

Disciplining Students in the Teen Challenge Program

By Dave Batty & Dan Batty

Student Manual

Name _____

Disciplining Students in the Teen Challenge Program

By Dave Batty & Dan Batty

Student Manual

2nd Edition

Scripture references used in this course are from the following versions of the Bible.

Verses marked NIV are from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 Biblica. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved. The “NIV” and “New International Version” trademarks are registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica. Use of either trademark requires the permission of Biblica.

Copyright © 1994, 2012, David R. Batty

All rights, including the right of presentation or reproduction in whole or in part in any form, are reserved under the Universal Copyright Convention and all other pertinent conventions, treaties, or proclamations.

This course is developed for use in Teen Challenge, and similar ministries working with new Christians in a residential setting. You may reproduce this course without written permission, but only for free distribution. For more information about this course, or to order additional copies, contact:

Global Teen Challenge
PO Box 511
Columbus, GA 31902
Phone: 706-576-6555
Email: gtc@globaltc.org
Web: iTeenChallenge.org

Contents

1	Discipline in your life	4
2	Principles of discipline.....	7
3	Relationships in discipline	12
4	The main goals of discipline.....	17
5	The role of staff in discipline.....	23
6	Teen Challenge standards and policies for discipline	30
7	Interview with a Teen Challenge Program Director.....	37
8	Methods of discipline.....	42
9	Making discipline effective	52
10	Special situations in discipline.....	57

Chapter 1

Discipline in Your Life

Key Truth: Your present view of discipline has been greatly influenced by your past experiences.

Key Verse: Proverbs 22:61 (NIV)

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

Introduction

In this course we will study the role of discipline in the Teen Challenge residential program. Clearly this is a broad subject that cannot be completely mastered in 10 hours of training. Not all Teen Challenge ministries have the same approach to discipline. Unfortunately in some settings, discipline is poorly understood by staff and ineffective in helping students move toward godly living.

First, let's understand what this course is not going to focus on. We are not going to train you on how to go to a Teen Challenge center and completely throw out the rules and discipline procedures currently in use and put something new in its place. We will not study how to start a new Teen Challenge and set up the entire discipline structure.

This course is designed to train you to work at a Teen Challenge ministry where a discipline procedure is already in place. The purpose of this course is to teach how a new staff can fit in effectively and implement the discipline procedures already in place.

Twelve Teen Challenge centers that participated in a survey on discipline were asked what are the major problems new staff face in handling this area of the ministry. All those interviewed had plenty to say about the problems that new staff face. We will look at those issues as we go through this course.

There is much more to being an effective staff than disciplining students. However, this area of responsibility is a difficult challenge even for staff who have worked at Teen Challenge for many years. How a staff handles discipline will quickly show the depth of character in his/her life. It will also expose your weaknesses.

Discipline gets personal—it involves conflict and confrontation. This will not be a course on theory—it will take a practical focus. This course will ask you to take a personal look at your past and present. You will be challenged to assess your own beliefs and attitudes and see how closely they match what Jesus calls us to live.

As you go through this course, at least one case study will be used with each class session. These case studies are in the Study Guide for this course. The purpose of these case studies is not to find the perfect solution to each situation. When disciplining students in real life—perfection is rarely the best way to describe the situation. We hope that each case study

will help you understand some of the critical issues that impact each discipline situation.

A. Your past experiences with discipline

If you have not done so already, stop and take time to answer the questions on Project 1, “Discipline in my Background.” It is located in your Study Guide for this course. As you look at your answers to those questions, it is important for you to see that your past experiences—good or bad—are having a major impact on your present attitudes toward discipline.

Some of these questions may have brought back some painful memories from your childhood years. As you begin this course, you also need to realize that the students you will be working with in Teen Challenge may have come from a very abusive background. They may still carry scars and deep damage from the way they were abused as a child.

We cannot go back and change our past. But as a Teen Challenge staff, you need to be attentive to the fact that the childhood experiences of those in Teen Challenge can have a profound effect on the way they handle discipline.

Abusive discipline can leave much more than physical scars—the emotional damage can be deep. So as you look ahead to the times when you will be administering discipline, it is important for you to make sure that it is done with Godly methods if it is to produce positive results.

B. What God says about your past experiences

Many of your students may have tragic stories of discipline not done in a loving Biblical way. In this course we will take a close look at what the Bible says about discipline. Let’s start by looking at two verses that deal with discipline as it relates to parents raising their children.

Proverbs 22:6 (NIV)

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

The main point of this verse can be seen in the lives of people today. Can you see the influence of your parents’ training and discipline—positive or negative—and how this influenced you as you grew up?

One student responded to this verse, “I’m an exact duplicate of my mother. I have her character traits—both good and bad.”

Some of your students may have come from homes where their parents did all within their power to raise their children right. Others may have parents that trained them how to be a sinner—and raised them without godly influence. Other students are in Teen Challenge today because they rebelled against what their parents wanted them to do.

Hebrews 12:11 (NIV)

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Take a few minutes and reflect on your past life and how this verse relates to your own experiences. One of the main *long range* purposes of discipline is to help students experience the positive results in their lives that are promised by these two verses.

C. Who are the people you will soon be required to discipline?

Depending on which Teen Challenge center you will be working at, many of the students may still be teenagers biologically. If you work in an adult program, then many of the students will be in their twenties, or older. However, their biological age does not determine their emotional maturity. Many TC students are still emotionally acting more like a teenager than an adult. Simply stated—when you become staff at a Teen Challenge center, you will be called on to discipline people who on the inside are still emotionally teenagers.

In God's plan for the family, parents start with a baby, and learn how to discipline beginning with this young child. They have thirteen years of experience before they have to deal with the difficulties of disciplining a teenager. Even in the best of family settings, disciplining a teenager can be very difficult. It will often be much more difficult in the TC setting because of all the life-controlling problems the students have in their lives right now.

There are a number of the key principles you must understand if you are going to be an effective staff at Teen Challenge. Here's one of the most basic—discipline can be much more effective when you know the person you are disciplining. The same method of discipline given to two different students can have completely different results. How can you offer the right kind of discipline to each student? Get to know them.

Our parents, with all their past mistakes and flaws, probably knew us better than anyone else when we were growing up. If you are going to be effective as a staff in Teen Challenge you will have to learn how a student's background can dramatically affect their attitudes and behaviors today.

Here's a couple more issues for you to begin considering. We will deal with these in much greater detail later in this course.

Why are we disciplining students in Teen Challenge? Do we discipline them just so they will obey the rules while they are in Teen Challenge? No—our long range goal for each student is that they will learn to live a lifestyle of obedience to both God and man.

With all the careful attention we give to learning about a student's background, none of this will replace the need to depend on the Holy Spirit to give us wisdom to minister to each student God's way.

Chapter 2

Principles of Discipline

Key Truth: Understanding God’s view of discipline will help me live a godly lifestyle.

Key Verse: Hebrews 12: 11 (NIV)

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Introduction

The next three lessons will look at basic biblical principles of discipline. These principles will provide a foundation for the specific methods of discipline that will be covered in later lessons.

A. The need for discipline

What are some biblical reasons for having discipline? In other words, why is discipline needed?

Consider these scripture verses and identify reasons from them:

Proverbs 22:6
Hebrews 12:11
2 Timothy 3:16
Romans 2:5-8
Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-24

The simple reason why discipline is needed is that people have disobeyed.

Another key point here is that God has ordained people to be in positions of authority. God has put in place His laws. He has also put leaders in authority over us.

Parents Exodus 20:12
Government leaders Romans 13:1-5

B. Three Levels of Obedience

Before we get into a detailed look at discipline, let’s start by looking at the big picture in life. God wants us to follow Him and live in His truth. When we obey Him, we experience the blessings that follow obedience. When we disobey God’s laws and / or man’s laws, painful

consequences are often the result. Developing a lifestyle of obedience is the key to a close relationship with God.

If you were a student in Teen Challenge, you may have studied the *Group Studies for New Christians* course ***Obedience to Man***. One chapter discussed in detail three levels of obedience. Let's quickly review these three levels, and look at each level from both sides—the side of the one obeying, and from the side of the person in authority asking this person to obey you. The best way to prepare yourself to be a person in authority in relationship to these 3 levels of obedience is to make sure you are consistently applying these in your own life.

1. Level One: Obey because you were told to do it

This is the basic starting point for obedience. Most of us can remember our parents saying, “Obey because I said so!” Some might call this blind obedience, and in some respects that's what this is calling for. But this is not where God wants you to spend the rest of your life.

Another way of phrasing this level is “Just do it!”

This level carries with it the understanding that I accept my leaders as having authority. With that authority comes the responsibility to govern – to lead. One part of leadership involves the power to establish rules and enforce them.

Hebrews 13:1-17 directs us to submit to those in authority. We are not looking at the abuses of authority here, but the general principle of authority being put in place by God.

Romans 13:1-5 makes this same point – authority has been established by God. I have a responsibility to submit to those in authority.

This biblical principle of submitting to authority is at the heart of the greatest conflict of all time – beginning in the Garden of Eden. Satan tells every one of us the same thing he told Eve – you don't have to obey God. Rebelling against authority is at the heart of the reason for this course.

God's simple first step for all of us is – obey – just do it. But then immediately move on to level two.

2. Level Two: Obey and discover the main reason why you were told to do it

This does not state, “Obey after you have discovered the main reason why you were told to do it.”

While you are obeying – think about it. Blind obedience is not the goal – we are looking for intelligent obedience.

Try to understand the main reasons why you were told to do it. Our motive in understanding the main reason why is not to challenge the leadership of the person in authority,

but to move us to level three – to be able to obey on our own.

Level two is not easily understood by many. People often miss the major reasons for a rule and assume that the rule is there to simply make life miserable for those who have to obey it.

The key point at level two of obedience is to grow in understanding and wisdom so we can see these rules as helping us live for God each day. Learning how to obey at level two prepares us for level three.

3. Level Three: Obey on your own

An expanded version of this level is – obey on your own because you know it is the right thing to do.

Another version is – obey on your own because you want to – out of a heart of love for God and respect for your leaders.

It is extremely important that leaders function at level three. This point cannot be over-emphasized! Just look at the chaos that follows when leaders fail – especially Christian leaders.

Level three is where God wants all of us to function. Our goal for each student in Teen Challenge is that they function at this level of obedience – not just once in a while, but consistently – even when we don't like the rule.

You may want to take a few minutes and ask yourself, “Why do I obey the rules?” What motivates you to obey?

C. The need for appropriate rules

Leaders need to make sure the rules they create and enforce accurately reflect God's priorities in life. The Pharisees in Jesus' day had created a long list of rules for “godly living” that were dramatically different from God's idea of godly living.

When you go to work at a Teen Challenge ministry, carefully study the rules and make sure you are using these rules to guide students to live the Christ-like lifestyle.

D. The three levels of discipline

Now that we have looked at the three levels of obedience, let's take a careful look at three levels of discipline. As you look at each of these three levels of discipline, try to identify examples from your own life that relate to each level.

The main purpose of this section is to look at discipline from the broad biblical perspective. God's view of discipline is redemptive, not an angry expression of frustration.

1. Level One: Self-discipline

This is the best type of discipline. We are not talking about self-punishment here.

