

Lesson 17

The Power of No

TEACHER PREPARATION

KEY CONCEPTS

Addiction is another word for slavery.

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco can all be bad for a person's health.

Using drugs, alcohol and tobacco can lead to addiction.

Drugs, alcohol and smoking tobacco will affect the user and people nearby.

People can learn to make wise choices about drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. recognize risk factors leading to addiction.
2. understand how using drugs, alcohol and tobacco can affect and change their health and behavior.
3. realize how their choices affect those around them.
4. develop good answers for saying no to drugs, alcohol and using tobacco.

KEY TERMS

Addiction: Someone has an addiction when he or she becomes dependent on or craves something all of the time.

Euphoria: a strong feeling of happiness.

Getting high: to achieve a state of mental euphoria, usually referring to substance abuse.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

We are beginning several lessons discussing how harmful addictions can be in our lives and how they can affect our dreams. This lesson introduces the idea of addiction. We want to focus on helping our students learn the

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importance of staying away from substances that can cause them to become addicted. Drugs, alcohol and smoking are all addictive actions that can affect a person's health and the well-being of those around them. Even though alcohol and cigarettes are legal in most countries for those who are 18 or older, smoking tobacco and drinking alcohol can be unhealthy for anyone at any age. Legal drugs can be prescribed for you by a doctor. When taken according to the prescription, they can help you feel better. When these prescription drugs are not used correctly, they can cause great damage to your body and even death. Illegal drugs are usually sold on the streets and can cause great harm to your body. Drugs, alcohol and smoking tobacco can attack your heart, brain, liver and other important organs in your body.

In the next few lessons, we will be teaching about how drugs, alcohol and using tobacco are dangerous to the people who use them and can also be dangerous to people nearby. Using drugs and abusing alcohol can limit a person's ability to make good choices. People who use drugs and abuse alcohol often lose touch with reality and say or do things they normally would not say or do. Addiction is a serious concern with the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco. It usually begins with someone just wanting to try it, but can end with addiction and the intense desire to use these substances every day.

In most countries, there are laws against children and teenagers using drugs, alcohol and tobacco. Some adults use alcohol in a lawful responsible way. But since some do not use addictive substances responsibly, laws have been made to try to limit dangerous situations which can occur when drugs or alcohol are abused.

Our hope is that as a teacher you can help your students make better choices of how to handle decisions about their feelings and needs. It is important for you to help them find ways to feel successful and happy without the desire for putting something inside their bodies to alter their personalities and physical bodies forever.

MATERIALS/PREPARATION

1. In **Applying the Lesson**, you will need each scenario written on a piece of paper for the groups.
2. In **Going Deeper**, these are some optional materials you can use. The lesson can be taught without these materials. Compass, or materials for making a compass (a needle or a straight, thin piece of metal [not aluminum] and a magnet or piece of silk), a non-metallic bowl with water, a piece of plastic foam (or cork or leaf) and a marker.

LESSON

BEGINNING THE LESSON

[Say to the students:] We are beginning a series of lessons to teach us how our choices can break our dreams. Remember at the beginning of *DreamMakers-DreamBreakers* when we talked about our dreams for the future? We have been studying a lot of ways our dreams can come true when we make good decisions about our character. Over the next few weeks, we will be thinking about choices and situations that can break our dreams. We want you to learn to make wise decisions about these choices so your dreams will come true. Let's see what happens when Hector, Dugan and Trish go to breakfast with the Librarian. Is everything on the menu safe to eat?

READINESS (5 minutes)

[Read to the students:] **Chapter 17 — Safe or Unsafe?**

"Good morning!" smiled the Librarian. "I trust you slept well. We have a busy day ahead of us."

"Ahwwwk," yawned Dugan as he ran his tongue over his teeth and smacked his lips. "I'm hungry," he announced.

"Me, too," offered Hector as he rolled over and sat up.

