

INSPIRED PARENTING

PREMIERE ISSUE VOL. 1. ISSUE 1. SPRING 2008

Emotional Intelligence

Why it's more important than IQ in ensuring your child's future happiness and success in life

Tantrums, Tears & Meltdowns

Bad behavior? Or a sign of Sensory Processing Disorder?

The Vaccination Controversy

What's right for your child?

MetaMusic

A key to Whole Brain Learning, better sleep and ADD



The Secret to Raising Teens

Four Quick Tips to Stay Positive

BY CHARLENE PROCTOR, Ph.D.

What parent doesn't occasionally agonize over the challenges teenagers bring to a family environment? Because of raging hormones and the teen brain (I hear their frontal lobes are not fully developed, accounting for the lack of empathy) I long for the days when our sweet little dearies used to have fun on family vacations.

The day I gave up the fantasy that I'd skate through the teenage years I heard EVERYONE ELSE having (Me: "My boys will never turn into evil teens!! We're so close!") and chose hiding in the upstairs bathroom on a regular basis with my own television, I crossed over from denial into reality.

Mom from an alien galaxy

Reminiscing about the years when I was viewed as the smartest parent in the world was my official rite of passage. In my youngest son's eyes, I went from an intelligent, savvy, and socially competent parent to some sort of import from an alien galaxy where only fumbling fools were allowed to live. My job: never talk to him or his friends at a school function for fear of his future and mine. ("Mom you ruined my life! Don't ever talk to my friends again, it's soooo embarrassing!"). My eldest rejected every aspect of normal family life, opting to pursue studies that would prepare him to be a C.I.A. agent and sell antiques on the side. Of course, he's made it clear he is never getting married.

Lately, I will admit my fantasies alternate between running away to a spiritual retreat for mothers of teenage boys and seeking revenge. I'd like to sneak into their rooms at night and lop off the hair they are convinced looks cooler than Zac Efron. The retreat scenario involves a guru who miraculously

grants me the patience to endure them both until they leave for college, where, of course, they realize nobody is going to do their laundry. Consequently, they have an epiphany about my contribution to their life.

In this fantasy I become a little grasshopper, completely centered in the eternal moment of now, returning home enhanced with boatloads of techniques guaranteed to establish my place in the world again. Being a positive thinker, it could happen if I keep practicing the Law of Attraction.

While cultivating (and encouraging!) their independence, teens need a lot of behind the scenes guidance in order to become good decision-makers. No matter what your teen's convoluted perception is of the world, it is important to show them that you are endeared by others.

My theory is that they will ask these people for advice at some point (because they won't ask you for any) and maybe your friends and work colleagues can slide in a few bonus compliments about you. It's also a survival technique when teens can't reciprocate a lot of love.

Also, show teens you can manage your own emotions and be a Vulcan when you need to be, capable of butting out of their lives completely, at least until they want the credit card.