Self-discipline is a healthy, mature way of facing life. Self-discipline is functioning at level three of obedience – obeying on your own.

Self-control is another way of describing self-discipline. This is not gritting your teeth and just grinding your way through each daily experience. It is willingly choosing to live within the rules that God and human authority have placed over you. It is “walking in the Spirit.” Nothing mystical or super-spiritual – just plain ordinary obedience, out of a heart of love for God.

Fear of discipline or punishment is not a very good motivator for consistent self-discipline. Fear can motivate temporarily, but it is a very poor foundation on which to build a godly lifestyle.

Exercising self-discipline is possible with God’s help. However, on many occasions it may not be easy. Paul talks about the battle to discipline his thoughts and actions.

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV)

“We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”

Philippians 3:12-14 (NIV)

(12) “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. (13) Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, (14) I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

Self-discipline, when consistent, eliminates the need to experience discipline from the other two levels. However, human nature for what it is – we all have experienced discipline at the next two levels.

2. Level Two: Discipline by others

Most of us were disciplined by our parents. When at school, the teachers disciplined us, or sent us to the principal’s office. In society we have laws. The police and the judicial system enforce those laws, and punish those who break the laws.

Many Teen Challenge students have been disciplined by parents or others in authority in ways that clearly violate God’s view of discipline. Past negative experiences with abusive discipline need to be distinguished from godly methods of discipline.

In future lessons we will deal with godly methods of discipline.

Romans 13: 1-5 makes the point that God has placed people in authority over us, and as a

Christian, we have the responsibility to obey those leaders. However, this scripture should not be used to draw the conclusion that all laws are approved by God, nor do all leaders enforce the laws in a just or godly way.

Hebrews 13:17 makes the point that leaders will have to give an account for their leadership. If you as a leader fail to discipline those under your care, or you discipline them in ways that dishonor God, He may begin to discipline you.

3. Level Three: Discipline by God

Consider the ways that God disciplines us.

Hebrews 12:5-11 gives a powerful description of God's view of disciplining us. Verse 6 makes the point that the Lord disciplines those He loves. Verse 10 states that "God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness." (NIV)

God's Word is described as a tool to help us.

2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,"

Hebrews 4:12 (NIV)

"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

Many times God does not immediately discipline us when we disobey His laws. Some people interpret silence from God as an indication that their behavior is OK. God is patient, long-suffering, wanting us to repent before His judgment comes. If we do not confess our sins, then after death we will face the judgment.

Chapter 3

Relationships in Discipline

Key Truth: Discipline carries the greatest potential for positive growth in the context of meaningful relationships.

Key Verse: Hebrews 12:10 (NIV)

Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness.

Introduction

In the last class session and today's class session we are looking at basic biblical principles of discipline. These principles provide a foundation for the specific methods of discipline that will be covered in later lessons.

The setting of discipline

Discipline usually occurs in a setting of relationships. In Case Study #1 in Study Guide Project 3, one of the difficulties we had in deciding what to do with the student suspected of smoking was the lack of any background information. How long has this student been in the program? Is this the first time he has done this, or has it happened before? What is his attitude toward resolving this problem in his life?

Understanding the background of the student and bringing the knowledge gained from a personal relationship with the student creates the setting for meaningful discipline.

A. Discipline in the context of meaningful relationships

Discipline is a regular part of Teen Challenge (TC). But we do not go out on the streets of our city and discipline people walking by who are smoking, cursing, lying, or using drugs. The TC rules only apply to those in the TC program. Each new student coming into the program must make a commitment to obey the rules. They also agree to accept the consequences of disobedience when they break the rules.

In reality, every new student is asked to make a commitment to establish meaningful relationships with the staff and other students from the very first day they enter the program.

These commitments as conditions for entering the program are extremely important later on when confronting a student about breaking a rule. The staff can go back to the agreement the student signed when s/he came into the program and use this as a basis for dealing with the situation. It is not simply that the student has broken a rule. It is more important that the student recognize that s/he has gone back on his/her word. When the student entered the program, s/he made a commitment to obey the rules of TC.

However, disciplining total strangers carries a high risk of failure. What motivates total strangers to obey the rules?

A much more powerful context for obeying rules is a meaningful relationship. The best setting for obedience is a relationship based on love and commitment.

1. Meaningful Relationships – Family

The application of this principle is clear in the Bible. God placed the responsibility of disciplining children first with the parents. (Proverbs 19:18, 23:13, 29:17). In this context of meaningful relationships, discipline has the potential to accomplish its intended purpose – righteous living.

2. Meaningful Relationships – Society

What enables a society to function? Only when people agree to live together under a mutually agreed upon set of rules (laws) can people in that society live in peace. Meaningful relationships provide the context for a peaceful society, these relationships provide the “glue” that holds people together.

The fear of discipline – a fine, a jail or prison term – motivates some to obey the laws. However, if a society is to continue to function effectively, something far more positive than fear of punishment must motivate people to obey the laws.

Teen Challenge is one aspect of society in the life of the student. For some this may be viewed as a substitute “family.” However, the relationships here are non-family relationships.

In the development of this course, a survey was conducted of graduates of TC. One prominent issue raised by the graduates was the importance of staff showing love to the students. If the discipline you administer in Teen Challenge is to be effective, genuine love must be clearly communicated to the students.

3. Meaningful Relationships – God

God disciplines us because He loves us, and He wants to have a close personal relationship with us. This principle runs through the whole Bible. Discipline administered is an expression of concern. Because we care about you, we discipline you.

The power of love motivates people to care about maintaining that relationship. Obeying the rules is an expression of love, commitment, and submission to the rules and the makers of the rules.

B. Discipline in the context of damaged relationships

The need for discipline is based on the act of disobedience. So whenever discipline is needed, one person has broken the rule, broken their word to obey the rules, and damaged their relationship with those in authority.

Look at the very first example in the Bible – Adam and Eve sinning against God. When God comes to talk with them, the consequences of their disobedience are clearly evident. In Genesis chapter 3, both Adam and Eve make excuses for their disobedience. You may want to take the time to read this chapter and look at how God disciplined them. How did their disobedience damage their relationship with God?

Take a minute and think about the consequences of your past disobedience. It is important to understand that disobedience damages your personal relationship with God.

In the Teen Challenge program, damaged relationships are a major problem. Most of the students have damaged or destroyed their relationships with family members. Disobedience typically played a major part in this damaged relationship. Many have damaged their relationship with the police – they have a criminal record.

Another element of damage common among Teen Challenge students is related to issues discussed in Chapter One and Project 2 – damage because of abusive discipline administered to them by people in authority – beating, burns, choking, etc. Even when you as a staff administer discipline in a godly way, the very act of discipline can bring back a flood of negative memories in the mind of the student, and cause a very hostile reaction.

Simply put – we are working with damaged people. As they react with disobedience, they can bring more damage into their lives.

We will deal with this more later, but what is your reaction to the damage that disobedience causes? If you react with anger, you may not be responding in a godly way. Godly sorrow is much more the response that characterizes God's response to disobedience. (2 Corinthians 7:9-10)

1. Delusion

The context of disobedience often involves delusion, denial, or rebellion. The temptation to disobey is often beautifully camouflaged as a simple way to have a good time and to get your needs met. Many times disobedience is not so much an intentional act of rebellion as it is ignoring the rules to get something I want right now.

Delusion is not seeing, not understanding, or not acting in truth. Satan is a master at deception. (See Isaiah 59:14 and 2 Corinthians 4:4.) His goal is to destroy us, and particularly to destroy our relationship with God.

When as a staff you are faced with a student who has disobeyed a rule, it is very likely that delusion is or was involved. Another way of looking at this issue is to pose the question – what was the main reason why you did what you did? Was your main reason for doing this to

break the rule?

There are many ways to rationalize disobedient behavior. It is common for the person to be more concerned about meeting his/her own needs and desires than to obey the rules. (Proverbs 14:12, 21:2) Many times at the moment of temptation, the person was misled – either by his own thoughts, or by the persuasive speech of another person.

2. Denial

Many acts of disobedience are accompanied by words of denial. Why would this person lie when confronted about his/her disobedient behavior? Denial is a defense mechanism designed to hide one from the painful consequences of facing the truth.

Why did Peter deny that he knew Jesus on the night of Jesus' arrest? Because Peter was afraid that if he told the truth, his own life would be in danger. In his mind, he believed that it was safer to tell a lie than to admit the truth.

But this denial is really an expression of delusion. Satan has deceived the person into believing that breaking the rule is more helpful to meeting his/her needs than in obeying the rule. Now Satan continues to deceive the person into believing that denying the truth will do more good than confessing his disobedience.

What can break through the delusion and denial to bring this person to an opportunity for change? (2 Corinthians 10:5) Make sure you have the facts. The Bible describes the truth as light. The light illuminates the situation, bringing clarity to what is really true. (1 John 1:5-8, 1 Corinthians 4:6)

3. Rebellion

Many of those coming to Teen Challenge have a major problem with rebellion. They don't want someone else telling them how to run their lives. Rebellion is basically saying "I don't want to submit to your authority. I want to be in charge of my own life. I will decide what my own rules are. I don't have to listen to you or obey you."

Satan is the father of rebellion. It fits his purpose for every student in Teen Challenge when that student chooses to rebel.

However, we need to be careful that we do not assume that rebellion is the primary reason why every student breaks the rules. For example, some children never got the attention or affection from their parents that they needed as they grew up. Some of these children learned that if they disobeyed the teacher at school, they would get special attention from the teacher, or another person in authority. We could look at that child and say, "That's not the right way to get attention." But the affection starved child is simply looking at the immediate result of getting attention.

This does not mean it is OK to disobey. What it does point out is the need for staff to be sensitive to the needs within that person's life, and attempt to meet those needs in a Biblical way. On more than one occasion, Jesus ignored the obnoxious behavior of people who came to

him, and treated them as though they were genuine seekers of the truth. (Luke 10:25-37) Proverbs contains many insights on rebellion, and the damage it causes in the life of that person.

When you as a staff are confronted with disobedient behavior, you must respond with care to bring the truth to the surface with love. Responding in anger at rebellion rarely helps to resolve the situation.

Case Study #2. “Just a little respect, please!”

Instructions:

1. Turn to Study Guide Project 4. Read the case study at the top of the page. If you are taking this course by correspondence, go ahead and complete all of the questions at this time.
2. If you are taking this course in a group class setting, go ahead and complete all of the questions before your next session. Bring this project with you to your next class session.

Chapter 4

The Main Goals of Discipline

Key Truth: Change within and in one's behavior is the goal of discipline.

Key Verse: 2 Peter 3:9b (NIV)

He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Introduction

In the last two class sessions and today's class session we are looking at basic biblical principles of discipline. These principles provide a foundation for the specific methods of discipline that will be covered in later lessons.

A. What is the main goal of discipline?

As a staff member at Teen Challenge it is essential that you have a clear understanding of what are the main goals of discipline at Teen Challenge. All the staff must have the same answers to this question. The answers to this question are not simply my opinions compared to your opinions. These answers need to be based on biblical principles of discipline.

Change!

The simplest explanation for why we discipline someone is so they will change. But what kind of change are you looking for? Some changes are not acceptable – because one can simply change one disobedient behavior for another disobedient behavior. Overt disobedient behavior can change to hidden disobedience – deceitful, lying behavior – not a good change!

