

## Talking Points

Here are some suggested Talking Points for turning this brochure package into a full-fledged presentation.

### Suggestions to Go with the Power-Point Presentation:

#### Slide 2: Connect

- Ask participants what they've always heard about roommates: the good, the bad and the ugly. You may get everything from "We'll end up lifelong friends" to "They're just someone we have to share a room with."
- Go over the bullet points on this slide, making sure to emphasize that every roommate relationship will be different. It makes sense to just focus on yours instead of comparing yourself with others!

#### Slide 3: Compromise

- Ask participants how they'd define compromise.
- Then go through the bullet points here and mention things to think about below each one, such as:
  - **The Room**
    - Do you both feel a sense of ownership over this new space?
    - Is the room comfortable for all?
    - How important is neatness to each of you?
  - **Technology**
    - Should you answer one another's phones if they're sitting out?
    - How will you both keep technology in the room safe?
    - Who can use what and when?
  - **The Stuff**
    - Will you both have equal access to the microwave, TV, video games, food, dishes, etc.?
    - Is it okay to borrow one another's clothes, sports equipment, etc.? If so, under what conditions?
    - What is okay to share and what isn't?

- **Guests**
  - If people drop in while one roommate is studying, how will you handle it?
  - How will each of you get enough alone time in the room?
  - Are overnight guests acceptable? Under what conditions?
  - If one of you is gone for the weekend, is it okay for a guest to use your bed?
- **Good place to use The Art of Compromise handout with an acronym that can serve as a helpful discussion tool.**

#### Slide 4: Communicate

Some additional points to make with each of these bullets include:

- **Go to the Source.** Talking behind your roommate's back:
  - Offers you a short-term "get it off your chest" feeling that's followed by continuous, long-term problems.
  - Makes those you're complaining to wonder if you talk about THEM behind their backs.
  - Still leaves your roommate in the dark.
- **Say What You Mean.** When you dance around an issue, you:
  - Confuse your roommate.
  - Fail to represent the breadth of your concern.
  - Rarely get to the core of an issue.
- **Avoid Gossip.** Refuse to participate in the rumor mill by:
  - Encouraging yourself and others to go directly to the source when there's a problem.
  - Steering clear of those who gossip.
  - Not using gossip as your "small talk" with other acquaintances.

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- **Don't Assume.** When you assume things about people, you:
  - Are doing things the lazy way.
  - Hold people at a distance.
  - Stop yourself from getting to know their really *good* layers!
- **Good place to use the How to Confront Others with Care handout.**

### Slide 5: Be Clear

- A role-play scenario here could be a good way to illustrate some of the keys to healthy roommate communications.
- Consider spending some time on the concept of “Agree to Disagree,” as this can be tough for many folks to grasp. It’s about standing up for yourself without putting your roommate down. It’s about listening to what your roommate has to say, yet not feeling like you necessarily need to fully agree with her. It’s about remembering that your values, thoughts and feelings are just as valid as your roommate’s. And it’s about realizing that you may not always like what she believes and she may not like what you believe, yet you’ll respect one another’s right to expression.
- **Good place to use the Clear Communication Strategies handout.**

### Slide 6: Show Concern

- **Good place to use the How to Help a Friend handout.**
- When discussing family issues, ask participants what they think about calling a roommate’s family members. Stress that this is often a *bad* idea!

### Slide 7: Be Respectful: Respecting Difference

- Ask participants to consider what they bring to the table in terms of their identity. Perhaps one person will self-identify as a Hispanic male who grew up with his grandparents while another might be a Jewish woman who is active in the local temple and proud of her Cuban roots.
- Consider discussing how it’s important to embrace and respect what makes us unique before we can fully embrace the difference in others.
- Respecting difference is about seeing what you have in common as well as discovering and learning from the differences.

### Slide 8: Be Respectful: Respecting Safety Concerns

- As you discuss these bullet points, remind participants that safety experts strongly recommend keeping doors locked, following policies and having room keys/cards always with their owners in order to maintain optimum safety.

### Slide 9: Chat

- **Good place to use the Getting to Know Your Roommate handout.** If roommates are attending this session together, give them some time to ask each other questions. Create a comfortable atmosphere where they can grab a corner and start talking.

### Slide 10: The Value of Connections

- If roommates are attending together, consider having them work on the **Roommate Agreement handout** before leaving. This tool can get them on a good, communicative path.
- **Also distribute The Roommate’s Bill of Rights & Responsibilities to reinforce some of what was discussed during the presentation.**