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## 4 Ways to Help Your Daughter Right Now

### **Give Her Your Attention**

Girls thrive on attention, especially positive attention. Girls want to be seen and heard; just watch a girl light up when she feels acknowledged and appreciated. If your daughter has your attention and feels you are more interested in who she is than trying to control her, you will have her undivided attention as well. Of course, boundaries are still required between a parent and a teen, but boundaries are different than control.

### **Don't Lecture**

One reason girls stop communicating with their parents is because they've heard it all before. Chances are, you're repeating yourself, so they tune you out, and then you say it again to make sure it got through because they're not listening! This is a vicious cycle that every parent has found themselves participating in. If you're lecturing, you have an agenda that makes your daughter feel shut out. It needs to be a reciprocal conversation or you will lose her attention. Your intentions are good, it's just not the most effective approach for getting through to her. As a teen, your daughter is becoming an adult and is learning to think for herself and make her own decisions with your support and guidance.

### **Listen**

Your teen daughter is a brilliant being with a whole world inside of her that longs to be expressed. Though she may seem more interested in her friends, you are really the most important person to her, and she will show this if you are able to listen. Don't pursue her and ask her a lot of questions. Just let her come to you when she's ready. Be interested in who she is and what she has to say without giving advice and she may actually ask for your direction. If she knows you are receptive and want to understand her, she is more likely to feel safe and open up.

### **Slow Down**

As adults, teens are looking to us for direction. They want to know how to be happy successful adults and we are their examples. If you are busy, stressed and distracted, your teen will think this is normal and follow in your footsteps. It's good to be ambitious and reach your full potential, but down time is just as essential. We all need balance, which includes rest and play, in order to maintain our physical, mental and emotional well-being. Most of the teen girls I work with are under so much pressure with school and activities that they have difficulty sleeping and staying focused in school. Make sure there's room for quality time to relax, connect, and just be together. These are your last few years with your daughter before she leaves home and they are very precious. You will also be preparing her for a healthy future.

### **Conclusion**

It's not easy to follow all of these steps all of the time, but your awareness of them and your intention to support your daughter will carry you through, if you keep practicing. Teens know that their parents aren't perfect and they are very forgiving if you're real with them and respectful. If you need guidance in following through, call me at 415-302-1700. I support teen girls and their families to be happier and more connected.

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