

# **SESSION NINE: WIDENING CIRCLES OF SUPPORT**

<b>SESSION NINE OVERVIEW</b>	
<b>GOALS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents and teens reflect on their experience during the programme and discuss how to continue supporting each other after the programme</li> </ul>
<b>CORE PRINCIPLES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your House of Support requires constant support and nurturing</li> <li>Stay connected to your PLH Buddy and continue supporting each other</li> <li>The end of the programme is the beginning of a happier and healthier family for the rest of your lives!</li> </ul>
<b>MATERIALS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance register, name tags, temporary adhesive, pens, crayons, paper, flipchart, refreshments for celebration, certificates, music for dance party</li> <li>House of Support poster</li> </ul>
<b>PREPARATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up the room with chairs in a circle.</li> <li>Prepare materials for name tags and refreshments for break</li> </ul>
<b>WELCOME</b> (20 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome</li> <li>Take a Pause</li> <li>Emotional Check-In</li> <li>Physical exercise</li> </ul>
<b>HOME ACTIVITY DISCUSSION</b> (30 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remind parents/teens of core home activity</li> <li>Ask parents/teens to share highlights and challenges</li> <li>Discuss solutions to challenges and practice solutions</li> </ul>
<b>BREAK (5 Minutes)</b>	
<b>CORE LESSON – PROGRAMME REFLECTION</b> (30 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Silent Reflection</li> <li>Art Activity</li> <li>Sharing in Group</li> </ul>
<b>CORE LESSON – MOVING ON</b> (20 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Story: Stone Soup</li> <li>Discussion: Keeping the momentum moving forward</li> <li>Review: Tips for continuing support</li> </ul>
<b>LOVING KINDNESS ACTIVITY</b> (5 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loving Kindness meditation</li> </ul>
<b>ONGOING HOME ACTIVITIES</b> (10 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spend at least 15 minutes of One-on-One Time a day with your teen/parent.</li> <li>Continue to praise your parent/teen, yourself, and others in your family</li> <li>Try to give positive, specific, and realistic instructions to each other</li> <li>Be calm and clear when talking about things that are important to you.</li> <li>Try to be more aware of your own emotions and the emotions of others.</li> <li>Ask your parent/teen about how s/he is feeling at least once a week.</li> <li>Practice I Feel Statements when communicating about emotions.</li> <li>Take a Pause whenever a conflict or difficult situation comes up.</li> <li>Try to maintain stable and strong household routines</li> <li>Be consistent and appreciative with rules and responsibilities</li> <li>Continue to monitor your family budget and savings plan</li> <li>Continue to be consistent with household rules</li> <li>Work together with your parent/teen when experiencing difficulties</li> <li>Work together with your parent/teen whenever a problem or conflict comes up in your family. Use the 6 Steps of Problem Solving.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember to think about short-term and long-term plans about how you are going to manage the crisis.</li> <li>• Be realistic, immediate, reasonable, and consistent when using consequences.</li> <li>• Keep updating the Mapping Exercise noting potential safe and dangerous areas as well as sources of support.</li> <li>• Meet with your PLH Buddy at least once week.</li> <li>• Do something nice to reward yourself for your hard work in the PLH Teens programme!</li> </ul>
<b>CLOSING CELEBRATION</b> (30 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certificates</li> <li>• Freeze Dance</li> <li>• Compliment Circle</li> <li>• Emotional check-out</li> <li>• Thank and praise families</li> </ul>

## **1      NOTES FOR SESSION NINE**

*Read this in preparation for delivering the session.*

### **1.1 Overview**

Session Nine is the final session for PLH Teens!

Congratulations! You deserve a lot of self-praise and recognition of all the hard work that you have done to get to this point of the programme. It is an amazing accomplishment!

During Session Nine, parents and teens will have the opportunity to reflect on the changes they have experienced over the course of the programme.

