

THE POWER OF CHOICE

TEACHING GUIDE

For Use With
Program 9

FRIENDSHIP AND DATING

Discussion Questions

Group Activities

Writing Assignments

Program Background

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There is probably nothing teenagers are more acutely aware of and concerned about than their relationships with others. And understandably so. At a time when everything in their lives is changing rapidly, personal relationships are at once the most comforting and the most threatening factors of daily existence.

In this program, host Michael Pritchard and high school students in Detroit, Wichita, Brooklyn, and Gainesville, Florida, take a heartwarming look at *how to create and maintain quality relationships*. As one boy in Brooklyn said, "When I started dating, my Mom told me to treat girls the way I'd want boys to treat my sister."

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

_ To stimulate young people to look critically at the nature of their relationships with others, and to choose for themselves what they want in a relationship.

_ To empower them to take the initiative in shaping their relationships the way they want.

_ To identify the ingredients that go into good friendships, and to sensitize them to the way their own actions either strengthen or weaken those friendships.

_ To examine the dynamics of boy-girl interactions, and to discover what members of the opposite sex both desire and expect from them in romantic and dating relationships.

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HOW TO USE THIS VIDEO

Use in classrooms, libraries, youth service agencies, youth groups, or show it to your kids at home. Ideal for parents, too.

THE POWER OF CHOICE[®] is an entertaining and thought provoking video series designed to help you empower your young people to make good choices in their lives. You can greatly enhance the effectiveness of this video by following it up with group discussions, writing assignments, and learning activities. This guide is intended to help you in your efforts.

We recommend that, before showing the video, you ask a few questions to start the kids thinking about the issues treated in the program. You'll find some useful questions on page 6. Also, you should expect that your students will have a lot to talk about after viewing the video, so it's a good idea to allow ample time.

While this discussion guide may appear to be written for classroom teachers, any group leader or parent will find it a useful tool for getting the most out of this video program.

PROGRAM CONTENT

INTRODUCTION: There are things we can do to form the relationships we want.

PRITCHARD asks girls for their pet peeves about guys and dating. Answers include: guys get physical when you want to talk, they're too possessive, they don't show their feelings. One boy complains that he doesn't like to be pressured to show his emotions; he prefers to deal with that himself.

DISCUSSION about breaking the ice. Don't try to make a girl fall in love with you, just get to know her, advises one girl. "Don't try to be Casanova Brown when you're really PeeWee Herman," says another; in other words, be yourself.

Boys say they would like girls to be more direct in approaching them. One girl says that she does flirt but doesn't want to seem loose.

A boy says his mother taught him to treat girls on a date as he would want his sister to be treated.

HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION: A person you're dying to go out with asks you for a date on weekend when you've planned to go skiing with a friend. What do you do? Some say that friends are more important and that the ski trip should have priority over the date. One boy says that his friend would understand if he canceled the ski trip; a girl says she would lie to her friend if the boy looked good.

PRITCHARD asks, what holds you and your best friend together? Answers include: trust, shared humor, the ability to express how you feel, and the knowledge that your friend will give you support when needed.

DISCUSSION of trust in friendship. The boy with a beard says that you have to take some risks. A girl tells about an incident when her boyfriend visited from out of town. One of her good

friends saw him first and made a play for him. She felt betrayed. One boy observes that at a time in life when people tend to trust friends more than parents, it hurts when that trust is violated.

PRITCHARD asks what to do when your relationship with a boyfriend or girlfriend is in trouble. Responses include: speak up, look at yourself first, and go the extra mile to save a relationship.

Two girls tell the story of how they drifted apart even though they were once close friends.

A girl asks, why be friends with someone who stops you from growing?

A boy tells the story of getting into a fight with guys from his old Hispanic neighborhood who thought he had betrayed his past. He says he loved them too much to hit them back. A classmate tells him to accept the fact that he outgrew his old friends. Pritchard tells him his conflict was "between loyalty for who you were and love for who you are."

