

### **TEACHER PREPARATION**

#### **KEY CONCEPTS**

1. Students need to set personal boundaries before they get into situations in which they will be tempted to engage in premarital sex or abuse alcohol and drugs.
2. When students move from adolescence to adulthood, they transition from having adults set their boundaries to establishing and maintaining their own personal boundaries.
3. When boundaries are set, decisions will generally have positive consequences (benefits) and negative consequences (costs).

#### **OBJECTIVES**

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

1. Describe their personal space boundaries.
2. Describe their moral boundaries in the areas of drugs, alcohol, and premarital sex.
3. Describe how positive and negative consequences will help or hinder their quest for a meaningful and happy life.

#### **MATERIALS/PREPARATION**

**In the Box: Grandmothers' Letter and a piece of chalk.**

- You will want to mark where students are standing in one activity, so if chalk cannot be used on the floor, you will need pieces of tape.
- Prepare the following lists on a board for students to copy or put on individual sheets of paper.

##### **DRUGS**

- Avoid places where drugs are used.
- Go to a place where drugs are used.
- Watch someone else take drugs.
- Try a drug to see the effects.
- Buy an illegal drug.
- Sell drugs to get drugs.

##### **ALCOHOL**

- Avoid places where alcohol is consumed.
- Watch someone else drink alcohol.
- Try alcohol to see the effects.
- Drink alcohol at home.
- Go to a place known to serve alcohol.
- Ask someone to buy alcohol.

##### **PREMARITAL SEX**

- Be in a group with the opposite sex.
- Holding hands.
- Hugging.
- Kissing.
- Be alone with the opposite sex.
- Touching below the neck.
- Lying down together and touching.
- Taking off clothes.
- Intercourse.

# LESSON

## BEGINNING THE LESSON

### INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we have been learning skills for living: attitudes and habits that will help us avoid dream breakers and make us more likely to accomplish our dreams. In this unit's final lesson, we will learn one more skill – how to set and maintain healthy boundaries. This time we do have a story and another letter from the grandmothers.



### STORY 5 MINUTES

[Read the following story, "Olga's Zoo Adventure".]

"Have you ever been to a major zoo?" asked Tatyana Alexandrovna after the three students had settled into their seats.

Natasha nodded yes, Dima nodded yes, and Sasha said, "Define major."

"Are we going on a field trip?" asked Natasha, hopefully.

"I figure that if our grandmothers can transcend time and space, a little thing like taking us all to the zoo should be easy," said Sasha.

"Perhaps," smiled the teacher. "But this particular visit to the zoo is best seen from a distance."

"Sounds promising!" said Dima.

"Apparently one of your grandmothers went to the Moscow Zoo when she was a little girl, and it turned into quite an adventure," said Tatyana Alexandrovna as she retrieved the letter from the grandmothers' box.

*Dear Ones,*

*How envious we were when we found out Olga was going to visit her aunt in Moscow. Of course, we were all of seven years old at the time. The big event was to be a visit to the zoo. Olga had a brochure from her aunt that described all sorts of interesting things about the zoo. She saw to it that we learned about the zoo whether we wanted to or not.*

*It opened in 1864 and grew to hold more than 3,000 birds, reptiles, mammals, fish, and invertebrates – whatever those are. Of course, it's much bigger today, but still – it sounded like the Hermitage of wild animals to us. We learned that jaguars are good swimmers and leopards are not, that most of the bears on Animals' Island would rather spend their days mooching treats near the moat where the people walk by than climb the big tree planted in their enclosure. From Olga's later description, the whole park sounds like a wonderful maze of cages, fences, moats, glass enclosures, and compounds designed to keep the inhabitants from snacking on each other.*

*Everything was going very well. Olga's aunt took her picture in front of the Monkey House on Animals' Island, and the outing was turning into a wonderful childhood memory. Then, shortly after they arrived at the open enclosure for the celebrated black swans, a string of real memory-makers occurred.*

*Swans are large graceful creatures, and Olga's aunt thought it would be ever so nice if Olga were able to see the beautiful birds up close. Now you probably know that you aren't supposed to feed zoo animals, but this didn't occur to Olga's aunt.*