There is also time to discuss how participants can keep their House of Support strong and stable so that the Sunshine of Positive Attention continues to shine on their families.

### **1.2 Reflecting on experiences**

Participants share how they have changed as well as what changes they have noticed in their relationship with their parents/teens and their life at home.

The artistic exercise drawing a picture allows them to process their experience as a group in a creative way and to hear from others about the impact of the programme on their lives.

### **1.3 Usefulness of PLH Teens**

During this part of the session, you will lead parents and teens in a discussion about benefits using the new parenting strategies learned during PLH Teens. This activity helps families make their own decision on how the programme impacted their lives.

You should help them see that the skills from PLH Teens will promote positive relationships between parents and teens that are based in love, affection, respect, and consistent parenting.

Hopefully, by this point in the programme, families will come up with that conclusion themselves!

### **1.4 Keeping the House of Support strong**

The last session of the programme can be emotionally challenging to many parents and teens. They may have developed strong relationships with each other and changed quite a lot over the course of the programme.

It has also provided them with a source of support and sense of community that many parents and teens will have found helpful and nourishing.

**This support can continue after PLH Teens ends.**

"Stone Soup" is a helpful story that shows how the skills and knowledge have always existed in the community. Although the programme helped bring these skills to the surface, all of the principles, building blocks, and solutions to problems came from the families.

**In other words, the parents and teens have always been the experts.**

Your role is to encourage them to discuss ways in which they might be able to continue integrating the practices and building blocks into their lives on an ongoing basis.

This may be in monthly or weekly support groups, get-togethers with PLH Buddies, or anything else that the families decide.

It is important that you affirm whatever the families decide to do. They can also check what resources including meeting occasionally with the group, providing a room for future meetings, and other sources of support.

### **1.5 Sending loving kindness**

Participants learn one more relaxation activity called "Sending Loving Kindness." This activity can be especially helpful when parents or teens are feeling alone and needing support.

It is a simple mindfulness exercise in which they send thoughts of "Loving Kindness" to themselves, wishing that they are happy, safe, healthy, and loved.

They also learn that they can send these thoughts to their loved ones, especially each other.

***You should also practice this activity for yourself since you deserve plenty of Loving Kindness too!***

## **2 INTRODUCTION**

### **2.1 Welcome**

Welcome participants warmly and enthusiastically when they arrive to the session.

### **2.2 Take a Pause**

**Take a Pause** with the participants. You can make it brief (about a minute):

- Close eyes
- Focus on thoughts, feelings, and body sensations (15 seconds)
- Focus on breath (30 seconds)
- Expand focus to the entire body and sounds (15 seconds)
- Open eyes

Remind participants that they should try to **Take a Pause** before reacting to their parents or teens when they do something that annoys or angers them.

This may help them respond in a less negative and violent way. **Take a Pause** can even be a couple deep breaths!

### **2.3 Emotional Check-In**

Parents and teens check into the group by sharing how they feel at the beginning of the session. They should describe their emotion, where they feel it in their body, and what thoughts are associated with it.

You can model this: "I feel anxious. I feel it in my shoulders. I am worried about having enough money this month for food," or "I feel proud. I feel it in my chest. I did well on my math test."

### **2.4 Physical Exercises**

This is the last time the parents do the physical exercises together. Take the time to review all the different steps of the exercise: stretching, isolations from head-to-toe, and shaking down the body.

You can also review any other physical activities that you have done during the programme including shoulder circles, back massages, and body pat downs.

Remember that the most important thing is to *breathe!!!*

### **3 DISCUSSION OF HOME ACTIVITIES**

Divide the parents and teens so that both can feel more comfortable talking about their experiences openly.

#### **Home Activities Recap**

The core home activities were to:

- Review the **Mapping Exercise** with your other family members. Discuss potential safe and dangerous areas as well as sources of support.
- Discuss **ONE possible crisis** together with your parent/teen. Make a **short-term plan** and a **long-term plan** about how you are going to manage the crisis.
- Remember to **Take a Pause** whenever a conflict or difficult situation comes up.
- Spend **at least 15 minutes** of **One-on-One Time** each day with your teen/parent.

