



How Girls Camp & High Adventure Camp Can Develop Relationships Youth Need | An Interview with Dan and Dave Gray

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Have you ever tried to help youth with their mental health? That's a tricky road to travel. I have to tell you about an inspiring presentation we recorded with a 1 and only Jody Moore. Yes, that life coaching Jody Moore. A few years ago, she recorded a fantastic presentation covering topics like normalizing tough feelings with youth, A more positive understanding of stress.

How to minimize shame and mastering the skill set of empathy and better understanding anxiety. I want you to see this presentation as soon as you finish this podcast episode. You can go to [leading saints dot org slash 14](https://www.leading-saints.org/14), and this will get you access to the entire video library at no cost for 14 days. Jodi presentation is in the mentally healthy saints library and you'll be a better leader or parent when you finish it. Again [dot org slash 14](https://www.leading-saints.org/14) out notes.

I got an email the other day from an individual. I forget where he is in the world, but he says, Kurt, I love leading saints, and I listen to it every time I'm on the treadmill. And then 1 time during an interview, he heard that leading saints has a Youtube channel and like all the interviews at least the vast majority of them are video recorded and you can watch the video

recording of the podcast episodes. And like, yeah, man. Get on there, go subscribe on Youtube to leading saints and you can get a visual of the interview and not just an audio experience.

And even if you're not a big Youtube user, I do us a favor because this actually helps us gain more reach and, Expose our content to individuals who could really benefit from it leaders around the world. So regardless if you are on Youtube lot or not go to Youtube and search for leading saints find the familiar red logo and just subscribe even if you don't plan to view every episode there that's gonna help us gain a larger audience of more reach dial in the algorithm, and we'll start showing up on leaders feeds that they didn't know how much they're missing here at leading saints. So head on over to Youtube, search for leading saints and subscribe to our channel and leave a comment every once in a while, but be nice. In this episode, we talk with Dan and Dave Gray of father son Duo who are doing some cool things with these... What they call bridge camp.

And, Dan is a well established phenomenal therapist has decades of experience helping people through therapy, especially those individuals struggling with sexual comp and and addiction. And Dan approached me a few months back and told me about these bridge camps that they're doing. And I thought it I was an interesting component when I wanted to share with the leading Saints audience especially those who are involved in girls camp, those in high adventure camps or taking the boys out to to camp or even the elders quorum. Right? And just these experiential components that we can introduce more and more that really have a developmental dynamic that we could leverage more and more.

And so, listen in this interview as we touch on, maybe why they do these camps this way. What we can learn from and maybe apply to our own youth camps that we do, and then also just another option, especially for bishop so out there who are trying to gather just a a stack of resources for individuals, especially families with youth who are struggling. You know, we can do the therapy. We can do the the counseling, whatever it is though those are great things, but here's another component to consider that maybe you can point families to. Who really struggling in their relationship, and that's a really strong component this in this discussion I want listen for is that dynamic of of it's all about the relationship between the use and the leader or the use and the parent, and how do we develop that?

How can create an incubator where individuals can step into and work on that relationship. Because if we get their relationship right, then so many other things come so much more smoothly. Right? So I think you'll appreciate this the interview, and maybe you can consider checking out their bridge camps saying this it's an option for you. So here's my interview with Dan and Dave Gray.

Alright. We got 2 Grays on the podcast today, Dan and Dave. How are you two?

Speaker 0: Hey, doing great. Doing well. Thanks.

Speaker 1: Now, that people will notice that won't take too long that your man are and you're... And the way you look is very similar. So you're a father-son duo. Is that right?

Speaker 2: Yeah. Yeah. We go to the same barber if you have nice already.

Speaker 1: Very good. Very good. Now maybe let's just put your background in perspective. Dan you've been a well known therapist for years and years. Working for Life star, which I think is a pretty common well known brand in the Latter Saint in some Latter Saint Circles.

You know, you've done a lot of good therapy there. And you're still practicing maybe get us a about your background, and then Dave, it's your yours.

Speaker 2: Okay. Alright. Sounds good. I... Yes.

I'm in private practice doing my work at helping individuals and families that are dealing with the compulsive sexual behaviors and addictions, those types of things. And I am, of course, with my private practice, extensively remote work as well as here in my office. As well. And my background has been the life start program that you mentioned there is 1 that I started with and my partner taught some many, many years ago. And we started a program which helps families and individuals, so we train also therapist to treat these issues.

And I recently sold my interest in the Salt lake office of wife's star, but have retained star parent company where we then train a a therapist throughout the country in different parts of the world as well in the treatment of sexual compulsive you gave yours. And so it's still staying real busy.

Speaker 1: Yeah. I bet. I bet. Unfortunately, you're you're staying busy. Yeah.

Yeah. It's a tough thing. So, Dave, what about you? What's your background?

