

Mindsets for Happiness and Success



HONESTY

Lying is like stealing. We rob others of their ability to make decisions based on the truth.

Let's TALK about LIFE

The single most important thing we can do for our children is talk to them about life. At dinner, at breakfast, eating burgers in the car, or sipping hot cocoa before bed. Decades of research has shown that children who eat 3 to 4 times a week with their parents are 3 times less likely to get involved with drugs, alcohol, or smoking. They do better in school, have higher self-esteem, and stronger relationships with their parents. With the little time busy parents have, we might as well talk about what's important. All it takes is 10 minutes a day.

LET'S TALK conversation starters have been strategically designed in a specific sequence to help children (and parents) learn the

Happiness and Success

twelve most important mindsets that lead to happiness and success. They are based on decades of research and the literature from hundreds of experts who study happiness and success. In the same way that we learn to walk, play a musical instrument, speak a new language, or dance the salsa, we also build mindsets through repetition. By repeating new, similar thought patterns over and over again during a 30-day period, we actually rewire certain ways of thinking into our brains. Eventually it becomes a habit that we continue without any effort. LET'S TALK is designed for ages five and up. Feel free to adapt the questions to what you know your children are able to understand and can relate to.

HONESTY Intro - 1

"Taking the easy way out or telling the truth - those are not just two different choices. They are different pathways through life. They are utterly different ways of being."
~Jordon Peterson

We lecture our children about how important it is to be honest, to live with integrity and do "the right thing." But what does that even mean to them? How do we communicate the enormous impact being honest will have on their lives? How do we motivate them to make choices that will sometimes be uncomfortable, even painful, because it's the right thing to do.

Introduction for Parents

HONESTY Intro - 2

The problem with honesty is that the short-term benefits of lying often seem way more appealing than the long-term benefits of telling the truth. To teach our children an honesty mindset, we need to help them understand that the long-term benefits of being honest are much more important for their future success and happiness than the short-term benefits of lying.

These conversation starters offer over 20 different scenarios that give you and your children an opportunity to talk about what happens AFTER you tell a lie, or AFTER you tell a difficult truth.

Introduction for Parents

HONESTY Intro - 3

You will explore how that might make you think and feel about yourself, as well as how others might think and feel about you. Included are four critical considerations:

1. Short-term benefits of lying
2. Long-term consequences of lying
3. Short-term consequences of honesty
4. Long-term benefits of honesty

After a month of conversations about the benefits and consequences of being honest, your children will be well-prepared for those inevitable situations that involve peer pressure and require split-second decisions.

Introduction for Parents

Card #1 - Rosalie and the Spelling Bee

A TRUE STORY: Eleven-year-old Rosalie Elliot was representing her great state of South Carolina at the National Spelling Bee. What an awesome honor to be at such an event!

In the fourth round, in the heart of the competition, Rosalie was asked to spell the word "avowal." It was an intense moment as she did her best to spell the word. Once the letters had rolled off her tongue and her turn was finished, there was great confusion over the letters she spelled. Due to her strong southern accent, it was difficult for the judges to determine if she had spelled "e" or "a." After much deliberation among the judges, and replay of the audiotapes, there was no definite solution to the problem. They could not determine whether she had said "e" or "a."

Meanwhile, during this time of debate, Rosalie realized the correct spelling of her word and that she had spelled it incorrectly. Finally, the chief judge directly asked Rosalie the question: "Was the letter you gave an 'e' or an 'a'?" Rosalie was presented with a critical choice. In an instant she spoke confidently and clearly. "I misspelled the word. I used an 'e'."

The crowd was surprised and amazed as Rosalie walked from the stage. Because of her honesty and integrity, they gave her a standing ovation! Journalists quickly covered her story, and it was well-known around the region. Even though Rosalie left the stage without a championship trophy, her instant and unwavering honesty proved her to be a champion!

Card #2 - Rosalie and the Spelling Bee

What were Rosalie's short-term CONSEQUENCES for being honest?

She lost the Spelling Bee

She didn't take home a trophy

She felt she let down her school

She worried she let down her parents

She lost the "Winner" opportunities

What were Rosalie's long-term BENEFITS for being honest?

She gained admiration and respect

Her school got positive publicity

Her parents couldn't be more proud

Her is the story everyone remembers

She is known for honesty & integrity

Card #3 - The Short-Term Benefits & Long-Term Consequences of Lying

Short-term benefits of lying

- You avoid getting into trouble
- You obtain something you wanted
- You get to do or be something you wanted
- You gain a place on a team, in a group
- You earn a reward, recognition, or credit
- You earn respect, admiration, popularity
- You avoid hurting someone's feelings

Long-term consequences of lying

- Your victory doesn't feel like a real victory
- You're stressed trying to maintain the lie(s)
- You live in fear that someone will figure it out
- You feel guilty about hurting someone else
- You feel bad that you are a liar and a fraud
- You lose friends, credibility, respect, and trust
- You struggle with damaged relationships

Card #4 - The Short-Term Consequences & Long-Term Benefits of Honesty

Short-term consequences of honesty

- You hurt someone's feelings
- You lose something you wanted
- You are criticized for speaking the truth
- You get into trouble for something you did
- You lose an opportunity to do/be something
- You lose a place on a team, in a group
- You feel vulnerable for sharing personal info

Long-term benefits of honesty

- People know they can trust you, rely on you
- People like to be friends and/or work with you
- People like you for who you really are
- Your relationships are stronger, more loving
- You don't have to worry about lying, hiding
- You feel strong, brave, confident, at peace
- More friends/opportunities will come your way

Rosalie and the Spelling Bee.