You should also make time to discuss any other challenges that may have arisen regarding consequences and solving problems together as a family.

Key points to be aware of during this home activity discussion:

- Make sure that participants have chosen realistic short-term and long-term plans that maintain a positive relationship between them and their teens
- Make sure parents and teens are still spending One-on-One Time together

#### **Possible questions for Discussion on Home Activities in Session Nine:**

- Does anyone want to share your experience making a short- and long-term plan for managing a crisis together with your parent/teen? What was the crisis?
- Does anyone have any questions about the Mapping Exercise and sources of support in the community?
- Does anyone want to about spending One-on-One Time together?

**Please remember:** You need to check in with **each participant** to explore his/her experience doing Home Activities:

- Explore solutions to difficulties in doing the Home Activities with parents and teens.
- Encourage parents and teens to offer ways to overcome challenges as a group.
- Choose a strategy from the group's solutions and practice it.
- Then evaluate how it worked and encourage the participant to try it again at home.

#### **BREAK**

## **4      CORE LESSON – PROGRAMME REFLECTION**

### **4.1 Silent reflection**

The programme reflection gives participants an opportunity to look back on their experiences, to notice how they and their relationship with each other may have changed.

Take the participants through a visualization of the entire programme drawing attention to key moments, Building Blocks, and experiences that may have arisen:

1. Ask participants to close their eyes and sit in a comfortable position.
2. Ask them to recall what their lives and relationships were like when you visited them at their homes before the programme began.
3. Guide participants through each session as you describe building the House of Support:
  - a. Setting Positive, Realistic, and Specific Goals
  - b. Spending One-on-One Time Together
  - c. Giving Praise and Positive Instructions
  - d. Managing Anger and Stress
  - e. Establishing Rules and Routines
  - f. Family Budgeting and Ways to Save
  - g. Accepting Responsibility for Our Actions
  - h. Solving Problems Together as A Family
  - i. Keeping Safe in the Community
  - j. Responding to Crises
4. Ask participants to think about their experiences looking at role-plays, practicing skills during sessions, and practicing skills with each other at home.
5. Ask them to think about whether their goals for themselves and their relationship with each other have been achieved or have changed.
6. Ask them to think about how they have changed, how their parents/caregivers and their teens have changed, and how their families have changed.
7. You might want to ask the following questions:
  - a. How helpful have you found the PLH Teens programme?
  - b. How is your relationship with your parent/teen different from before you started the programme?



- c. What are the main skills or things that you learned from the programme? How are these different from the way you related to your parent/teen before?
- d. How would these skills help you/your teen develop as a human being?
- e. What do you think are the long-term consequences or benefits of these skills?
- f. Do you see yourself continuing to use it?
- g. What kind of support do you need to continue using them?

8. Ask the participants to open their eyes.

## 4.2 Art activity

After the reflection, distribute paper and crayons for the art activity. Ask the participants to draw pictures that relate to some of the following questions:

- 1. What was their relationship with their parent/teen like before the programme?
- 2. How has the relationship changed? How have you changed? Your parent/teen? Your family?
- 3. What was the most important/significant thing that you learned? Why was this significant?

Participants share their drawings in pairs with their parent/teen and then as a larger group.

After each participant shares, s/he places his/her picture in the middle of the circle as if giving an offering to a communal fire within the House of Support.

***Please note:*** Allow every participant to share but try to keep the sharing brief (1-2 minutes each). You can draw a picture and share too!

## **5 CORE LESSON – MOVING ON**

At this point in the session, the focus shifts to the future. The programme ending can be a very emotional time for parents and teens. Many may feel anxiety about the next chapter in their lives. It is important to provide parents with some support and encouragement.

The next activities help parents identify ways of continuing to support one another.

