

Parent Tips | Freedom Journey

Show them grace.

Just because it's for teens doesn't mean *Freedom Journey* is a "lite" class. This class is challenging, and students do hard work. At times, your son or daughter might feel overwhelmed, which can look like anger, depression, anxiety, irritability, or any number of things. Although we don't encourage or excuse poor behavior, please understand that your student might experience increased emotion.

Give them space.

If you are concerned about what your student might share, keep in mind that this class is not about judging you or your parenting. Rather, this class equips your student with valuable tools that help them deal with relationships, difficult circumstances, and painful feelings. Your son or daughter might want to share what they are learning in class, or they might not. Please respect their decision. In the case of virtual meetings, respect your student's privacy as well as others by ensuring your student has a place to join that is truly private, away from distractions and interruptions.

Stay off their case.

Regular attendance is critical for your son or daughter to get the most out of *Freedom Journey for Teens*. At times, however, your student might be reluctant to go. Do what you can to encourage but don't force them to attend. This process is the most effective when students embrace it for themselves. Completing the Daily Journey Steps is the student's responsibility, and their leaders reinforce their efforts.

Help them get to the place.

Your student will likely need some help with transportation. Besides helping with rides, you can also help by not scheduling other obligations during class time. If unavoidable obligations or travel prevent your student from attending, ask them to contact their small group leader as soon as possible and inform them of the absence.

Be their home base.

Make yourself available to listen to your student talk about what they are learning. Let them decide what and how to share. Small group leaders are doing the tough work of processing with your student. Your job is to be a safe place for them to land.

Let them run their race.

Cheer them on. Encourage them by affirming positive changes you observe in their lives. Celebrate with them when they recognize milestones such as finishing each unit and completing the class. Your positive words make a world of difference.