

# TALK IT OVER

*Made a mistake, facing a challenge, have a question? Don't put off talking about it with those who care most about you.*

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**W**hen I was in junior high school, I used money from a paper route to buy a small motorcycle. It wasn't new or very powerful, but it was fast enough to kick up desert dust from the trails that snaked through the cactus east of our home in Tucson, Arizona, USA.

When my motorcycle ran out of gas, I would grab our gas can. When the can was empty, I would arrange a ride to fill it up at a gas station. One day my older brother had what I thought was a great idea.

"Just borrow some gas from Dad's pickup," he said.

He showed me how, with a small section of rubber garden hose, I could syphon gas from the pickup directly into my motorcycle. That solution worked great—until I got careless a few weeks later.

While I was syphoning gas, the hose slipped from my hand and slid into the pickup's gas tank! I couldn't see it or reach it. In a few weeks, I feared, the gasoline would dissolve the rubber, which would likely clog the pickup's carburetor.

It was bad enough that I'd been taking gas without permission, but now I'd probably ruined Dad's pickup. How could I tell him? He was kind of strict, and I was afraid of what he'd say.

## AN IMPERATIVE DUTY

If you're like me, you won't get through your teenage years without making mistakes. In today's world we're assaulted by pornography and profanity, bombarded by bad movies and bad music, and surrounded by temptation to break the commandments. Even if we do our best, we still make mistakes sometimes.

It's not easy admitting mistakes or personal challenges, and it's not easy asking difficult questions, especially of parents and Church leaders. But admitting mistakes, talking through challenges, and asking sincere questions—including questions about the Church and gospel doctrine—is exactly what you should do.

“Parents and all who are called to lead and serve the youth . . . have ‘an imperative duty . . . to all the rising generation’” (D&C 123:11), said Elder Robert D. Hales of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. He said that duty includes listening to the youth.<sup>1</sup>

For parents and leaders to listen, young people must be willing to speak up.

# 5 SUGGESTIONS FOR TALKING TO ADULTS

Starting a difficult conversation or raising an embarrassing subject requires courage and faith. But where do you find the courage and faith to talk about a mistake, discuss a challenge, or raise a doctrinal question? Whether you're talking to parents, Church leaders, or some other trusted adult, consider the following suggestions.

## 1

### DON'T PROCRASTINATE

I remember a college friend who got drunk at a party during Christmas break and did some things she regretted. When she returned to college, she was too embarrassed to talk to her bishop. She spent the next few weeks feeling miserable and then dropped out of school. Had she just seen her bishop, things would've turned out for the better.

Your bishop is there to help you. He won't belittle you, and he won't be shocked. He's heard it all before. He'll keep your conversation confidential, and if you have a question he can't answer, he'll find an answer or help you find one of your own. Serious mistakes, problems, and questions usually don't take care of themselves, so don't procrastinate.

## 2

### STUDY IT OUT IN YOUR MIND

You may think your mistakes, problems, or questions are worse than they really are. So you may feel anxious about meeting with your bishop or talking to parents. But if you'll “study it out in your mind” (D&C 9:8) under the influence of the Holy Ghost, you'll be guided to take your question or concern to them. And you'll feel better afterward.

“Our Father in Heaven expects us to study it out first and then pray for guidance as we seek answers to questions and concerns in our personal lives,” said President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency. “We have our Heavenly Father's assurance that He will hear and answer our prayers. The answer may come through the voice and wisdom of trusted friends and family, the scriptures, and the words of prophets” or other leaders.<sup>2</sup>

## 3

## PRAY FOR COURAGE

Speaking up requires courage, and “the true badge of courage is overcoming the fear of men,” said Elder Lynn G. Robbins of the Presidency of the Seventy. “Daniel’s prayers helped him face lions, but what made him lionhearted was defying King Darius (see Daniel 6). That kind of courage is *a gift of the Spirit* to the *God-fearing* who have said their prayers.”<sup>3</sup>

You don’t need to be afraid of adults who love you and want you to be happy. Pray for strength and courage, and Heavenly Father will help you overcome your fear. Prayer worked for Daniel and the Prophet Joseph Smith. It will work for you too.

## 4

## STUDY THE SCRIPTURES

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said studying the scriptures is more important than sleep, school, work, TV, video games, and social media. That’s because as you study the scriptures, “peace will prevail in your life” and “you will develop strong faith in the grace of God and know that through the Atonement of Jesus Christ all will be made right according to God’s timing.”<sup>4</sup>

The assurance that things will work out will give you strength to talk to your parents or priesthood leaders.

## 5

## WRITE A NOTE

Nephi recorded “the things of my soul” (2 Nephi 4:15). Like Nephi, you may need to ponder and write down your thoughts before attempting to verbalize them. Before seeing your bishop or talking to your parents about something serious, consider sharing your thoughts first via email or letter. A bishopric youth discussion where the bishopric answers anonymous written questions is another good way to get answers.

## GROUNDED FOR LIFE?

I didn’t write my dad a note about the hose in the gas tank. In fact, since I’d probably be grounded for life, I decided not to tell him. A few months later, however, my conscience got the best of me and I prayed up enough courage to admit what had happened. Instead of grounding me, he shrugged his shoulders, gave me some fatherly advice, and said, “Be more careful next time.”

After that conversation, it was easier to talk to my dad—especially when I messed up. Those chats helped prepare me for bishop’s interviews.

As for our pickup truck, I’m happy to report that that hose didn’t ruin it. It still runs just fine. **NE**

## NOTES

1. Robert D. Hales, “Our Duty to God: The Mission of Parents and Leaders to the Rising Generation,” *Ensign*, May 2010, 95, 96.
2. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Waiting on the Road to Damascus,” *Ensign*, May 2011, 75.
3. Lynn G. Robbins, “Which Way Do You Face?” *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 10; emphasis added.
4. Richard G. Scott, “Make the Exercise of Faith Your First Priority,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 93, 94.

