

The parent-teen relationship: Conflict resolution

*****SOT*****

Sara Bennett

OSF HealthCare psychotherapist

"Sometimes we think we have it figured out, but the conflict gets bigger. Kids can isolate themselves. Parents can even isolate themselves. We feel big emotions about what the kid is doing or not doing. Sometimes it can feel like direct disrespect. We start focusing on the child's character. We forget sometimes that they're just kids." (:25)

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"The next thing you really want to do is hear what they have to say. Understand where they're coming from. Put yourself in their shoes even if we know it's a dumb idea or moot point. Validate their emotions. Words like, 'I understand. That would be very challenging. What was going through your mind when that was happening to you? How did you work through this problem?'" (:28)

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OSF HealthCare psychotherapist

"Kids are going to learn just as much when you step back. Words like: 'I came to you out of frustration. It probably seemed angry. I didn't mean for it to sound like that. I'm sorry if I hurt your feelings. It was out of fear. I'm going to do better to manage my own stuff so I can really respect where you're coming from.'" (:20)

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"The therapist could act as a mediator and, actively within the situation, model those repairs and resolutions. Then the parents and teens can do it more effectively [at home]." (:16)