FOR TEENS · A MERAKI PARENT SERIES GUIDE

Your Story, Your Call

Small ideas for big moments: at school, online and with friends.

Ages 10–14

1

The group chat moment

Everyone in the chat is saying the same thing about someone. It's easy to just agree.

"Do I actually know that, or did I just hear it?"

It's okay not to know yet. When even one person doesn't pile on, it gets easier for everyone else to think for themselves.

> **TRY THIS**
> You don't have to argue. Just don't add to it until you know more.

2

A moment isn't a person

"She was mean today" is about a moment. "She's a mean person" is a label. One bad day doesn't decide who someone is.

That goes for you too. A hard day, an awkward moment, a mistake: it's a moment, not your whole story.

3

Three roles, three better ones

When things get dramatic, people often slip into one of these. You can choose a different one.

"I can't." Feeling stuck and powerless	**"What can I do?"** Choosing one small step
"It's your fault." Blaming a person	**"Here's the problem."** Naming the problem, not the person
"I'll fix it for you." Taking over	**"What do you think?"** Helping a friend find their own way

4

When your brain hits the alarm

When something feels scary or unfair, your body might want to:

Fight · **Run** · **Freeze** · **Go along**

That's your body trying to protect you. It's normal. Big decisions are just easier after the alarm calms down.

> **TRY THIS**
> Notice the alarm. Breathe. If you can, wait before you reply, post or decide.

Need help right now? This guide isn't a way to reach your counselor. If you're in crisis or thinking about hurting yourself, **call or text 988**, any time. If you're in danger, call **911**. You can also talk to your counselor at your next session, or a trusted adult today.

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Your Story, Your Call

Ages 15–18

1 What's outside the frame?

A screenshot or a six-second clip can make anyone look like a hero, a victim or a villain. What happened right before? Right after? A caption chooses the story before you've seen the rest.

"What role is this post asking me to play?"

> **TRY THIS**
> Before you share or react, ask what you'd need to see to actually know.

2 A moment isn't a personality

People act differently in different places: calm in one room, loud in another. A single moment tells you how someone was in that room, on that day. Not who they are.

Give other people that allowance, and give it to yourself.

3 Choose your role

Victim "This is happening to me."	**Creator** "What outcome do I want? What's my next step?"
Persecutor "It's all their fault."	**Challenger** Name the problem clearly. Leave the person out of it.
Rescuer "Let me handle it."	**Coach** "What options do you see?"

From ideas by Stephen Karpman and David Emerald.

4 Your voice at school

As you get older, you'll often be invited into planning about your own education, especially when the talk turns to life after high school. Your view matters there.

Asking in writing is a quiet superpower: it's calm, clear and easy to answer.

"Hi Ms. Lee, could you tell me what I'd need to do to bring my grade up in this unit? Thanks, Sam"

> **TRY THIS**
> One question per message. Keep a copy. You can always bring your parent or counselor in.

5 When the alarm goes off

Under stress, bodies go to fight, flight, freeze or going along. Counselors sometimes describe a "window" where we can think clearly; stress pushes us outside it. Everyone has times like that.

> **TRY THIS**
> If you're outside your window, it's okay to say "Let me think about it and get back to you."

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