"Well and good," said the Librarian. "I think you will be interested in the table I set up over in the alcove."

Trish arched her back and then patted Edgar who was curled up next to her. "Wake up, Sleepyhead. I think breakfast is waiting."

Edgar stretched out his front legs as his rear end arched upward. Then he raised his nose skyward, sniffed and followed his nose toward the alcove.

The three followed Edgar to the alcove to discover a table filled with delicious platters of meats and fruits and pastries. Dugan plucked a grape from one of the platters near him and popped it in his mouth.

“Yuck!” said Dugan as he spit his grape on the floor. “That’s not a real grape. It looks like a grape, but it’s fake!”

Edgar sniffed the discarded grape with his nose and then pushed it aside.

“Looks like Edgar agrees with you,” laughed Trish.

“What’s going on?” asked Hector surveying the platters of food on the table.

The Librarian’s eyes sparkled with some unknown secret, but she gave no indication as to how they should proceed.

Hector selected a particularly appealing pastry and carefully nibbled at its edges. “All right! That’s more like it,” he announced as he took a big bite out of the pastry. “Yum.”

“Let me have some,” demanded Dugan.

“Get your own,” mumbled Hector placing his pastry out of reach.

“Okay, be that way,” snipped Dugan as he reached for a pastry from the same platter.

“Not so fast,” sputtered Hector with a mouth full of food. “This is my platter! Get your own!”

“What’s going on with you? There seems to be plenty for everyone,” said Trish.

“Uh-oh!” moaned Hector grabbing his stomach. “I don’t feel so well.”

“How many of those pastries have you eaten?” asked Trish.

“I don’t know — maybe two or three,” moaned Hector.

“More like five or six,” chided Dugan.

“I don’t think eating breakfast is what the Librarian has in mind this morning,” mused Trish.

“Quite right,” smiled the Librarian. “If you are to succeed in helping to cure the Map of Wonders, you must first face an opponent much closer at hand — your appetites.”

EXPLORE (10 minutes)

[Say to the students:] Hector found that his desires were becoming so strong he couldn’t resist eating more and more and more. We all have desires. What are some of your desires? [Give students a chance to

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answer.] Desires can be fun — like your desire to play with your friends or eat ice cream. Desires are not bad unless they become addictive or lead to unhealthy behaviors. Do you know what the word addiction means? [Give time for students to answer and then share the answer from Key Terms.]

Today, we are going to talk about how addictions to some things can be an obstacle to your dreams for your life. Sometimes, when people feel stressed, frustrated or sad, they look for a way to make themselves feel better. Some people will try to feel better or relax by drinking alcohol or taking drugs or smoking a cigarette. They might feel better for a short time, but soon they will feel worse. What are some good choices you can make to help you feel better if you feel stressed or frustrated? [Discuss good options like exercise, riding your bike, playing sports, going for a walk, talking to a friend, etc.] Think about your best friend. How will your choice about drugs, alcohol and smoking affect him or her? How about your little sister or brother? [Lead a discussion about these thoughts.]

DISCOVER (10 minutes)

[Talk about what it means to be addicted to something. Say to your students:] People eat food every day. Are we addicted to eating? No, unless we cannot stop overeating. If we eat to live, we eat moderate amounts of food each day and can decide to stop eating when we are full. If we live to eat, we develop an addiction because we eat to fill an emotional need, so we eat more food than our bodies need and keep on eating even after wanting to stop.

People drink water every day, but very few crave water. Many people crave alcohol at first because they think it makes them feel happier, but then they drink more and more because they can't feel okay without increasing amounts of alcohol. They can become addicted to alcohol and eventually get to the place where they cannot function without it. Other drugs are even more addictive than alcohol, but all addictions will in time make you their slave.

[Discuss with your students what problems they see or think could happen if someone is using drugs or abusing alcohol. These answers will vary according to grade level. Encourage an open and honest discussion while

being careful to respect your students' feelings. They may share about situations in their homes, and you will need to handle those thoughts with care.]