*Bits of bread from her roll coaxed one of the largest black swans over to the bank of the pond. With a little more coaxing, she had the swan completely out of the water, gobbling down her dwindling supply of bread. Who knows? Perhaps it was the fact that the swan was out of the water and full of expectations, but the end of the food was also the end of the relationship as far as the swan was concerned. Olga's aunt hadn't realized the change in the relationship and picked that moment to reach out – purely in the spirit of friendship – to give the swan a parting stroke on the neck.*

*The swan lowered its head, spread its wings, hissed, and charged! It turns out that an enraged swan can really move! It also turns out that Olga's aunt could move pretty fast when the circumstances called for it. With her skirt hitched up, she was high-stepping it with the best of them!*

*She might have escaped none the worse for the experience if she hadn't mistaken the open gate for a safe haven. A sizable crowd had been drawn to the spectacle of Olga's aunt trying to out-run the swan. And so, when she inadvertently charged into the kangaroo enclosure (one of the animal tenders had just opened the gate to feed the curious-looking creatures), the crowd of spectators immediately tried to warn her. Of course, 50 people yelling at you at the same time seldom brings clarity. However, it did bring the ever-curious Bennett's wallabies, as kangaroos are known in Australia.*

*Sensing that something must be afoot, the kangaroos bounced over to the opening to greet the one who, they probably thought, was their new feeder. Next to bouncing kangaroos, a charging swan looks like a small annoyance – especially when the kangaroos are bouncing directly toward you!*

*It was just bad luck that the mountain goats were being temporarily housed in the next enclosure. The zoo officials were all but certain that the goats wouldn't be able to jump the walls of their temporary home. Now, it is a well-established fact that, after elephants, zebras, and venomous snakes, male mountain goats are the most dangerous animals in captivity.*

*Of course, when the kangaroos all jumped into the next compound, all bets were off. The jumping gene in the goats surfaced with a vengeance. The wall turned out to be woefully inadequate for keeping in the goats.*

*They say that was the only time they've had to close an entire section of the zoo during visiting hours. With kangaroos, swans, and mountain goats, and Olga's aunt running wild in the walkways, they thought it best to stabilize the situation before any more boundaries were breeched. The zoo officials said it was a miracle that no one was seriously injured.*

*Olga often said in later years that subsequent visits to the zoo seemed rather tame after that. She only had two regrets. One was that her aunt had hung onto the camera during the whole episode and hadn't managed to take a single photo. Her other regret was that her aunt never showed the slightest interest in a second visit to the zoo – even though it was only a couple of years before she was allowed back in the park!*

Your Grandmothers

## EXPLORING THE LESSON



### QUESTIONS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

5 MINUTES

*[Classroom teacher begins.]*

**Let's think together about this question:**

**After hearing of Olga's adventure, what do you think would happen at a zoo if all the fences, walls, moats, barriers, and boundaries were suddenly removed?**

*[Answers to add if students don't mention them:]*

- *Some animals would likely be eaten.*
- *Others would escape.*
- *Some would probably try to hide.*
- *Others would become overwhelmed with their new freedom.*
- *Any visitors would likely join Olga's aunt in trying to get out of there.]*

**The problem in establishing boundaries is knowing when you are going to need them before you're in the situation where you need them. So let's discuss further the setting of boundaries.**

**What kinds of boundaries do people draw or build to keep things within something, and what kinds of boundaries do people draw or build to keep things outside of something?**

*[Responses may include:]*

- *Country borders*
- *Athletic fields*
- *Property lines*
- *A variety of fences*
- *Corrals, pens, rooms, jails, etc]*

**What are the main reasons for the establishment of boundaries?**

*[Responses may include:]*

- *Protection*
- *Safety*
- *Caretaking of animals*
- *Efficiency in farming*
- *Political reasons*
- *To show ownership, etc.]*

**What kinds of boundaries do you have as a young person?**

*[Responses may include:*

- *Your small space in your flat or house*
- *A chair and desk at school*
- *A deadline by which you must be home at night, etc.]*

**Most boundaries are visible and easy to identify, such as the lines that mark off an athletic field, fences around a house or yard, fields surrounded by roads, rivers and trees.**

**Some boundaries are not quite as visible, but are often set apart with signs, markers, and maps, such as geographical lines that separate countries, regions, or personal property.**

**Also, there are boundaries that are quite invisible, but are still very important to us human beings. What do you think some of these invisible boundaries may be?**

