



## The Teen Challenge Culture

### A Message to Students

We are pleased that you are considering Teen Challenge to begin your recovery from addiction.

Teen Challenge is one of the most successful faith-based recovery support programs in the world; we contribute our success to our foundation in faith. We believe that true change comes from what God can do on the inside of us. If you are interested in faith-based recovery, Teen Challenge is the place for you. **All of our classes, counsel, and environment are rooted in a belief in God and values found in the Bible.** We are serious about faith-based recovery because it has provided the most successful care available for overcoming addiction and beginning a new life.

Teen Challenge is a "Culture of Responsibility." Our basic premise is that one must assume responsibility for his own life. You must own the responsibility for your thoughts, choices, and life patterns. Difficult experiences can contribute to life controlling addiction but cannot be an excuse for remaining in addiction. **At Teen Challenge you will take a responsible look at your life so healing can occur and important lessons can be learned.** Your negative experiences do not need to dictate your future.

**Coming into Teen Challenge can be difficult at first.** When drugs and alcohol wear off, and you find yourself away from all that's familiar, a variety of emotions can be experienced. Feelings of anger, pain, guilt, homesickness, or even being trapped, can creep in on you. As badly as you know you need to begin this journey, this "internal war" can be most difficult. Experience tells us that once an individual passes through this initial struggle they will adjust to the program.

You have probably had moments where you wanted things to be different, but were unable to break the cycles of addiction. We are determined to help you get your life back. **No one can lead your life but you. We want to help you become that responsible leader!**

### A Message to Families

Families will need to be strong. We must shut the door on every excuse to leave the program prematurely. As brave as the student may appear, fears of facing the challenge of changing their life is real. The family's natural instinct is to relieve pain, but there's no growth without it. We need families to stand strong as we help the student take a hard look at their life. Teen Challenge must have the family's support throughout the process of change. Whenever they communicate pain, encourage them to stay the course and refuse to support a departure from the program.

When you have questions about what is communicated to you from your student through phone calls or letters, please contact their advisor. We want you to have perspective as we assist your loved one toward recovery from the devastation of addiction.



## A Culture of Responsibility

God wants us to know freedom from addiction and destructive behavior. While the world promises freedom outside of God's established boundaries, this road leads to entrapment and a life out of control. It is Teen Challenge's desire to help you take back that control. Regaining control begins when you allow God to change your heart and continues as you learn to live responsibly. There will be some pain in the change and we begin to assume responsibility for our thoughts, choices, the company we keep, the places we go, how we treat others, or react to mistreatment. In the "Culture of Responsibility" all of our excuses begin to go, but the internal adjustments we need to govern ourselves, honor God, and respect our fellow man will follow in their place.

Teen Challenge creates an environment where you can experience God. Seeing life as God sees it will begin the growth process. Here, you will establish new boundaries and enjoy the freedom that comes from living within them. This is the time and the place where you can face your fears, your failures, and your disappointments. You can become all that God intended for you to be.

### Components of a Responsible Culture

#### 1. Reverence for God – Living out God's word and gaining His perspective on all things

This is where order begins to come to our lives. It all starts with learning God's word.

From God's word we learn:

- **That God has a plan for our lives.** We're not on earth to just eat, drink, and be merry. God has a higher purpose for us than coping with our addiction. You will discover God's plan for your life as you journey through the program.
- **How God feels about things.** When we see how God feels about things we begin feeling different about the way we've been living. This brings conviction into our lives and lets us know we are accountable for our behavior.
- **God can forgive anything that I've done.** God wants to remove the shame you feel from the things you've done. You haven't gone so far that God can't reach you.

#### 2. Respect for others – Honoring other's boundaries to establish meaningful relationships

There can be no true relationship without respect. To respect is to feel or show honor and esteem for others. ***We can learn to respect the boundaries that others set and have meaningful relationships.*** We can also discover the value of respecting our leaders and remaining under the protection their counsel provides.

#### 3. Repentance – Learning to admit, "I'm wrong" and having the desire to be changed

Many of us work hard to stay in a state of denial when it comes to facing our problems. To admit being wrong would be to admit defeat. This is one battle you must lose. The refusal to face your "self" will mean the continuation of failure, disappointment, and broken relationships. ***The road to freedom will begin as you become painfully honest with yourself.*** When we are honest, the power of God comes to make things right.

#### **4. Retribution – Reward for right behavior and correction for wrong**

There are always consequences for our behavior whether they are immediate or not. The good times should always be good and the bad times always bad. To cushion the consequences of our choices denies us vital self governing information. We fully expect that you will have some negative behavior while at Teen Challenge. In the past, you may have had enabling relationships that allowed you to continue your negative behavior; or a co-dependent relationship where someone else felt responsible for your addiction and refused to confront your behavior. ***In Teen Challenge's "Culture of Responsibility" you will be held responsible to face your actions.*** It is our belief that when you have no place to put the blame but yourself that you'll see the need to ask God to help you change.

#### **5. Restitution – Learning to make things right when we've been wrong**

This may involve returning property we've stolen or agreeing to repay someone for damages we've caused. Learning to confess to others and make things right is essential to clear our hearts and minds for a new way of living. ***Having to clean up after yourself helps to train the heart to do what's right in the future.***

#### **6. Restoration – Learning to ask for and give forgiveness and commit to rebuild relational trust**

Where you have people you will have differences. The program will provide opportunities to apply restoration principles. ***Learning to grow through our differences will prepare us for lasting and meaningful relationships once we return to society.***

#### **7. Rejoicing – Celebrating God's favor that comes from living out these principles**

Once you embrace the culture there will be plenty of reasons for celebrating. As you **believe** and embrace these principles you will discover God's presence in your life. ***The evidence of God's presence in your life will help you know that you belong to God.*** Knowing that you are not alone makes it easier to trust that you can become all that God has intended for you to be.