[Say to the students:] Some people get addicted to drugs or alcohol. They feel they cannot be happy unless they are using drugs or drinking alcohol. It causes them to make poor choices about people and life. Sometimes, they harm others because they cannot control their actions. If you are ever fearful of someone who is addicted to drugs or alcohol, you need to tell a trusted adult and let them help you.

APPLY (30 minutes)

[Discuss with your students ways to say no when someone offers them drugs, alcohol or a cigarette. Wait for their thoughts before you offer suggestions. Remind them they have the right to say no. They don't have to give a reason. They can just walk away. Some ideas might be:]

"No thanks!"

"No thanks, I am on the football team. I need to stay healthy."

"No, I am okay ..."

"No thanks. Not for me!"

"No, I can't. If my parents found out, they would be so upset with me!"

[Younger elementary students will need to do this next activity as a class. Divide your older elementary students into four groups. Give each a scenario and ask them to prepare a short skit. Tell them the focus of the skit will be how to say no when someone approaches them with an offer to use drugs, alcohol or tobacco. Have them share their skit with the class.]

Scenario 1: You are at your friend's house. His dad is drinking alcohol and offers you a sip.

Scenario 2: You have a headache and are at a friend's house. He says, "I can get a pill out of the cabinet for you. My mom uses one when she has a headache."

Scenario 3: You are at the park and a friend’s older sister is there smoking. She wants you to try her cigarette. She tells you, “It won’t hurt you” and “It is no big deal.”

Scenario 4: You and your friend are at the park playing. A teenager walks up to you. You know him because he is a friend of your older brother. He says he has something to make you feel really good. He says, “It’s fun!” He gives you some powder and tells you to sniff it up your nose.

SHARE (10 minutes)

*[Earlier in Lesson 4, we discussed your dreams for the future. Think/Pair/Share with your neighbor how using drugs, alcohol or tobacco could break those dreams. (This discussion can be held as a class with **younger elementary students**.) Encourage your students to say to themselves and to others, “I would never try alcohol, drugs or cigarettes because I like myself exactly as I am and I don’t want something in my body that would change it!”]*

ENDING THE LESSON

[Say to the students:] **We have been talking about the dangers of addiction and choices you will have to make in life. We will end this lesson with another part of Hector, Dugan and Trish’s story. Listen to what happens when a storm comes into their lives.**

[Read to your students:] ***Into the Storm***

“I’ve packed a special sack lunch for each of you,” smiled the Librarian.

“Did you use any of the stuff from the table in the alcove?” asked a cautious Hector.

“No, but I’m glad to see you are becoming more discerning,” said the Librarian.

“We’re going on a picnic?” asked Dugan.

“Not exactly. More like a boat trip,” replied the Librarian.

“How do you know we’re going on a boat trip?” asked Trish.

“Look at the Map of Wonders,” directed the Librarian.

The Map of Wonders had moved again and this time, a great ocean shifted over to the students’ side of the table. From their vantage point,

they could see the winds starting to pick up as small whitecaps appeared on the surface and the water itself began to change colors from bright blue to deep green.

Edgar jumped up on one of the chairs and started to bark at the troubling sight.

“Looks like a storm in the making,” said Hector.

“I’m glad we’re on dry ground,” agreed Trish as she pulled Edgar from the chair and hugged him tight to herself.

A part of the table supporting the Map of Wonders started to buckle and shift. Before their eyes, a small wooden boat was formed. It had two open bench seats with brass handholds attached to the sides and a coil of rope on the floor.

“I have a very bad feeling about this,” said Hector.

The boat slid nose first into the water and sat, gently bobbing up and down by the edge.

“Stay on shore or get in the boat,” said the Librarian.

“Is it safe?” asked Hector.

“Absolutely not,” replied the Librarian.

