

Parallel Learning Technology

Rebellion Is Good

Adolescence is one of the most critical and misunderstood of the five stages of relationship.

Let's summarize the perception, attitude, thinking, and behavior that make up this stage.

The adolescent:

- Sees them self in a “big circle” relationship to the parents (perception)
- Operates from a ‘false ego’ as a temporary self-identity (attitude)
- Begins to grasp the concept of cause and effect (thinking)
- Learns about the boundaries and impact of the control cycle (behavior)

The five basic needs for survival, freedom, usefulness, love, and self-identity are still connected. This means that a threat to any one need is a threat to all of them—like an emotional house of cards.

Growing up is all about learning how to fulfill these basic human needs—physically and emotionally. This is not optional if the adolescent is to live a healthy and fulfilling life.

During childhood, physical survival and love were paramount. During adolescence, the need for freedom takes center stage. This is as it should be. How else does a person begin to discover where they begin and end?

The struggle for freedom is the way the adolescent separates from the parent. The path to this ‘definition of self’ is rebellion

A parent can take one of two views regarding this healthy stage of rebellion:

- My child's rebellion is healthy and the path to separating from me and becoming a whole person.
- My child's rebellion must be controlled. It makes me look like a bad parent and my child will become self-centered.

The second view steers us toward one very real problem with parenting today. Too often, we have not made this emotional separation and are trying to parent our children through it. All of our unresolved conflicts regarding our childhood come into play.

On another note, we haven't really learned how to use our most effective tool for raising teenagers—that is consequences. We have to do a better job at teaching our children about 'cause and effect'.

Their rebellion must be balanced with a healthy dose of reality. If we set the boundaries during this 'run for freedom', we can all survive adolescence. Our kids have to discover the natural consequences of 'going to far' if they are to develop emotional self-control.

We have just scratched the surface here on this important topic of adolescence and even more importantly, growing up.

The bottom line is, we grow up physically according to very predictable laws of nature. But growing up emotionally is still a process of trial and error.

The most important question we can ask ourselves is, "Where are we with regard to emotional maturity?" We may want to explore the essential ingredients of maturity and examine the missing pieces that would explain some of the 'glass ceilings' in our lives. These are:

- Self-Authority—the ability to make good decisions that are right for you
- Self-Responsibility—the ability to take action on these decisions
- Self-Accountability—the ability to ask for and accept feedback from others.
- Self-Control—the ability to process feelings and emotions so that these do not take charge of your life by dictating your decisions

It is never too late to grow up emotionally. Life Skills U's courses and coaching process provide the education and the mentoring that allow this essential passage to take place in adulthood.

Growing up is the most important thing we do in this journey through life and it begins with finding out where you are. Come find out.

(Concepts taken from *Passage to Adulthood and Kid's Don't Come With An Owner's Manual*)