

MOVIE: TOY STORY 3

***** Please read the Introduction to Large Group Studies in order to best utilize this material***

Sub Topic theme:

LEAVING FRIENDS BEHIND

Lesson objective:

To understand that maturing and moving are common in experiences in people's lives. It is often a time when we are required to let go of things (possession and places), while we work at saying farewell to our friends in healthy ways. Often, when we pass something of ourselves on to others in love, we develop a resiliency in our character while growing as teens on the move.

Intro to the Movie:

The Toy Story series takes a generation of youth through the loving episodes of Andy and his toys. This final chapter begins as Andy is now 17 and preparing to go to college. The toys, distraught from a lengthy period of neglect from Andy begin to take solace in their impending trip to the attic. But they mistakenly end up at the Day care from hell. Eventually they make it through the scary trials and end up back in Andy's bedroom.

(The focus of the study will concentrate on this last portion)

Hearing Andy and his mom approaching, Woody hops in the 'College' box. As they enter Andy's room, his mother is hit with the sad reality that her son is going away. Andy tells her that even though he'll be gone, he'll still care about her.

Hearing this, Woody realizes that Andy can still care for him and the other toys: an example of true love, in that you never forget those you really love. As Andy is distracted by his sister Molly and his dog Buster, Woody quickly grabs a Post-It note and a marker, writing down a street address for someone named Bonnie, before hopping in the 'Attic' box.

Andy returns to the room, and sees the note on the 'Attic' box, thinking that his mom wrote it. Andy takes the box to the address and sees Bonnie playing in her family's front yard with the same quirky imagination that he had.



Andy then gets out of the car with his box. As Bonnie sees him approach, she stops her game and calls for her mom. Bonnie's mom recognizes Andy, who then explains that he has some toys for Bonnie. Andy then introduces each of his toys, telling Bonnie a little bit about each of them: Jessie loves little critters, and Bullseye is her favorite 'critter.' Mr. and Mrs Potato Head are madly in love. The three green aliens come from a strange place called Pizza Planet. Hamm will save your money, but is also 'The Evil Dr. Porkchop.' Rex is a fearsome predator. Slinky is as loyal as they come for a dog. Buzz Lightyear is a cool space ranger who flies, shoots lasers, and protects the galaxy from the Evil Emperor Zurg.

With each toy revealed, Bonnie gets more and more brave until, after Buzz, she peeks into the box and sees Woody. Andy has no knowledge of how Woody got in there, but is surprised when Bonnie calls him 'my cowboy doll,' and quotes one of Woody's lines: "There's a snake in my boot!"

Andy sees Bonnie looking at Woody, and explains to her how important Woody is to him: how long he's had him, and how brave Woody can be. However, he explains to Bonnie that she can have Woody, if she promises to take good care of him, and the other toys. When she quietly nods an affirmative, Andy suddenly begins to pretend-play with her, and the two are having an imaginative time interacting with their toys. Secretly, Andy's toys are overjoyed at their last playtime with him.

Finally, Andy gets into his car, as Bonnie gathers her old and new toys on the porch. As she holds Woody and Buzz in her little arms, she makes Woody wave goodbye. This causes Andy to give a sad but calming smile. "Thanks, guys," he whispers, as he drives off.

After Andy leaves, Bonnie's mom takes her inside for lunch, leaving the toys on the porch, watching Andy's car fade into the distance down the street. "So long, partner," says Woody.

Woody smiles at the other toys, reaffirming that Andy did care for them, and care for them enough to leave them with another child who will take care of them and give them many playtimes to come. Woody then begins to introduce his friends to Bonnie's other toys.

(The 3D lenses) Look for themes such as moving away from home, saying goodbye to people (friends and family), as well as places and possessions. In Andy's case, it's a bit of a farewell to childhood and all of his play friends that have meant so much to him and his creative boyhood. Maturing and moving often require a "letting go"

process, and Andy demonstrates a powerful lesson of passing things on to others as a strategy for successful transitions.

Discussion Group Questions:

1. If **you** were cast in this movie, which of the main characters would you rather be and why?
2. Do you have a special toy that you've grown up with as a kid? If so, describe it.
3. Have you ever had to leave something important behind or lost something you cared about in a PCS move? How did you feel?
4. Do think Andy's decision to give his toy friends away was a good strategy? What good might come out of it? How would you handle it?
5. As you mature and move, you're sometimes faced with letting go of things that have been important in the past. How do respond to being asked to do that?

