

Life Strategies for Teens
Life Law 8: We Teach People How to Treat Us

Due:

Directions: Read “Life Law 8: “We Teach People How to Treat Us” of *Life Strategies for Teens* pg. 175-193. Then please think about and answer the following questions on your own paper. Your answers can be typed or hand written. (The answers should show thought and be complete sentences in paragraph form with proper grammar, spelling and punctuation.)

It is not fair to ask others what you are not willing to do yourself.

- Eleanor Roosevelt, Former 1st Lady of the United States

- 1) What does Mrs. Roosevelt mean in the above quote? Give an example that demonstrates your understanding of the quote.

- 2) Your relationship with your parents is the central one in your life at the moment. Like it or not, your parents control your life: where you go, whom you see, if you have money to do and buy the things you want, etc. You need to take stock of your relationship. Use the following questionnaire to focus on that relationship and to identify where there is room for improvement and renegotiation. Once you have answered the questions, analyze the results and pin point where you see things that need improvement or work. Who is mainly responsible for the problem you or your parents, or is it a little bit of both?
 - a) Are you clueless as to how to show your parents that you really respect them?
Yes _____ No _____
 - b) Do you feel “too young” to get what you want? Yes _____ No _____
 - c) Do you feel as though your parents don’t listen to you? Yes _____ No _____
 - d) Have you gotten into the habit of tuning your parents out and not hearing what they have to say? Yes _____ No _____
 - e) Do your parents give you long lectures including a list of “you should have” . . . ?
Yes _____ No _____
 - f) Have you stopped bothering to let your parents in your thinking, your ideas, hopes, plans- your life? Yes _____ No _____
 - g) Do your parents like to give you a history lesson about when they were teenagers?
Yes _____ No _____
 - h) When you bring up a problem of yours, do your parents just try to top it with one of their own? Yes _____ No _____
 - i) Do you find that you only go to your parents when you have a problem?
Yes _____ No _____
 - j) Do you feel that your parents treat you as if you were much younger than a teenager? Yes _____ No _____
 - k) When you’re hanging out with your family at home, do you suddenly act more childishly than you would if your friends were around? Yes _____ No _____
 - l) Do you feel totally ignored? Yes _____ No _____

- m) Do you feel put down and condescended to? Yes _____ No _____
- n) Do you speak to your parents as if they don't have a clue in the world about anything that really matters in life? Yes _____ No _____
- o) Do you feel hurt by the way your parents treat you? Yes _____ No _____
- p) Do you think your parents feel hurt by the way you treat them?
Yes _____ No _____
- q) Do you think your parents feel hurt by the way your treat them?
Yes _____ No _____
- r) Are you kind to your brother(s)/sister(s)? Yes _____ No _____
- s) Do you ever have the "whatever, it doesn't matter" attitude toward your responsibilities around the house?

- 3) You hold the power to change relationships with your peers too. You teach people how to treat you, so you need to identify problem relationships and the pay-offs you are creating that prompt other to treat you the way they do. Make a list of 3-5 of the most difficult relationships, excluding family that you have in your life right now. Identify the person's name, describe what it is about this person that bothers you and label it "treatment", think about this person's payoff for treating you this way, and finally come up with a way or plan to eliminate this payoff that will teach them to treat you differently.

Example:

Name: Bill

Treatment: Cold and distant, he does not include me in the group unless he needs my help in math.

Payoff: I keep giving him my help whenever he wants it, not matter how he treats me later.

Eliminate Payoff: Next time, I'll make it clear that I'm not at his beck and call. He will respect me more if I stand up for myself. He will know he can't take advantage of me, and will have to treat me with respect.

- 4) Just as it is true that you have allowed other people to treat you in ways you did not like, the people in your life have no doubt let you get away with bad behavior as well. List 5 instances of bad or unhealthy behavior that your important people have let you get away with. (Feel free to use the examples if the shoe fits.)

Examples:

- I push others until they give in and I get my way.
- When I am feeling defensive, I lash out at others and say unkind things that I later regret but don't apologize for.
- Instead of speaking directly to someone I'm having a problem with, I talk about him or her with another friend.
- I bail out of plans when something better comes along.

- 5) Make a circle within a circle. In the middle write your name. In the outside circle list all of the people, no matter what age, you trust and feel closest to. Look at your list, what type of relationship do you have with each? Are some of the names in your lists for questions #3 or #4? How can you change that?