

10 top tips for parents of teenagers

In my work with teenagers I find these 10 issues are the most important to them.

- 1) Your teenager must know that you unconditionally love and trust them. If you're not sure if they know, ask them using open questions?
- 2) When you listen to them ensure you are listening from your heart. Face them heart to heart, concentrate on their words, tone of voice, facial expressions, body language and sense the things they don't say in the silences. A bit like listening to your best friend and the latest gossip!
- 3) Teenagers tell me their biggest problem is that their parents or teachers do not respect them. Ask your teen, 'do you feel respected by me' and prepared to be shocked. Ask their teacher to ask the same question if you can.
- 4) To ensure you get anywhere near the truth you need to ensure, they are in the mood to talk, comfortable, have time and relaxed. And make sure you're in the same situation by scheduling time for this important event.
- 5) Once you've started this unfolding process make a date for a regular discussion - no holds barred. Keep that time sacrosanct (sacred, untouchable), as they will judge how you value them on whether you turn up.
- 6) Ask your teen to start a 'Success Diary' recording all their wins and successes every day. When they feel down, get them to read through a few pages or do it together if it feels right. The better they feel about themselves the better they will be and the better their choices in life will be.
- 7) When the going gets tough encourage them to just sit quietly for a few minutes to gather themselves and think of the things that make them happy. And while they are thinking these happy thoughts get them to increase their senses of what they are feeling, seeing and hearing.
- 8) When you are angry with them separate your feelings for them from their behaviour. Reaffirm your love for them and explain that it's your behaviour you don't like not them. Tell them when they are angry with their mates to use the same strategy.
- 9) Remember every relationship affects 2 people and you can never control another person. However the better the relationship is the more influence you will have. So as with every other relationship in your life - you need to work at this one as well.
- 10) If you don't unlock the key to your child's potential who will?

Congratulations you will have helped develop your teen into an empowered individual.