

THE PARENT'S GUIDE FOR TEEN
EXAMS

Encouraging confidence & creating calm



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INTRODUCTION

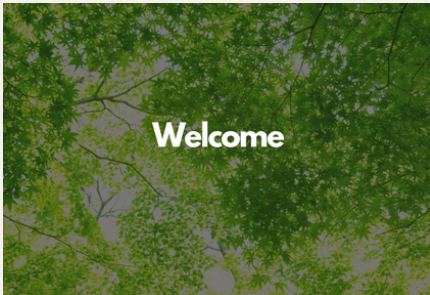
Hello, I'm your coach Emily Gearing.

I'm a passionate helping parents to support their teens through difficult times such as exams. Over the last 8 years, I've worked with hundreds of teens, helping them to achieve a positive, calm mindset & develop confidence.

Through my training & experience as a life coach & mindfulness practitioner I've discovered how routine, nurture & communication are the key components to raising happy, secure teenagers.

As a mum of two teens myself I've applied my learning & navigated my way through many challenges.

Creating a secure, calm, predictable environment at home has been essential in developing confidence. During exam times these routines are even more important so I've created this book as a guide for facing the weeks ahead.



I truly believe that teenagers can thrive during exam times with the right support, environment & routine. I'm eager to show you how.

- Emily Gearing

CHAPTER 1

The Philosophy of Parental Support

Your teen still needs you

The philosophy of parental support for teens is focused on guiding adolescents as they transition from childhood to adulthood, helping them grow into independent, responsible, and well-adjusted individuals. This philosophy is rooted in balancing nurturing support with encouraging autonomy & independence.

The key principles are:

1) **Facilitating independence & autonomy.**

Encouraging teens to become self-reliant is essential. This involves teaching them to make their own decisions, solve problems, and manage responsibilities. Parents can support this by slowly providing more freedom, allowing teens to experience consequences of their actions, and being there to guide rather than dictate their choices.

2) **Providing Emotional Support & Nurture.**

Teens can display complex emotions which might be hard to understand. With the changes in technology, social media & discussions around identity / sexuality the landscape may feel very different to your own teenage years. It's important therefore to listen, offer advice when asked, and provide comfort and reassurance. Validating their feelings and experiences helps build their self-esteem and resilience.

3. **Maintaining Open Communication.**

Keeping lines of communication open is critical. This means creating an environment where teens feel safe to express their thoughts, worries, and aspirations without fear of judgment or repercussions. It involves active listening, empathy, and transparency from parents.

4. **Setting Boundaries and Expectations.**

While it is important to encourage independence, setting clear boundaries and expectations is also crucial. This helps teens understand their limits and the consequences of stepping beyond them. Effective boundaries are consistent, reasonable, and set through mutual discussion, respect and understanding on both sides.

5) **Educating and Guiding.**

Parental support includes educating teens about important life skills and values. This includes practical skills like financial planning, cooking, and time management, as well as moral guidance and ethical decision-making. Parents act as role models, demonstrating behaviours and attitudes they wish to impart on their children.

During exam times, teens will need your emotional support, guidance & nurture more than ever.

CHAPTER II

The Importance of Routine

Routines will keep you safe

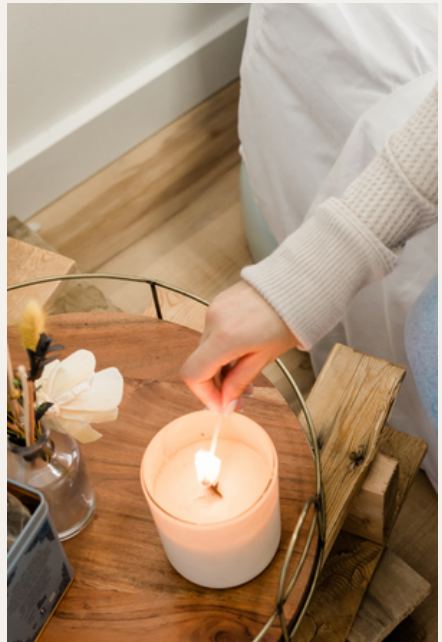
I am a strong believer that routines help foster an environment where teens can thrive.

I followed the 'contented little baby' routine when my children were little & it helped me to navigate many obstacles plus ensured that my children always knew their needs would be met.

Routines during exam times are even more important for creating a calm home environment.

How to get started

1. Go through the exam timetable with your teen. Ensure you know exactly what day the exams start / finish & when they have time off.
2. Keep weekend / evening plans to a minimum during the exam period. Ensure that your teen feels they have enough time to revise in between exams.
3. Encourage your teen to create a self-care plan to use during the exams, include healthy eating, early nights & time off to relax.
4. Discuss what type of emotions they may experience such as fear, overwhelm, doubt, worry & feeling nervous. Explain that these are to be expected & create a plan to manage them.



