

# Words That Encourage/Discourage

Read the following statements.

## WORDS THAT ENCOURAGE

- ▶ Every body makes mistakes.
- ▶ You're the kind who can do it.
- ▶ You certainly are improving.
- ▶ Mistakes do happen.
- ▶ I like the way you are listening.
- ▶ Give it a try. You can do it.
- ▶ That is very nice work.
- ▶ Thanks so very much.
- ▶ I'm glad you enjoy listening.
- ▶ It sounds like you enjoyed that.
- ▶ How do you feel about it?
- ▶ Knowing you, I'm sure you'll do fine.
- ▶ I have a lot of confidence in you.
- ▶ It was very thoughtful of you to \_\_\_\_\_.
- ▶ Thanks, I really appreciate \_\_\_\_\_, because it makes my job easier.
- ▶ You're very good at \_\_\_\_\_. Would you do that for us?
- ▶ It looks as if you really worked hard on that.
- ▶ It looks as if you spent a lot of time thinking that through.
- ▶ I see that you're moving along.
- ▶ Look at the progress you've made.
- ▶ You may not feel you've reached your goal, but look how far you've come.
- ▶ I like you.
- ▶ That is really great.
- ▶ I appreciate your cooperative behavior.
- ▶ It's so nice to know someone like you.
- ▶ Keep up your good work.
- ▶ What a neat idea!
- ▶ I've never thought of that.
- ▶ I really appreciate your help.
- ▶ I know; it's really hard.
- ▶ I like the way you handled that.
- ▶ I'm glad you are pleased with it.

## WORDS THAT DISCOURAGE

- ▶ I'm ready to give up on you.
- ▶ You can't do anything right.
- ▶ Look at all those mistakes.
- ▶ That's good, BUT...
- ▶ You are so clumsy.
- ▶ Here, let me do it for you.
- ▶ No, do it this way, stupid.
- ▶ John can do it. Why can't you?
- ▶ I've told you a thousand times.
- ▶ Your brother/sister always makes good grades.
- ▶ When are you going to grow up?
- ▶ I told you that would happen.
- ▶ Why don't you ever listen?
- ▶ I won't love you.
- ▶ You have rocks in your head.
- ▶ Why are you always so slow?
- ▶ Everybody knows that.
- ▶ Boys don't cry.
- ▶ Now, you aren't hurt.
- ▶ You are nothing but a bully, liar, cheat, etc.
- ▶ You are wrong.
- ▶ What am I going to do with you?
- ▶ What are you, a sissy?
- ▶ You are driving me crazy.
- ▶ Lazy.
- ▶ I knew you wouldn't do it.
- ▶ You never pay attention.
- ▶ You don't know how to do that.
- ▶ Why don't you think?
- ▶ Get out of my way.
- ▶ That's good, and I'm sure you can do better next time.
- ▶ You do not have a reason to feel that way.

Encouragement is valuing and accepting people as they really are (not putting conditions on acceptance); pointing out the positive aspect of behavior; showing faith in people so that they can come to believe in themselves; recognizing effort and improvement (rather than requiring achievement); showing appreciation for contributions. Accepting people as they are encourages growth by increasing their sense of worth and confidence. Reminding people that there is always more and more to attain tends to discourage them and make them feel inadequate as they are.

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