Speaker 0: On, my background is... I was actually in the real estate and land development world for many years. And about 10 years ago, went through a shift, and I actually started working with Dan and Todd on the life star business and operations side of the business, business development and and operations side. And so that's how I got involved with with mental health side of, of my... I guess, my career.

And, yeah, that's kind of my background and how I have... I got involved with Dan and Todd. I had some different business ideas, and some some thoughts about what they could do and started getting involved on the day to day operations side, and that's kinda of where I ended up. So currently, I helped my dad, handling his billing and and his private practice business details. And then also with the Star network of therapists, we're currently revamp and re editing all of our workbook and so I'm, I'm managing a lot of that.

And then the current project that we're working on is a program called Bridge camp.

Speaker 1: Yeah. I... Whenever I connect with therapist. I'm always intrigued to hear. Like, what are you...

What, you know, what issues are walking into your your office as of late. And it seems like, they don't change too drastically. But... And then maybe that'll kinda guide us into the history and why do you start a bridge camp?

Speaker 2: Yeah. Well, most of my clients Occurred, are those who are struggling, men, more, although, I do have some female there clients that do come in to see me. But it's individuals some single and some buried that are struggling with issues related to excessive pornography use, other sexual behaviors, compulsive behaviors that have gotten them into difficult situations with their employment or in their marriage or in their single life, their their relationships And so

they come in and seek help trying to navigate the recovery process, trying to get their lives in order so that these behaviors are not governing their life any longer, not having to deal with the shame. That's related to it. I mean, also the disturbance that is created in their lives.

Is any time there's a compulsive addictive behavior of any sort it interrupts one's ability to accomplish the things that they want to in their life so their goals or compromised their relationships with the, say the women they're dating or their wives are compromised as well. And they just don't feel good about themselves because their choices are not congruent with their belief system. And so they come in trying to get help, for those issues and trying to get their lives straightened out, get into a recovery process, extend their recovery, so that their sobriety is extended for a long periods of time and then hopefully a lifetime free themselves for the behavior. And so it's it's a an exciting work. It's tough work, but individuals that are committed to it.

It's wonderful to watch the healing process and to see how people were able to find freedom from the bondage of this stuff too.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Yeah. For sure. And then is there a connection there? I mean, just from your therapy work to start the the bridge camp?

Or what's the story behind that?

Speaker 2: Oh, well, that's a really good question, Kurt. Over the years, of course, most of my clients have been male. But like I say periodically, I have females come in, but most of them have been men. And or young young men who are preparing to say, go on their missions or are wanting to get ready to get married, but they realize that this behavior is going to interrupt that process. And it's very consistent as I then work with clients and talk to them about their background and their history that many have issues related to their their fathers or their mothers and they're up upbringing.

Their problems that they've then acquired and through early exposure to pornography, say when they were teenager was a result of them, experimenting of course and looking at things and then getting kind of a habit pattern established, but then they didn't have really abilities to connect with their parents to get direction and guidance as to how to navigate and deal with.

And sometimes it's because the relationship, there with their parents was really not very good. They felt like they weren't maybe meeting the expectations of their parents or the communication patterns were not established very well. Maybe dad was so busy dealing with his business or his church calling or other things where there was kind of a disconnect with mom and dad and so their teachings around sexuality were left to their peers or to the Internet, And so they got kind of channel into directions that were very unhealthy and didn't have the mentoring and the health for an assistance from their parents that they were really needing. And maybe there's been some trauma in their backgrounds.

With their family, where there maybe been a divorce. And so there was not the real connection and attachment bonding that is needed for a young person to be able to navigate the difficulties of childhood it in teenage life. And so I would see those consistent patterns, and I saw that it was so important for parents to know how to connect with their kids, especially when it came to navigating today's world around the Internet and screen time and social media and the extensive exposure that these kids have to sexual issues and stimulus that's out there. And how important it is for parents to be able to talk to their kids and create an environment where they're not chained where they feel comfortable and being able to talk to their parents. And so I saw the import to that over the years.

And then of course, here, I'm sitting here with my son, and I've raised 3 sons and a daughter and realizing how you important those relationships are. And so when this opportunity came up to be able to start a 05:01 c 3, program, the profit program to help families. We decided that we were going to really focus on helping parents to create healthy relationships with their kids through experiential programs in the outdoors in camping setting or other kinds of outdoor activities where they could learn to be together, experience things together and have a setting to open up relationship connection. Yes communication and experiential kinds of things that bring them together. And so that's kind of the genesis so how it all started and then presented it today, and Dave has had some real seat experiences too.

It is growing up years with going to the Ben boys ranch that he could share with you if that if that would be helpful that was kind of some of the principles laid the... We followed then in applying them to the bridge camp program that we have now.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Dave, when people ask you, what's bridge camp? I mean, what's your... How do you summarize it?

