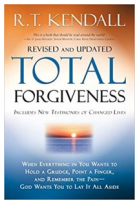


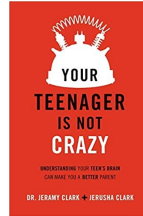
job. Do not forget that you are planting seeds, and, in time, they will sprout. There will be a time in your life where your child comes back around and thanks you for what you have taught him. Keep your eye on the prize.

Going Further — Resources



[Total Forgiveness](#) by R.T. Kendall will help you discover that not only can we be totally forgiven we must also totally forgive others.

Your Teenager Is Not Crazy by Dr. Jeramy and Jerusha Clark. Your teen's brain is under heavy construction in the transition from childhood to adulthood. Rather than just hold on for dear life, make this season with your teen one of cultivating creativity, self-awareness, and passion for things that really matter.



Find additional resources for parenting, marriage, and other seasons of life at <https://growfaithathome.org/>

Going Further — Church Support

Fusion is great places for students (grades 6-12) to meet friends and learn more about God, faith, and so much more! Fusion meets Sundays from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Get more info here:

- <https://staffordcrossing.org/fusion>
- Email fusion@staffordcrossing.org

How to Forgive Your Teen

Helping families
trust and follow Jesus

@home

Just when you think you've seen it all, your kid goes and screws up in a way you never even imagined possible. Even though you expected the teenage years to be difficult, you just never imagined...*this*.

While it is completely normal for a teen to make a mistake or two (or many) along the way, I get more and more parents who are struggling to let go of their teen's slip-ups, whether big or small. As a result, the parent-teen relationship develops into an unhealthy cycle of pain, distrust, and resentment from both sides.

Hanging on to old mistakes, rehashing past issues over and over again with your teen, and taking your teen's behavior as a personal affront can make for a bitter few years, to say the least.

Are you finding it difficult to forgive your teen for his mistakes?

Here are five tips to help you navigate your path back to a harmonious and healthy parent-teen relationship:

#1. See your teen for who she is, not just who she appears to be. Volumes of research show that the teenage brain is not just a mini-adult brain. Brain development continues well into the 20s, and the last part of the brain to develop is the frontal lobe, responsible for logic, impulse control, and rationale. So often I hear from teens in my office whom are coping with the ramifications of a poor choice they made. Typically, these kids know that they should not have made the choice, but they just could not help themselves in the moment. This isn't to say that teens should be let off the hook for making bad decisions. However, understanding that the teen brain is not fully developed in the areas that control reasoning may help parents not to take their teen's mistake so personally.

#2. Issue the punishment and move on. When you're fuming about your teen's screwup, it may seem hard to keep a calm head. I often teach the parents I work with my "issue the ticket" technique of discipline. When you are pulled over by a police officer, they usually stay calm, there is little lecturing, and the officer does not take your infraction personally. An officer simply issues you the ticket and moves on. As a parent of a

teen you need to try to practice "policing" your teen the same way. Stop engaging in heated discussions and debates over your teen's mistake. Just stay calm, issue the punishment, and move on.

#3. Maintain regular "parent" dates with your kids. The lives of both parents and teens are busy, and schedules are tight. Regardless, it is an absolute must that you fight for regular time with your teen, even if you don't seem to get along most of the time. Schedule the date and keep it. Sharing a meal or even going for a walk together might seem strained at first, especially because all cell phones should be ignored during your dates. However, you will find that it is during these uninterrupted times that your teen will eventually open up to you and discuss what is really on his mind, especially when you allow him to control the dialogue. Don't pepper him with questions. Just sit back and listen. In the end, the critical message your teen receives from you via these dates is that he is a priority, and that spending time together matters to you.

#4. Find something (anything!) to be positive about and share it with your teen. Teens often complain to me that they only hear what they are doing wrong and what they need to do better. Over time, this dynamic causes a teen to view all interactions with her parents as critical. Spend 15 minutes writing down what you admire or appreciate about her. Take at least one off the list every week and share it with your teen. Hearing about what is good, what is positive, and what strengths she has puts wind into a teen's sails and boosts her self-esteem and confidence. Even if she seems to brush it off, trust me when I say that it matters to her more than you realize.

#5. Remember the big picture. The right decision and the popular decision are rarely the same. Oftentimes you will have to issue a punishment that is difficult. Don't forget that parents who do their job well are focused on raising independent, successful adults. This often means that parents have to give up what is easy in the short term for what will best benefit their kid in the long term. Being a parent of a teen is often a thankless

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