Warning – as a staff, you cannot force the disobedient student to change. To a certain degree, you can force external change.

So what kind of change are you looking for? As followers of Jesus, our goal should be to change our behavior to obedient actions that honor Jesus. We need to change to become more like Jesus.

So what motivates a person to want to change?

The kind of change that biblical discipline is designed to accomplish is change that comes from a willing heart. This is best accomplished when one has a meaningful relationship with the person in authority.

This is why at Teen Challenge, one's personal relationship with Jesus Christ is seen as the most important step to beginning to overcome addictions and develop a new way of living – one characterized by obedience to God and our leaders.

Love is the highest motive for change. However, real life points out that most of us don't change simply by the power of love.

Two major motivators for change are learning and pain. A careful understanding of these two motivators is essential as we look at appropriate methods of discipline for TC students.

1. Change resulting from learning

What makes us want to change? When we learn so much we want to change. Many TC centers use study projects as a method of discipline. For example, a student is required to write a 500 word essay on lying, using at least 5 scriptures.

The assumption behind this method of discipline is that one major need in the life of this student is new information. If they learn what God expects of them, they will be willing to change their behavior.

Throughout the Bible this theme is stated in many ways.

Psalms 119:105 “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.”

Psalms 119:11 “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”

John 8:32 “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

But education by itself does not guarantee change. Nor does it automatically lead to obedient behavior. This is the false assumption used in the sex education and HIV / AIDS education provided in public schools. For some young people, this education has resulted in more sexual activity, not less.

Discipline that focuses on education can be effective if the student *wants* to change. What will motivate that desire to change? Having a personal relationship with Jesus and wanting to please Him is certainly a key issue here. Some want to change because they are tired of their old way of living.

2. Change resulting from pain

Pain motivates us to change. We stop hitting our finger with a hammer because it causes pain – lots of it! Pain is a gift from God to protect us from destroying ourselves.

What will cause a person to stop disobedient behavior? Pain – which may come in many forms.

a. Spiritual pain

God's Spirit speaks to our spirit, to convict us of sin. This conviction of the Holy Spirit is designed to motivate us to change. A guilty conscience is one way that God uses to communicate the need for change.

But a biblical truth with powerful implications is important here. God will not force us to

change. He gives us the choice on how to respond to “spiritual pain.” Sometimes God will go to extreme measures to get our attention, as He did with Saul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-9). However, the common biblical description of God’s way of dealing with man is His “still small voice” speaking to our spirit.

Even when Christians know God’s truth and have lived with it for years, they can still ignore that voice within, as King David did regarding his sin with Bathsheba. (See 2 Samuel 11 and 12.) Psalm 51 describes this time in David’s life, and shows how God attempted to get David’s attention. However, David was living in a delusion of his own making, and it took the confrontation of the prophet Nathan before David was willing to confess his sin, and change.

It is important for us to explain to TC students that the Holy Spirit will convict them when they break the rules. They need to learn to listen to their heart, and hear God speaking to them with His “still small voice.”

b. Emotional pain

Discipline can bring emotional pain in a variety of ways. This aspect of discipline can easily be abused, as many TC students can affirm, based on the responses given in Project 2 for this course.

Emotional pain – embarrassment, shame, guilt, or sadness – can motivate a person to change. For a person to be subjected to discipline can cause embarrassment to the point that the student determines to change his/her behavior so s/he doesn’t have to experience this emotional pain again.

For some individuals, the pain of bringing disappointment into the life of their parents or leaders is a big concern. They love their parents (or leaders), and want to please them. The emotional pain that comes from a broken or damaged relationship can motivate that person to change.

When disciplining a student, we need to be sensitive to the emotional pain they are experiencing. This does not mean we want to protect them from experiencing emotional pain. But we need to make sure that our methods of discipline are fostering sorrow that leads to repentance, not anger that leads to more rebellion.

The loss of freedom by being locked up in jail is designed to bring emotional pain to bear on that disobedient person.

c. Physical pain

Physical pain is the easiest to understand. Children are spanked by their parents. The physical pain of the spanking is designed to break through the delusion, and to send the message to the brain that it is time to change. The disobedient behavior is unacceptable, and discipline in the form of physical pain is designed to help convince the child that it is in his/her best interests to change – or more pain will come with the next act of disobedience.

In the TC setting, methods of discipline that include physical pain are rarely appropriate. Corporal punishment is not allowed in Teen Challenge.

However, some methods of discipline do require physical labor which can cause the “pain” of tired muscles. One method of discipline requires the student to move a pile of bricks or wood from one place to another. Many centers assign extra work duties as a method of discipline. These may cause both physical pain and emotional pain.

So let’s review what we have looked at so far.

1. What is the main goal of discipline?

Change!

2. What makes a person want to change?

- a. Learning (education)

- b. Pain

3. What kind of pain motivates change?

- a. Spiritual pain

- b. Emotional pain

- c. Physical pain

4. What kind of change are we looking for?

- a. Change that comes from the heart

- b. Change to want to obey God and those in authority over us

B. Punishment versus correction

What is the purpose of discipline – punishment or correction? This issue is clearly an important one in the Teen Challenge setting.

The old “prison guard” mindset is in clear conflict with a biblical view of discipline. Discipline can easily be abused in the Teen Challenge setting when staff use it as a power play. The attitude, “I’m going to make him/her pay for it,” is more an expression of revenge than discipline.

C. Redemptive discipline

We must understand the role of discipline in Teen Challenge is redemptive – to bring healing, not just punishment.

2 Timothy 3:16 offers one example of how the scripture serves this role.

2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and

training in righteousness,”

This verse identifies four different uses for all scripture—teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. This provides an excellent summary of what discipline looks like from God’s point of view.

D. Discipline and the consequences of actions

Many students misunderstand the difference between consequences of their disobedient actions and discipline given them by the person in authority. Students need to realize that when they disobey, they immediately set in action a series of consequences that affect not only themselves, but others around them. Often they completely miss this point. These consequences begin even before their disobedient behavior is discovered by the person in authority.

Satan will try to deceive the disobedient person into believing that no negative consequences will result from this behavior. Proverbs chapter 1 gives examples of the positive results of sinful behavior. Satan in the Garden of Eden talked to Eve about the benefits of disobedient behavior. (Genesis 3)

Being disciplined is only **one** of the results of disobedience.

Some students view discipline as what happens when they get caught breaking a rule. Discipline needs to be seen as the result of disobedience, not getting caught. The difference between these two issues is highly important.

These two perspectives see “the problem” quite differently. If “getting caught” is the problem, then what one must do is make sure they don’t get caught next time? But the second perspective sees the disobedient behavior as the problem. What needs to change is not the method of escaping detection, but a change of behavior that includes obedience and abstaining from the disobedient actions.

The focus must be on the disobedient behavior. One tool that can help at this point is asking the person, “What did you do?” If their response is, “I got caught!” you haven’t moved to the key issue. Getting the person to take responsibility for their disobedient behavior is vital. Then the connection must be made to the discipline as the consequence of their disobedient behavior.

Some consequences are the results of breaking God’s laws – such as the physical damage that results from driving recklessly and causing an auto accident.

E. The attitudes of the staff

As you prepare to discipline students your focus cannot simply be the disobedient student. Your attitude as a staff is a major issue in how effectively you will be able to do this part of your work responsibility. Your attitudes will have a powerful impact on how the student responds to you in this process of discipline. There are three issues which provide a biblical basis for the staff administering discipline.

1. Firm love

Firm love holds people accountable to the rules, because that is what is best for the student, not for the convenience of the staff.

Firm love is consistent love, but it is not legalistic love. Firm love is patient. Firm love means that as a staff, I care enough about the student that I will make the investment of time and energy to discipline this person properly.

Firmness without love is not the Jesus style of discipline. This kind of discipline can be cold and uncaring. At the other extreme, love with no firmness is “sloppy agape.”

2. Tender heart

One of the great dangers for TC staff is becoming callused or hard hearted. When you become a staff, keep a caring heart for the hurting. Having a tender heart does not mean that you allow the students to take advantage of your compassion and walk all over you.

It is very easy for new staff to get tough on the inside and the outside after getting burned by a student’s manipulative actions. Having a tender heart means that we take the time to be moved with compassion when we see the damage their disobedience has caused.

3. Attentive ears

Learning how to listen carefully as a staff is a powerful skill when it comes to dealing with disobedience. Hearing what the student says, as well as what is not said, are both very important parts of listening. You need to carefully sift through the messages and sort out the facts from the opinions. You also need to separate the emotions from the facts.

Attentive ears also involve listening to the Holy Spirit. Here is how one staff accomplishes this at TC. She first talks with the student to get the facts. Before deciding on what discipline to assign, she dismisses the student from her office, and then prays specifically about how to deal with this student. Learning to be attentive to the Holy Spirit enables us to see what God is attempting to do in the life of that student.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have looked at the main goal of discipline—we want the disobedient person to change. We want that change to be real change—from the heart, a desire to become more like Jesus.

However, it would be good to also reflect on the need for you as a staff member to consider the need for change in your life as you seek to discipline students. Do you need to change your attitudes toward disobedient students? Do you need to change how you listen to God in this discipline process? Do you need to change how you listen to the student in the discipline process? What changes do you need to make in your life so you can be more effective in disciplining students?

Chapter 5

The Role of Staff in Discipline

Key Truth: Teen Challenge staff must demonstrate God’s character in the context of discipline.

Key Verse: **Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)**

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:1 (NIV)

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

Introduction

In the last three class sessions we looked at basic biblical principles of discipline. These principles provide a foundation for the specific methods of discipline that will be covered in the remaining lessons.

Every discipline situation will involve a staff member. Before we look at the methods of discipline and focus on the student, we need to first look at the staff and how prepared they are to handle discipline in a godly manner.

Before we look at the **methods** of discipline, we need to look at the **messengers** of discipline. One can use an appropriate method of discipline, but apply it in a very ungodly way – which will result in more damage.

The surveys conducted in Project 2 probably gave examples of students that had been disciplined in anger – some were abused. Some have been spanked, but “beaten” is probably the correct label to describe what some experienced.

What messages are you communicating when you discipline a Teen Challenge student?

If discipline in Teen Challenge is to be redemptive and move the student to a closer walk with God, the messengers of that discipline – the staff – must clearly communicate evidence of God’s character in the context of that discipline. The staff must also provide evidence of God’s character in their life all the rest of the time too, or their effectiveness in communicating Christ’s love will be ineffective at the time of discipline.

In this chapter we will look at five key areas in the life of the staff:

- A. Understanding authority
- B. The self image of the staff
- C. Avoiding the wrong kind of help

- D. Understanding cultural differences
- E. Communicating with Godly love

A. Understanding authority

Effective discipline begins with a staff that clearly understands authority.

1. The Jesus style of authority

The Jesus style of authority builds on the principle that all legitimate authority comes from God. Romans 13:1-7 points out that everyone must submit to the governing authorities. The TC staff is not only in a position of authority over the students, but s/he is also under authority.

It is more important that the staff understand this and be obedient to his/her leaders than for the student to obey. If the leaders are disobedient and corrupt, how can the students be properly disciplined?

