

Sue Atkins
The Parenting Expert

Parenting Made Easy System

**NAVIGATING THE CHOPPY WATERS OF
THE TEENAGE YEARS**

**DAY 2: WHAT YOU &
YOUR TEENAGER WANT**

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www.sueatkinsparentingcoach.com

In a nutshell – In this session, I'll show you the ways in which teenagers aren't that different to toddlers! Knowing what you and your teenager each want will help you to grow and nurture that relationship. And I'll also give you a really handy tool to use that will help you improve your communication with your teenager ...

Welcome back!

Toddler or Teen?

How would you feel if you considered how you are bringing up your teenager in a slightly different way? You see, I believe that there really isn't that much difference between handling a toddler and a teenager – in fact they are similar in lots of ways:

- They both want to be more independent, want to assert themselves and be individual
- They each want to have more control about what happens to them
- Both lack the maturity and experience to understand all the potential dangers and risks around them
- Both feel confused about the emotional and physical changes they are experiencing, and both are likely to throw a tantrum if they don't get what they want!

Be honest with yourself. You negotiated and navigated your child through their toddler years, so you can take the learning from some of those experiences and apply them to this new phase of your family's life now.

So start to look at your teenager as not really very different from a toddler, and in some ways you'll start to relax around this whole issue and things will start to improve.

Naturally it's also a time to prepare your child for the bigger issues of life: for the pitfalls of falling in with the 'wrong crowd', taking drugs or dropping out of school but with careful navigating and negotiating, and keeping the lines of communication really open, there is absolutely no reason why you can't all sail through this transition easily.

Remember, too, that setbacks are normal and to be expected. Parenting is not a linear process, and nor is a teenager's growth towards independence. Sometimes my own daughter seems incredibly mature and sensible, but another day she can be immature and silly! This is completely normal, and remember that the seemingly perfect family you secretly envy are going through exactly the same things too!



The power of visualisation is a really powerful tool in your parenting toolkit – By listening and relaxing each day and doing a meditation or visualisation exercise you are training your unconscious to find new ways to make your relationship with your child happier. Why not try one now? [Click here](#) – or download and play the audio file called Day_2_Visualisation.mp3.

Learning to Let Go

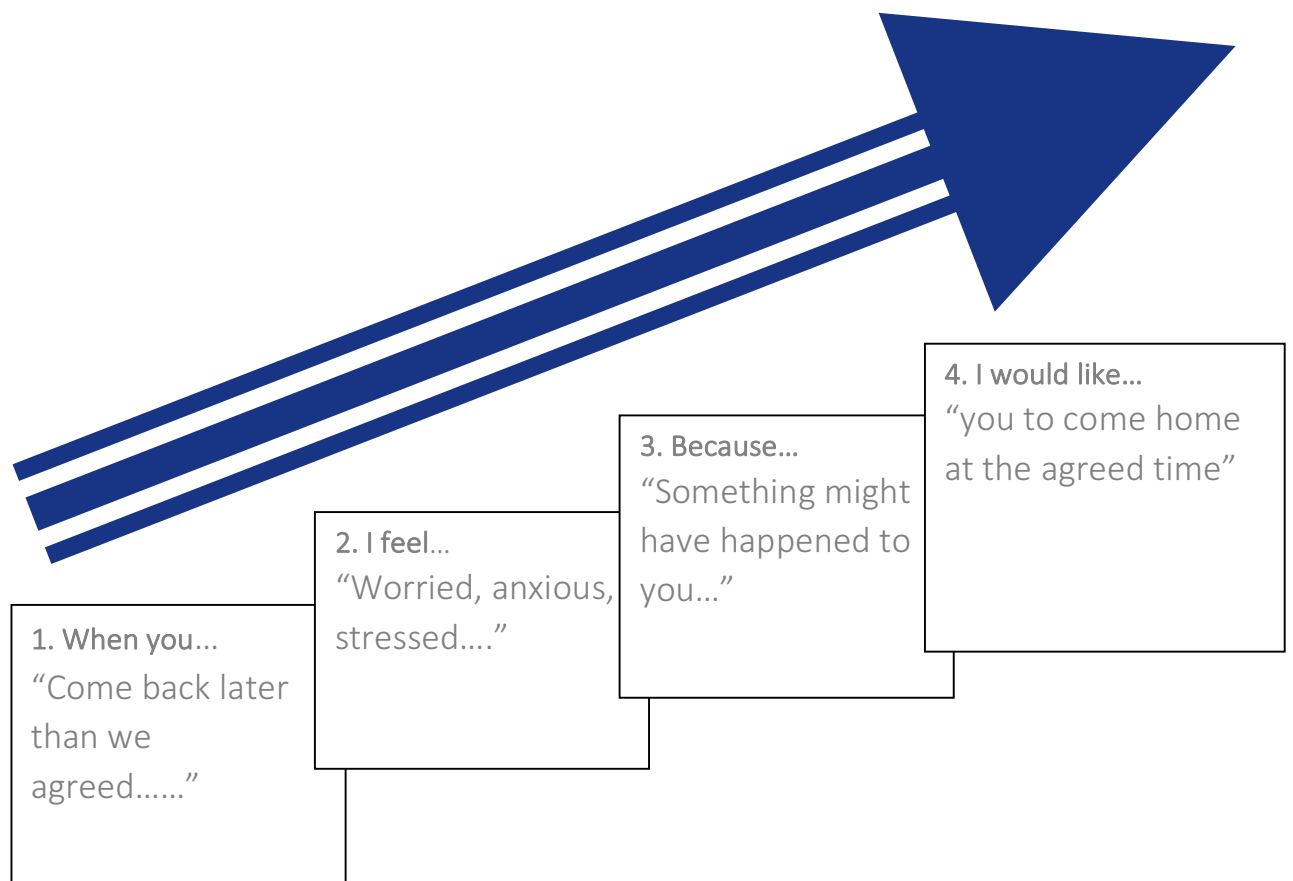
As kids become more assertive, confident and confrontational it's a natural reaction of some parents to match their behaviour and become more assertive, more confrontational and more controlling themselves. In my opinion, though, that is where things can start to go wrong.