It's important that friends give each other "the space to change and grow," says one girl, and another observes that it is hard to see friends growing away from you, as typically occurs at the end of high school.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Questions to ask before showing the video.

1. What are the qualities that make a good friendship?
2. What are the qualities you look for in a boyfriend or girlfriend?

Questions to ask after showing the video.

3. How do you break the ice on a first date?
4. On the worst date you ever had, what went wrong?
5. When you first meet someone, what do you reveal about yourself? How do you let people get to know you?
6. Why do some people on a date "act like Casanova Brown when they're really PeeWee Herman?"
7. How do you approach someone you find attractive? What kind of risks are involved?
8. What are some of your pet peeves about people you've gone out with?
9. What do your pet peeves reveal about you?
10. What are the qualities you look for in a girlfriend or boyfriend?
11. A long-time friend asks you out on a date. You don't want that kind of relationship with this person. How do you respond?
12. Two friends of yours are at odds with each other. They demand that you choose between them. You don't want to lose either of them. What do you do?

13. How do you know that someone is really your friend?
14. How do you let someone know that you are really their friend?
15. "We trust friends more than parents," says one boy in the program. Is that true for you? Are your friends more trustworthy than your parents?
16. How do you know if you can trust a friend with an intimate secret?
17. People you once felt close to turn on you and put you down. What should you do, if anything, in response?
18. Describe the groups or cliques that people you know associate with. Would you call the relationships within these groups friendships? What characterizes a friendship as distinguished from membership in a group?
19. What do you do if you want a person you have just met to become a part of your group, but the others don't want to have anything to do with this new person?
20. When someone tells you that a friend of yours has done something that you feel is wrong, what alternatives do you have, and what would you do?
21. Have you ever drifted apart from a friend? Do you regret losing that friend, and if so, what could you have done to prevent it? Is there anything you could still do to fix it?
22. Have you ever had to break off a relationship? How did you do it? Could you have handled it in a better way?
23. Is there any good way to break up with a boyfriend or girlfriend?
24. Is it really possible to be friends with a former boyfriend or girlfriend?

GROUP ACTIVITIES

1. Divide into teams of four. Each team creates and acts out a skit of a disastrous first date. It could be a double date, or two people could be the dating couple and the others play supporting characters like a driver, a former girlfriend or boyfriend, people they're stuck with in an elevator, etc. The comedy comes partly from the contrast between the positive expectations of the daters and how they end when it turns out badly.
2. Brainstorm ways in which people might meet someone they would like to know but have not felt able to approach.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Write an ad about yourself for the "personals" column of the newspaper. (E.g., 17 year old athletic male seeks intelligent, vivacious female for weekend hikes.) Be sure to write it in a way that would appeal to the girl or boy of your dreams. Then, write an ad that the girl or boy of your dreams could use to attract you. What does this tell you about how you see yourself, and what you think you want? How well would the two people you described get along?
2. You are a "clique counselor," and it's your job to provide incoming freshmen with information about the cliques one might join. Write a brief description of the unifying interest of each clique and describe the people who tend to join it.
3. Write a scene in which two former friends who drifted apart after they joined different cliques meet by chance, tell each other off, and then discover they really still like each other.
4. Write an essay on the ideas about love that people are in love with. Focus on the differences between illusory love and the real thing.

ABOUT MICHAEL PRITCHARD

Michael Pritchard is a juvenile probation officer turned comedian/youth counselor/public speaker. After his college graduation in 1973, Mike went to work for the St. Louis Police Department and then relocated to San Francisco's juvenile hall. In his years of working with young offenders, Mike discovered that his penchant for humor served as a powerful counseling tool, enabling him to break down communication barriers and help a lot of troubled kids turn their lives around. As Mike is fond of saying, ***"the shortest distance between any two people is a good laugh."*** Mike's unusual combination of talents gained him recognition as California's "Probation Officer of the Year" the same year that he won the San Francisco International Comedy Competition.

