


2.

Say what you mean and mean what you say.

If someone asks you how you feel about something, it is important to say what you really mean. Find the “right” way and time to tell the person how you feel. Don’t try to throw them off the trail by telling them half-truths about what you feel. Try not to beat them over the head with how you feel.

If your parent asks you why you did something, don’t tell them what YOU THINK THAT THEY WANT TO HEAR. If they ask you why you failed your end-of-unit test, don’t tell them that the teacher didn’t go over any of the materials and that’s the reason you weren’t prepared. If you think that reason is a good one to tell because it shows that it’s not your fault (and you probably won’t get grounded if it’s not your fault), think again. If your parent decides to call your teacher to ask them why they gave you to a test in math on things that you’ve never learned, or if they ask your teacher at parent-teacher conferences, the truth is going to come out. Then, you will likely have not only your parents upset with you (and not trusting you because of a lack of integrity), but also your teacher who will be wondering what she did to deserve having you lie about her. Does it sound worth it to take that chance of having so many people not trust you?

Let’s think of it in another way. Let’s say that you want your parent to play a board game with you. You ask if they will be able to play one with you tonight after dinner. They say “sure I can...right after dinner”. You are eating your cheeseburger, and are even managing to get through the green beans quickly because you are so excited about playing with

your parent. Once you're finished, you rinse off your plate, put it into the dishwasher, clear the table (your household chore) and run upstairs to get a selection of board games to bring downstairs. You dash down the steps barely able to keep your balance on the steps because you are holding 5 board games. You run into the living room and place them all in a circle on the floor. At this point, it doesn't matter to you which game is played...you like them all...and you just really want to play with your parent. You look around you and start to wonder why your parent isn't on the floor with you. After about 10 seconds, you call out their name. There is no answer. You get up, walk into the kitchen and still can't find your mom/dad. You still call their name, while walking up the steps. When you get to the top of the stairs, you see (much to your horror), that your mom/dad is sitting at their desk in front of the computer. You can't hide your disappointment as you ask "what about our game, are you coming"? Your parent says "Oh, honey, I just have to check my email and pay some bills online. Give me about 10 minutes." Ten minutes later, your parent says they need another twenty, and twenty minutes later, they say that they didn't mean that they were going to play a board game TONIGHT. If this is the third time this week that this happened, will you think that your parents "say what they mean and mean what they say?"

Make sure that you say what YOU mean, and mean what YOU say.