The disciples of Jesus had a real problem understanding authority. They equated power with authority. But Jesus talked about being servant leaders – He spoke out sharply against the world’s concept of authority – lording their power over others. Matthew 20:20-28.

New TC staff that are graduates of the TC program often have major problems in this area. Frequently they allow their new position of authority to “go to their head.” Power can be easily abused, and must be handled with care.

Frequently new staff treat students harshly. On the other extreme, some new staff want to be liked by the students and so they are too lenient on the students. Finding that healthy balance is directly related to having a solid personal relationship with Jesus and His view of authority.

2. God commands parents to discipline their children

A biblical view of authority includes an understanding that God has commanded leaders to discipline those under their authority.

Parents are directed to discipline their children. Proverbs 19:18.

Governing authorities are God’s servants to punish the disobedient. Romans 13:1-5.

Hebrews 13:17 points out that leaders will have to give an account to God for their leadership. TC staff need to recognize that one day they will stand before God at the judgment. God will require an accounting of what kind of a leader they were—and how they disciplined students is one of the areas for which they will have to give an account.

3. Leadership by example

What do TC students see when they look at the staff? Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:1, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” The staff at TC need to set the example of obedience and godly attitudes toward leadership so that we too, can say to our students, “Follow my example as I follow Christ.”

One part of setting the right example is being willing to admit our mistakes to the students. When staff show a willingness to be honest, and admit mistakes in public, they set a powerful example.

Another way staff can set the right example is during work detail. Working **with** the students on the work projects rather than just watching them is important.

4. Walk in truth

The priority of being a TC staff is not to be in a position of power and show others who’s really in charge at TC. Our priority must be to focus on walking in God’s truth. In chapter three we discussed how often delusion is involved in acts of disobedience.

Staff must live out a firm commitment to walk in God’s truth, whether students respect them or not.

5. Obey at levels two and three

In chapter two we discussed the three levels of obedience. TC staff need to set clear examples of functioning at all three levels, especially level two – “Obey and discover the main reason why you were told to do it,” and level three – “Obey on your own because it is the right thing to do.”

Students are watching the staff. What they see will probably have a greater impact on disciplining them, than what the staff say.

B. The self image of the staff

How a person functions in leadership often reveals the self-image of that person. If that leader has a weak self-image, it will usually show up in the context of relating to the students, especially in situations that involve discipline.

1. Do you need to be needed?

Do you need people to affirm your worth? Is your inner security based on what the students think of you? If so, you are likely headed for trouble. Some new staff come to this ministry with a need to be needed. This easily creates an unhealthy atmosphere for staff-student relationships.

Our self-image must be rooted in our relationship with Jesus. It is essential that we look to Jesus and see ourselves as He sees us.

2. Power and a weak self-image

Power is addictive, and staff with a weak self-image will seek more power as a means of supporting their weak self-image. Jesus was not obsessed with power. Insecure leaders are often obsessed with power.

3. The right to be respected

In the *Group Studies for New Christians* course ***Anger and Personal Rights***, we cover the issue of personal rights, and what happens when someone violates one of your rights. Do you live with the belief, “As a TC staff, I deserve to be respected.” When persons in authority believe they have a right to be respected, you can be sure that students will challenge that right.

What is your attitude toward respect? What are you expecting from your students? Respect needs to be viewed as a privilege. Jesus showed genuine respect to others even if they were disrespectful toward Him. Demand of yourself the responsibility to be consistently respectful to your students and others around you. True respect from others is earned by your genuine expressions of love and concern.

It will be very common for TC staff to discipline a student that does not have a biblical self concept. The student may have a proud spirit. If the staff is insecure, s/he may react to that student’s attitude in a way that does not focus on helping the student, but more on building the staff’s insecurity.

If TC staff are going to be effective in relating to students, they must have a clear understanding of their self-image and not allow themselves to be drawn into power struggles with students or other staff.

C. Avoiding the wrong kind of help

In the Living Free ministry, part of the training focuses on the negative concept of “enabling.”

1. Enabling

Enabling is defined as:

1. Anything that stands in the way of persons experiencing the natural consequences of their own behavior. Galatians 6:7-8
2. When helping harms the one you love.
3. Rescuing people from their responsibilities and/or consequences.

4. Giving the person permission to stay sick, and continue with their inappropriate behavior.

Galatians 6:7-8 is a powerful example of this point. God says that a person will reap what they sow. But the “enabler” can’t stand to see that happen, so they rush in to put good things where the destructive consequences would have resulted.

A proper understanding of enabling is often difficult for new staff to understand. Distinguishing the difference between offering the wrong kind of help versus the right kind of help is not a simple task.

What is the goal of the staff when disciplining a student? The staff can often miss their proper role in discipline.

2. Confronting conflict

The Living Free ministry has another workshop that deals with confronting conflict. A powerful truth starts that section of the training:

We are most useful in confronting conflict when we are not so much trying to change another person as we are trying to help him/her see himself/herself more accurately.

Often in the context of discipline, that staff is functioning from a mindset of “I’ve got to make this student change.” But that is not the most effective way to help that student. The staff must respect the student’s responsibility to think through the situation and choose his/her response. The staff will be most effective by focusing on helping the student see the truth as it relates to the situation at hand.

The staff must see discipline as redemptive, not just punitive. The role of the staff is to demonstrate firm love.

D. Understanding cultural differences

Teen Challenge brings together staff and students from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Many students were raised in another part of the nation. Racial and ethnic backgrounds can dramatically affect ones beliefs about discipline.

Ones family background also has a powerful influence on the attitudes and behavior patterns of the student. Was the student raised without a father in the home, or by abusive parents?

Culture does have a major influence on TC’s effectiveness in helping people with needs. Over the past 50 years, very few American Indians or Asians have gone through TC in the USA. One explanation is to look at the staff.

Potential students often consider the racial mix of the staff. Are there staff of the same

background? Very few TC centers in the USA have any American Indians or Asians on staff. TCs which consistently minister to Afro-Americans usually have at least one Afro-American staff.

You may want to talk to other TC students or graduates about their experiences as a student in TC related to this topic. Were they disciplined by staff of a different racial or cultural background? What special challenges did this provide for them? What can you learn about being more culturally sensitive towards those who come from a different racial or cultural background?

Cultural barriers can be overcome and cross-cultural ministry is a realistic possibility. However, it takes careful attention to cultural issues.

E. Communicating with Godly love

How the staff communicates to the students is most important. Does the student see love in action?

One director commented that often he cringes when he hears a staff disciplining a student because the speech is harsh. Finding appropriate ways to communicate firm love is an ever present challenge to TC staff.

In the survey of graduates of TC, this issue was at the top of their list – the staff must show love if they hope to be effective in disciplining a student.

The message of 1 Peter 4:8 is certainly true for TC staff:

1 Peter 4:8 (NIV)

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.”

Colossians 4:8 (NIV)

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Ephesians 4: 15 (NIV)

Instead speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

Conclusion

All five of these areas of your life are very important as you prepare yourself to be an effective staff at Teen Challenge. Disciplining students is one of the most difficult responsibilities that TC staff face. Preparing yourself first is essential if you want to see God use you effectively. It is not simply learning the right words to use in assigning discipline.

Much more important is that your heart be prepared for this part of your work. Ephesians 4:15 challenges us to grow in all areas of our life—to grow up into Christ, who is the Head. As

we diligently seek to grow up each day to me more like Jesus, and continue to see him as our Leader, then we will be in a position to more effectively help our students become more like Jesus in their lives also.

More than being an expert at disciplining students, you need to set your sights on being an expert at following Jesus. The more you become like Jesus, the more effective you will be at helping your students to do the same.

Chapter 6

Teen Challenge Standards and Policies for Discipline

Key Truth: Discipline in the TC program is only done within the context of approved policies and procedures.

Key Verse: 2 Timothy 4:5 (NIV)

But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, . . . discharge all the duties of your ministry.

Introduction

This chapter is very different from all the other chapters in this course. We will be looking at how the discipline fits into the organizational structure of the Teen Challenge ministry. We will look at both staff policies and student rules.

If you are studying this course in a country outside of the USA, then some parts of this chapter may be different in your country. We will use the example of a Teen Challenge center in the USA as the model for this chapter. As you look at applying some of these principles in your own country, you may have different requirements or policies.

So as you read the rest of this chapter, please understand that the issues are being presented as though you were working in a TC center in the USA.

In preparation for this lesson, read the three assigned handouts:

1. Selected portions of Teen Challenge USA National Accreditation Standards.
2. Selected portions of the TC Staff Policy and Procedures manual.
3. Teen Challenge Student Rules and Entrance Agreements.

The staff must understand that discipline of TC students is not a personal issue where each staff does what they think is best.

Discipline in TC is carefully structured by national standards and local policies and procedures approved by the Teen Challenge Board of Directors. It is essential that new staff thoroughly understand these policies and procedures.

Failure to properly understand and use these policies and procedures may result in the staff being disciplined or terminated. Abuse or neglect in this area of work in TC can result in criminal charges being brought against that staff and the ministry leadership – including the local board of directors. Failure of the staff to function with the highest degree of integrity can bring devastating damage to the reputation of the TC Ministry—both locally and nationally.

The methods of discipline used in TC are broken down into three stages:

Step 1: The Teen Challenge USA National Accreditation Standards

Step 2: The local TC policies and procedures that relate to the national TC Standards. Most of those will be written in the center's policies and procedures staff manual.

Step 3: Examine how staff implement these policies and procedures on a daily basis in the program. The student rules provide the basis for this area.

An analogy may be helpful at this point:

1. The TC USA National Accreditation Standards are the skeleton which provide the overall framework for biblically based discipline in the TC setting.
2. The local center's policies and procedures provide the meat and ligaments to put substance to the standards.
3. The implementation of these policies and procedures on a daily basis is what brings "life" to these rules and regulations. However "legalism" is not our goal. We need the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit to use the discipline procedures as a redemptive work of growth in the life of each new Christian.

Step 1: TC USA National Accreditation Standards related to discipline

The whole accreditation process will be discussed in greater detail in another course. TC USA National Accreditation Standards are designed to primarily benefit the local center. They provide a minimum level of structure and quality of ministry required for TC centers. Local TC centers are accountable to the TC National office for implementing policies and procedures to address all the issues covered in the standards.

It is not enough for the local TC center to have a policy and procedures manual for the staff. The ministry must be able to demonstrate that staff are informed of the policies and procedures and are consistently implementing them as required by their job descriptions.

There are four sections of the TC USA Accreditation Standards that address issues relating to disciplining students in Teen Challenge.

1. Student Rights
2. Student Records
3. Staff Training
4. Confidentiality laws

In this chapter we will focus primarily on the first two sections listed above.

1. Student rights section of the accreditation standards

The Student Rights standards address five different issues of which four are directly related to discipline. Standards 75-78 all deal with the issue of student rights. Below is a general description of each standard.

1. Standard 75 prohibits abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the students and requires staff to follow a specific procedure in reporting any act that may constitute abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
2. Standard 78 lists the basic rights of students in the TC program and describes the steps the staff must take in informing the students of these rights.
3. Standard 76 addresses specific restrictions regarding student discipline.
4. Standard 77 explains the grievance procedure that students are allowed to use. This standard requires staff to be familiar with this grievance procedure and properly respond to any student filing a grievance.

