

## Notes from Supporting Our Kids Through the Inevitable Ups and Downs of Teenage Relationships with Rosalind Wiseman, Tuesday, April 11 2023

Our job is to help our children navigate the tumultuous experience of growing up, maintain our sanity, strengthen our relationship by recognizing the dignity of each other (which is non negotiable)

R.W. helped us understand the complexity, and intense feeling around friendships (that stay with us all forever) and the predicament of adolescence that makes friendships their top priority.

What drives teens and preteens:

- socially rewarding experiences and belonging in the group
- experiences where they feel pride, admiration and respect,
- avoiding social pain, embarrassment humiliation and shame at all costs
- seeking earned prestige, making a reputation and contribution to the group or community

Remind them that true friendships are based on trust and loyalty -they allow us to be ourselves and are the building blocks for our future.

Ask them-What are 3 characteristics of a friendship that are most important to you,  
And what are 3 characteristics that would make you pause ( never say "end") a relationship.  
Help them be specific about what they want from a friendship.

We give advice based on what should motivate kids but actually does not-they will do whatever it takes to avoid social pain, embarrassment, humiliation and shame.

Happiness is social connection

Friendship is an action, verb, a bond

Principles to guide our thoughts and actions:

- commit to treating ourselves and others with dignity
- no one knows everything, together we know a lot-
- listening is being prepared to be changed by what you learn.
  - you are learning their perspective
- be easy on people, hard on ideas-it is a process
- do not focus on a particular friend but on the lesson to be learned
- validate more, relate less (ask if they want to hear about your experience-they need to invite us to share) validate their need to create a sense of belonging. Do not say -I know what you are going through. Their life is different.

Lean in say I want to find out more.

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- young people are the subject-matter experts of their lives
- take ownership when it is hard
- speaking your truth does not have to be all or nothing

### In a Healthy Relationship:

- you can disagree and express anger with dignity
- stands by you and does not force you to take a side
- acknowledges that conflicts are not the end of a friendship
- Apologies are sincere and believed
- are proud when you shine

Emotions are real but not permanent -  
we can change the way we feel

Take the feeling.

The emotion of friendship can hijack our emotions -be aware we can hurt others without realizing it

Friendships are about healthy boundaries they empower us to make brave choices that make us feel safe

You don't have to fix everything -support their discomfort and growth. Opportunities will come - this is a process. Friends are present in the moment -help your kids for a lifetime.

They don't have to put with maintaining a friendship at all costs.

Boundaries empower us to make brave choices that help us feel safe