Speaker 0: Yeah. My dad did a good job. His side of the way british camp kinda came about. And the therapeutic side is 1 component of that the other part of it also is when we were working with our therapist at the Salt Lake Clinic, the life clinic, we had all these couples coming in and working on their relationship working on themselves, But what they all had in common too is that they still had to be functioning parents to their kids while they're working on their own issues. And that was a pretty common theme is, you know, the parents nowadays, they're struggling with knowing how to connect with their kids because they were they're dealing with their own things, but then also because of the digital world that we live in, and life is so busy now.

Kids are not just involved in 1 sport. They're involved in 10 and you know, that had grunt from 1 thing to the other. And so that was 1 component of it as well. The other part of it for me and personally, I went through a a pretty tough divorce about 10 years ago as well. And my kids were young.

They were 2 and 5 and my ex wife for the first 3 or 4 years when she decided when we divorced, she wasn't around a whole lot, and my connection with my kids really help me through a dark, pretty depressive and depressed time in my life. And so connection to my kids, really, really influenced me in being able to get through that difficult trial. And then also with my dad, back but each of my... It been... When I was 12 years old and my brothers were 12 years old.

He wanted to have a kind

Speaker 2: of a a right appreciation or ride right passage.

Speaker 0: We ahead had a sit down discussion with each of my each of our grandparents and they talked about the importance of, you know, of living a moral life and kinda importance to the priest in their lives, and we went on a like, a little hike and and talked about what it means to be a man. And, you know, how to treat the women in our lives and that kind of stuff. Mean, I was 12. I was pretty young. It's I from a young age, my that stuff was very important to my dad.

And so that and also a culmination of a lot of other things were involved in how we developed and came to what we know right now as Bridge camp. So answer your question after adding a little bit of history to it as well. Bridge camp is an experiential program for parents and teenagers

to connect. And it's through getting any the outdoors. We built it around 3 principles at venturing, learning and serving.

So We spend basically a Friday afternoon to a Sunday afternoon, so we're camping. We provide the tents, provide the cops. We provide the food and the details of all the location. Aspects of the program, and we adventure, we do Ropes courses. We do e equally work courses.

We... These next 2 camps are gonna be down in Bay, Utah at a place called Bail Pools. And it's very climbing heavy. So there's about 230 pre anchored climbing routes and all of our adventure activities are gonna be built around climbing and repel. And and so those are some of the event activities.

We also do other things like, the challenge that challenge the participants, You know, we'll we'll incorporate an ice bath, for example. So a father and son will be, you know, facing each other, get in their own ice bath. And sometimes it's a competition. Sometimes it turns into a supportive thing where the sun knows that the dad does not wanna do it. And he's doing it anyway, and it's overcoming, you know, some anxiety or feared.

So there's that component, then the service component, we do a service project either a little bit of service project each day or just a big service project during that camp where we're mainly cleaning up the area in which we're holding the camp or we've done service project at a facility that that helps house domestic abuse, victims. And we've... You know, we're... I think in the future, we'd like to some more work with, you know, homeless shelters or different groups. And then the learning component is we have mental health professionals.

My dad being 1, and we have a few others come and join us for the entirety of the camp. And they help our participants right on the spot, For example, like, we have 1 father son duo were kind of going at it on the ropes course and starting to argue, and our therapist was able to go over and say hey. Let's just take a break a minute. I'm noticing this is happening. Is this is how you guys deal with with conflict in your relationship and at your home and in your home.

And they were able to really work through and learn some skills to maybe better resolve their conflicts when things come up. That's just 1 example. The other example of the learning is our mental health professionals and our staff, we do different workshop presentations in in the

evening, like, around the campfire fire, kinda like a fireside side type scenario where they talk about active listening skills or relationship building activities. And it's really powerful. May, they talk about the activities throughout the day and You, what was a like to watch your your dad faces fears of propelling down that wall and see him struggle.

And, you know, what what does that do for your relationship? So we... The learning happens throughout the entire events, which is really a cool aspect of it.

Speaker 1: Yeah. You know, you use this... Both of you uses for experiential. Right? And I think most of us can kinda understand what you mean by that.

You all... You're experiencing things. At this camp. Right? But I think there's a...

Like, this is my journey of really understanding the power of experiential activities where we have a long tradition and most religions do. Right? It's like, there's a problem. When you get people in a room, and we'll talk Adam. And if we talk Adam long enough, then they'll start to understand and their behaviors a real change.

But there's such a much more maybe a richer approach or a more dynamic approach when you put people in these scenarios where they're experiencing things together. It's a little more natural and it's sort of this incubator of of real life that then the true lessons can come out, or they can see things about themselves, they wouldn't they wouldn't have identified elsewhere. Right? So if anything else you would you would add to this dynamic of experiential activities?