We will take a closer look at each of these standards to see how they relate to discipline.

a. Abuse, neglect, and exploitation – Standard 75

This standard does not simply apply to staff abusing students but also students abusing other students or where other outsiders may be involved. However, in our context, we are only looking at this standard in its relationship to discipline.

Consider this question: “How could the discipline practices of a TC center relate to the issues of abuse, neglect, or exploitation?”

Consider this question: “What constitutes abuse when disciplining a student?”

Physical abuse – hitting, beating; attempted strangulation.

Verbal abuse – shouting, berating a student, subjecting them to racial slurs or other demeaning verbal messages.

b. Basic rights of students in the program – Standard 78

Some TC staff see a conflict between this standard and the teaching in the *Group Studies for New Christian* course “**Anger and Personal Rights**” which teaches that as Christians we are to give up all our rights to God.

Broadly speaking; there is a difference between “personal rights” and “legal rights.” When we teach students to give up their personal rights, this does not mean it is OK if someone sexually or physically abuses them. If you as a staff do nothing to stop that kind of abuse, you would be guilty of negligence. That clearly is not the godly way to respond.

These standards simply put into writing basic human rights – which when honored provide staff and student alike with an understanding that they will be treated humanely and

with dignity and respect. The policies being discussed today provide for a clearly stated mechanism by which abuses of these basic rights will be documented and dealt with by proper authorities.

This section: of the standards in no way undermines the authority of the staff. It only guarantees to the student that Teen Challenge is a ministry of integrity that operates with biblical principles of discipline, respect and authority. It guarantees to the student that we will not allow staff or students to use Christianity as a means to abuse anyone. We are providing a safeguard for each student. We want to send a message that we clearly respect the rights of each individual.

Simply stated, the Constitution of the United States includes the Bill of Rights which guarantees certain basic freedoms to all citizens. We are simply acknowledging our responsibility as staff to treat students with dignity, respect, and honesty and provide a safe environment for their personal growth. Other countries usually have a similar set of laws guaranteeing certain basic freedoms to all citizens.

c. Restrictions regarding student discipline – Standard 76

This standard provides specific restrictions on the discipline which can be used by the staff in TC. It prohibits the use of corporal discipline—spanking or other physically pain inducing methods of discipline.

This standard prohibits students from being subjected to harsh, cruel, or excessive discipline.

It also restricts the staff from assigning a student a method of discipline which personally benefits a staff member. For example, a discipline cannot be assigned to have a student do personal work for a staff, such as washing his car or doing other manual labor at his home.

This standard also defines the process by which discipline is administered to a student and documented by the staff.

d. Student grievance procedure – Standard 77

This standard provides a means for a student to communicate a grievance to the staff. The intent of this standard is to provide a clear process where complaints can receive appropriate consideration by the leadership of the ministry.

Some TC centers call the student grievance procedure by another name, but basically this covers the procedure by which Matthew 18:15-17 is implemented.

The implementation of this standard could include issues not related to discipline.

2. Student records – Standards 68 & 69

The accreditation standards provide detailed guidelines regarding the records that are required to be kept for each student in the program. However, in this course, we are only looking at those parts of the standards that explain the need for documenting discipline given to

students.

Standard 68 gives a broad overview of the record keeping procedures required for the ministry.

Standard 69, sub-points i, j, & k (especially #i) provide direction on the need for documenting all discipline given, and the results seen in the life of the student.

Step 2: The Teen Challenge Policies and Procedures Manual

This manual is designed by each local TC center to provide specific instructions to the staff on all areas of the ministry. It must cover all issues addressed in the national TC Accreditation Standards.

However, the policies and procedures manual for any TC center will often include policies on numerous other issues not required by the TC Accreditation Standards. For example, it may include a policy on staff owning pets in housing provided by TC. It may include policies regarding the use of TC vehicles.

These policies provide a standard procedure for all staff to follow in the daily operation of the ministry. Policies should provide enough detail to be clearly compatible with the overall discipleship process of the ministry.

All staff do not have a copy of the TC USA Accreditation Standards. However, all staff associated with a local TC are required to read the Teen Challenge Policies and Procedures Manual for that center.

Handout #2 for this class provides selected policies and procedures used by a local TC center in the USA. These policies have been designed to (1) bring their center into compliance with the National TC USA Accreditation Standards, and (2) provide each staff at this local center with the procedures they are to use in conducting their work on behalf of this TC ministry.

It is the responsibility of each staff to understand and apply all of these policies in their work. It is the responsibility of their supervisor to hold each staff accountable and confirm that each staff is properly implementing each policy and procedure.

Let's take a look at the policies related to disciplining students from this local TC center.

1. Documenting discipline given to students

Handout #2 contains selected parts of the Teen Challenge Policies and Procedures Manual. Page 87 gives the instructions on how the "Student Chronological" is to be used to track the progress of a student through the program. In this course we are only looking at how this relates to documenting discipline given to a student.

Point A. 3 and A.3.a. explain what is to be included in the entries made. **Subpoint A.3.a.6.** states that discipline must be documented.

Pages 89 & 90 provide sample entries into a Student Chronological report. On the top of page 89 is a list of the codes for different types of entries on the chronological. Refer to column 1 with the codes, you will find the first Discipline entry on 4-17-93. (on page 90)

The two discipline entries on page 90 do not give a very detailed explanation of what happened in this case. In the actual student files kept on students in your program, the entries made by the staff may often include much more detail than included in this sample.

Now refer to Handout #1 (The TC USA National Accreditation Standards) page 8 and look at Standard 76, sub-point d. This standard explains what has to be communicated to the student and the last sentence talks about required documentation. The policies we have just looked at related to the Student Chronological in Handout #2 provide the direct link to this national accreditation standard.

2. Policies on discipline

Pages 92-93 in Handout #2 list the policies for this local center on how discipline is to be administered. Notice how each policy is similar to or expands on what the related TC Accreditation Standard calls for.

For example, turn to page 8 in Handout #1 and look at **Standard 76, sub-points a & b.** Compare this to the information on page 92 in Handout #2, the list of discipline methods prohibited by TC. (Point B)

The policy and procedure manual is used as the basis for staff training particularly in this area of the ministry.

One of the problems listed by staff participating in the survey on discipline was that new staff are not familiar with the policy and procedure related to discipline. In many centers, new staff are not allowed to give out discipline until they have worked there for at least three months.

Notice in Handout #2 that pages 92-93 list a variety of discipline methods TC staff are allowed to use. There is also a detailed set of policies and procedures used on dismissing a student from the residential program. (See pages 105-108.)

Each Teen Challenge center will have its own set of policies on discipline as well as a set of student rules.

Step 3: Implementing discipline policies

The third step in implementing discipline in a local center involves the rules that are given to the students in the program. Handout #3 contains a few selected documents that provide some of these rules. A local TC center may have a student handbook that provides

rules and procedures for all areas of the student life activities in the program.

The TC USA National Accreditation Standards require that these rules be communicated to the students. These rules provide the foundation for implementing discipline.

The next chapter in this course will be devoted entirely to a closer look at how discipline is implemented at the local level.

Pages 4-5 of Handout #3 contains a student entry agreement for a men's Teen Challenge center. Each student is required to sign this before they are allowed to enter the program. Please note that each statement is a positive statement, not a negative statement. Instead of having each rule stated and "what you cannot do" they are instead worded as a positive statement.

Also each statement is based on what the student understands and agrees to do. In reality, this agreement is the student saying, "I agree to follow each of these rules." They are giving their word—making a promise—to follow each of these points. Another way of stating this—this is their "obedience agreement" or their "promise to obey the TC rules agreement."

Our goal in this class today is not to create a list of the perfect rules for the perfect Teen Challenge. Most staff taking this course will not have the authority to completely revise all the rules of the TC center where they work.

However, if you are in a position of wanting to review and revise your student rules, the Global Teen Challenge office has samples available and is ready to consult you on this process. (email: gtc@globaltc.org)

Conclusion

Let's come back to the Key Truth for this chapter—discipline in the TC program is only done within the context of approved policies and procedures.

The main purpose of this chapter is to give you a broad overview of how the discipline process is to be operated in a local TC center. There are three major steps in this process.

1. National Accreditation Standards that provide a set of guidelines and boundaries for disciplining students.
2. The local center Staff Policies & Procedures book which gives detailed steps that are to be used by all staff at that center when administering discipline to a student.
3. The rules to be given to the students.

You need to understand the proper role of each of these three steps and how they relate to each other. The big issue here is that staff have rules they must follow in disciplining students.

In the next chapters we will take a closer look at some of the specifics of implementing discipline in the TC program.

Chapter 7

Interview with a TC Program Director

This chapter is very different from all the others in this course. If you are taking this course where you have regular classes with a teacher and other students, then the class session related to this chapter will include an interview with a Teen Challenge Program Director.

If you are studying this course on your own, you may want to consider some options.

1. You could interview a Teen Challenge director in your area and discuss all the questions in this chapter.
2. You may wish to obtain a taped interview of a TC director being interviewed for this course. Check to see if it available on the website: www.iTeenChallenge.org or contact the Global Teen Challenge office: email: gtc@globaltc.org

This format for this interview will address three major topics:

1. How is discipline implemented in the program?
2. How is discipline documented in the student files?
3. How are new staff trained to discipline students?

You may need more space than what is included in this manual to record all the key issues discussed in this interview, so we recommend you have extra paper on hand.

Interview with: _____

Part 1: How is discipline implemented in the TC program?

Question 1: Let's assume a new student is entering the program today. What orientation and training do you give him/her about the rules of the program and discipline procedures?

Question 2: What kind of commitment do you have new students sign regarding the rules of the program?

Question 3: What are the rules that new students most frequently violate?

Question 4: When a staff discovers that a student has broken a rule, what are the standard procedures the staff must follow?

Consider several different kinds of discipline situations.

For example, are all infractions treated the same?

Or are different methods of dealing with students dependent on:

1. minor infractions
2. major infractions
3. infractions that can lead to dismissal from program

Question 5: How do you make the punishment fit the crime?

Question 6: How do you gather evidence if the person is not caught in the act of breaking the rule, but you suspect that s/he has broken a rule?

What credibility do you place on the testimony of other students?

Question 7: What is the most difficult part of disciplining students?

Part 2: How is discipline documented in the student files?

Question 8: What are the steps that staff must take in documenting infractions and discipline given to a student?

Question 9: What are the biggest problems you have with staff documenting discipline?

Part 3: How are new staff trained to discipline students?

Question 10: How are new staff trained to discipline students?

Question 11: What are the major problems you have with new staff disciplining students?

Part 4: Additional questions for guest being interviewed

Chapter 8

Methods of Discipline

Key Truth: With the Lord’s help, we need to find the most appropriate discipline for each student.

Key Verse: Hebrews 12:11 (NIV)

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.

Introduction

Over the past two chapters we have looked at some of the discipline methods that are used in a specific center. Our purpose in this chapter is to take a systematic look at the different types of discipline used in Teen Challenge centers. Each local center may not use all of these methods, and some may not be appropriate for your local situation.