Whether he's being funny or serious, Mike's big love is talking with kids about the choices they make in their lives. He teaches young people that they have the power of choice, that they are responsible for the choices they make, and that they owe it to themselves to choose the best.



"The shortest distance between two people is a good laugh."

HOW THIS PROGRAM WAS PRODUCED

THE POWER OF CHOICE began as a one-hour TV special for PBS. Our aim was to create a show for teenagers that would be both entertaining and educationally useful. With this goal in mind, we took San Francisco comedian/ youth counselor Michael Pritchard and a TV production crew to four high schools across the U.S. to talk with kids about how they make choices in life.

At each school Mike entertained a student assembly with comedy about growing up. Then, he led small groups of students in highly productive problem-solving sessions. These groups were selected by the schools before we arrived (we asked for a representative mix of students). The kids we got were amazingly candid. They revealed deeply personal thoughts, feelings, and experiences, and shared useful solutions and insights. We captured all this on videotape using three cameras, and edited the material down to a one-hour show.

When the program aired on PBS, educators and broadcasters expressed enthusiasm for having it made into a series. So, we immediately began work on eleven new half-hour programs exploring a whole range of issues important to teens. To develop the content, we spent one full semester at schools around the San Francisco Bay Area meeting with students and teachers. Following that, we took Mike and our production crew on a nine-week, 21 state tour of high schools throughout the U.S. (see list).

We returned with more than 100 hours of material, and spent five months editing the eleven new programs. The series was televised on PBS and is used in classrooms, libraries, and youth groups throughout the U.S. and other countries.

LOCATIONS

THE POWER OF CHOICE was shot at the following high schools:

San Francisco, Calif.

Lowell H.S.

Denver, Colorado

West H.S.

Biloxi, Mississippi

Biloxi H.S.

New York City

Murry Bergtraum H.S.
for Business Careers

San Rafael, Calif.

San Rafael H.S.

Los Angeles, Calif.

Venice H.S.

Phoenix, Arizona

Washington H.S.

Albuquerque, N.M.

West Mesa H.S.

Dallas, Texas

Woodrow Wilson H.S.

Wichita, Kansas

Southeast H.S.

St. Louis, Missouri

St. Thomas Aquinas/ Mercy
H.S.

Nashville, Tennessee

McGavock H.S.

Atlanta, Georgia

Northside H.S.

Gainesville, Florida

Buchholz H.S.

Columbia, S.C

Dreher H.S.

Washington, D.C.

School Without Walls

Philadelphia, Penn.

George Washington Carver
H.S. for Engineering &
Science

Wayne, New Jersey

Wayne Hills Senior H.S.

Brooklyn, New York

Edward. R. Murrow H.S.

Boston, Mass.

Newton North H.S.

Cleveland, Ohio

Glenville H.S.

Detroit, Michigan

Cass Technical H.S.

South Bend, Indiana

La Salle H.S.

Chicago, Illinois

Senn Metro Academy

Madison, Wisconsin

West H.S.

Bloomington, Minn.

Thomas Jefferson H.S.

Fremont, Calif.

Irvington H.S.

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**ELKIND+SWEET COMMUNICATIONS, INC.
(415) 564-9500
publisher@livewiremedia.com**

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THE POWER OF CHOICE

Program Titles

- 1: THE POWER OF CHOICE
- 2: ACTING ON YOUR VALUES
- 3: SELF-ESTEEM
- 4: COPING WITH PRESSURES
- 5: DRUGS & ALCOHOL - Part 1
- 6: DRUGS & ALCOHOL - Part 2
- 7: DRINKING & DRIVING
- 8: SEX
- 9: FRIENDSHIP & DATING
- 10: DEPRESSION & SUICIDE
- 11: COMMUNICATING with PARENTS
- 12: RAISING YOUR PARENTS