Read the story of Rosalie and the Spelling Bee (Card 1). Then discuss the benefits and consequences of telling the truth (Card 2). Think of two more benefits and consequences. Then add them to our list.



Day 1

Short-term benefits of lying.

Rosalie's Spelling Bee story is just one example of a situation where we could be tempted to lie because the immediate benefits seem so appealing. Read the left half of Card 3. Brainstorm more benefits.



Day 2

Long-term consequences of lying.

Read the right half of Card 3 and talk about the long-term consequences of lying, which seem less important when we need to make a snap decision or peer pressure is involved. What can you add?



Day 3

Short-term consequences of honesty.

Read the left half of Card 4. Talk about the short-term consequences of honesty - reasons why we are afraid to tell the truth because of the pain it will cause you or others. What reasons are missing?



Day 4

Long-term benefits of honesty.

Read the right half of Card 4 and then talk about the long-term benefits of honesty - which are valuable but don't seem as urgent or appealing as the immediate rewards. Can you think of a few more?



Day 5

Your best friend lied to you.

How would you feel about a best friend who lied to you, or lied to others about you? Would you want to continue being friends? Would you be able to trust them again, even if they apologized?



Day 6

When is it ok to lie?

Are there situations in life when it might be considered acceptable to lie? We're not talking about little white lies, but real lies that could save a very sick child, prevent an innocent person going to jail, or feed a starving family?



Day 7

How do you fix a lie you've told?

The most difficult thing about lying is that we usually regret it and want to make amends. Our own pride and shame are the biggest obstacles. How would you go about repairing a relationship damaged by a lie?



Day 8

Do you give back the extra change?

The cashier at the grocery store gives you \$10 more in change than you should have received. You could give it back or keep it. Talk about the benefits and consequences (Cards 3 and 4) for those two choices.



Day 9

Do you hurt a friend to help a friend?

You see a friend cheating on a test, which could make another friend lose out on an award. You could say nothing or bring it to the teacher's attention. Talk about the benefits and consequences (Cards 3 and 4) for those two choices.



Day 10

Do you break your promise to Dad?

You promised to help Dad mow the lawn, but your friends have something more fun to do. Do you lie to your dad and go, be honest but break your promise and go, or stay and mow the lawn? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 11

Do you pretend you know nothing?

You broke an expensive lamp in the living room while goofing around with some friends and a soccer ball. Do you tell your mom the truth or pretend you know nothing about it? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 12

Do you fix the damage or lie?

You spread an unkind rumor about your good friend when you were having a fight. She asks if you did it. Do you admit the truth and try to fix the damage or lie about it? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 13

Do you admit you miscounted?

You land on free parking during a monopoly game, win \$1100, but realize you miscounted the squares and no one noticed. Do you let it go or tell the truth? Talk about benefits and consequences.



Day 14

Who ate the last two cookies?

Your mom is asking who ate the last two cookies on the plate that she specifically said not to touch - because they were for Dad. Do you speak up or say nothing? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 15

Can you keep a secret?

A friend tells you a secret, which you promise to keep to yourself but couldn't help telling someone else. She asks if you told anyone. Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 16

Who decides who gets in trouble?

You see your best friend start a fight and then blame someone else who gets in trouble for it. Do you keep quiet or say something? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 17

Did anyone see you cheat?

You are playing basketball with friends. You fouled and scored, but you don't think anyone saw the foul. Do you call it or pretend it didn't happen? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 18

Your Dad made fun of you.

Your dad made fun of you in front of your friends in a way that would be OK at home but was embarrassing with your friends. Do you tell him how you feel? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 19

Do you keep the money or return it?

You and a friend found a wallet laying in the street with a lot of money in it. Do the two of you keep it, or do you try to return it to its rightful owner? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 20

You find answers to the school test.

You find the answers to the class test you are having on Friday. Do you return the answers to the teacher or study the answers to get a good score on the test? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 21

Do you tell your friends to stop?

Your friends think it's funny to make fun of a classmate using a mean nickname. Do you join in and tell her/him that "it's just a joke," or do you tell your friends to stop? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 22

She believes it's your favorite cake.

Your mom made a cake you really don't like, but you once said you "loved" it to please her. Now she makes that cake for every birthday. Do you tell her the truth? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 23

His parents are asking you for help.

Your good friend is doing drugs and you are worried that it's getting serious. His parents ask you about it. Do you say nothing or betray him and tell his parents? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 24

Can you share an unpopular opinion?

Your teacher has expressed strong political views. You and a few other students disagree, but they are afraid to share what they think. Do you speak up? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 25

You watch a friend steal something.

A friend of yours took something off the teacher's desk and when she asked the class about it, he blamed it on another student. Do you tell the teacher? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 26

How about chocolate before dinner?

Someone gives you a chocolate bar after school, but your mom doesn't allow candy before dinner. Do you eat it secretly or show it to your mom and ask if it's okay to eat it later? Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 27

Kids hack into school computers.

You witnessed a group of kids hacking into the school computers and changing grades. They said they would change your grades too if you keep quiet. Talk about the benefits and consequences.



Day 28

Rank the BENEFITS from +1 to +5.

Rank each of the benefits on Cards 3 and 4, from +1 to +5, based on how valuable each benefit would be to you. Example: "You earn a reward" is +3, and "People know they can trust you" is +5.



Day 29

Rank CONSEQUENCES from -1 to -5.

Rank each of the consequences on Cards 3 and 4, from -1 to -5, based on how negative each consequence might be. Example: "You hurt someone's feelings" is -2, and "You feel bad being a liar" is -5.



Day 30