Speaker 2: Yeah. Maybe I could address that real quick, what's going on in my mind right now encourages my own personal experience with my dad, years and years ago, and that as I've reflected on the things that I remember, than my dad taught me. They're are the things that I heard from him while we were fishing. While we were waiting the stream and camping that night before, sleeping in the car in a tent, experiencing things that I liked. He knew what I enjoyed doing, and he did the same things.

And so I felt that he was connecting with my needs and what I like to do and was wanting to be with me. And that was so critical then also, I I boxed with my dad a on. So he was a boxer

surgeon, and so the first thing I remember owning was the these little box seeing gloves that fit my 3 year old hand. And I boxed with him till I was in my teens, and I remember the things he taught me while we were boxing, things like how, of course, to defend myself, but how to treat other people not to pick fights to stand up for those that are being bullied how to then treat women. I remember my dad teaching me how to treat my mom and my sisters and the girls that I was dating and knowing that he had expectations of how I was to treat the women in my life.

He taught me about honesty. He taught me about hard work, the hard work component was out serving with him, going out and going down to my grandma's house and and doing her lawn and knowing how to to then help her with other things that she was needing and other people in the neighbor. Those are the messages that I remember him teaching. I frankly don't remember much about our home evening discussion sitting in the living room. Yeah.

Not to speak dis despair about any of those opportunities to teach that it was usually doing something with him. Riding with him in the car to go get an ice cream mall down at snow groups here in salt lake. Yeah. Or him driving me to my ball game and talking to me about how the game went afterwards. Those are the things I remember.

And it's through those connections with being with someone that you care for and love that they're giving their time to you, then you're going to be much more open to the lessons that they're teaching, and learn from their example as well because like Dave saying, when we see these father and son companionship or we see the mothers and the daughters as they're being instructed with self defense and watching how they interact with each other and seeing some apprehension and in maybe their their own personal insecurities coming out. And so they see this with each other and they can talk about it. And then the mom can teach lessons about how to make it through your fears, how does how to face your challenges and life. And those are the things that kids are gonna remember by experiencing it with their parents.

Speaker 1: Yeah. And I'm just sort of pivoting this back into a, maybe a church leadership context of those youth leaders or and parents, of course, you know, a lot of us are parents. And just that, you know, we we sometimes put a lot of emphasis, or we'd really try and highlight in the sent... You know, a concepts in in the Sunday lesson. Right?

Like, it... We gotta understand this. You know, good bad. Do this. Don't do that.

When in reality is, those... Some of those most casual, it can feel like such a casual experience when you're experiencing something, and you're responding back and forth to how they're reacting things can be really powerful. So lean into that. Right? Like, these aren't waste of...

This isn't a waste of time or going on that hike or or doing that service project, You know, obviously, service is great. But there's also a component of there's some human development happening and some connection, relationship happening. Right?

Speaker 0: Yeah. I think what we wanted to build the program around was the experiential process because it brings out emotion, it brings out feeling, it brings out vulnerability. And when a parent and team experienced that together, and they witness each other being vulnerable and overcoming and sharing in an environment, where they're able to be pulled out of their day to day live and they're not in their family, you know, scenario or they have to worry about other siblings hearing or getting to the next appointment or getting me to the next game or whatever it might be. They're really able to be in the moment, and it's where it's where the real bonding can happen. And when the vulnerability and the experiential learning happens, it's a really a powerful thing.

It's pretty cool.

Speaker 1: Yeah. So these bridge camps, are they done like, you don't, bring all your kids to a bridge camp, Just

Speaker 0: not a 1 on 1 type of... 1 1 experience. Yeah. Yeah. And it's for teenagers between ages of 12 and 17, we're working on variations of the program as well where we'll have some programs available for kids younger than 12.

And then also, works bare many are exploring the idea of, having adult parent kid opportunities and and experiences. Yeah. And in fact, at the Uc uk conference I had several people say, oh, man. I would love to do that with my mid 20 year old. And so we're exploring that.

We're also exploring other ideas of other variations of camp as well.

Speaker 2: Yeah. And also occurred the church leadership component as well. We've talked about this quite frequently because now with the exclusion of boy scouts in the church in particular, those opportunities of going out and camping with mentors or with your father or with a church leader with your young men's president or with your bishop or sc leader. Those are more limited now And so we've had a number of parents who have said gee, I would like my son to have a camp experience but he's not involved in any scouts now. And so I'd like to be able to have him have that with other men as well And then he comes along, and then there are other men involved with our staff and the other fathers.

And it's a great opportunity to have then to watch... Have the sun watch his own father also interacting with the other men in this outdoor context and in with the challenges they're facing with some of the events that we have. And so it provides a tremendous opportunity, I think for leadership opportunities for of the boys to learn how to be mentored, but also for the fathers and the other men in the in the group to know how to mentor these young boys that are also dealing with their issues.