*[Accept all answers, but give special affirmation to responses that are very close or similar to the following:*

- *Personal space*
- *Physical health boundaries having to do with drugs, alcohol, and premarital sex*
- *Emotional boundaries having to do with friendship and love*
- *Behavioral boundaries having to do with our character and choosing to do right or wrong]*

**People prefer to have some physical distance between one another, but the distance varies from situation to situation and culture to culture. We label this distance “personal space boundary”, which is the area around each of us that gives us a sense of comfort and security.**

**For example, many people feel less comfortable when pushed tightly together in a bus. Of course, this is something we must endure, and even get used to, except for those few times when we have the time to wait for the next bus in the hope that it will not be so crowded.**

 = 10 minutes



## PERSONAL SPACE ACTIVITY

10 MINUTES

Student B walks toward Student A from in front of him or her.

Student B walks toward Student A from the side of him or her.

Student B walks toward Student A from behind him or her.

Let's take a look at personal boundaries.

*[Ask two reasonably cooperative students of the same sex to help you do the following activity. Have the two students face one another standing two meters apart.]*

*Place a light chalk mark on the floor just in front of Student A's shoes, another just behind his shoes, and marks just to the left and right of his shoes. Tell Student A to remain standing inside the chalk marks and facing Student B.*

*Next, have Student B stand about two meters **in front of Student A**. Have Student B walk slowly toward Student A until Student A says, "Stop". Note how close they are, and put a chalk mark on the floor just in front of Student B's shoes.*

- 1. Ask Student A to describe what he or she felt or sensed when he or she said, "Stop". Affirm the student's responses and guide a brief discussion that focuses on the responses that indicate levels of trust, levels of fear, levels of comfort, and levels of discomfort.*

*Next, have Student B step about two meters **to the side of and face toward Student A**, standing about two meters away, and have student B walk slowly toward student A's side until Student A says, "Stop". Note how close they are now, and put a chalk mark on the floor just in front of Student B's shoes.*

- 2. Ask Student A to describe what he or she felt or sensed while Student B moved closer. Responses will likely be similar to No. 1. Note any differences and why.*
- 3. Ask Student A what he or she felt or sensed when he or she said, "Stop". Affirm the student's responses and guide a brief discussion that focuses on any differences from the previous responses that indicate levels of trust, levels of fear, levels of comfort, and levels of discomfort.*

*Finally, have Student B stand about **two meters behind Student A**. Have Student B walk slowly toward Student A until Student A says, "Stop". The two students might be nearly touching, or they might be at quite a distance. Again, place a chalk mark on the floor just in front of Student B's shoes.*

- 4. Again, ask Student A to describe what he or she felt or sensed while Student B moved closer. Responses will likely be similar to No. 1 and No. 2. Note any differences and why.*
- 5. Ask Student A what he or she felt or sensed when he or she said, "Stop". Affirm the student's responses and guide*

**TEACHER SUGGESTION:**

Tell students who may want to talk to you in private or to the school psychologist or social worker to feel free to talk to you after class.

*a brief discussion that focuses on any differences from the first responses that indicate levels of trust, levels of fear, levels of comfort, and levels of discomfort.*

*Allow all the students a couple of minutes in pairs to discover their personal space boundaries. They don't need to mark these boundaries with chalk, just get a sense of them.*

*Describe to your students that they have just experienced a personal space boundary and let them share their comments and questions. Affirm the comments that restate that personal boundaries vary in distance from person to person, vary depending on who is coming close, vary from culture to culture, and are determined by levels of trust, fear, and comfort.]*

**This activity demonstrates personal boundaries of which people may not be aware. There are also moral boundaries about which people are often unaware and which affect our character. Where you set these boundaries also greatly affects whether or not you achieve your life dreams and goals.**

**Moral boundaries are the limits you put on your own behavior, as well as the fences you put around yourself to keep yourself from being improperly influenced, and to avoid being used by other people.**

**Societies also write laws that set personal boundaries, including an individual's right to personal safety. No one has the freedom to hit in anger, touch inappropriately, force themselves on others sexually, or coerce others to drink or take drugs.**

 = 20 minutes



## PERSONAL JOURNAL SETTING BOUNDARIES ACTIVITY

10 MINUTES

Refer to the lists you placed on the board at the beginning of class.

