

Lesson 7.21 Talk It Over

Topic: Conflict Management  
Subtopic: Active Listening  
4B. Communication Skills  
4D. Conflict Management

Class: Standard VII (Grade 7)

Objectives: **Knowledge:** Students will know how to be active listeners. **Attitude:** Students will want to talk over conflicts.

Materials Needed:  
Blackboard and Chalk  
Exercise book

References: Matthew 18:15-17

Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:26

Teacher Activities

**Introduction:** *Optional Worship.*  
*Think-Pair- Share:* If someone told a lie about you and you found out about it. What would you do?

**Bible Story:** Have a student read Bible Story. Jesus is teaching about what to do when someone “sins against you.” He tells his disciples to go to the person and talk it over.

**Application:** Review the four rules for Talking It Over. Then discuss active listening and write these guidelines on the board:

- *Do not make comments*
- *Ask only clarifying questions Make summary statements or paraphrases*
- *Try to understand the other person’s feelings.*

**Evaluation:** When someone hurts you, do you follow Jesus’ instructions to go to the person you are upset with and talk it over?

Student Activities

**Introduction:**  
Students discuss a *Think-Pair-Share* question.

**Bible Story:** Student Reader reads Matthew 18:15-17. Discuss the questions (see Teacher’s Notes)

**Application:**  
Students roleplay two conflict situations using active listening and Talk it Over guidelines.

**Evaluation:** Were students able to use the active listening guidelines in talking over a problem? When students have conflicts, are they able to use talk it over guidelines and active listening?

**Extension Activities:** *Worship.* You are encouraged to continue with opening song(s), silent prayer and a student led prayer. *Memory Verse.* Discuss how following Jesus’ advice in Matthew 18 helps us keep the commandment in James 4:26. *Drawing or writing.* Have students divide in groups of four. Each person in the group takes one of the Talk it Over rules and draws a cartoon or short story showing how to do that. One person would show what they would do to calm down, the second person would show how they would listen and so on. *More roleplays.* Let students think of other conflict situations and practice using active listening in small groups.

## Notes for Teacher

In this story Jesus gives very clear directions for what to do when someone hurts you. We are to go to that person and talk it over. The Talk It Over guidelines can help us develop empathy and understanding for the other person. The Active Listening guidelines can help us develop empathy for the other person. Both Talk it Over and Active Listening were introduced in earlier classes if the students have had several years of Peace in a Community curriculum.

Key Points: Jesus taught that we when we are upset with someone, we should go to them and talk it over.

Introduction: *Think-Pair-Share.* If someone told a lie about you and you found out about it. What would you do? Answers to this question will vary. Accept any reasonable answer at this time. This situation will be discussed later in the lesson.

Bible Story: Student Reader reads Matthew 18:15-17. The story today comes from Jesus' teachings on the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus gives very clear instruction for what to do when someone does something that hurts or angers you ("sins against you"). Use the questions below to guide your discussion.

- **What does this passage say to do if someone "sins against you?"** (go to them and talk it over in private)
- **Give an example of what it might mean to "sin against someone".** (Saying or doing something that hurts someone or makes them angry.)
- **If that doesn't work, then what do you do?** (take someone else with you and try to talk to them) Point out that when a third person helps two people talk about a conflict, that person is called a *mediator*.
- **If that doesn't work what do you do?** (Treat them like outsiders; you don't have to be their friend but you do not hurt them or take revenge against them)

Application: **In the situation at the beginning of the lesson, what did you say you would do? Is it consistent with what Jesus taught? When someone does something that hurts us, the first thing we should try to talk it over.** Review the four rules for Talking Together as you write the rules on the board. These rules have been presented Standard II and IV.

- Stay Calm* – Sometimes if we are very angry we may need to calm down before we talk it over. Then it is a good idea to stop and wait to calm down or maybe even walk away and come back when you are calm.
- Listen* – There are always two sides to a problem. You need to try to understand what the other person feels and thinks. Good listening is essential for problem solving.
- Care about each other* – Try to think how the other person feels. You want to find a solution that will help both of you.
- Think together* – Think of different ways you could solve the problem. Talk about it until you find a solution you both will accept.

**Listening to the other person's side of the story is very important. It is important to try to understand their point of view. This is called *empathy*.** (Write *empathy* on the board.)

*Active Listening.* **An active listener is more focused on listening than speaking. They are trying to understand the other person's feelings and thoughts rather than thinking**

**about what to say next. Here are some guidelines for active listening.** (You might write these on the board as you explain them to your students. )**If you are an active listener you...**

- **Do not make comments** (about what the other person is saying. You don't try to defend yourself or think about what you want to say until the other person is done talking.)
- **Ask only clarifying questions** ("Could you give an example of that? What do you mean by that?")
- **Make summary statements or paraphrases** to make sure you understand (summarize or restate in your own words what you thought the person said)
- **Try to understand the other person's feelings.** Try to understand not only the person's thoughts and actions but also what they are or were feeling.

*Roleplay.* **Now we will roleplay the situation that I gave you at the beginning of the lesson. Remember, in a roleplay you pretend to that person and you try to think and say what you think that person would say. Make it up as you go along.**

Choose two girls as volunteers. Let each person read the information below about their own role but don't let them see what the other person's role is.

Rasoah – You had promised Adah you would help her with homework last night but your mother said you had to stay home and watch your younger siblings. You tried to call Adah but she had her phone turned off. Today, before you even had a chance to talk to Adah, Truphena (another friend) told you that Adah said you broke your promise and that you are always breaking your promises. You are angry with Adah because she is turning your friends against you.

Adah – You are angry because Rasoah did not come and help you with your math homework like she promised. You did not understand it and you weren't able to do your homework. Your teacher was angry with you for not doing your homework. Right after the teacher talked to you, you see Truphena and she asked why you were so upset. You told her what had happened and said, "I guess I can't trust Rasoah to ever keep her promises." That is all you said to Truphena.

Teacher: **Our story starts with Rasoah going to Adah to tell her how she feels and what she thinks.** After the roleplay, ask the students how well Adah and Rasoah did at using Active Listening and the Talk It Over guidelines. Now let two new volunteers try doing the same roleplay.

*Here is a second roleplay. That you can use to give the boys a turn.*

Joseph- Your family grows fruit. You have had a fruit stand on the corner for two years. You use the money from the fruit to pay for school uniforms and other things you need. A week ago two new boys started coming to your corner and started selling fruit. Since they came you have not been able to sell enough to pay for the things you need. You are angry that they are taking away your business. Tell them what you think.

Sammy and Muhonja – You are brothers who recently moved to this area. In your old neighborhood you sold fruit to make a little money for things you need. You have been selling fruit on the same corner as Joseph for the last two weeks. You didn't know he was upset about it.

Teacher – **Joseph starts this roleplay by going to Sammy and Muhonja to tell them what he feels and thinks.** After the roleplay, again discuss how the boys did at following the active listening and talk it over guidelines. Do the roleplay again, with new volunteers, if you have time.