“Stone Soup” is a story about community building that is shared with the parents to help them take ownership of their own skills, knowledge, and wisdom.

Depending on how much time is available and whether there is a separate celebration planned, you may want to tell this story during the community celebration.

### **5.1 Story – Stone Soup**

*(traditional tale as narrated by Jamie McLaren Lachman)*

There was once a beautiful village. The people of this village were always happy because they never needed anything. They had livestock, fruits, and vegetables, as theirs was a very fertile village. They never knew suffering.

However, after some time there was drought. There was no more rain and their livestock was dying. Times became difficult because now there was hunger in the village. The people stopped talking to each other because everyone was focusing on their own problems.

One day an old woman came to this village carrying a big black pot on her head and a small brown bag. When she arrived in the middle of the village, she placed the big black pot on the ground and sat next to it to take a rest. No one saw this woman, except a little boy who was out playing that day.

When the boy saw this old woman, he asked her "Bibi, what are you doing with that big black pot?"

"I am going to make some Stone Soup!" answered the old woman. This confused the boy. Who ever heard of such a thing as Stone Soup?

Because he was a curious boy and always full of questions, he asked, "Can I please help you Bibi?"

The old woman was very happy when he asked to help. "Of course, you can! Go and get some water and collect some wood, my child," she said.

So, the boy collected some wood in the nearby forest. As the old woman was busy making the fire, he went down to the river to fetch some water.

By the time the boy returned with water, the old woman had a large, warm fire burning.

She placed the big black pot on the fire and poured in the water. She then opened her small brown bag and took out a shiny, round white stone. She placed it in the big black pot and began to stir, humming an old cooking song.

Soon, the water began to boil. The old woman licked her lips and said to the boy, "Mmmmm...this is going to be a delicious pot of Stone Soup."

It wasn't long when the others began to notice the fire burning in the middle of the village. One by one, they left their homes to see what was happening.

"What is going on here?" asked one man. The boy answered, "She is cooking Stone Soup!"

Those who were there exchanged looks as if they had never heard of such a thing. Stone Soup?

The news spread fast and throughout the village. All the villagers left their homes to see this crazy old woman and her Stone Soup with their own eyes. As the people were arriving, the old woman continued to stir the pot while humming.

When she noticed that there were many people gathered, she stopped stirring and tasted the watery soup. "Mmmmmmm... This is going to be the most delicious soup. It is just missing something. If only there were some onions..."

One woman had a few old onions that she had been saving. They were small and wrinkly but still good to eat. "I have some onions," she offered. She fetched them from her home, chopped them up, and added them to the big black bubbling pot.

After a little while longer, the old woman tasted the soup again. "Yes, this soup is going to be so good. But it is missing something.... If only there were some more...."

"Vegetables!" said a voice from the crowd, "It needs more vegetables. I have some spinach. It's not much but you can use it." Another person brought a couple of old potatoes. Someone else had a cabbage. Another garlic. Carrots. A pumpkin. Salt. An old scrawny chicken. Some chillies. Spices.

*[At this point, the storyteller can ask people for suggestions what to put in the soup]*

The smell of the soup filled the village. It reminded people of the old days. They began to talk to each other, exchanging stories and news, even jokes. Laughter was heard again for the first time in many years.

At last, the old woman stopped stirring. She tasted the soup and declared with a twinkle in her eye, "This Stone Soup is nearly ready. And so much to eat. I wonder if you will help me finish it please."

Everyone went back to his or her homes and brought bowls and spoons. Even though there were so many people, there was just enough for each person. They ate the soup until they were all full. And it was the most delicious Stone Soup they had ever tasted.

When they were done, the villagers brought out their drums and other musical instruments and began to sing songs and dance. They sang and danced until dusk. Then, the villages thanked the woman and returned to their homes chatting with each other. Once again, there was the sound of laughter and song in the air that evening.