*[This activity is designed for students to write individual responses in their Personal Journal.]*

**Let's think about the idea of moral boundaries as they relate to the use of drugs, alcohol, and premarital sex.**

**On the board are three lists of activities. Copy each list into your Personal Journal. These activities are listed in descending order from the safest to most dangerous. For each list, draw a line indicating where you choose to stop – where you will choose to not compromise or yield. When you draw these lines, you are setting personal moral boundaries. You will not be asked to share your choices in class or with me, your teacher.**

*[Discuss the fact that all boundary decisions have positive consequences (benefits) and negative consequences (costs). For instance, drawing an appropriate boundary can result in a good reputation and open doors to new healthy friendships, but may cost your relationship with a supposed friend who has chosen a path that endangers your dreams.]*

*Ask your students to look at the activity directly above and below where they drew their boundary lines on each of the three lists. Ask them to write a sentence in their Personal Journal about how the benefits and costs might change if they “stopped” at different events on the drug list. Do the same for the alcohol and premarital sex lists.*

*When your students have finished writing, say:]*

**Perhaps some of you would like to change where you drew the line on one or more of the lists. Take a moment to review what we’ve learned about the consequences of choices in these areas and make any changes you think would be wise.**

 = 30 minutes



## CLASS DISCUSSION

5 MINUTES

*[Remind your students of some possible ways that an individual might be able to maintain a specific boundary when pressured by someone else to change it, including:]*

- *Walk away.*
- *Clearly state the boundary and commitment to it.*
- *Avoid the pressure by choosing to be with people who support the same boundary, etc.*

*Reinforce ideas that were taught in Lesson 25 on ways to avoid manipulation. (Repeatedly say “No”, avoid making excuses, etc.)]*

 = 35 minutes



## ENDING THE LESSON

### SUMMARIZE

All people have personal boundaries, including moral boundaries. You are at the age when thinking through, setting, and maintaining your moral boundaries are crucial. The choices you make in these areas will affect the rest of your life. Your choices will become dream makers or dream breakers. Remember, the easiest and best time to establish boundaries is before you need them.



### PERSONAL JOURNAL ACTIVITY

10 MINUTES

You may recall from the last lesson that I told you we would be making another entry in your Personal Journal. We have come to the end of the unit on developing effective life skills.

Open your Personal Journal to the first entry and re-read your “What do I want most out of life?” statement. Also review the comments you wrote in the “Stronger Together” section, the “I Assert My Independence From Drugs” section, the “I Assert My Independence From Alcohol” section, and the “I Assert My Independence From Premarital Sex” section.

Take a few minutes to think about how you may have changed the level of your commitment since you originally wrote your commitments in your Personal Journal. You may want to strengthen your commitment and, if so, please write that under your previous commitment on the appropriate page.

*[Provide sufficient time for students to complete the task.]*

Once you have completed reviewing the previous sections, you are ready to add a section titled “I Responsibly Set Boundaries.”

**Caution:** If you draw no moral boundaries for yourself, you are much more vulnerable to manipulators than if you have already decided what behaviors you will and will not do.

**In this group of lessons, we have tried to equip you with the important skills:**

- To resist pressure to compromise.
- To recognize the dangers of infatuation.
- To delay gratification to reach greater goals.
- To unmask the media.
- To avoid being manipulated.
- To set responsible boundaries.

Have students record these in their Personal Journal under the title: “Skills I Have Learned and Need to Keep Working On.”

Now, it is time to set some responsible boundaries. Your teachers can only set classroom boundaries. Your parents are slowly turning the task of setting your boundaries over to you. This will not be the last time you set boundaries for yourself; it is a lifelong process. When we take a stand by drawing a boundary, that becomes a “defining moment.” So be courageous and set some strong boundaries for yourself. When you set boundaries, you are choosing who you are and who you will become.

The challenge of this defining moment is to draw your own first set of moral boundaries. I would like you to do this by writing in your Personal Journals the behaviors you will not do in your three lists (Drugs, Alcohol, and Premarital Sex).

Start with the words, “I WILL NOT” and simply list all the behaviors you will not do (the activities listed below your line in each of the three areas). When you have finished, please sign and date your commitment. Be sure to leave enough room for a couple of signatures as you did in the previous sections.