Speaker 0: Yeah. And. And I'll I'll just chime in there really quickly too, though, because we did start the program with the father and son primarily in mind, but then we shifted to a general parent situation too, because you know, the the women are needing the leadership and the ship too. And 1 of them are powerful things that we did was we've done a lot of work over the years with Elizabeth Smart and her foundation. She has a great program called Smart defense.

And So we had 1 of their instructors come and do a a self defense program for 1 of our our first mother daughter camp that we ran last year. And that was an overwhelming success. And I think the women were empowered and they saw this woman instructor who she was dynamic. She was strong. She was smart and teaching them how to how to build to stand up for themselves, and that was really cool too.

So yeah. Anyway, I just wanted to throw that in as well.

Speaker 1: That's great. And then is there... You know, you mentioned the the therapist component? I mean, because... These aren't necessarily...

You wouldn't frame these as... This isn't, like, a therapy camp,

Speaker 2: which you...

Speaker 0: It's not a therapeutic program. I I kinda came to a a definition to it, like a couple weeks ago, frankly, It's really a relational program. It's a relationship building trust and connection building camp for parents and teams. So that's kind of the best summary of it really.

Speaker 2: Yeah. And it's not specifically for troubled use. But troubled use can come. Mh. But it's not geared towards setting up a therapeutic environment necessarily it ends up being that way.

It ends up being kind of therapeutic for everyone because people are learning, but it's not intended to try to help. Individuals, specifically to work through specific problems that they're dealing with. They have the opportunity to use this experience to deal with their issues that they're dealing with in their family or in their own relationships with their peers or others.

Speaker 1: Yeah. 1 thing that comes to mind, I remember sort of being that bishop, and you have the the parents who are working with 13, and the team is struggling in life, not necessarily you know, majorly earlier or do they're not necessarily a troubled team, but, you know, maybe the... I remember, you know, maybe helping them out getting the teen and into some good therapy and make sure that's happening, But it just seems like wheels are spinning. Right? Now these type of opportunities are really great to sort of jump start the system or, you know, like, try something really different.

They can maybe where you can learn in a different way and and grasp some concepts that not gonna get in maybe the traditional talk therapy, you know, structure. Right? And so this is just... I know there's a lot of leaders out there who are just, like, they're praying over these people that you can, like, we're doing all the stuff. Right?

I got the professional therapist, but maybe this is something that we can jump start the system and and find a new direction to go down.

Speaker 2: That's right. And it can work kind of help to break through the resistance that say a teen would have to go into therapy. It's may times difficult to get a teenager or some parents even to seek out professional health. There's still the stigma of counseling. Night, there must be something wrong with me if I go to a therapist.

But here, the parents can come in with the perspective of wanting to connect with their child so that they can maybe open up communication with them that they can maybe discuss certain things that are going on in their relationship or how it might be viewing their son's disconnection from his peers maybe focusing so much on his digital screen work or social media and all of that. It's So this is an opportunity to maybe open up some discussions in a less threatening environment than just saying, Hey, Sun, let's go in for counseling. Yeah.

Speaker 0: Yeah. I we we we hope that, you know, on the couple different levels, while we call them duo, while the parent duo is at the camp. We hope that they have just a really fun energetic, memorable time of connecting together. But then we hope that they take it the step further. We hope that they've learned some skills, right, of complex resolution, some of the things that I already mentioned that they can take home and practice in their day to day relationship not only with themselves and with their siblings and with other kids in the family, and with the other parent as well.

So, you know, we... That's what we hope is happening. And, you know, for those kids, we know studies show that the more involvement the parents have in their kids lives, the more involved the more that they're willing to to teens are willing to let their parents be involved, not take control over everything as they grow grow into teenage those teenage years, but they're gonna make better decisions as they grow up. And as they transition into adulthood, if they have a strong connected relationship with the parents, they're gonna be more successful as as they make those tough decisions going into adulthood.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Very really good stuff. Is there anything you'd add, like... Because obviously, people are thinking, well, you know, we do Girls camp, and, you know, I think there's some high adventure type of things that we're trying to find a cadence for, you know, summer to summer. Is there anything else the...

Any... Like, just with your experience with a bridge camp, like, ways that we can be more intentional with some of these camps because I think of have a typical girls camp, you know, they adventure and they tip... Sometimes there's some service components. And then they... You know, there's lessons of things.

Any Any other way we can be more intentional when we try and create these experiential moments for those we lead?

Speaker 0: That's a great question. And I think all those experiences are wonderful. Mean, I have growing up. I had nothing personally. I had nothing, but good scouting experiences, you know, young, young men activities youth activities and such great opportunities and I had, you know, learned a lot of great things.

