire family.
- All members of the family should attend. If one member chooses not to attend, he/she must still abide by the decisions of the group. It pays to attend and voice your opinion.
- Each member has the right to bring up a problem. Everyone has the right to be heard, regardless of age. The parents' voices are no higher or stronger than the children's.
- Together, all seek a solution to the problems, and the majority opinion is upheld.
- After the decision is made, no further discussion is allowed until the next week's meeting.

There are certain challenges that may come up to stump the family in these proceedings, but if all remember it is a "family problem", creative solutions may come more readily. Also, it may be advised to read Dreikur's book!