Group input:

Leader-solicited responses from the large group on reactions to some of the questions

Gathering of ideas and themes recognized in the discussion groups with a focus on guiding the audience toward the main objective: *To understand that maturing and moving are common in people's lives. It is often a time when we are required to let go of things (possession and places), while we work at saying farewell to our friends in healthy ways. Often, when we pass something of ourselves on to others in love, we develop a resiliency in our character while growing as teens on the move.*

Bullet Objective:

Put this summary section in your own words, but here are some ideas you can use:

Most of you have grown up with Andy over the years of three Toy Story movies, and watching this can feel like you're losing these friends, too. *Toy Story 3* really is a story about moving, and moving on; a sort of 'letting go' of places and possessions and people as well as his boyhood friends – Woody, Buzz, Jessie and the rest of the gang. The fact that a lot of us are moving every few years builds in natural times in our lives to mature, let go and move on. There are feelings of sadness along with

feelings of anticipation, so doing farewells with purpose is something that all of us need to think about and learn how to do.

You may have heard about a man named Moses who led the people of Israel out of Egypt, through the parting of the Red Sea, wandering for 40 years in the wilderness, and bringing them right up to the Promised Land. At the end of his life, after leading these people for so long, it's time for him to say his farewells and to hand over the leadership to Joshua. It's his time to let go and move on. Here's how Scripture records how he handles this with maturity and Godly purpose.

Deuteronomy 32

⁴⁴ Moses and Joshua son of Nun recited this song, so that the people of Israel could hear it. ⁴⁵ When Moses had finished giving God's teachings to the people, ⁴⁶ he said, "Be sure to obey all these commands that I have given you today. Repeat them to your children, so that they may faithfully obey all of God's teachings. ⁴⁷ These teachings are not empty words; they are your very life. Obey them and you will live long in that land across the Jordan that you are about to occupy."

Deuteronomy 34

¹ Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Mount Pisgah east of Jericho, and there the LORD showed him the whole land: the territory of Gilead as far north as the town of Dan; ² the entire territory of Naphtali; the territories of Ephraim and Manasseh; the territory of Judah as far west as the Mediterranean Sea; ³ the southern part of Judah; and the plain that reaches from Zoar to Jericho, the city of palm trees. ⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, "This is the land that I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob I would give to their descendants. I have let you see it, but I will not let you go there." ⁵ So Moses, the LORD's servant, died there in the land of Moab, as the LORD had said he would. ⁶ The LORD buried him in a valley in Moab, opposite the town of Bethpeor, but to this day no one knows the exact place of his burial. ⁷ Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died; he was as strong as ever, and his eyesight was still good. ⁸ The people of Israel mourned for him for thirty days in the plains of Moab. ⁹ Joshua son of Nun was filled with wisdom, because Moses had appointed him to be his successor. The people of Israel obeyed Joshua and kept the commands that the LORD had given them through Moses. ¹⁰ There has never been a prophet in Israel like Moses; the LORD spoke with him face-to-face. ¹¹ No other prophet has ever done miracles and wonders like those that the LORD sent Moses to perform against the king of Egypt, his officials, and the entire country. ¹² No other prophet has been able to do the great and terrifying things that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

Wow, what a testimony to what a magnificent man Moses was. He didn't argue with God, but believed God had his best interests in mind and trusted God with the outcome. He handed it all over, even though he never personally made it into the

Promised Land. Moses moved on to be with God and like Andy in the movie, they let go of the things that had been important to them. Positive farewells and trusting God in transitions is a great opportunity for us to grow in our maturity and resiliency of character, and we bless other people in the process!

Challenge:

1. If you know of someone who you haven't had a good, healthy farewell with (maybe your last PCS or someone who left you) then make contact and ask their forgiveness. Make the relationship right.
2. What things do you need to let go of? Identify some people who could use something you should part with like Andy did with his toys. Consider doing that this week as a group of friends (make it a group project and take stuff together to a shelter or Goodwill or any place where your stuff can be put to good use). Celebrate letting go!
3. Ask God to show you how to trust him with your next PCS move. Ask him to mature you and help you leave a place well.

Pray for God's purpose and power to put it into action and transform lives. Remind them of the online personal journey at ReZilient Life for further involvement with this topic of a family Leaving Friends Behind.