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Mary has always been a good student, but was never in the popular crowd. When she started to play sports in her second year of high school, that all changed. She was beginning to be noticed by guys in her class, and asked to attend parties.

The long weekend approached and one party in particular was announced. "Friday night, Susan's house, no parents." Mary really wanted to go, but she knew that her parents wouldn't allow it. They had a strict rule about parents being home at all times.

She had never been to a party this large, and knew she'd be missing the perfect opportunity to make a lot more friends. Everyone was asking her if she was going, even some of the boys.

They told her that she could just lie and they'd never know. Easy for them to say, they weren't as close with their parents as Mary was.

What if they did find out? Would they ever trust her again? Would she be allowed out of the house anymore? Or what if they don't find out, maybe nothing bad would come out of it all? All of these questions plagued Mary's mind as she went to the party.

NOTES FOR THE FACILITATOR

In this situation, we see a special form of peer pressure. The other students wouldn't have a problem lying to their parents, or some might even have parents who wouldn't mind them going to this party. This puts teens into a strange situation, where they either feel that they too should lie, or that their parents are being unfair since another set of parents are allowing their teen to go to the party. Mary is a good student, and thus it doesn't seem right to not give her this freedom. These are all things that go through a teen's mind, and need to be addressed. They need to understand that not all parents are the same, and not all parents are right. Some parents don't do a good job with rules and regulations, and put their own children in danger when they try to 'be cool'.

Teens are most afraid of one thing, their parents finding out they've lied. Even though many of them will become comfortable with lying, it will still bother them. You have to explain to them that being honest will make all these feelings of guilt go away, and they will have a much better time not always looking over their shoulder, wondering if they will be caught.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What do you think of Mary and her dilemma?

Do you feel sorry for her?

How do you think popularity comes into play in this?

What would you do in her situation?

Would your parents allow you to go to the party? If not, would you lie to them to go?

Have you ever been in this type of situation? Or has a friend? What did you/they do?