As the evening stars began to shine, the old woman was left alone in the middle of the village. She gathered the white stone in her small brown bag and placed her big black pot on her head. Without a word of farewell, she slowly began to walk down the windy road that led out of the village.

Before she could leave, the boy saw her and ran to her. "Why are you leaving, Bibi?" he asked.

"My work here is done," the old woman replied. "But we need someone like you to help us," said the boy.

She reached into her small brown bag and handed the boy the white stone. "You have all the ingredients that you need to make Stone Soup." Then she slowly walked down the road. The boy watched and waved until he couldn't see her any longer.

The villagers never saw that woman again. But life in the village continued to thrive – in the best of times and the worst of times they never lost their connection to each other again as they continued to make the most delicious Stone Soup.

*The end.*

## **5.2 Discussion – Keeping the momentum going**

Lead a discussion to help participants to identify specific ways in which they can continue to support each other. Useful questions to help prompt discussion may include:

1. What are some of the ingredients that we have in our community to continue supporting us as families?
2. In what ways can we continue to support our teens' development and our lives after the programme?

You can suggest that someone takes the responsibility for getting the group together if participants suggest staying in contact or continuing to meet regularly.

For peer support groups, it is important to identify the following:

- Person (or people) responsible for organizing the support groups
- Place where the parents can meet and if help can be provided from an organisation
- Time and day that will best suit everyone

## **5.3 Review – Tips for Continuing Support:**

1. Keep practicing all the Building Blocks that you used to build your House of Support.
2. Stay connected to your PLH Teens partner. Try to meet once a week!
3. There may be other families who have done the PLH Teens programme in your neighbourhood. Start your own PLH Teens Support Group!
4. Learn what services and support you can get in your community.

## **6 CORE LESSON – LOVING KINDNESS EXERCISE**

Participants learn one last stress reduction activity – a Loving Kindness exercise.

This activity helps participants connect with a sense of loving-kindness towards themselves and their families. It brings closure to the culminating activity while reconnecting participants to a sense of wellbeing and calmness after all the excitement and anticipation for the closing.

### **Suggestions for leading the Loving Kindness activity:**

*NOTE: Use the below text as a guide to leading the activity.*

*Just like **Taking a Pause**, you can pause for about 5 seconds at each [Pause] in the text. It is helpful to follow your own instructions during the pause.*

### **Step 1: Preparation**

Sometimes when we are experiencing stress, feeling alone, or just needing support, it can be helpful to send thoughts of loving kindness to ourselves.

This exercise helps us to become more grounded and present – which increases wellbeing and balance - helping us to manage stress, illness and difficulty. [Pause]

Find a comfortable sitting position, your feet flat on the floor, your hands resting in your lap. [Pause]

Close your eyes if you feel comfortable. [Pause]

### **Step 2: Becoming Aware**

Ask yourself, "What is my experience in this moment?" [Pause]

Notice what thoughts you are experiencing. Notice if they are negative or positive. [Pause]

Notice how you feel emotionally. Notice if your feelings are pleasant or unpleasant. [Pause]

Notice how your body feels. Notice any discomfort or tension. [Pause]

### **Step 3: Opening to Loving Kindness**

Connect to your heart in a kind and gentle way. You may want to place one hand on your heart or chest. [Pause]

You can then say the following words silently to yourself [Pause]

May I be peaceful. [*Pause*]

May I be safe. [*Pause*]

May I be healthy. [*Pause*]

May I be happy. [*Pause*]

May I feel loved. [*Pause*]

*Repeat slowly once or twice taking your time between each phrase.*

If you feel comfortable, you can also send thoughts of loving-kindness to your teen/parent, your partner, your family, and anyone else who is close to you in your life. [*Pause*]

May you be peaceful. [*Pause*]

May you be safe. [*Pause*]

May you be healthy. [*Pause*]

May you be happy. [*Pause*]

May you feel loved. [*Pause*]

*Repeat slowly once or twice taking your time between each phrase.*

#### **Step 4: Expanding Awareness**

Allow your focus to expand to the whole body. [*Pause*]

Allow your focus to expand to the sounds in the room. [*Pause*]

When you are ready, open your eyes. [*Pause*]

#### **Step 5: Reflecting**

Take a moment to reflect on your experience.