“Why would anyone even think about getting into that boat?” demanded Dugan.

“I can only think of one reason,” replied the Librarian. “It allows you to do things you cannot do outside the boat.”

“I don’t think I understand,” said Trish.

“Of course you don’t,” smiled the Librarian.

Edgar jumped into the boat, faced his friends and started to bark.

“Strange dog,” muttered Hector as he climbed in and put an arm around Edgar who continued to bark.

“I guess that settles it,” said Trish as she joined them.

“Okay,” conceded Dugan as he climbed in. “We are all in this together.”

Just then a rogue wave picked up the boat and carried it a hundred feet off shore.

“HOOOOOOOOWWWL!” howled Edgar.

The three friends looked back at the Librarian standing at the edge of the table where they had all been only moments before. She was holding something up to her ear. It looked like an old-fashioned phone. That is exactly what it was and she was speaking into it.

“Why are we being sent out in a storm?” yelled Hector.

“You are not being sent out in a storm!” yelled the Librarian, putting her hand over the mouthpiece to the phone. “You are being sent out in a boat!”

Additional class activity (optional):

[Say to the students:] The Librarian seemed to think there is something special about being in a boat. Have any of you ever been in a boat? What was it like? The Librarian said there are things about being in a boat that are not possible if you are outside of the boat. Let’s see if we can make this a bit more realistic. Let’s pretend our classroom floor is the surface of a big lake. I need four volunteers to play the three children and Edgar the dog. We will need to build a boat to float on our lake. What do we have that could become our boat? (Chairs, desks, benches, even mats — anything the four students can sit together on. Continue the activity after the boat is built and the four students are positioned on it.)

[Say to the students:] We want to have some people to be in the lake without a boat. Who will volunteer to be in the water? [Have the “swimmers” position themselves around the boat lying on the classroom floor on their stomachs, backs or sides; then, look around at all the volunteers as if assessing the situation.] Something is missing. Under the surface of the water there ought to be some sea monsters to make it interesting. Yes! We need some sea monsters, who will volunteer? [Let the children act out their different roles at the same time for a few moments and then have everyone freeze.] So, what is different about those in the boat and those in the water?

Kinds of answers you are looking for:

- *One group is drier than the other group.*
- *The boat people don’t have to work to stay afloat.*
- *Those in the water are more easily attacked by the sea monsters.*
- *You could survive much longer in the boat than in the water.*
- *The boat offers some protection from the storm and what is in the storm.*
- *The boat people have a better point of view, they sit up higher and can see further.*

- *It is easier for the boat people to talk and help each other if needed.*

[Say to the students:] The next few lessons are going to take us into a storm where we will face some of the dangers lurking just under the surface of our very real world. Like the children in the boat, we will have to learn all we can about these dangers and how to avoid them. Fortunately, we have been building and will continue to build a “boat” that can shield us and keep us from being overwhelmed by these dangers.

GOING DEEPER (optional)

*[During the next few **Going Deeper** sections, we will be talking about needing a “compass” in our lives ... something that helps us find “true North” in our lives or keeps us going in the right direction. For part of this discussion, we will be talking about which way is north on our earth. You can simply talk to your students about which way is north, south, east and west and how you can know the direction of north by knowing where the sun rises and sets and by looking for the North Star at night. If you have access to a compass you may choose to share it with your class or if you have access to the materials listed in the Materials/Preparation section, you may choose to construct a compass by following the directions listed below. The concept being taught in this section can be made by skipping the experiment listed below and going straight to the discussion about why it is important to know which way is north.]*

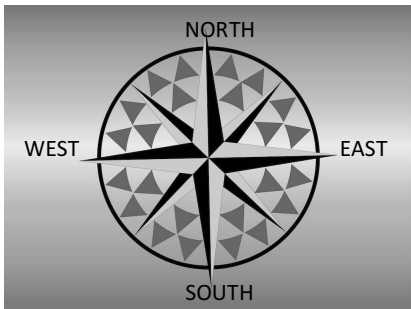
[Say to the students:] **Our three story friends are in a boat. What kinds of things might you find in or on a boat?** *[Let one or more students answer. Possible answers – sail, oars, anchor, bailing bucket, rudder and compass. If they don’t mention a compass, you will need to suggest it.]*