A major concern directors have for new staff is that they understand the *intent* behind discipline. Discipline is not used as a means of power or revenge. Discipline from a biblical perspective is designed to bring positive growth. In looking at each method of discipline we need to ask the question, “**How will this discipline help this student develop the godly attitudes and behaviors that mark a growing Christian?**”

A. Methods of discipline

In this course you have looked at several case studies in the Study Guide. In each of these cases, we have discussed a specific event and a suggested discipline. However, in the local center, the staff are working with these students on a daily basis. They get to know the student, see his/her progress, and base much of their decision on what they feel is best for this student at this time in his/her life.

1. Counseling

Many times staff will not give specific discipline when a student disobeys a rule. Instead, they will counsel the student. This might be a very brief discussion at the immediate time. Typically this might be done with a new student—especially with an infraction where the staff gives the new student the benefit of the doubt that perhaps s/he is not familiar with the rule and does not realize that what s/he did is against the rules.

There are also times when the staff sees that the behavior of the student is not simply a mean streak of rebellion. Many times disobedient behavior is simply frustration being acted on. The immediate rule that was broken is not the root of the problem. The staff may see a greater need to counsel the student regarding the deeper issue and ignore the minor rule that was broken.

Counseling can be used with all the other methods of discipline as well. Even if we have already determined what method of discipline will be used, it is important that we cultivate the personal relationship with the student being disciplined.

Balance is the key here. Students don't need a 15 minute fiery sermon on the evils of their disobedience. Jesus kept His descriptions of sin to a minimum with many that He dealt with. For example, when He rebuked Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 16:23) and when He spoke to the woman caught in adultery (John 8:11).

Saying too little means that we miss the opportunity to bring God's truth to this situation. Saying too much drowns out the still small voice of the Holy Spirit.

2. Educational projects

Educational projects for discipline can involve a wide variety of choices. Here are some of the more common ones.

a. Scripture study

- This can involve memorization of one or more verses that relate to the area of growth needed in the life of the student.
- Another variation is to have the student write a paper based on the teachings of several verses related to the infraction or attitude or behavior that needs to change.
- Another form of scripture study discipline that is used in Teen Challenge is to have students copy chapters or whole books from the Bible.

Caution needs to be used in making this kind of an assignment. First, to copy large sections of scripture requires no thinking or understanding of the words they are copying. All they have to do is write words.

Another issue that needs to be evaluated here is—how does copying a whole chapter help the student deal with the area of disobedience in his/her life? In reality, copying chapters from the Bible is a variation of “doing prison time.” Once you have served your time—copied your chapter or book, you are free to go. But what has the person learned?

b. Character qualities study

This study project is based on the *Personal Studies for New Christians* course **Character Qualities Class**. The student is assigned one or more of the character qualities and given the regular work, plus the option of additional special projects with additional questions for the student.

Again the issue needs to be stressed, the greatest benefit from this kind of discipline assignment is when it is accompanied with personal counseling.

c. Study projects from the book, *The Bible in Counseling (Waylon Ward)* or *Homework Manual for Biblical Counseling-Volumes 1 & 2 (Wayne Mack)*

These three books provide an excellent selection of projects that can be assigned relating to all different kinds of issues, such as anger, bitterness, self image, relationship with God and others, etc.

There are a variety of other books available which can serve as a resource for study projects. With each of these projects, the goal is that the student will learn practical Biblically based information that will help them as they seek to apply it in their life, and become more obedient.

d. Special written projects

The staff assigning the discipline may want to create a study project. One example is to have a student do a study on gossip and what the Bible says about it. The student also has to write about the consequences of gossip.

The creativity of the staff is the only limitation here to designing projects appropriate to the situation.

3. Loss of privileges

Loss of privileges is probably one of the most common forms of discipline used in Teen Challenge. When assessing the intent or-purpose of this type of discipline, we have moved from the instructional style of discipline to the restriction style of discipline. The intention of this method of discipline is to get them to see the unpleasant consequences of disobedience. This same issue holds true for the next categories of discipline also.

The issue of “pain” in the consequences of the discipline is intentional with this method. The pain is related to the loss of privileges, not physically inflicted pain.

Loss of privileges could include the loss of:

- phone calls
- visits from family
- mail
- recreation
- shopping trips
- passes
- free time

Loss of privileges cannot involve loss of meals, nor can it include being locked in a room. However, it can involve being restricted to certain rooms in the building, or not being allowed

to enter certain areas, for example, the recreation room.

4. Work detail assignments

Another very common method of discipline is being assigned extra work. Many centers assign a certain number of hours of work for the discipline.

The work assignments vary greatly, from washing the Teen Challenge vehicles, to washing pots after meal time, cleaning the stove, or under the stove, mowing the lawn, digging a ditch, picking up rocks.

In some cases the work assignments are done while the other students are scheduled for free time or on the weekend.

A real danger here is to use the “prison guard mindset” in handing out this kind of discipline. It is easy to slip into the “doing time” mindset by both the staff and the student. Care needs to be taken to make sure the punishment fits the crime.

Indiscriminate use of work assignments can penalize the person for their disobedience, but the question must be asked: “How is this discipline helping the student grow, especially in relationship to the area of his/her life involved with the disobedience?”

Assigning hours of work can be a method of discipline assigned “for the convenience of the staff.” It can become the easy way out for the staff rather than finding a discipline that more closely relates to the violation. This method of discipline can minimize the involvement of the staff—all the staff has to do is assign the extra work. No effort is required by the staff to assess the real issues going on in the life of the student.

One TC center uses a work assignment when two students are not choosing to get along with each other. They must move a pile of tree stumps from one place to another. They are provided a wheel barrow to use. Each student must hold one handle of the wheel barrow as they move these stumps. They also have a pile of cement blocks to move. A pole is provided to slide through the holes in the cement blocks. Each student must hold one end of the pole as they move these blocks. This method requires the students to communicate and work together to accomplish the project.

Academic discipline

Another variation of a work detail assignment relates to academic discipline. If a student has failed to complete class assignments, or failed a test, then s/he is assigned an extra study hall time. Typically this is done while other students have free time, or perhaps during recreation time or instead of going on a shopping trip.

5. Discipline for major violations

The student rule book identifies violations of a more serious nature which can lead to major discipline including dismissal from the program. All centers do not use all of these methods, especially the first three listed below.

Some of the violations that can lead to serious discipline would include smoking, using drugs, violence or threats of violence against another person (student or staff), refusal to accept a discipline, refusal to participate in a scheduled activity for TC students, or lack of personal progress.

Typically, violations of this nature require more than one staff to determine the discipline for the student.

a. Probation

A student placed on probation is told of the need to make some serious changes in his/her life. Failure to change during the time they are on probation may lead to dismissal from the program.

Typically a student is placed on probation a minimum of one week. During this time they may lose all privileges, and may also be restricted to only certain rooms in the building, especially during free time.

In the counseling that would be part of this discipline process, the student is told the specific behaviors and/or attitudes that must change by a specified time. Additional educational projects may also be assigned as a part of this probation time.

b. Extend time in the program

When a student displays a serious need for growth, his minimum required time in the program may be extended. Typically this is done in one month increments. For example, a student may be just a few days or weeks from completing the induction phase of the program. S/He may violate a rule that reveals a serious need for growth. It may be evident that the issue cannot be dealt with in just a few days. Consequently part of the discipline may be to require the student to spend an additional month in the induction program before being eligible to transfer to the next phase of the program.

c. Start the program over again

This discipline may be used when it is clear that the student simply is not learning the basic discipleship principles being taught in the program. This method of discipline is rarely used, because simply starting the program over is not a quick fix to the problems in the student's life. However, for some students this discipline is offered as a last alternative instead of dismissing them from the program.

d. Suspension from the program

Suspension leaves open the door for the student to return after a specified number of days. Some students involved in serious violations are caught in the trap of delusion, thinking that Teen Challenge is the cause of their problems rather than accepting personal responsibility for their problems. Sometimes a return to the world shakes them into reality.

Often there are conditions for the student while on suspension that determine eligibility to

return to the program. These may include church attendance, seeing their probation or parole officer (if applicable), completing certain educational projects—scripture memorization or Bible reading.

e. Dismissal from the program

Certain violations of TC rules send a clear message that the student in question is either not ready for Teen Challenge, or the program is not equipped to deal with the needs in his/her life. If a student is violent, and attempts to endanger the life of another person, or his/her own life, this student is usually dismissed.

Another example is the person that has no desire to change, but wants to use Teen Challenge as a place to get three meals and a bed. Some of these persons will go from one TC center to another looking for an open bed, but not really seeking God's help to change their life.

f. Transfer to another program

In one sense this method of discipline is very similar to a suspension. Training centers will sometimes use this method and send a student back to an induction center as a means of discipline. This is not used extensively, because simply changing locations rarely solves the problems in the life of that student.

However, sometimes a student came through an induction program, but did not make the genuine change needed to function as a Christian at the training center. This student may be sent back to the same induction center from where he came from, or he may go to a different induction center.

Historically there are several illustrations where the student sent back experienced a positive “reality check” and went through the program a changed person. However, for every one of these positive examples, many others drop out of the induction center before completing the second time through. Typically they find it difficult to obey the rules, no matter where they are living.

In some cases, the students have a rebellious heart and they stubbornly refuse to humble themselves before the Lord. It is important to note however, that some students have not received proper counseling to address the deep rooted problems in their lives. The disobedient behavior is not so much an act of rebellion as it is a sign of deep hurt and damaged relationships that need healing.

B. Prohibited disciplinary procedures

In chapter one we discussed how our personal background in discipline can greatly affect our present views on this issue. Certain forms of discipline are prohibited, but equally important, certain types of behavior by the staff during times of discipline are also prohibited.

1. No demeaning language

Staff are not allowed to use demeaning language, racial slurs, put-downs, criticism, yelling, or verbal intimidations.

2. No physical contact

Staff are not allowed to hit students, or use corporal punishment (spanking) unless it has been specifically approved by the parents or guardian of a minor.

Staff are not allowed to slam a student against a wall or use other types of physical contact as a means of discipline.

The only time a staff is allowed to use physical restraint is to prevent a student from doing harm to himself/herself, or to another person. The same applies to a student attempting to commit serious damage to physical property.

3. Students may not be locked in a room

Locking a student in a room as a form of discipline is not allowed in Teen Challenge. This program is not a prison, nor should it attempt to keep people in the program that require that level of control.

The only time locking up a student would be appropriate is to temporarily control a student intent on doing bodily harm to himself/herself or to another person. As soon as this person is locked up, the local police should be summoned immediately (no exceptions) to remove this person from the premises of the Teen Challenge program.

4. Do not discipline students in public

If a student has violated a rule, if at all possible, the staff should take the student to a room or area where they can talk in private. Confronting a student in public can be very embarrassing and add fuel to the angry emotions being expressed by those involved.

5. No food deprivation

Being deprived of a meal(s) cannot be used as a method of discipline. Teen Challenge is required by law to provide meals to those who live in the program.

6. No excessive discipline

Most programs have limits on what discipline can be given to a student. For example, they cannot be assigned 20 hours of work for violating a rule. Excessive discipline can relate to educational projects as well. For example, one student was given the discipline of copying the entire book of Ephesians two times for a very minor infraction. In this case, the program director stepped in and required the discipline to be changed.

Excessive discipline is usually handed out as an expression of frustration (or power) by the staff. Some centers help to moderate these kinds of excesses by requiring a second staff to sign off on any discipline given a student. This provides the opportunity for cooler heads to evaluate the situation.