When you are ready, open your eyes. [*Pause*]

Remember that you can do this activity at any time whenever you feel like you need extra support.

## **7 ONGOING HOME ACTIVITIES**

### ***IT IS WHAT YOU DO AT HOME THAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE!***

It is important to remind participants that they need to continue keeping their House of Support strong and healthy even though PLH Teens has come to an end.

The home activities are a great way for parents and teens to stay connected to the programme by actively engaging in positive relationship building.

Families should be encouraged to reward themselves whenever they do a home activities activity!

- Spend **at least 15 minutes** of **One-on-One Time** each day with your teen/parent.
- Keep the Sunshine of Positive Attention shining on you and your parent/teen
  - Continue to **praise** your parent/teen, yourself, and others in your family
  - Try to **give positive, specific, and realistic instructions** to each other
  - Be **calm and clear** when talking about things that are important to you.
- Continue to build awareness of emotions and your ability to communicate about them
  - Try to be more **aware of your own emotions and the emotions of others.**
  - Ask your parent/teen about how s/he is feeling at least **1 time a week.**
  - Practice **I Feel Statements** when talking about emotions at least **1 time a week.**
  - Remember to **Take a Pause** whenever a conflict or difficult situation comes up.
- Try to maintain stable and strong household routines
  - Be consistent and appreciative with **rules and responsibilities**
  - Continue to monitor your **family budget** and **savings plan**
  - Continue to be consistent with **household rules**
- Work together with your parent/teen when experiencing difficulties
  - **Work together** with your parent/teen whenever a problem or conflict comes up in your family. **Use the 6 Steps of Problem Solving.**
  - Remember to think about **short-term** and **long-term plans** about how you are going to manage the crisis.
  - Be realistic, immediate, reasonable, and consistent when using **consequences.**
- Keep updating the **Mapping Exercise** noting potential safe and dangerous areas as well as sources of support.



- Remember your **Coping Strategies**:
  - **Take a Pause** when you feel stressed or angry.
  - **Physical Exercises** when you wake up.
  - **Loving Kindness** when you are feeling lonely and need support.
  - Do **Something Nice for Yourself**.
- Meet with your **PLH Buddy** one time during the week.
- Do something nice to **reward yourself** for your hard work in the PLH Teens programme!

## **8 CLOSING CELEBRATION**

### **8.1 Certificates**

Hand out certificates of completion to parents at the end of the session. This is a simple recognition for their accomplishment in finishing the programme.

You may also want to plan a special reward for those who only missed one session or attended all of the sessions. Make sure that you have told the parents and teens about this at the first session!

### **8.2 Freeze Dance Party**

This activity is a fun way to celebrate the end of PLH Teens:

1. When the music plays, participants all dance.
2. When the music stops, everybody must FREEZE and not move.
3. Give an instruction for something fun to do when the music starts again. For example:
  - a. Dance backwards
  - b. Dance with your hands in the air
  - c. Dance in pairs
  - d. Make up your own!
4. Remember to praise the performances!

### **8.3 Compliment Circle**

Parents and teens take turns praising each other.

Then parents and teens take turns praising themselves for something specific that they did well.

Encourage participants to make eye contact and use the name of their parent/teen. The compliments can be about anything as long as they are sincere.

### **8.4 Emotional Check-Out**

Model the emotional check-out by describing your emotion, where you feel it in your body, and what thoughts are associated with it.

For example, "I am feeling happy. This happiness is in my eyes. I am happy to have learned about how to create fair rules together."

***Thank and praise the families for their commitment to making loving and nurturing relationships together!***