

Friendships with Girls and Women

Session Four is about friendship between men and women. Your personal presentation will be a key part of the session. A well-prepared presentation will help the other fathers and sons in their reflections.

In your five-minute presentation, please share some personal stories about how you have related to women as friends and with respect. This session does not particularly address the area of sexuality and its implications in man and woman relationships, though you may touch on those issues if you wish. You can tell about relationships with many women who are and have been a part of your life: mother, grandmothers, sisters, girlfriends, wife, daughters, co-workers, and so on.

Also, many teenage boys have trouble getting to know girls. Though attracted to girls, shyness is a major stumbling block. You might include some reminiscence of the difficulties you first had in making friends with girls and some techniques you had for overcoming shyness.

Remember to make your presentation personal. This can be achieved by using quite a few "I" statements in your talk. Use the following sentence starters to help you. You do not have to include all the statements in your talk.

Sentence Starters

- My grandmother was . . .
- My mother and I . . .
- I learned to overcome my shyness with girls by . . .
- I remember my first girlfriend because . . .
- When I first met my wife I thought . . .
- When my wife and I were dating some of the best times were . . .
- My wife is my best friend because . . .
- My daughter is special to me because . . .
- I enjoy having women as friends because . . .
- I believe that women should be treated with respect because . . .
- My relationship with women friends is different than with men friends because . . .
- A lesson I learned from my mother is . . .
- A lesson I learned from my wife is . . .
- A lesson I learned from my daughter is . . .

Also, you may wish to include in your presentation personal reflections on the following issues:

- The emotional and physical differences between a man and a woman, and the importance of respecting those differences.
- The importance of respecting a woman's prerogative to say "no," especially in the area of sexual relations.

Personal Reflection: Friendships with Girls and Women

Directions: Read through each of the following exercises. Then choose and complete *one* of the exercises in the space below.

- **Write** about the best friend you thought of in the imagination exercise. Tell why you consider this person to be your best friend.
- **Who** is a person you recently developed a friendship with? What are some techniques you use to make new friends? How can these techniques and the ones you heard in the presentation help you to form friendships with females. **Write** about one insight you gained from the presentations and answer the questions above.
- **Write** the initials of five females you are currently friends with or would like to be friends with. Next to each set of initials, write one practical strategy you can use for maintaining the friendships or becoming friends.
- **Conduct** a flow of consciousness. This means you simply write down as many words you can think of that describe how you can show respect for a woman in your relationship with her.