

Exercise #2.3

Vague descriptions are listed for each of the examples below. Take a moment to describe the behaviors in specific terms as discussed in Class #2. Remember children benefit from descriptions of both their positive and negative behaviors.

1. Situation: Your teenager throws her coat and books on the kitchen table.

Vague: “What do you think you’re doing?”

Specific: *(Describe what happened.)*

(Describe what you want done instead.)

2. Situation: Your 17 year old spends 45 minutes on his homework instead of talking on the phone.

Vague: “Gee, what got into you?”

Specific: *(Show your approval)*

(Describe what was done well.)

3. Situation: Your 13 year old argues with you about taking out the trash.

Vague: “Don’t you talk to me that way!”

Specific: *(Describe what happened.)*

(Describe what you want done instead.)

5. Situation: Your 15 year old son comes home one hour late.

Vague: “Can’t you tell me? You’ll never go out again!”

Specific: *(Describe what happened.)*

(Describe what you want done instead.)

4. Situation: Your 9 year old picked up his toys and put them away without being asked. Now he wants to go out and play.

Vague: “Thanks for being so neat. Sure you can go out now.”

Specific: *(Show your approval)*

(Describe what was done well.)

6. Situation: Your 14 year old comes home with the highest grade she’s ever received on a Math test.

Vague: “Oh, that’s nice.”

Specific: *(Show your approval)*

(Describe what was done well.)

7. **Situation:** Your 7 year old son leaves his bike in the driveway.

Vague: “You are so irresponsible with your things!”

Specific: *(Describe what happened.)*

(Describe what you want done instead.)

8. **Situation:** Your 6 year old asks for some candy. You tell her she will have to wait until after lunch and she says, “OK, Mommy.”

Vague: “That’s a good girl.”

Specific: *(Show your approval)*

(Describe what was done well.)