I would say for parents, as they're wanting and they're trying to connect with their kids Well, first of all, come to a bridge camp events.

Speaker 1: That's right. Yeah. It's but. Watch the model in

Speaker 0: action. Yeah. But outside of that, we've developed a workbook that we hope to release in the next the next number of months that can also help people walk through and be met mentor through some connection opportunities with their kids. But find things outside of the box, do service projects together and carve out time where you're meeting them on their level, like, 1 of the activities we have is we do a trek activity. And 1 of the stations, that we...

We don't do this at every camp, but 1 of the stations was an xbox set up in a Sprinter van in a Sprinter Minivan. And the dad had to come in and sit down and play a video game with their son, and they were instructed that they they were to play the video game that the sun wanted and let the sun teach him how to play a video game. Know. So find ways like, get involved, go and you know, make sure you're going to the gains, go the extra mile to, you know, to plan a daddy daughter date, you know, every month or so. And finals 1 on 1 activities.

I think 1 of the biggest things really was the is the service. When you're serving other people, and you're doing it together as a family or you're doing it together 1 on 1 with your kids. You're

not only teaching them, you know, through example, that's serving others is important. I mean, because people don't love to go do work and clean up a camp site and clean up trails and things like that get your hands dirty. It's not always the fun thing.

But when you know that it's serving the community and the the disabled group that's gonna come up and use that camp next is gonna be able to... Is is gonna be able to access different parts of the trail and things because we did that work. There's something powerful about that. Go do your own high adventure family stuff. Some of my most favorite memories with my kids as backpack packing in Es, and they had nothing to do with, scouts or with the church or a church group.

It was just an activity we did In fact we brought... My parents came along with us. So we had 3 3 generations doing a multi day backpack trip, And Cool. You know, swimming in the water and and and and advent adventures. So and the grandparents

Speaker 2: nearly didn't make it

Speaker 0: out. So wow. They made it. They made it. Without any rescue necessary.

Nice. So I think Well, being self aware is really something else that we talk about. Being self aware of your own emotions, your own feelings. And if you are, you're gonna be more aware of your relationship, and really trying to focus on building the relationship and doing it on a on hopefully a daily basis too.

Speaker 2: Yeah. Yeah. I'd go I... Say, amen to what David said here, 1 additional piece thinking about your reference to maybe girls camp or the voice camps and they're doing and things that are in they're involved in in the church that we're seeing that 1 of the major components of this is opening up the lines of communication between the parents and the kids. And so having opportunities to sit and listen And I think sometimes we as parents and having been bishop myself and being involved with the young men's and preparing these activities for t and different camps we do.

I wish I could go back and maybe make some changes in terms of our preparation for what we were wanting to do. I remember feeling like we needed to entertain these kids and we need it to write all these opportunities for adventure and doing gotta be fine. Right? It's gotta be fun. And We've got to, of course, help them build their testimony.

But at the same time to remember that some of these kids don't have a real strong connection with God yet. And that some don't maybe even have an awareness of God's existence yet or believe in it or the history of the church and so forth. So remembering that we've got to meet them where they are. And we don't know where they are until we listen to.

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Speaker 2: And hear what they need. And I wish that I had been more attentive to the needs of the kids that we were serving to listen to their needs in the preparation for the events that were coming up, not just assume that because I'm the parent, and I know better, leader and I know better that I know what they need to know. I wish I had been more aware it communicated more openly with them to get a feel for what they were going through. What things that they were wanting to hear in our discussions around the campfire fire. And then when we're there, like Day was saying to help them be aware of what they are feeling and thinking.

And as parents and I would say as leaders to be vulnerable to open up and share some of your own challenges in life in terms of communication and what are the things that have kept me from being able to really understand my wife where my kids needs, things at in terms of the fears that I faced or the anxieties and stress that I've dealt and have these kids hear and understand from these adult mentors, how they've gone through and dealt with challenging issues related to bullying or or feeling disregard or not enough in their social interactions with others or feeling out on the outside. And having those opportunities for the kids to share and have the parents know how to listen and not jump so quickly into then resolve or how to deal with it or how to get out of the issue, but to listen to the kids and let them also kind of learn how to work through their own niche. So you could get me on our real role without kurt as it was which is obvious, but I think that would be helpful.

Speaker 1: That leads my next question. I'm I'm curious because there's probably individuals who are maybe really stressed about their team and their development and how they're doing, and they're I'm not sure how they're doing and And when you... They show up to Camp, Friday, it

doesn't take too long to realize, you kinda see the model in which they're being parent and you realize I think the parent is more of the problem than the teenagers. Is that that real? Or...

Speaker 0: Yeah. Yes. That absolutely

Speaker 2: this. No. Yeah. He he sees that the problems with me. Know.

That's that. And what you're saying there is absolutely true. Yeah.

