# Keys to the Success of Teen Challenge

By Dave Batty

**1. A brief history of Teen Challenge**

Started in NYC in 1958 by Rev. David Wilkerson

*The Cross and the Switchblade* book tells how Teen Challenge started

Now over 1,060 centers in 82 countries

Research has shown that Teen Challenge graduates have a 70-86% success rate of living drug free. Studies looked at those who had been out of Teen Challenge   
2-15 years.

**2. Models of treating drug addiction**

A. Medical model

B. Psychological model

C. Educational model

D. Christian Discipleship model

I tell the students, you’re not here to become drug free.

You’re here to become a man of God who is holy and righteous, set apart to serve your Creator.

The incredible by-product of a life in Christ is that you find healing, joy, hope, and peace. You don’t use drugs, or have sex outside of marriage, or get drunk because you love God.

--Sallie Culbreth, Teen Challenge, Hot Springs, Ark

**3. A closer look at the Christian discipleship model used in TC**

Discipleship is not a miracle, like salvation or healing.

God needs experts at discipleship today.

At Teen Challenge, Christian discipleship training is the primary tool for assisting those with addictions. Counseling is used as a secondary treatment method to assist these individuals.

Students spend at least 3 hours a day 5 days a week in Christian discipleship classes, learning how to apply the teachings of the Bible to their daily living.

Here are 10 characteristics of discipleship. It’s not an exhaustive list, but it does give a perspective on several key aspects of this personal discipline.

1. Christ-centered, not man centered

*How do you help them develop a dependency on God, not yourself?*

1. Discipleship is future oriented

*How are you helping them get a practical hope for their future?*

*How are you building vision into their lives?*

1. Element of the miraculous

*What are you expecting God to do in their life?*

*Who will be the next Steve Hill or Nicky Cruz?*

1. Action centered, not information centered

*Are you giving them too much information?*

*How are you helping them develop a pattern of problem solving with Biblical personal application?*

1. By choice, not by force

*How are you making them responsible for their choices?*

1. Involves obedience

*How are you modeling self-motivated obedience?*

1. Based on a power source outside of myself

*How are you teaching them to depend on God?*

1. Love centered, not factory mass-produced

*How are you loving them?*

1. Character centered, not success centered

*How are you helping them develop Godly character?*

1. Time limited

*How do you know God’s timing for change in their lives?*

Effective discipleship produces disciplers. 2 Tim. 2:2

**5. Our view of addictions**

A. Definition of an addiction

Chemical dependency (addiction) is the state that results from the process of turning to chemical use to meet life’s needs.

(Jeff VanVonderen)

B. How addictions are overcome

TC Statement of purpose

The mission of Teen Challenge is to evangelize persons with life-controlling problems and initiate the discipleship process to the point where the student can function as a Christian in society, applying spiritually motivated biblical principles in relationships in the family, church, chosen vocation, and community.

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