



EPISODE 10 - GRANITE FALLS HS **GRANITE FALLS, WA**

- *Bullying, prejudice and cliques are fixtures in schools across America.*
 - *Challenge Day is a one-day program that aims to break down these barriers.*
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ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Granite Falls High School is located in the small town of Granite Falls, Washington, in the foothills of the lower Cascades.

Featured students and their roles on campus:

Carissa – “Emo”
Corey – “Redneck”
Max – “Jock”
Tessa – “Prep”
Destiny – “Partier”

Cliques and the stereotypes people form about various groups on campus are a painful reality in every school.

- What are the cliques at your school? What stereotypes do you attribute to them?
- Have you or any of your friends ever been hurt by stereotypes or by being associated or labeled as a member of any of these groups?
- Do you relate to any of the students in this episode?



THEMES TO EXPLORE AND DISCUSS

1. Dealing with Addiction
2. The Power of No
3. Judgment & Religion

1. Dealing with Addiction

Notice

- In this episode **Max** expresses his deep pain related to his family's ongoing efforts to deal with his brother's drug addiction. Have you ever had to deal with addiction in your life, either personally or with a friend or family member? Did you get the support you needed? Is it still an issue?
- In your experience, how well do you and your friends understand addiction? Why do you think addiction has become such a big problem for so many teenagers?
- If you or someone you care about is struggling with an addiction, what kind of support do you think is needed? How important do you think friends and family are in the recovery process? Are you aware of the resources in your school or community? Do you know people who have successfully dealt with or are dealing with the issue of addiction? What, if anything, can you learn from their experience?

If you NOTICE that addiction has become a problem for you or people close to you, and you CHOOSE to Be the Change – you can ACT by doing one or more of the following...

Act

- Take an honest look at yourself and your life. Are you dealing with addictions of any kind? If so, who in your life is most affected by your choices? Make a list of all the key relationships, friends, family members, teachers and others that have been or are being negatively affected by the addiction. Reach out to someone you trust will support you, and together come up with some positive steps such as counseling or twelve step meetings that you believe might improve your situation. Once you know what actions you can take, ask the person to support you in taking them.
- Get to know your resources. Find out if your school or community has an up-to-date resource guide available; if so, make sure to share it with your friends and classmates. If not, work with your classmates and your teacher to create a school and community resource guide for individuals and families dealing with addiction issues.



Steps for creating and sharing your resource guide

1. Start with your counselor, school resource office and other support people and interview them on the services they provide.
 2. Speak to your local health department, drug treatment centers and other local agencies.
 3. Talk with people who have dealt with their addictions. Find out where they got their support.
 4. Research online support and hotlines.
 5. Once your resource guide is complete, share it with your classmates – post it online or make copies available at your school. Do what you can to spread the word.
- If you notice someone close to you falling into addictive behavior, have the courage to talk to the person about it. Tell them how important they are, and let them know how their choices are affecting you. If they still seem resistant – and you are seriously concerned for their safety, wellbeing or their life – get help! Remember you don't have to handle things alone. Talk to someone you trust or call a hotline for support.

2. The Power of No

Notice

- Early in this episode **Carissa** admits that she has a hard time saying no. She says she feels totally taken for granted not only by guys who want to be more than friends but by just about everyone who wants something from her. Can you relate in any way? Why do you think so many people have such a hard time saying no?
- On a scale of one to ten, how honest would you say you are? Are you true to yourself? Do you ever compromise yourself or your values in order to please other people, gain approval or to avoid being left out? Have you ever said yes when you really meant no?
- Is there anyone in your life that you have an especially hard time saying no to? If so, why do you think that is? What might happen if you had the courage to tell this person the truth?

If you NOTICE that saying NO is a problem for you or people close to you, and you CHOOSE to Be the Change – you can ACT by doing one or more of the following...



Act

- At any point that you notice yourself changing your opinion or yourself in order to please others, stop. Have the courage to share what's right for YOU.
- For many people saying yes when they really mean no is more than just a habit. For some this behavior is part of a pattern that is passed on from generation to generation. Many counselors refer to this habitual behavior as co-dependency, which can cause us to compromise our values and even our safety. If this is true for you, know that you are not alone. Talk to a counselor, join a support group, and do whatever it takes to make yourself, your safety and your needs your top priority.
- If you notice you carry any pain or anger from a time that you didn't or couldn't say no, do what you can to deal with it. Talk to a counselor, parent or friend that you trust.

3. Judgment & Religion

Notice

- As a preacher's daughter, **Tessa** mentions she often feels judged because of her religious beliefs. Later, she admits to making negative assumptions and judgments about others. In what ways, if any, do other people's religious or spiritual beliefs affect the way you relate or interact with them?
- When you think of the term "religious" what comes to mind? Do you consider yourself a religious person? A spiritual person? What opinions or judgments do you hold related to religion? Do your opinions or judgments bring you closer to or separate you from other people?
- How often, if ever, have you been hurt or judged because of your religious beliefs? How big an issue is religious prejudice in your school or community? What, if anything, can you do to be a positive part of the solution?

If you NOTICE that you or people around you are being negatively affected by judgment related to religion and you CHOOSE to Be the Change – you can ACT by doing one or more of the following...

Act

- If you notice you have negative stereotypes about other people based on their religious beliefs, do your best to stay open-minded. Think about who at your school is being judged because of what they believe, and try to get



to know who these people really are. Ask them to share about their experience, how it feels to be judged, what really matters in their lives, what they believe and why they believe it.

- The next time you notice someone making a negative comment based on another person's religious beliefs, ask the person to share why they feel so strongly on the topic. If the person seems to be holding stereotypes based on misinformation and lies, challenge them to find out what's really true about the person, their faith and the ways they practice it. Encourage them to be more open-minded.
- If you find yourself being negatively judged about your religious beliefs, do what you can to let go. Remember that they may not know any better given their upbringing and life experiences, and keep in mind that no one can change who you are or what you believe. Show the person acceptance and understanding, and offer to answer any questions they might have about you, your faith or what you actually believe.

LEARN MORE AND SHARE

- If stuff going on at school is impacting your emotional health, check out <http://www.halfofus.com>.
- To further discuss the issues in this episode, head to <http://ifyoureallyknewme.mtv.com>.