It's about **NOT** matching that behaviour, it's about recognising what's happening and trying the new strategies and techniques of negotiating, discussing, and talking – the time for *telling* is over.

I want to introduce you to a simple tool that will really help the way you respond on occasions when you otherwise boil over. Make a note of the following technique:

- 1 When you _____
- 2 I feel _____,
- 3 because _____.
- 4 I would like _____.

Here is the technique in context:



Start to use this technique yourself, and once you find yourself using it routinely, encourage your son or daughter to use it too. It is very effective!

Part of this letting go process is to recognise the signs of growing independence:

- wanting to spend time alone in their bedroom
- wanting to spend more time with friends than with family
- wanting to go on trips to the cinema or shopping centre on their own developing their own opinions
- answering back
- unpredictable mood swings
- wanting their own money

It's also about recognising that kids want to do these things perhaps earlier than when you were growing up. Perhaps your fourteen year old is asking for these privileges, when you'd rather wait until they are sixteen. But times have changed, and everyone's different. It's about being your own best advisor, knowing how mature your teenager is, sticking to your guns and trusting your intuition. There's no need to just "give in" because "everyone else's Mum or Dad lets them".

Now it's your turn!

It's time to practise the four-step technique to improve the way you communicate with your son or daughter. Think about something your teenager does, or has done, that made you feel stressed, angry or confrontational. How could you communicate the way you feel, or felt, in a positive and constructive way? Take your pen and paper and try out the When You / I Feel / Because / I would Like:

When you ...

I feel ...

Because ...

I would like ...

A Quick Recap

- At the end of the day there's not that much difference between toddlers and teens!
- Setbacks are normal and to be expected
- Parenting, as well as growing up, are not linear processes. So you need to be prepared for giant steps forward, as well as regular steps back!
- When your teenager becomes more assertive, confident and confrontational, that is not your cue to do the same. It might be time to let go.
- Recognise the signs of growing independence
- Get comfortable using the tool: When You / I Feel / Because / I would Like

Next time ...

We will consider your parenting and personal values. I'll help you identify what values or principles are important to you, which is important because successful parents are very clear about what's really important to them, and what's non-negotiable. It will also help you to consider what values you would like to pass on to your children ...

See you then!



Sue Atkins

As seen in:



THE  TIMES



theguardian

BBC
RADIO

Daily  **Mail**

BBC

The Daily Telegraph

this
morning

PSYCHOLOGIES

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