



Positive Voices Around Us: Exploring Perspectives of Family, Friends, Community, and Support

Introduction - This exercise is designed to spark meaningful conversations about the influence of family, friends, and social supports on personal growth and positive change. Participants will reflect on these important relationships while answering questions from the perspective of others in their lives.

Opening Activity – Say it Like...

Directions - Think about the people who surround and support you—immediate and extended family, friends, coworkers, neighbors, and others. In this exercise, you'll be asked to answer questions, but instead of answering from your own perspective, you'll respond as you believe these other individuals would answer.

Guidelines:

- Make your best guess: If you're unsure how someone would respond, avoid saying "I don't know." Instead, do your best to make an educated guess.
- No offense intended: If you're asked to answer for someone you've never met or don't know well (such as a biological parent you've never met), feel free to choose a person who represents that role in your life, or ask for an alternate role. Remember, this is about engaging in discussion, not causing discomfort.

Instructions: Take turns. The counselor will select a role from the list and a question. The person whose turn it is should answer the question as if they were responding from the perspective of the chosen role. Here are two sample scenarios to clarify:

Sample 1:

- ❖ *Role Selected:* Father
- ❖ *Question Chosen:* What makes someone a "good" person?

Group Member: (Answering as if their father): "A good person is someone who works hard, stays out of trouble, and treats others with respect."

Sample 2:

- ❖ *Role Selected:* 10th Grade Teacher
- ❖ *Question Chosen:* How would you describe (Group Member's Name)?

Group Member: (Mary, answering as if her 10th grade teacher): "Mary is a great student when she's focused. She can be a bit mischievous when she's bored, but overall, she's smart, charming, and an excellent writer."



Role List

<p><u>Family Roles</u> Father (or father figure, stepfather, foster, etc.) Mother Son Daughter Brother Sister Grandfather Grandmother Grandson Granddaughter Uncle Aunt Nephew Niece Cousin (first cousin, second cousin, etc.) Great grandfather Great grandmother Great uncle Great aunt Father-in-law Mother-in-law Brother-in-law Sister-in-law Son-in-law Daughter-in-law</p> <p><u>Relationships</u> Relationship Partner (Boyfriend, girlfriend, etc.) Ex Relationship Partner Husband Wife Ex-husband Ex-wife</p>	<p><u>Self</u> Past You (choose an age) Future You</p> <p><u>Social/Community</u> Friend (Current) Friend (Past, childhood, etc.) Neighbor Coworker Teacher Classmate (or former classmate) Judge Probation/Parole Officer Social Worker Counselor Supervisor/Boss/Manager Mentor Sponsor/Recovery Support Law Enforcement Officer</p> <p><u>Fun (Optional)</u> Favorite Actor Favorite Music Performer Fictional Character Other Celebrity Historical Figure Pet (If your pet could talk) Favorite Superhero Favorite Athlete Video Game Character Alien from another planet Your Childhood Toy (if it could talk) A Time Traveler</p> <p>Other? – <i>Be creative and come up with your own</i></p>
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Question List – **Remember the group member is answering AS THE PERSON (As mom, dad, etc.)*

- How would you describe **(Group Member's name)**?
- What do you think is **(Group Member's name)** greatest strength?
- What do you think **(Group Member's name)** needs to work on the most?
- What do you think is the most important lesson **(Group Member's name)** needs to learn?
- What advice would you give **(Group Member's name)** about their future?
- What is something you are proud of about **(Group Member's name)**?
- How do you define happiness?
- What do you think makes someone a "good" person?
- How would you explain the importance of family?
- What do you believe is the most important thing in life?
- What makes life meaningful for you personally?
- What would you say to try and motivate **(Group Member's name)**?
- How would you describe your relationship with **(Group Member's name)**?
- What do you usually say about the type of people **(Group Member's name)** dates?
- What do you think **(Group Member's name)** should focus on in their life right now?
- How has **(Group Member's name)** grown or changed over the years?
- What do you appreciate most about **(Group Member's name)**?
- What do you think is the key to success?
- What advice would you give **(Group Member's name)** about handling difficult emotions?
- What is your favorite saying?
- What is your biggest fear when it comes to **(Group Member's name)**?
- What brings you the most joy?
- What is the hardest thing you've ever been through?
- What is the most important thing **(Group Member's name)** has learned from you?
- How would you describe the world today?
- How would you explain **(Group Member's name)**'s strangest opinions or behaviors?
- What is the best gift you've ever given to **(Group Member's name)**?
- How do you think **(Group Member's name)** can improve their relationships?
- What is the hardest decision **(Group Member's name)** has had to make?
- What is the hardest decision you have had to make?
- What are you most grateful for?
- What is something **(Group Member's name)** does or believes that you disagree with?
- How would you explain the way **(Group Member's name)** handles adversity?
- What is the most important thing **(Group Member's name)** has done for you?
- How would you describe the way **(Group Member's name)** shows love?
- What do you think are **(Group Member's name)** most annoying habits?
- How do you feel about the way **(Group Member's name)** handles money?
- What is the most valuable lesson life has taught you?
- What do you think **(Group Member's name)** is most passionate about?
- What is one conflict you have had with **(Group Member's name)**?
- What is your biggest hope for **(Group Member's name)**?
- How would you describe **(Group Member's name)**'s sense of humor?
- What is the best way to handle a difficult situation?
- What is **(Group Member's name)** most defining characteristic?
- How would you describe your impact on **(Group Member's name)**'s life?
- What are your favorite things in life?
- What is something you cannot stand or hate?
- What makes you laugh?
- What is your favorite way to spend free time?
- What are you usually doing at family parties?
- What do you think this world needs to become a better place?
- Other – ***Feel free to be creative and come up with your own ideas.***



Closing Discussion:

Reflecting on our family history and the relationships that shape us is a vital part of personal growth and positive change. Our families, whether biological or chosen, have an undeniable impact on who we are and how we view the world. By discussing and understanding our family history, we gain insights into patterns, values, and behaviors that have influenced our decisions and actions over time. This awareness not only helps us understand ourselves better, but it also offers us opportunities to break unhelpful cycles and reinforce positive legacies.

Equally important are the roles that friends and social supports play in our positive change journey. Surrounding ourselves with people who uplift and encourage us can be a key factor in our progress. These relationships provide emotional support, accountability, and encouragement during difficult times. Whether it's a family member, a close friend, a peer support, or a counselor, the positive influence of others helps us stay on course and empowers us to make lasting, meaningful changes in our lives. Recognizing and nurturing these connections is essential to the ongoing process of growth, personal development and self-improvement.

Close Out Discussion Questions

- How do you think your family history has shaped your current approach to life?
- What are some current family and social challenges and how do you handle them?
- In what ways do your friends or social supports contribute to positive change in your life?
- What are some patterns or behaviors you've noticed in your family that you want to continue or change in your own life? – What are some patterns you want to change?
- What role do you believe communication with family and social supports plays in personal growth and healing? How can you improve in communicating with your support network?
- How can you be a source of support for others in your family or social circle?
- What is one thing you learned about yourself from discussing your family and social relationships today?
- How do you plan to use the insights gained from today's discussion to move forward in your recovery journey?

"The people around us shape our stories, but it's how we learn from those relationships that truly defines our journey."

