

# Keeping Your Sanity While Loving and Letting Go of Your Teen and Young Adult

By Anne Jolles

Loving and letting go?

Well, that is another term for detaching with love.

The goal of parenting is to work our way out of this job... right? If we don't do that then we will have a permanent houseguest - not so good. These loving and letting go challenges become so much more apparent as your child grows into a teen and young adult.

Slowly and consciously we must shift the weight and responsibility of decisions and consequences onto our child as they grow older. We want them to develop and listen to their own voice because we will not be around forever. In order to do this we must learn to respond and not react.

We have so much at stake parenting teens today. Decisions and situations come at us fast and furiously so we have to be clear on what is being said and where it is coming from. Only then can we consciously choose our next step and respond in this letting go process.

As our children get older and we get older (how did that happen?), the decisions and situations seem to get bigger and faster. Who pulls out a self-help book in the middle of the chaos? That is why I collect and create tools and strategies that I call, "Drive Through" Life Tools. These are pearls of wisdom condensed into simple steps to grab and use in the midst of challenge.

Here is a tool that I have found helpful in finding that 'loving and letting go line' that we have to draw in the sand as our children age:

**HEAD, HEART, SOUL...**

**HEAD:** Ask yourself: What are the facts? What is the rational explanation of what is transpiring? Just the facts, please.

What are the facts as seen by the others involved?

We are asking our logical and rational mind, "Hey, what's up?"

Be clear and acknowledge what you hear.

Fill in the blank: My head knows \_\_\_\_\_.

**HEART:** Ask yourself: What am I feeling? What emotions are calling out to be heard? What is my heart input? What are the emotions of the others involved?

Be clear and acknowledge what you hear and feel.

Fill in the blank: My heart feels \_\_\_\_\_.

**SOUL:** Ask yourself: What does my soul know to be true?

This is the place that listens to both your head and your heart. It is where your inner guiding principles, beliefs, values and intuition live within you. This is a place of deep knowing that can listen to your head and your heart and only then formulate and respond with wisdom.

Fill in the blank: My soul knows \_\_\_\_\_.

If we are not asking for and acknowledging input from our head AND our heart, then we are usually reacting versus responding. This usually adds fuel to the fire.

Give yourself and your teen the respect of a response and not a reaction. The next BIG decision or heated moment you have with your teen or young adult, make sure you know who is doing the talking that is driving your discussion and decisions:

IS IT YOUR HEAD, HEART OR SOUL?

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## CHOOSE YOUR BATTLE

Define family rules with a focus on the top priorities

*Many spirited children can be defiant and combative particularly when they are asked to comply with choices they didn't make or are asked to do something they believe is unnecessary. Realize that in an attempt to create stability by exerting more control, you may be unintentionally creating a bigger problem. By insisting on too many rules or guidelines, your child may begin to rebel against everything. Assess what you are expecting from your beloved child. When it comes to rules, try to choose only the top priorities with a focus on self-care and respect for themselves and others.*

From the Parent Guidance Oracle Cards, by Rev. Nina Roe  
(Coming late 2008)

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