

Expressing Emotions Communicating with Parents for Teenagers, Ages 11 and up

~ Notes for Parents ~

Expressing Emotions Side #1 and Side #2

As you remember from your own teenage years, it is very difficult for an adolescent to express emotion. We encourage you to be very involved with your teenager and this title.

- Listen to the entire recording with your teenager, and then discuss the various issues raised.
- The recording discusses why it is important to talk about feelings. Add some of your own observations and encourage your teenager to think of some reasons of his or her own.
- Share some of your feelings about expressing emotion. In ongoing discussions, talk about your teenager's fears.
- There are four techniques to help your teenager express emotions:
 - Identify the emotion. Why do you feel that way? What can you do about it (three or four alternatives)? Then do something about it.
 - Daydreaming as a way of experiencing and expressing.
 - Inventory emotions on a weekly basis; i.e., list all the major emotions and then talk about them.
 - Pick a friend, imaginary or real, with whom to talk.

As parents, be aware of these techniques and help your teenager do them -- without pushing or demanding.

Communicating with Parents Side #3 and Meditation

Try to remember how difficult it was for you to talk to your parents. Perhaps talk to your inner child and adolescent to bring back the fears and doubts you had in communicating with your parents. Know that it is as difficult for your child.

- Listen to the entire recording and discuss salient points.
- In many cases, your teenager is going to be trying something totally new and something that has not been encouraged before. Therefore, be understanding and

patient with their attempts.

- Be familiar with techniques suggested on the recording (work with them yourself with your inner adolescent):
 - Practice ahead of time in your room (out loud) or in your imagination.
 - Ask why it is important to talk about this feeling. Is it to inform, or is it to hurt? (Assume it is to inform.)
 - Each day talk about three positive feelings and three negative feelings involving as many members of the family as possible.
 - On a weekly basis, sit down together and tell the other what you most want them to know about you -- parent and child.

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