



Do you want to help your teens become more confident?

Do you wish you could connect with your teens on a deeper level?

Do you often struggle to know **how to** direct them or **how much** to direct them?

Do you feel like you have to constantly nag them and tell them what to do, just to get them motivated and organized?

By pursuing your teen's heart with curious questions and deep listening, I believe that this is the parenting shift that will make a big difference in your family dynamics.

Intentional and specific, curious questions allow your teens space to "tell themselves what to do," as you do not need to be the expert on their lives. As you move away from being the "expert," they will move into a more responsible role.

These communication skills encourage your teens to participate in solutions that lead to critical thinking skills, problem solving and leadership development. The results will not only harvest

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deeper family connections but also improve self-confidence as you prepare your teens to become independent thinkers, to lead and to live their lives with purpose.

Give them opportunities to practice ownership of their lives and they will gain more confidence because they will see that their ideas work, and they **can be** the “experts on themselves.”

Listen to understand. If you listen to understand, then you can respond better. These tools will help you to experience deeper conversations together and prepare your teens for adulthood.

What does this picture of deep listening and curious questioning look like?

Here are **FIVE TOOLS:**

Tool 1: Rating Exercise:

Level of Involvement:

Do this exercise together with your teen and rate these questions on a scale of 1-10. This gives a good perspective on how your teen sees your involvement in their lives and whether you are being too controlling or directing. This is where you can find a balance together!

“How involved do you think I am in your life?”

“What do you want me to do more of?”

“What do you want me to do less of?” (be prepared for these answers without taking offence)

Brainstorm ideas of how you will do “less/more directing” with specific examples in specific situations. For example: “Mum, please don’t keep reminding me to do my homework because when you do, then I don’t want to do it.”

Think of ways to support one another. Evaluate each week, reassess and ask: How are we doing? What isn’t working? What are we learning about ourselves?

You can use rating exercises in different areas of their lives. Rate your level of closeness, level of communication, level of anger, level of anxiety, level of fun together, level of busyness and more.

Tool 2: Types of Questions:

As a rule, **“What” and “How”** questions are safer to use than **“why”** questions as **“why”** questions can portray judgement and disapproval.

“How did your words affect her?” as opposed to **“Why** did you say those hurtful things?”

“What stopped you from going to class today?” instead of **“Why** didn’t you go to class today?”

“What got in the way of your studying?” instead of **“Why** did you get bad grades?”

These kinds of questions invite relationship and encourage your teen to share on a deeper level, as they feel less judged and less threatened.

Tool 3: How do, what do and where do?

Involve them in the “how do’s,” “what do`s” and “where do`s.”

Invite your teens in to share their advice, ideas and opinions. Ask questions that make them feel valued and appreciated. Your teen wants to feel **HEARD**.

“How do you think we should solve this problem?”

“What do you think of this idea?”

“How would you fix it?”

“How would you like to plan our camping trip?”

“Where should we go out for dinner?”

The next time, you have a family decision to make, ask questions and brainstorm ideas. It may be planning a holiday, a visit to grandma, road trip, travel adventure, meals for the week, special dinner celebration, planning chore responsibilities, or planning their birthday party.

Tool 4: Flip the Picture:

Heart Checkup:

Parents tend to focus on their teens` negative actions. It helps when you flip this and begin focusing on your own actions, and how you may have contributed to the situation.

“What have I said to you in the past that has made you feel worse about yourself?”

“How else have I hurt you?”

“How can I become better at connecting with you?”

“Where do you think we should start?”

“Will you please forgive me?”

Curious powerful questions communicate: “I trust you;” “I value what you have to say;” “I accept where you are at;” “I give you room to make mistakes;” “I am supporting you on your journey;” “you are part of our family team;” “I love you and I value our relationship.”

Tool 5: Check-in Anytime Tool

Tune up:

Keep these questions at the back of your mind for checking in with your teen from time to time:

“What is working in your life?”

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“What is not working in your life?”

“How would you like me to support you?” (**invite them to invite you in**)

The family is mutually dependent on one another, so it is not about “me” or “I;” it is about “we” and trying “**to be better together**” as we learn “**to do better together.**”

Constant dialog and check-in are important:

“How is this affecting us as a family?”

“What can we do better?”

“How should we hold one another accountable?”

Do you get the picture? Can you see how you are building more connection as well as giving your teens more autonomy with responsibility as you encourage them to solve problems, think up their own ideas and share their opinions. As they feel more valued and appreciated, they will invite you in and ask for your advice 😊 Yay!

You do not have to be the “expert” and think up all the solutions in order to be a good parent. Understand who you are, who your teens are and give them some space to “tell themselves what to do,” so you can enjoy one another. **Be the parent your teens want to talk to.**

Experiment with these tools for a week and you should see a marked improvement in your teen’s confidence and in your relationships. Re-design your relationship and then practice these tools consistently. Check in frequently with your teen for a “tune up!”

Parents, we need to be working our way out of a job so that our teens become competent, confident and responsible young adults.

As an [academic life coach](#), I promise you that if your teen signs up for a coaching relationship with me, they will get confidence like never before. They will get much more deeply in touch with who they are and what they want and this will create confidence which will create motivation which will create action which will create results.....more productivity, and more independence as they feel more comfortable with themselves.

If you would like to stay in touch, please check out my [Facebook page](#) or send me an email on mandifrostzw@me.com. Also check out my [Life Prep teen curriculum](#) for high school student groups.

My first 1-hour informational session is always free!

From my family to yours 😊

Mandi Frost

Academic Life Coach

Serving Families