Speaker 1: And, I mean, do you have to do you have to take the time to really talk directly to that parent? Or, I mean, how do you how do you work through that or help them kinda of become come to that realization?

Speaker 0: That's a good question. I'll I'll take that will, I mean, this really is... It... It's a fair... It's not a therapeutic program, like, what we talked about earlier.

You know, this is really an opportunity for them to kind of evaluate the relationship and hopefully, there is a level of self awareness that the parent will recognize during the experience that they may be able to go. Oh, you know what? Way that I'm communicating man, I I think I've learned some tools that I can do that different. And we plant the seed at 1 of our british camp events And then hopefully, as we develop the program, we're wanting to have a pretty resourceful website as well and have opportunities for people if they want more help if they wanna, you know, access the therapist after camp or something that we can be a a resource and we can get people to get additional help. But you know, really, this is not a process group.

It's not a... You know, we we are gonna process some things and have some open group discussions about some important topics and things, but Yeah, we're really not gonna get into that type of thing at the camp with the parent. 1 of our activities at that trek event that I mentioned is we do have a little sit down 1 on 1 with a therapist with the parent and the team. And sometimes, we have a real a guided message that we were already kind of have prepared for the therapist to kinda go through And it's not a therapy session. I mean, it's a it's a 30 minute, you know, sit down discussion.

But we give the parent and the teen an opportunity if they would rather go something that is struggling their relationship, they wanna just get some input, then they could bring it up then and they could talk it through. But we Yeah. We're we're really not gonna be looking to solve any yeah. Major issues at... Yep.

Speaker 2: Though that that being said, we still because we do have some professionals they're, you know mental health professionals, plus all those others, like Dave and the other staff are really very aware of what's going on during the track act ti and during the adventure activities and so forth. And we do start to see kind of trends with the relationships. And so we then can monitor some of our discussions in the evening to talk about general communication issues. And we can talk to the parents about maybe some things that we see come up without directing it right that's specific parents.

Speaker 1: Yeah for

Speaker 2: a specific child, but to have it be a general discussion that we have around that topic. And like, Dave was saying during that 30 minute time, we have certain discussions left. For example, I was helping them understand, say the 5 love languages, you're probably familiar with love languages and in relationships. And, I was able to talk to the parent and the child that was there with them about? What is their love language?

How do they communicate their love for each other and how where are they of their parents love language or their mother's love language and that that kind of discussion comes up and we can kind of address some of those issues that we see in their relationship during those kinds of discussions too.

Speaker 1: Yeah. That makes sense. I wanted to ask you about that the discussion component or the learn of the the the trio there, the learn component. You know, whether, you know, whether it's around a campfire or is it a, like, someone gives a formal sort of lesson, because there is that temptation of, like, the adults or the the facilities sort of begin to lecture to the group, and then, you know, you don't know if the... Youth or sort of turn off their brains.

But so you want some discussion, but how do you do that? So any any tips you'd give just that the learning component in a camp setting, Yeah.

Speaker 0: I think the more that you can be direct and concise and also have a be an active experience. An interactive thing where it's not just a a lecturer and receiving. Like, fact I remember our very first night, of holding our camp. You know, we we thought we would have, like, a 2 hour introduction, and we had this, you know, slight show presentation that we thought would be a great introduction, but everybody was just sitting on their dumb their chairs watching, and you could just see that they were like, okay. What, you know, what what am I supposed to take from this and opposed to...

Or, I guess, contrasting that to the last night where we we did kinda have a purpose in mind of what our group discussion was going to be, and it kinda 1 of the youth brought up a topic, and we all just kinda rolled with it. And because they brought up the topic, the other kids, brought you know, they were interject. So I guess in a in a camp experience that way, I think the less lecturing that we can do as the adult leaders the better, and how to best do that, you know, we're still learning too. Right? 1 of our therapist was she was dynamic, and she only gave about a a 10 or 15 minute discussion, and then she broke out and had parent and teen.

Sit down a practicing skills. Yeah. Sit down a practice what they were what she had just been lecturing or talking about. Right? Mh And that 1 over really, really well.

So short and sweet and then get them active and actively engaged in know what they were just taught. That'd be what I would say.

Speaker 1: Really helpful. Any other component principal concept do you wanna make sure we cover before we wrap up? Or...

Speaker 0: Yeah. I would just say, connection, connection, connection. We built this program on that core principle and some other things obviously involved there as well. But the deeper connection that we have as human beings with 1 another and the people that we love, the better off, we're gonna be, the happier we're gonna be, the more likely we're gonna be able to tap into the joy that we're supposed to experience here, you know, on earth. And So whether it really it's

the it's the parent relationship or, you know, whatever friendship relationship you know, a church leader with their kids, have a strong healthy connection.

Everything you do have a be built on connecting 1 another. Yeah. That's kind of what I would say.

