

Praise vs. Encouragement – Examples

| Praise statements | Encouragement statements |
|--|---|
| You are such a good boy/girl. | I appreciate your help. |
| You did it just like I told you. | You figured it out for yourself. |
| All A's, I'm going to give you reward. | You worked hard, you deserve it. |
| I'm so proud of you. | You must be proud of yourself. |
| I like what you did. | How do you feel about it? |
| You always look perfect. | You create your own uniqueness. |
| You always have the right answer. | I have faith in you to learn from mistakes. |
| You are the best player on the team. | You are a good team player. |
| I'm glad you listened to me. | I have faith in you. I trust your judgment. |
| With more work you'll get it right. | Look how far you've come. You can do it. |
| Great! That's what I expected. | You can decide what is best for you. |
| You did it better than anyone else. | You did your best and you don't give up. |
| Your really know how to please me. | I love you no matter what. |
| Your painting is beautiful. | Tell me about your painting. |

Imagine these statements being said to you – which one would you like more? Which one would leave you feeling more respected? More capable?

The fundamental difference is that one creates a dependent relationship with the person giving the praise and the other encourages the child (or person) to believe in themselves and notice their own abilities.

Hints:

- Tone of voice also makes a huge impact on these statements; imagine speaking to an equal, not a child and the child will notice the difference.
- Think of praise as a bit like candy, sweet and wonderful on occasion, but not good as a steady diet

Encouragement or Praise?

Adapted from Positive Discipline by Jane Nelsen, Ballantine Books

Encouragement

1. To inspire with courage
(courage < Old French corage, < Latin cor heart)
2. To spur on: to stimulate

Self-evaluation

("Tell me about it")
("What do you think?")

Addresses Deed

Appreciation, Respectful
("Thank you for helping.")
("Who can show me the proper way to sit?")

Empathy

("What do you think and feel?")
("I can see that you enjoyed that")

Self disclosing "I" messages

("I appreciate your help")

Asks questions

("What is an appropriate noise level for the library?")

Effect:

Feel worthwhile without the approval of others.
Self confidence, Self reliance
Self esteem

Praise

1. To express a favorable judgment of
2. To glorify, especially by attribution of perfection.
3. An expression of approval

Evaluation by others

("I like it.")

Addresses doer

Expectation, Patronizing
("You are such a good boy.")
("Good girl!")
("I like the way Suzie is sitting.")

Conformity

("You did it right.")
("I am so proud of you.")

Judgmental "I" messages

("I like the way you are sitting.")

Should statements

("You should be quiet like your sister.")

Feel worthwhile only when others approve.
Dependence on others
"Other" esteem

Questions you might ask:

- Am I inspiring self evaluation or dependence on the evaluation of others?
- Am I being respectful or patronizing?
- Am I helping them discover how to act or trying to manipulate their behavior?
- Am I seeing the child's point of view or my own?
- Would I make this comment to a friend or neighbor?

Words for practice. Remember to leave out the judgments (good, bad, perfect, nice).

Descriptive encouragement: "I notice...."

Appreciative encouragement: "I appreciate....", "Thank you for...."

Empowering encouragement: "I trust you...", "I know you can..."

Courage (from the root word: cor – Latin, heart) is the very small step you take in the direction to be more of who you truly are when it might be easier to take a step in another direction. (This is not an official definition!) So when you encourage someone, you are creating a space for him or her to take that step.

The Special Language of Encouragement

Phrases that demonstrate acceptance:

"You seem to like that activity."

"I can see that you enjoy learning."

"I can tell you're pleased with it."

"Since you're not satisfied, what do you think you can do so you'll feel happier with it?"

"It looks like you enjoyed that."

"How do you feel about it?"

Phrases that show confidence:

"Knowing you, I'm sure you'll do fine."

"You'll make it!"

"I have confidence in your judgment."

"That's a rough one, but I think you can work it out."

"You'll figure it out."

Phrases that focus on contribution, assets and appreciation:

"Thanks, that helped a lot!"

"It was thoughtful of you to _____."

"Thanks, I really appreciate _____, because it makes my job easier."

"I need your help on _____."

To a family group:

"I really enjoyed today. Thanks"

"You have skill in _____. Would you do that for the family?"

Phrases that recognize effort and improvement:

"You really worked hard on that!"

"Looks like you spent a lot of time thinking that through."

"I see you're moving along"

"Look at the progress you've made: _____."

"You're improving in _____."

You may not feel you've reached you goal, but look how far you've come!"

The 4 C's of Encouragement

Separate the deed from the doer.

There are no "good" or "bad" children; only "encouraged" or "discouraged" children whose behavior is more or less useful.

A misbehaving child is a discouraged child.

