

Monica

Cameron

Facilitator Discussion Guide

EYFP

Synopsis

Monica has to wake up early in the morning for a 4-H activity. She is tired and still angry about missing the party the previous night. Monica gets in a tiff with her grandmother and father in the kitchen, then slams the door on her way out to care for the rabbits.

In Scene 2, Monica and Layla are in the rabbitry. Monica is cleaning up, while Layla is sitting down and scrolling through her phone. Layla tells Monica about the party, but is interrupted when their ride shows up.

Scenes 3-5 take place during the 4-H volunteering event at the Animal Shelter. Layla gets moved out of Monica's group, much to Monica's disappointment. She tries to make small talk with "the new kid," Cameron as they are walking to their assigned workstation. Monica is shocked when she sees a dog in what looks like an operating room. Greg, the Assistant Shelter Director, explains that the dog was probably abandoned at the shelter. Then he shows Monica and Cameron where they will be doing their volunteer work.

Later that day, Monica notices that Cameron has some strange movements and sounds. Cameron explains that he has a neurological disorder called Tourette Syndrome. Monica learns that Cameron moved from Colorado, used to play on a travel baseball team, and misses his friends. The conversation is interrupted when they hear footsteps in the hallway. Greg, the vet Dr. Greene, and the Shelter Director Mr. Makhoul, talk about a dog and police.

Facilitator Notes

This episode builds on Sessions 1-2 of the Powerful Families curriculum. The goal of this discussion guide is to help participants reflect on their own listening habits.

Episode 2 contains conversations about disability and bullying that may be upsetting to some participants. Watch for signs of distress and adjust the conversation accordingly.

Vocabulary Alert!

In Episode 2, Scene 5, Cameron says that he has **Tourette Syndrome** (say "Tor-eh-t Sin-drome"; also called "Tourette's Syndrome"). People with Tourette Syndrome make sounds and movements called **tics** (say "ticks"). Tics can be simple, like blinking or sniffing, or they can involve many body parts or sounds. The important thing to know is that people with Tourette Syndrome cannot control the tics. To learn more, visit tourette.org.



Continued

Opening

Think of a time when you felt like someone really listened to you. How did you know they were listening?

As you watch the video, pay attention to whether and how the characters listen to each other. Use tally marks or another way to keep track of each moment when the characters seem to really be listening. Be ready to share your observations after we finish watching the video.

Optional: provide paper and writing utensils for participants to keep track of their thoughts.

After Watching the Video

After the video, facilitate a discussion with the group. Begin by reminding the group of the expectations set during Session 1.

Round-robin Question

It is important for everyone to contribute to this question as a way to build trust and practice listening. You can choose to go in a circle or let participants “popcorn” respond. An option that doesn’t involve speech is to hold up a piece of paper with the number of observed “listening” moments written on it.

How many times did you notice that the characters really seemed to listen to each other? For right now, just say the number you counted. We will talk in more detail once everyone has had a chance to respond.

Comprehension Questions

These are suggested questions. It is not necessary to ask every question in this list. Participants may answer some of the questions before you ask them, or they may bring up their own questions to explore. As a facilitator, your job is to listen far more than you speak. In general, ask a new question only if conversation has hit a dead end and 30 seconds of silent time doesn’t break the stalemate, or if you sense the discussion veering into unproductive territory. You may also want to ask follow up questions if a participant makes an interesting point that no one else takes up spontaneously. Finally, if you have some very vocal participants, you may need to occasionally break in to invite quieter participants to speak or to repeat a point that might have gone unheard.

Talking Tips

Participants may need support to think about how listening/not listening can affect emotions. If they do not mention emotional consequences during the discussion, ask them to think about how each character feels.

- What were some of the times you noticed that the characters really seemed to listen to each other?
- What made you feel like the characters were listening at that point?
- What happened as a result of [character name] listening to [different character name]?
- When did a character miss an opportunity to really listen?
- How could you tell that [character name] was not really listening to [different character name]?
- What were the consequences of that missed opportunity?
- How could [character name] have handled that moment differently?

Continued

Closing Questions

There are two closing questions. The first question asks participants to generalize about the importance of listening, while the second question asks them to personalize and apply their ideas to their own lives.

- *Why is it important to listen to others?*
- *How do you let others know that you are a good listener?*

You could use this episode to help review reflexive listening. Ask participants to act out how one of the scenes would have changed if the characters had used reflexive listening.