Ephesians 6:4 says, “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” (NIV) This offers good advice to staff as well. What is the staff doing that is exasperating the student in the program?

Excessive discipline could also involve a student being requested to do a discipline that could put his/her health in danger.

C. Process for dismissing a student from the program

Many programs prohibit one staff from being able to dismiss a student from the program. Typically dismissal requires the approval of the discipline committee or the program director. Many times the student’s situation will be discussed in a staff meeting before any decision is reached.

Usually the staff policy and procedures manual will provide guidelines for dismissing students from the program. It is very important to document all actions taken in this process.

Another issue that needs to be carefully considered are the long-term consequences in the life of the student. Sometimes staff want to dismiss a student simply because their disobedient behavior has been making life difficult for everyone—especially the staff. It is easy to slip into the mindset of “this student is too much trouble. Let’s get rid of him so we don’t have to deal with all these problems.”

But what is God’s point of view on this student? If Jesus were on your staff, would he be voting for this student to be dismissed? We need to be ready to extend mercy—some of the time.

D. How to assign appropriate discipline

No 3-5 minute discussion in this class can adequately prepare a new staff to appropriately handle discipline in the Teen Challenge setting. However, certain basic issues are going to be the same in TC centers.

1. Follow the policies and procedures of the TC center where you work

First, the local center’s policy and procedures manual for the staff will usually give specific instructions on how discipline is to be handled in the center. Some infractions may automatically result in certain disciplines.

The program director or his/her designee will take time to explain to new staff the discipline procedures used at that local center. They will also explain how discipline is to be documented in the student records.

2. Ask God for guidance before assigning the discipline

One program director provided another insight that will always be appropriate for any new or old staff. She said that when she is dealing with a student regarding discipline, she will first call the student in and discuss the incident before giving out any discipline. She then dismisses the student from her office, and asks the Lord for guidance on seeing the real issues that need to be dealt with and the discipline that will best deal with the issues at hand. She then calls the student back in and discusses the discipline the student will be required to complete.

3. Take time to get to know the student personally

Again, the key is getting to know the students personally. This is important to be able to provide the best help on a continuing basis. For example, a particular violation might usually result in giving a student work time as the discipline. However, if that student is a work-a-holic, and does not like to interact with other people, then putting him/her to work may be just what s/he wants to do, instead of dealing with the issue that brought on this discipline. In other words, from this student's point of view, the discipline in this case is not punishment, it's really a reward!

4. Do not threaten students

Another important issue is – no threats! Many times parents will threaten their children with certain punishment if they don't shape up. Staff who grew up in that kind of a home setting may find it easy to use verbal threats. Staff at Teen Challenge need to communicate clearly and honestly. Don't make a threat unless you are fully prepared to follow through and do what you said you would do. Do not threaten to do something that you do not have the authority to do.

Help students realize that they choose to be disciplined. When they choose to disobey, they choose to be disciplined. We need to make sure that they learn to assume responsibility for their own decisions, attitudes, and emotions.

5. Seek to find balance in your discipline

Balance is a vital issue when it comes to discipline. We are not Teen Challenge police agents always on the lookout for someone who is breaking a rule.

We need to model obedience, and talk about it in a positive way. We need to reinforce positive behavior. Some students may act up because they have learned that the only way they get personal attention from the staff is when they disobey.

6. Follow through on the assigned discipline

One director said the biggest problem he has with his staff is following through on the discipline they give to students. Holding the students accountable to complete their discipline often requires an extra investment of time and emotional effort on the part of the staff. Are we willing to make that commitment to the student?

An even more important part of the follow through is to take time after the discipline has been completed to talk to the student regarding the issues related to this whole incident. This staff needs to have a non-confrontational discussion, focusing on what the student has learned from this experience. Your goal in this conversation is not to determine how much pain the student experienced, but is the student moving in the direction of personal growth—moving toward a deeper relationship with God?

Conclusion

This chapter provides a significant challenge for every staff member, not just new staff. Determining which method of discipline to assign is never an easy responsibility. We need God's wisdom in this area of TC work.

Our greatest desire needs to be to see each student grow closer to God and learn how to develop an obedient lifestyle. When discipline needs to be assigned, it needs to be personalized to each student with the desire to see them make the kinds of changes that will lead to a godly, righteous lifestyle.

Chapter 9

Making Discipline Effective

Key Truth: Staff must respond in discipline with godly attitudes to help make the discipline effective.

Key Verse: 1 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

Do not repay evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

Introduction

This chapter will focus on both the character of the staff and the wisdom and knowledge they gain as they work in Teen Challenge.

The six major issues addressed in this chapter cover some, but not all, of the issues that help make discipline effective. Hopefully these issues will help you to avoid some major problems in the days ahead when you begin working in a Teen Challenge center.

A. Showing love and concern

Part of the research done in creating this course was to interview graduates of Teen Challenge and ask them what made discipline effective when they went through the program. One of the biggest issues they raised was the need for staff to show students that they genuinely love them and have concern for them.

Disciplining strangers often carries very little positive influence for change.

Consider: **How can staff show they love the students?**

How can staff show they care about the students?

Realize that love and concern are not simply shown at the time we discipline students. It is important to find simple ways each day to communicate love, whether or not students are obeying all the rules or have a positive attitude toward the staff.

Turn to 1 Corinthians 13 and look at the practical expressions of love called for in this passage. Understand that “agape” love is not based on the other person loving me, or responding in a positive way to my expression of love.

Consider: **How did staff show love or fail to show love?**

How did that impact the student’s relationship with that staff, especially when it came time to discipline?

Even in the best of circumstances, handing out discipline is difficult. However, if a staff

does not care for a particular student and has a bad attitude toward that person, it will result in even more strained relationships with that student in the context of discipline. Genuine expressions of concern—really caring about the student—shows up in the actions of the staff.

If you care, you

- are willing to confront disobedience.
- are willing to assign meaningful discipline.
- are willing to hold the student accountable and follow through on the discipline.
- do not view discipline as a hassle with a lot of red tape.
- do not presume the student has a bad attitude and is unwilling to change.
- see hope in every student, even in the middle of a discipline situation.

B. Avoid favoritism

Student morale is easily affected by how the staff treat the students. If staff have an attitude of enthusiasm, joy, love, and concern, the students will see this. Many will respond in a positive way.

It is even easier for staff to affect the morale of the students in a negative way. Showing favoritism brings a spirit of divisiveness to the student population that undermines all the hard work of creating a redemptive, positive atmosphere for growth.

Consider:

How do staff show favoritism to students?

How does the perception of favoritism affect the student's response to discipline?

Understand that appropriate discipline can create the perception of favoritism. Realize that all students should not be disciplined exactly the same. However, balance is needed here.

If one student breaks a rule and gets no discipline, and the next student breaks the same rule and gets dismissed, then you can create an atmosphere of uncertainty and anarchy. We need to watch our attitudes as staff that we are not using discipline as a means of releasing our own frustration toward a particular student.

The favoritism staff develop toward students can be based on the primary responsibilities of that staff. For example, if the staff in charge of work detail sees that a particular student is a good worker, then this student may always get the best jobs and the other students with poor work habits get all the worst jobs. The best working students may get extra “grace” shown them at the point of discipline, because they are such good workers.

Sometimes favoritism is directly related to racial issues. We discussed the issue of

cultural differences in chapter 5. If staff are to make discipline effective, careful consideration must be taken regarding racial issues when a staff is disciplining a student of a different racial background. In fact, the student may accuse the staff of being a racist simply because of the different racial backgrounds of the two involved.

C. Stay calm during a problem

Disobedient students make for a stressful situation for the staff. These troubled times during the day can easily be interpreted by the staff as “interruptions.” Sometimes students will use times of disobedience as an occasion to lash out at the staff with harsh criticism or other disrespectful comments. How will you as a new staff respond to such criticism?

Consider:

How easy is it for you right now in life to take disrespectful comments or unjustified criticism?

What makes it hard for you to receive such comments?

How are you able to receive these comments in a positive way?

Proverbs 15:1 speaks to this issue in a powerful way.

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. (NIV)

Consider how this verse speaks to the issue of disrespectful students.

One of the key issues you will deal with is not taking comments of students in a personal way. Many times students will lash out at the staff and say hurtful things. Staff can get “in the flesh” just as easily as the students. If a student can get a staff to react this way, it provides that student with the satisfaction that s/he can control the emotional response of that staff. However, when the staff responds in a quiet respectful way, this gives the Holy Spirit the opportunity to convict that student.

Staff must learn to stay calm when disciplining students and keep focused on the real issues in this case, and not let their “personal rights” get in the way of dealing with this problem in a Christ-like way. On many occasions Jesus was subjected to harassment and people showed disrespectful attitudes toward him. Quite often He would ignore their attitudes and treat them with genuine respect as though they were sincere seekers of the truth. (See Luke 10:25-37 for one example.)

Remember, remain calm in dealing with a disobedient student in the context of discipline if you want that discipline to be effective.

D. Be aware that you are dealing with difficult people

To put it bluntly, a lot of new staff are naive when it comes to understanding how to discipline teenagers or young adults. New staff need to realize that they are dealing with difficult people. That sounds like an obvious statement, but just look at how we expect our

students to act in Teen Challenge.

- We get frustrated because the student doesn't seem to want to change.
- We react when we see the manipulative behavior in the life of this student.
- Our frustration shows when we know the student is lying, but we can't prove it.

We must understand that those who come to Teen Challenge for help are here because they have serious life-controlling problems. These problems are expressed in a variety of ways (or symptoms). We need to be careful that we do not let the irritating symptoms distract us from dealing with the real root problems.

A blunt way of stating this is to say: We will see a lot of garbage in the lives of the students we deal with. We need to be careful that we don't let the garbage distract us from the top priority work that God wants to see accomplished in the life of each student.

We need to look for small steps of progress and compliment them. We must also find a balance in the discipline we administer. If we look hard enough, we will always be able to find some failure worthy of discipline. However, we must find that balance between mercy and justice

It is also important to remember that discipline will not automatically produce righteous behavior. But discipline provides the student with the opportunity to develop righteous behavior.

E. Patience vs. frustration

We have already made brief references to these two issues earlier in this chapter. Opportunities to respond in these two ways face the staff every day.

Consider:

What situations related to discipline do you think would be most frustrating to you?

In your current situation, what do you find frustrating when others break the rules?

We are not simply talking about frustrations in the context of discipline. In the wide variety of other responsibilities that face the staff every day, many potential frustrations can arise. If you are frustrated about something else, and a student violates a rule, you may find it easy to take out your frustration on that student.

However, if discipline is to be effective, the staff must be inwardly powerful enough to control their frustrations and learn how to deal with the many stressful situations in Teen Challenge without letting these things get them frustrated.

The character quality of patience is vital if we are to make a positive contribution to the spiritual battles for the lives of our students. Patience does not mean we smile and ignore all

the disobedient actions of the students. True love holds students accountable for their actions. Patience is the first quality used to describe love in 1 Corinthians 13.

Consider:

What are some appropriate or inappropriate ways to express patience in the context of disciplining students in the Teen Challenge program?