Speaker 2: Yeah. Yeah. And the the mentoring component of the parent or the leader or our staff, we talk about how important it is for us as staff to mentor and to kind of give examples of of healthy interaction and communication. And so that's so very critical and that... But that creates then like Davis saying this bonding and connection phase there.

We were all we're created to connect. Yeah. That we saw saying in the very beginning in in Genesis and in the story of the garden, how heavenly father first says, it is not good for man to be alone. Relationships is what the main focus of even that whole story is about. God even saying we want Adam and Eve to come back into our presence.

That connection, that relationship. And so we were all created to connect. We long for the bonding and feeling of acceptance and being with others and feeling the love from others and That's the essence of the connection is that someone feels that they're love. And we want that to be a component of our camp and of for what we want here to feel and understand is the importance of conveying that pure love that then opens the connecting arm to embrace their child into their life, and they have them be a part of their life. And so that's what we're wanting to see happen throughout can't experience.

To then last a lifetime hopefully to plants and seeds for them to be able to then continue to do the things that they have learned to do and implement all the principles that they've learned in church and in other context to a way of implementing and making it happen. We learn a lot of good things in our lessons in church and in our sac meetings and so forth. But then it's a matter of applying how do you apply that? And we want the camps to be a place where There's an application of the principles of connection.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Yeah. That's powerful. And I really appreciate that emphasis on connection. Because I think we make a mistake, you know, I think something's going wrong with this person in my life or this loved 1.

And so they... We need to find a good therapy program for them, or in the church context we think, hey. We're having girls camp or we're taking the boys camp. We need to focus on getting them a testimony of the gospel. Right?

And, of course, these these are value efforts and things, but really when we focus on the relationship like you're doing through camp, Like, let's just focus on building a strong relationship together and naturally this testimony component or the therapy they need or these things will come naturally if they're built on a foundation of a pure strong relationship with 1 another. Is that a good way to frame it?

Speaker 2: Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. Congrats. That's great.

Yeah. Cool.

Speaker 1: Yeah. Cool. Well, Tells, If you wanna learn about Bridge camp, and we're recording this the beginning of summer 20 24, where should they go to learn more and and consider it?

Speaker 0: Great. We have a website, bridge camp dot com, and you can see a list of all of our past camps that we've done in our upcoming camps. We have 4 scheduled this year with hopefully a fifth in September that we're trying to pull together as well. Our first 2 camps this year are in va Utah So it's stand, Saint George just north of Snow Canyon. And, the first 1 is June fourteenth to the sixteenth.

And then the next 1 is July nineteenth to the 20 first. So now we're taking registrations for those. And then in August, and those are dedicated for parent and teens. It's not that it's not a father son or mother daughter. It's just a parent.

Team needs to be between 12:17. And then the camp in August, the second through the fourth is a dedicated father sun camp, and that is hell here camp oakley, just up Canyon by Cam Utah. And then the week later after that, the following week, which I guess would be September... No. It's August

Speaker 2: oh All late on.

Speaker 0: 7 to the ninth, I believe I can't remember right off the top of my head, but that's a dedicated mother daughter camp. And then the 1 in September, I believe it's the first week of September, and that's probably gonna be a mixed parent team, and we may be doing a high adventure fly fishing backpack type experience for that 1, location to be determined. We're working out those details right now. The camps technically right now are free. We do ask for a deposit at the time that you register that allows us to know you're.

You're pretty serious about trying to come. And we we do ask that if families are able to please contribute to help us cover our costs, or costs or about 300 dollars a person per camp, but we're We're just asking if people can, you know, donate to help great. If they can't, and they need their deposit back after they've attended camp, then we will return the deposit as well. So that's for this year. Next year is probably gonna be a little bit different, but that's that's the plan for this year and we're super excited.

So And we're all we're also on social media, Rich camp 20 22 is is the handle there for Instagram and then on social on Facebook where, I think you just look at Bridge camp and you'll you'll find it.

Speaker 1: Now that we've reached the end of the episode, I quickly wanna to thank you for supporting the leading Saints podcast test. There's so much content out there to consider and you picked this 1. If leading saints made an impact in your life, we would sure like to hear about it at leading Saints dot org slash contact. And if you could quickly text or email this episode to a leader you know I bet it will bless their life. You can mark off your good turned daily, and let's even call administering.

Okay. Maybe not that far. But seriously, thank you and help us share this content. Remember, the Jody moore presentation about youth and mental health is waiting for you at leading saints dot org slash 14.

Speaker 3: It came as a result of the position of leadership, which was imposed upon us by the God of heaven who brought fourth a restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And when the declaration was made, concerning the own and only true and living church upon the face of the earth. We were immediately put in a position of loneliness. The loneliness of leadership from which we cannot shrink nor run away and to which we must face up with bold and courage and ability. It's