Look for and Compliment the Good Daily

FAMILY GOALS:

1. Look for and compliment the good in each family member daily.
   a) Record the “Reinforcing Compliments” you give each other.

2. Ignore minor annoying behavior and resist fault-finding.

3. Write one thing you noticed and appreciated in the “Gratitude Journal” each day.


FAMILY FUN:
Print off the “Family Tree” handout and pages of leaves. Let each person write his or her strengths on the leaves. Cut them out and glue them to the tree.

POWER PHRASE:
“Looking for and daily complimenting the good in family members helps me like them even more—and helps them behave better.”

Look for and compliment the good in each family member daily (including yourself!)

Ignore annoying behavior; resist fault-finding

Use “Instant Stress Busters” to self-soothe
Look for and Compliment the Good
Tracking Sheet—Adult

Write the name of each family member below. Daily look for things you can compliment in each person. Put a mark each time you give a reinforcing compliment. Looking for the good in others trains our brains to notice the positive. This helps us feel happier, enjoy family members more, and treat them better.

**Steps to a Reinforcing Compliment:**
1. Give it immediately.
2. Be excited and sincere.
3. Say exactly what the person did well.
4. Tell how it helps the person.
5. Add a gentle touch.

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**Gratitude Journal:** Each day write one thing you noticed and are grateful for.

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**No Trash Talk**
Put a mark every time you fault-find or criticize. Make a goal to stop.

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Look for and Compliment the Good
Tracking Sheet—Child

Draw a smiley face each time you compliment a family member.
Remember, complementing people makes them feel happy and it makes you feel happy too.

Follow these steps to give a super compliment:
1. Give it immediately.
2. Be excited and sincere.
3. Say exactly what the person did well.
4. Tell how it helps the person.
5. Add a gentle touch.

Here’s an example to get you started:
If your mom fixed you a yummy dinner, you could give her a hug and say, “Mom, thanks for fixing a good dinner tonight. When you fix good dinners, it shows you really care about us.”

No Trash Talk
Mark a frowny face every time you are mean to someone, like criticizing or pointing out someone’s mistakes.

Make a goal to stop noticing and pointing out the negative.
Look for and Compliment the Good
Tracking Sheet—Teen

Practice makes perfect. Put a checkmark each time you compliment a family member.
Noticing the good boosts your brain power, and complimenting your family members builds loving relationships.

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Remember to follow these steps to make it a reinforcing compliment:
1. Give it immediately.
2. Be excited and sincere.
3. Say exactly what the person did well.
4. Tell how it helps the person.
5. Add a gentle touch.

Here’s an example to get you started:
If your sister played well in her soccer game, give her a high-five and say, “Hey! You played a great game today. You played hard and had a lot of good touches on the ball. The more touches you get, the better you’ll get at your ball control!”

No Trash Talk
Put a checkmark every time you criticize or find fault with someone.
Make a goal to stop noticing and pointing out the negative.
The Power of Praising and Ignoring
Two fundamental skills to change children’s behavior

1. Praising the Positive Opposite:
Identify one negative behavior you’d like your child to change and write it below. Only work on one behavior at a time. Decide what that behavior’s opposite would be. (It becomes the Positive Opposite you’re going to praise.) Write it below. For example: the opposite of “fighting” is “getting along”; the opposite of “lying” is “telling the truth,” etc. Every time you see your child doing that positive behavior, praise him or her using Reinforcing Compliments. The steps to use Reinforcing Compliments are praise immediately; be enthusiastic, be specific, give a benefit, and add a touch. Track your praise and your child’s progress.

If the behavior doesn’t occur often enough to be reinforcing, talk to your child privately during a calm moment and set up a reward system that allows him or her to earn special rewards or privileges (see Lesson 3). Track his or her behavior and your Reinforcing Compliments.

| Praising the Positive Opposite: |  |  |  |  |  |
|---------------------------------|  |  |  |  |  |
| Name:                           | Negative Behavior | Positive Opposite Behavior: | S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
|                                 |                 |                                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|                                 |                 |                                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|                                 |                 |                                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|                                 |                 |                                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

2. Effective Ignoring:
The other crucial skill in changing behavior is to ignore minor negative behaviors that you want to disappear. Kids feed on attention and want to get a reaction from you. Don’t give it. Ignoring needs to be done right in order to be effective. Here are the 5 Steps of Effective Ignoring:

1. Show no emotion.
2. Turn your attention immediately away; act interested in something else.
3. Don’t look at the person.
4. Have no physical contact until the misbehavior stops.
5. Warmly give your child positive attention the moment the misbehavior stops.
40 Phrases That Praise—For Parents
Putting deposits in your kid’s “emotional bank account”

Say these phrases aloud on your own so that they will come to mind, and feel natural, as you seek opportunities to use them. Actively look for the good in all family members and give sincere compliments—especially to those who annoy you the most. Praise even their attempts at good behavior. You’ll feel happier, and so will they. Only after people feel loved and accepted can they begin to change.

**REINFORCING* COMPLIMENTS**

1. I’m proud of you for...
2. Thanks for trying so hard on...
3. I’m pleased the way you...
4. How thoughtful of you to...
5. You’ve made real progress on...
6. You did a good job on...
7. Keep up the good work on...
8. You are a natural at...
9. I like it when you...
10. That was a really good try at...
11. That’s a great improvement on...
12. I’m pleased you...
13. I appreciate you being...
   (so thoughtful, honest,
persistent, kind, etc.)
14. You showed a lot of creativity at...
15. I’m impressed with the way you...
16. Thanks for being so...
   (responsible, organized, etc.)

**POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS**

26. Well done!
27. I like to hear your ideas.
28. Excellent work!
29. What a great job!
30. That’s a good point. Thanks for sharing.
31. I’m sure you can do it; you’ve done hard things before.
   (Or: I knew you could do it.)
32. Thanks for doing what I asked.
33. I couldn’t have done it without you.
34. Wow! Cool! Way to go!
35. That’s great! Give me five!
36. I like the way you’re working!
37. You’re on the right track.
38. Good thinking!
39. You’re a great helper.
40. That’s a great idea!

**EXPRESSING LOVE**

17. I love you.
18. We make a great team.
19. I have fun with you.
20. I’m glad you’re my son/daughter, husband/wife.
21. I enjoy spending time with you.
22. I’m glad you called.
23. If you’re concerned/sad/hurting, I’m here to listen; help me understand.
24. You mean a lot to me.
25. You’re right.

30 Phrases That Praise—For Kids
Putting deposits in your parents’ and siblings’ “emotional bank accounts”

Everyone has an “emotional bank account” and a need to feel loved and appreciated, including your parents and siblings. A sincere compliment is like a deposit in their account. Criticism makes withdrawals. Practice saying these phrases aloud until they feel natural. Then look for ways to use them every day. Do your part to help your family feel loved and appreciated. You’ll feel happier and so will they.

**REINFORCING***
COMPLIMENTS

1  I’m proud of you for…
2  I really liked that you…
3  That was really nice of you to…
4  Great job on…
5  I like it when you…
6  Thanks for helping me…
7  Your __________ looks really good!
8  I love it when you…
9  I appreciate you…
10 Thanks for being so…

**EXPRESSING LOVE**

11  I love you.
12  We make a great team.
13  I have fun with you.
14  I’m glad you’re my mom/dad/grandma/etc.
15  I like spending time with you.
16  I’m glad you called.
17  I like talking to you.
18  I love it when you spend time with me.
19  Thanks for always being there for me.
20  You’re awesome!

**POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS**

21  You’re the best!
22  That’s a good idea.
23  What a great job!
24  That’s a good point.
25  I couldn’t have done it without you.
26  Wow! Cool! Way to go!
27  Awesome! Give me five!
28  I like the way you did that!
29  You’re right.
30  You’re really smart.

Three Easy Instant Stress-Busters

Practice each of these Stress-Busters until they become easy to do and you can immediately de-stress and self-soothe. Whenever a family discussion gets “hot,” call a “Ten Second Time-Out” to disengage, and use these three instant stress busters.

1. **Calm Breaths**
   Take three slow, deep breaths through your nose; hold each breath for a second; and then very slowly release the air.
   As you take slow, deep breaths through your nose, tiny cells high up in your nasal passage are stimulated, giving off nitric oxide.
   Nitric oxide is a relaxing, short-lived brain neurotransmitter. It causes our blood vessels to relax and dilate so they carry more oxygen to the brain, and we feel more calm and alert.

