

It's All About Family!



Topic #16: Encouragement

Often we hold higher expectations for other people than we do for ourselves. We expect others to speak kindly to us, but we sometimes speak unkindly to those around us. We expect people to be on time when meeting us or to always be cheerful, but then we are often late and grumpy with others. It is easy to hold high expectations, but it is difficult to improve ourselves enough to meet our own high expectations. We forget that people are flawed, and we forget to focus our attention on improving ourselves rather than improving others.

Consider how you respond to people who don't act the way you think they should. Do you get frustrated and yell at them? Do you make sarcastic comments about them? It's easy to fall prey to negatively thinking about people who don't meet our expectations. Instead, practice acts of encouragement. Remember that everyone makes mistakes and that encouraging words will inspire people to improve themselves more than negative ones.

The next time someone is unfocused, lazy, struggling with their lines or dances onstage, instead of yelling at them or saying nasty things under your breath, offer instead to help them. Make a lunch date to practice together. Offer encouragement to help them improve themselves. And most of all, work to improve the way you treat other people, so that people who hold high expectations for you can be proud of the ways you meet and exceed those expectations.

Challenge #16: Encouragement

Think about one or two ways you hold unrealistic expectations for someone. How can you adjust those expectations to make them more reachable? Then, the next time someone bothers you because they aren't meeting the expectations you hold for them, offer them words of encouragement and help rather than talking down to them. Remember the lessons of unconditional love!