F. Confronting conflict

Almost every discipline situation involves conflict to some degree. Another staff training course will deal with conflict resolution in more detail. However, the point needs to be made here that conflict is not always evil. Jesus faced conflict frequently; rarely did He seem angry just because He was faced with a conflict situation.

We need to see conflict as a tool that God can use to help those involved learn the lessons that He wants us to learn.

How we handle the conflict will show how much of Jesus we have in our lives at that time. As staff we would do well to ask the question: “What would Jesus do if He were in my place?” How would He respond to this student who has violated a rule? What would be His approach to moving this student toward understanding the truth and then committing to walk in the truth?

Chapter 10

Special Situations in Discipline

Introduction

In this chapter we will look at several difficult issues that you as a staff will encounter in the Teen Challenge ministry. The first issue we will cover is distinct from the other issues. What are some of the special challenges a new staff will face in working at Teen Challenge?

All the other issues covered in this chapter will focus on some of the difficult complications that face every staff in Teen Challenge. Each one of these issues could easily fill an entire chapter. Our goal is to give you a brief introduction to some of the factors related to these difficult issues.

A. Training for new staff

Many Teen Challenge centers do not allow new staff to immediately begin disciplining students. The new staff are required to go through a training and mentoring period of time. This could be a few weeks to three months. During that time the leadership of the TC ministry will provide opportunities for the new staff to observe how discipline is handled.

Warning—do not be surprised if you see inconsistencies and problems in the way staff discipline students! Even though you may not be allowed to immediately discipline students, you may quickly begin to see problems in how the older staff are disciplining students. You may disagree with how the staff handles a situation. Their methods may go against what you have been taught in this course.

Do not become disillusioned by the problems you see in the lives of other staff. The priority you need to focus on is looking to see how the other staff communicate love to the students. How do the staff assess the problem? What is the process they use in assigning discipline?

You need to focus on learning the process that is used in this center, and then as a separate issue determine how you can best put to practice the things you have learned in this course. You need to set as your personal goal to follow the positive examples of the staff, and determine to avoid the negative examples you see in the staff. Most of all, ask God to give you wisdom on how you can fulfill this area of your responsibilities in a way that will honor Him.

Now let's look at some of the difficult challenges you and the other staff will likely face in Teen Challenge.

B. Confession vs. denial

One of the difficult challenges you will face is how to handle confessions and denials.

One day a student walked into the staff's office and literally threw an ink pen on the desk of the staff and said, "I am returning this pen. I stole it."

So how would you have responded to this student if she had made this confession to you?

The student then went on to talk about how she was becoming such a weak person. Before coming to Teen Challenge she had been involved in lots of crime, and often stole things to support her drug habit. She had no problem stealing from her own mother and other relatives.

But now in the office of the staff she was disgusted at herself for becoming so weak. She had been feeling so bad on the inside that she was returning this "stupid ink pen" that she had stolen.

The staff accepted this confession, but then asked the student to consider another possibility of what was going on in her life. She suggested that what was going on inside this student was not a sign of becoming weak, but it was a sign of the Holy Spirit working in her life. The staff explained that what she was feeling was the conviction of the Holy Spirit. The fact that she had come and returned the ink pen without being caught was a sign of real progress in her life.

God communicates his attitude toward the issue of confession and offers his response.

2 Chronicles 7:14 NIV

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Another staff provides students with an opportunity to confess what they have done wrong before accusing them of anything. For example, if it has been reported to the program director that a particular student was involved in some disobedient activity, the director will call that student into the office privately.

This director then says, "You probably know why you are in my office today. Why don't you tell me your side of the story." This director does not reveal anything to the student, but gives the student freedom to say whatever s/he wants to.

The director reports, "Many times this student will confess to me far more than I already knew about what was going on in his/her life." Giving a student the opportunity to confess everything sometimes results in the director getting a much more comprehensive understanding of what is going on in the life of this student.

Two cautions need to be considered:

1. The student may or may not be telling the truth. Some students can be very

compelling in telling a story that is not true. You need to pray that God will give you wisdom to see what is true, and if they are not telling the truth, for God to expose the lie.

2. The difference between admitting what you know and true confession. If you state, “It has been reported to me that you did xxxxx. Is that true?” If the student says, “Yes, I did that,” this is not a confession. The student is simply admitting what you already know.

True confession is for this student to tell you what they did without any knowledge of whether you know what they did.

If a student admits to what you confront them with, and they shed tears, and tell you how sorry they are—you have no way of knowing if they are sincerely repentant or if they are simply putting on a good act.

When a student confesses to their disobedient actions, many times staff are willing to be more lenient in the discipline they assign.

Denial is also a complicated issue for staff to handle. Sometimes staff set the student up to deny what happened because of the confrontational way in which the staff addresses the student. You need to be very careful in addressing the student to be a seeker of the truth, and not quick to jump to conclusions.

You may want to start with very general questions, not revealing to the student what you already know. As you go farther into the conversation, you may want to bring up more evidence that has been given to you.

In some centers, if another student is the one who has made the accusation, the staff may bring the two students together and have both give their side of the story in an attempt to get to the truth.

In reflecting on these two issues—confession and denial—two questions would be good to consider.

1. What motivates confession?
2. What motivates denial?

Often people use denial as a defense mechanism, as did Peter when he denied Jesus just before his crucifixion. We also need to be careful not to demand that a student confess. We need to offer them the opportunity to confess.

C. Evidence gathering and assessment

Gathering evidence needs to be kept in balance. Your job as a TC staff is not to be a fulltime detective, constantly on the lookout for evidence of students breaking the rules. If that is your focus, you will always be able to find someone who is falling short of perfection. Our

first priority is to be an expert at discipleship—helping our students learn how to follow Jesus in every area of their life.

We need to be looking for opportunities to affirm students when they are obeying, when they are doing well. At the same time, we need to be alert to protecting our students for the destructive consequences of disobedience. The best time to address a problem is before it starts. So if you see two students who are arguing, don't wait until it turns into a fight. Try to defuse problems before they become a crisis.

When you know that someone has broken a rule, pray and ask God to guide you into finding the truth. God already knows all the facts, but you don't. Be careful that you do not assume to know the facts when you don't. Don't assume a student is lying—make sure you have the facts.

Be very careful about using evidence that comes from another student. You need to be careful to not dismiss it as false evidence, but at the same time don't automatically assume that it represents the whole truth. You need to develop the attitude of reserving judgment and not quickly jumping to conclusions. You need to discipline yourself to distinguish the difference between objective evidence and opinions.

Sometimes the director will have the staff conduct a search of the whole house, especially the living quarters for the students. As you search, pray and ask God to help you find anything that is prohibited by the TC rules. This may include food, weapons, money, cell phones, or other prohibited items. Your search needs to be motivated by the desire to make TC as safe as possible for all those in the program.

D. Confidentiality

One of the challenges TC staff face is the issue of confidentiality—what do you keep private regarding each student. Each center needs to have clearly defined policies on how the student records are kept confidential and stored in a secure place.

However, the staff deal with student confidentiality issues on a whole different level in their daily work. What information should you keep confidential when it comes to a student breaking a rule? Should other staff be informed of what you know, or should you keep it private?

As a general rule, staff should not keep from other staff information they have about a student's disobedient behavior. In one center, at a staff meeting, one staff pointed out that a particular student had tried to get him to keep quiet about his disobedient behavior. He stated how sorry he was that this had happened, and the student promised not to do it again.

What soon surfaced in the staff meeting was that this same student had similar conversations with several other staff, seeking to arrange for private deals of mercy. All the other staff had agreed to not discipline him because he had such a positive reputation in the program, and he was so "repentant" in talking to them. His pattern of deception was revealed only when one staff refused to go along with his "sincere repentance."

If staff are going to avoid this kind of a problem, then they need to have a process by

which disobedient behavior is documented. However this information must be handled by all staff in a very careful way. Staff must be careful not to discuss these issues with other students. Careless conversations by the staff can cause great damage in the area of student trusting staff.

E. When do you call the police?

There have been times when a student becomes violent and endangers the lives of other students or staff. As a staff member you need to be prepared to call the police if you are in a situation that could become dangerous. You need to know how to call the police and who else needs to be notified if you have called the police—for example, the program director.

For example, if a student has a knife or other weapon in his/her hand, and threatening to use it, then this is likely the time to call for help. Do not wait until the person has caused serious bodily harm to themselves or to others before you call the police.

You need to see the police as your friend and your help in this kind of a crisis. You also need to have a process to follow up if the police have been called. Usually it would involve the dismissal of that person from the program.

However, the best time to address these types of problems is before they become a crisis. If you know that a student has a violent temper, then be on the alert to early signs of a problem, and step in to address it before it becomes a full-blown crisis.

Remember that as the staff, you have a responsibility to maintain the safety of your center for all who are participating in your program.

F. When do you discipline the whole program?

Some TC centers try to force everyone to obey the rules by putting all the students on discipline when a certain rule has been broken. Sometimes this is done when the staff know a “crime” has been committed but they do not know who did it. They will bring all the students together and confront the whole group and demand that the guilty person confess.

There are several problems with this approach. First, it is very difficult for someone to admit they have done something wrong. But to do this in front of all the other students and staff is even more difficult. If the student was not repentant in the first place, there is little chance that this method will convince them to admit their guilt.

This approach demonstrates that the staff believes they can force students to admit their guilt. Another problem is that many of the students may have no knowledge of the “crime” and so they are forced to go through this process even though they are innocent.

In some countries this kind of discipline may be prohibited. If it is allowed, it should be used with great care.

One way to approach this kind of a problem is to pray that God will bring to light the truth about who is the guilty one. If a person is disobeying in one area of their life, they will likely disobey in other areas of their life. Sooner or later, their sins will be exposed.

G. Disciplining a student with a background of abuse

One of the difficult challenges staff face is when they have a student who has a background of being abused—especially if they were abused when they were being disciplined. Many of those who come to Teen Challenge have come from very dysfunctional backgrounds. Their parents or others may have been very abusive in their disciplining.

One staff pointed to small marks all over her arms, scars of 3-4 lines right next to each other. She explained that when she was a child, and disobeyed, her mother would take a dinner fork, heat it red hot over the stove and then press it on the arm of the child to “discipline” her. That is absolutely not discipline—that is abuse. The physical scars are only part of the damage this person will live with.

Other students have stories of broken bones and scars from when they were beaten as a child. All of these are clear examples of abuse. So what does that have to do with you when you are disciplining this student in a proper way?

Even though you may be disciplining this student in love, using appropriate words, attitudes, and expressions—just the fact that you are disciplining this student may bring back memories of all their past abuse. You are not the abuser, but your discipline may remind them of their abuse. They may react in a very hostile way to your careful discipline. You need to realize that they may not be reacting to you as much as what you are associated with—all the painful abuse of their past.

You need to pray that God will give you wisdom on how to discipline your students in a way that will bring healing into their lives, not more damage.

Conclusion

There will likely be many difficult situations you will face in the months ahead. Disciplining students is one of the most difficult challenges staff face. God is ready to provide wisdom to all who ask. See James 1:5.

You need to continue to come back to the basic principles that you have learned in this course, and seek to apply them in a way that will bring positive growth into the lives of your students. Also remember that you need to be personally applying these same principles in your life as it relates to those who are your leaders. Your example of obedience can make a positive impression in the lives of your students as they seek to grow and become the person God wants them to become.