*[Provide sufficient time for students to complete the task.]*

The next step will be for you to share your statement with at least two people. They can be the same people with whom you shared the previous section or someone else (a parent, grandparent, teacher, sibling, or friend) whom you can trust to be supportive.

Tell them some of the things you have learned about how setting boundaries can affect your dreams. Then, ask them to sign their names in the “I Responsibly Set Boundaries” section as a witness to your commitment. If you have the courage to take this step, you will be on your way to realizing your dreams and have the benefit of trusted partners along the way – people who can be a source of strength for you when you encounter the challenges and obstacles that lie ahead.

This is the end of our unit on Skills for Living. Next time, we will begin the last series of lessons in our *DreamMakers-DreamBreakers* Class. Our next lesson is called “The Unseen World”.

Before dismissing your students, remember to dictate the Parent-Teacher questions to them.

 = 45 minutes

## RESOURCES

### GOING DEEPER

Today, we explored how boundaries can help protect us from dream breakers such as drugs, alcohol, and premarital sex. Three of the world's major religions – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – believe that God Himself gave important boundaries to us, the humans He created. The best-known of these boundaries is a set of rules called the Ten Commandments.

Christians believe God gave these boundaries, not to make us unhappy or take away our fun, but for quite the opposite reason. He gave us these boundaries to protect us from harm and help us avoid things that might destroy our dreams.

*[If you think it would be helpful, you can read the original Ten Commandments in **Exodus 20:3-17**.]*

### TEN COMMANDMENTS PROTECTION LIST

Write on the board:

1. Make God first.
2. Nothing between God and you.
3. Respect God's name.
4. Day for worship.
5. Honor parents.
6. Don't murder.
7. No adultery.

I'm going to summarize each of the commandments and write a brief phrase for each on the board. Please copy these phrases into your notebooks. Then I'm going to ask you which of these 10 boundaries might help protect us from the three dream breakers (drugs, alcohol, and premarital sex) we've been studying.

The first command is:

1. Make God first in your life.

The second command is:

2. Let nothing come between you and God.

The third command is:

3. Respect God's name; don't use it lightly.

The fourth command is:

4. Set aside one special day for worship each week.

The fifth command is:

5. Honor those who raised you.

The sixth command is:

6. Don't murder another human being.

The seventh command is:

7. Be faithful to your chosen mate.

8. Don't steal.

9. Don't lie.

10. Don't covet.

The eighth command is:

**8. Respect what others have – do not take it from them.**

The ninth command is:

**9. Be truthful; don't lie about another person.**

The last of the Ten Commandments is:

**10. Be content; do not desire what belongs to another.**

Now that you have the brief summaries written in your notebooks, let's go back through and talk about which of these boundaries might help keep us from the three dream breakers. Keep in mind that some may protect you directly and others serve as a more indirect or general protection. (In other words, if you followed the commandments wholeheartedly, you would be much less likely to become involved with dream breakers.)

*[Lead a discussion through each of the commandments, letting the students share their ideas first. Then add your own comments.]*

*The point of this exercise is not that everyone agrees on exactly which of the 10 would protect them from the three dream breakers. Rather, the point is that God desires to protect us and has given us boundaries in the form of commandments. The Seventh Commandment is one that is clearly a partial protection against sex outside of marriage. Commandments Three, Four, and Six probably are not even indirect protections against the three dream breakers we are dealing with in this curriculum. The other commandments are probably indirect protections. An example of an indirect protection might be "honor parents". Most parents do not actively encourage their pre-teen or adolescent children to take illegal drugs, get drunk, or have sex. So, if adolescents honor their parents, they will behave in ways that would make their parents proud of them, even when the parents aren't present.]*

## FOCUS POINT

Be sure to leave time for discussion at the end of the learning activity so your students can discuss the connection between the learning activity and the lesson. Listen to see whether they seemed to understand the key points listed. If you sense that one or more of these points may have been lost, be sure to guide the discussion to make sure they get these main ideas.

1. **A number of the Ten Commandments can serve, at least indirectly, as protections against the three dream breakers.**
2. **Rules like the Ten Commandments are not designed to make us miserable, but rather to help us lead long, productive, and fulfilling lives.**

## PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

### **For Family Discussion:**

1. Discuss the moral boundaries that you as a family have established.
2. Ask your adolescent what he or she thinks are some boundaries you might strengthen to improve their chances of reaching his or her dreams.