Today, we are going to make a compass. We will need four things to make our compass: *[As you mention each of the items, set them out on a table before the students.]* **A needle, a magnet (or a piece of silk), a piece of plastic foam (or cork or leaf) and a non-metallic bowl containing water.**

First, we will need to magnetize our needle. Who would like to help me do that? *[Say to the volunteer:]* **Rub the sharp end of the needle across**

one end of the magnet 50 times in the same direction. (If you are using a piece of silk, rub the silk on the sharp end of the needle 50 times in the same direction.) We need another volunteer to count the strokes. While they work, let's prepare the rest of the items.

[Place the bowl with water in the center of the table.] Let's see if our plastic foam (or cork or leaf) will float. [Place the plastic foam (or cork or leaf) in the water making sure it isn't touching the bottom of the container or stuck to the side.] Is our needle ready? Good. Now, let's see if our magnetized needle will float on the plastic foam (or cork or leaf). [Have one of the students place the needle on the plastic foam (or cork, or on or through the leaf).] If we've done everything correctly, one end of the needle should slowly position itself to point north. [It will be helpful to have a general idea of which way is north in your classroom.]



[Discussion:] Why might it be important to know which way is north? [Let one or more students answer. Some answers you may hear: to keep from getting lost, to know where you are or to orient yourself after a storm.]

Each of our lives is a little like a long journey in a boat. A boat can get knocked off course by a big wave or a storm. Can you think of some things that might knock us off course and keep us from reaching our dreams? [Let one or more students answer.] We will look at some of those things in this course. We are calling them *DreamBreakers*. Like waves or a storm, *DreamBreakers* can knock our lives off course or even sink our ships! So, we need something like a compass for our lives. Genesis, the first book of the Bible, tells how God created the universe and our world. Last of all, God created us, the human race. Here is what it says: "So God created humans in his own image. He created them to be like himself. He created them male and female" (Genesis 1:27, Easy to Read Version).

What do you think it means when it says, "God created us in his own image?" [Let one or more students answer.] It means we are made in some ways like him, and being like him is our goal in life. So, the compass in our

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lives (the way we decide which way to go) should point to God Himself. Our journey is to find him, get to know him and become more like him. In future lessons, we'll explore more about our compass.

PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

This week, we have been talking about addictions and the effects of being addicted to something harmful. We discussed making wise choices when someone introduces us to drugs, alcohol or tobacco.

We will have more lessons on these topics over the next few weeks. Please be sure you have established a clear, no-nonsense policy about drugs, alcohol and smoking with your children. Parents are the biggest influence in children's lives. Your child needs to understand drugs are only safe when prescribed by doctors and administered to them by you, their parent.

Help your child feel a sense of responsibility to keep his or her body clean and clear of any substance abuse. Your child's future health and happiness are at stake.

Questions you might ask your child:

1. Can you tell me the story your teacher read? What opponent did the friends have to face in the alcove? (The opponent the friends faced was their own appetites and whether to eat food good for them.)
2. Do you remember what the word addiction means? (An addiction is when someone becomes dependent on something.)
3. Has anyone already tempted you to try a cigarette, an alcoholic drink or a drug? (Listen carefully and respectfully. If your child has already tried a cigarette, alcoholic drink or drug and feels guilty, it is appropriate he or she feels the guilt. Please avoid shaming your child as this may create a barrier between you. Focus on how easily he or she can become addicted and how the substance can ruin your child's life and future.)
4. Share a time when you learned how important it was in your own life to keep from being addicted to substances like alcohol, drugs or tobacco.