2. **Warm Waterfall (Progressive Muscle Relaxation)**
   a) Close your eyes and tighten all your muscles, even those in your face.
   b) Imagine a gentle, warm relaxing waterfall that begins to pour softly over your head, run down your face, and flow all the way to your feet. As the soft, warm water touches each part of you, relax that set of muscles.
   c) When the imaginary warm water reaches your feet, flick the water off your fingertips, open your eyes, step out of the “puddle” and you are completely relaxed, de-stressed, and alert.

3. **Positive “C” Talk (“Self-Talk”)**
   • I am **C**alm and in **C**ontrol.
   • I **C**an make this moment better.
   • I **C**an smile.
   As you repeat each of these three statements to yourself, take a slow, deep cleansing breath though your nose. Hold it for two seconds, and then let the air out slowly through your lips. On the last “C” statement—after you breathe out, SMILE!
   Smiling triggers “feel-good” brain chemicals. You’ll feel a happy difference.
Print out this page and its companion leaf page. Together, think of strengths that your family has (loyal, helpful, etc.) or that individual family members bring to the family (kind, funny, hard-working, etc.). Give each family member several leaves and have each person write family strengths or positive qualities (including their own) on each leaf. Then glue them to the tree and post where family members can see and appreciate it. Add leaves to the tree as you think of more qualities or learn new skills.
What Makes Our Family Strong

b. Family Tree Leaves

Cut out the leaves and write strengths of your family and/or family members on them; then glue on tree.
What Makes Our Family Strong

c. Personal and Family Strengths

Below are a list of qualities and strengths to write on the leaves in the “Family Tree Leaves” handout. All people have things they do well and qualities that others value and appreciate. Think about each member of your family and write the strengths and qualities they have on your leaves and place them on the family tree. As you look for and discover new qualities continue to add them to your family tree.

- sense of humor
- good sport
- intelligent
- protecting
- gives hugs
- peace maker
- thoughtful
- understanding
- happy
- creative
- loving
- playful
- helpful
- loyal
- bright
- studies hard
- neat and tidy
- cheerful
- dependable
- good cook
- affectionate
- energetic
- hard worker
- good listener

- lovable
- obedient
- clever
- quiet
- observant
- friendly
- agreeable
- controls temper
- positive
- sensitive
- brave
- consistent
- funny
- curious
- good at drawing
- good at math
- good at writing
- good at dancing
- good at speaking
- good at acting
- good skateboarder
- good at geography
- good at remembering
- good story teller
- good speller
- good puzzle solver
- good gamer
- fast runner
- thrifty
- great swimmer
- good at tricks
- truth teller
- organized
- gives service
- cooperative
- strong
- athletic
- out-going
- kind
- supportive
- patient
- assertive
- sharing
- active
- capable
- responsible
- mellow
- caring
- good at fixing things
- imaginative
- persistent
- honest
- calm
- generous

| Jenny is athletic and a good sport. |
Pro-Social Skills for a Successful Life
Encouraging good behavior

**HOW TO**

**GIVE REINFORCING COMPLIMENTS**

1. Give your compliment immediately.
2. Be enthusiastic and sincere.
4. Explain a benefit for doing the behavior that your child will appreciate.
5. Add a gentle touch.

**HOW TO**

**PRAISE THE POSITIVE OPPOSITE**

1. Identify one negative behavior you’d like your child to change.
2. Decide what the opposite of that behavior is.
3. Every time you see your child doing the good behavior (the opposite of the bad behavior), praise him or her using Reinforcing Compliments.

**HOW TO**

**STOP CRITICIZING**

1. Recognize that criticism harms family relationships. It doesn’t encourage people to change, and it creates negative brain wiring in the person who is criticizing.
2. Make a firm commitment to yourself and family to stop being critical. Put up reminders.
3. Ask the family to remind you to not criticize, and thank them when they do. Replace your criticisms with a positive phrase.
4. Look for the good in others.
5. Each time you notice a fault or think a judgmental thought about someone, add the words, “… and me too,” to the thought.
6. Use the skill of positive criticism from Lesson 7.

**HOW TO**

**IGNORE ANNOYING BEHAVIOR**

1. Show no emotion.
2. Turn your attention immediately away; act interested in something else.
3. Don’t look at the person.
4. Have no physical contact until the misbehavior stops.
5. Warmly give your child positive attention the moment the misbehavior stops.
6. Praise the positive opposite.