Rudolf Dreikurs

Children are encouraged when they:

Connect

- They experience unconditional love
- They get lots of friendly, loving eye contact
- They get lots of affectionate touching and hugs
(appropriate touching is non-sexual)
- Adults spend focused time with them – playing, working, and sharing conversation
- Their feelings are listened to and validated
- They share fun with the adults in their life



Feel Capable

- They learn skills
- They are given training in social skills and appropriate behavior
- Mistakes are treated like opportunities to learn
- They are allowed and expected to do for themselves everything they are able to do
- Adults refrain from criticism and focus on the positive parts of children's efforts
- Adults have confidence in the children's abilities

Count

- Their ideas and opinions are respected and accepted
- Adults express interest in their interests and knowledge
- They are accepted as individuals of equal value
- They participate in family/classroom meetings



Contribute

- They do household chores
- Their help is accepted and appreciated
(Even when the adults can do it faster and better)
- Their efforts are appreciated, even when they don't achieve perfection
- They are given responsibility

Belonging

The fundamental desire of every human being is to belong, to have status in the group of which he is a part. Rudolf Dreikurs

Beth Johnson Revised 2006/08/28 Adapted from a variety of Adlerian sources
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Making Agreements and Following Through

The Steps of Making an Agreement:

1. Have a friendly discussion with the other person to gather information about what is happening regarding the problem. It is helpful to start with your problem – and why it is a problem for you. Then listen to their perspective. Respect is key.
2. Brainstorm for possible solutions and chose one that both you and the other person agree to. This may take some negotiating because your favorite solution may be different from the other person's favorite. When making agreements with young people – do what you can to use their suggestions while being respectful to yourself. (Notice that there is no threat or "consequence" here. Consequences undermine the power of any agreement.)
3. Agree on what a kept agreement would "look like" and a specific time deadline (to the minute).
like a smart goal
4. At the deadline, you simply follow through on the agreement by firmly and respectfully requesting the other person to keep the agreement until it is done.

Four Hints for Effective Follow Through

1. Keep comments simple and concise. ("I notice you didn't _____. Would you please do that now?")
2. In response to objections ask, "What was our agreement?"
3. In response to further objections, shut your mouth and use non verbal communication (point to your watch; smile knowingly; give a hug and point to your watch again).
4. When other person concedes to keep to the agreement (sometimes obviously annoyed) say, "Thank you for keeping our agreement."

Four Traps that Defeat Follow Through

1. Wanting young people to have the same priorities as parents/teachers.
2. Getting into judgments and criticism rather than sticking to the issue.
3. Not getting specific agreements in advance that include a specific time deadline.
4. Not maintaining dignity and respect for the other person and yourself.

From: *Positive Discipline for Teenagers* by Jane Nelsen and Lynn Lott. Available from your local book store or from Empowering People www.positivediscipline.com or 1 - 800 - 456 - 7770

Parents Helping Parents Problem Solving Steps.

From the Teaching Parenting the Positive Discipline Way Manual by Lynn Lott and Jane Nelsen (page 29).

1. Invite the volunteer to sit next to you, and explain what the "Parents Helping Parents Problem-Solving Steps" are.
2. Introduce the volunteer. On a flip chart or butcher paper, write the volunteer's name, his/her spouse or partner's name (if there is one), and names and ages of all children and other household members.
3. Ask the volunteer to give a short explanation of the concern. (If the person goes on and on, interrupt and say, "I think we have the general picture") Ask the group to raise hands to show if anyone else has ever had a similar problem.
4. Ask the volunteer to describe the last time the problem happened in enough detail so that the group can get an idea of how to role play the problem. To help the person focus on specifics, ask, "What did you do and say? What did the child (or others) do and say? And then what happened? And then what happened?"
5. If it didn't come out in the above description, as the volunteer, "How did you feel?" If it isn't obvious from expressed feelings, ask the volunteer to look at the "Mistaken Goal Chart" and choose the feeling that comes closest from the feelings column of the goal chart. Ask the group, "How many of you have ever felt that way?"
6. Look at the Mistaken Goal Chart" and see if you can guess what the mistaken goal may be based on the volunteer's feelings, and what the child did in response to what the volunteer did.
7. Ask, "Want to try something new that may be more effective?"
8. Set up a role play. Invite the volunteer to role play the child (or in some cases, offer the choice to watch the role play). Assign someone to play each part. Tell the role players to start with the lines they heard during the description of the problem.
9. Stop the role play as soon as you think they have had time to experience feelings and decisions (usually less than a minute). Process by asking all the role players, one at a time, what they were feeling and what they were deciding as the people they were role playing.
10. Ask the group to brainstorm decisions the volunteer could try. Write down all suggestions on a flip chart. Invite the group to refer to the alternative column of the "Mistaken Goal Chart" for ideas, or to make suggestions from their personal experience.
11. Ask the volunteer which suggestion he/she would be willing to try.
12. Bring back the role players and role play the suggestion that the volunteer chose with that person playing him/herself this time or the child (to experience how the child might feel in response to the suggestion) or to watch again. At the end of the role play, process feelings and decisions of each role player.
13. Ask for a verbal commitment from the volunteer to try the suggestion for one week and report back to the group at that time.
14. Ask the group for appreciations for the volunteer. (What help did you get for yourself by watching this. What did you see that you appreciate about the volunteer? What ideas did you see that you could use? Etc.)