CHAPTER III

Routine Tips and Techniques



Routine 1 – Meal times

Ensuring your teen has enough to eat during the exams will be essential.

- Take a breakfast tray to their room so they can eat whilst they're getting ready for school.
- Ask them what they would like to eat & batch cook some of their favourite meals so you have them ready for their most difficult days. Stick to the same meal times each evening so they know how long they have to revise.
- Make healthy snacks in advance & encourage your teen to eat them as often as possible. Maybe create a 'snack station' to use during the exams that is just for them.
- If they usually do chores around meal times, give them a break during the exam period.



Routine 2 – Calm mornings

Having a calm start to the day will really help with the nerves.

- Put relaxing music on or practice some breathing techniques with your teen on the way to school. If they walk to school, encourage them to look around for different colours, shapes or listen to certain sounds. Reminding them to focus on their senses will help them to be in the moment.
- Get up earlier to make lunches or prepare a breakfast tray for them so that you are not rushing in the mornings & can be fully present with them if they want to talk.
- Remind siblings to give your teen some space in the morning. Ensure that the bathroom is free & they won't be late to school. Their sibling could swap their shower time to the evening just over the exam period to help.

CHAPTER III CONTINUED

Make time to talk

Once you have the practical exam routines planned, the next stage is to build in time for nurture, emotional support & regular communication.

Bear in mind that your teen will be feeling stressed, anxious & nervous most days. Think about how they may have behaved in the past with these emotions & make a plan for how you will handle any triggers or outbursts.

Consider letting some behaviour go during the exam times as your teen may be struggling with overwhelm so any extra demands could cause a break down in communication. Explain to your teen that you're expecting their emotions to be more complex during this time so you will be a bit more tolerant of their behaviour but you still expect respect.

Create a plan with your teen on how they / you will manage situations if they arise. Remember that emotions rise up, reach their peak & pass like waves so be aware of your own emotions too. Recognise when you feel tired, angry, frustrated or worried & wait until the wave passes before talking to your teen.

Make a list of all the things you can do to support yourself during this time if you become triggered by your child & suggest some self-care strategies your teen can do too.

Ensure they have a quiet space without distractions when they come home & always offer time to talk if they want to. Remember not to judge & ideally just listen, offering reassurance.

Try focusing on the positives & the moment. Aim to encourage your teen to let go of the outcome. You can deal with whatever comes & there are lots of options open. Exams aren't everything & they don't dictate how the future will be. Lots of people retrain or change career paths so there's no right way to getting a job / career.



CHAPTER IV

Nurture Confidence

Confidence doesn't just come from ability

You may think that confidence is about knowing you are capable of something but confidence actually comes from being open to making mistakes & trying anyway.

There are two ways of looking at life, either through a fixed/static mindset or a growth/expansive mindset.

A static mindset causes us to be scared to try new things. It impacts our ability to manage challenges & bounce back from failures.

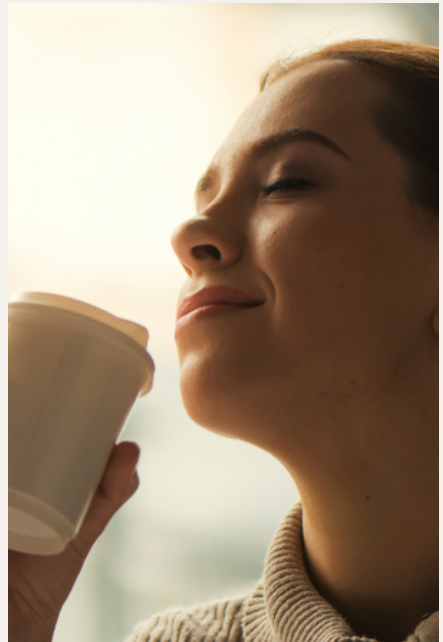
An expansive mindset on the other hand is open to multiple possibilities without limitation. It sees failure as a chance to learn & grow.

Teens learn from making mistakes so we can't control their every move. As discussed earlier, fostering independence is one of the factors of being a good parent.

Be open to letting your teen take responsibility for their own future.

If they haven't revised enough or put enough effort in they may fail their exams. It isn't the end of the world. There are always other options & it is no reflection on you as a parent.

Confidence comes from learning from mistakes & being open to new possibilities. If your teen fails, they will develop the confidence & resilience to try again & that could be life changing for them. Your job would be to support them on their journey & guide them along the way.



CONCLUSION

You've got this

Exam times are undoubtedly stressful & the impact on your household during the exam period may take it's toll. Knowing that you can get through it together by using the strategies in this book should hopefully provide you with some comfort.

Remember that predictable routines will help you & your teen to be as prepared as possible. It will alleviate any angst or worry around meal times & mornings giving your teen the time & head space to plan & prepare.

Offering nurture & support will be the best way forward over the coming months. Having a plan in place to deal with emotions will empower you to let some behaviours go & keep communication flowing.

Creating a self-care support plan for you & your teen should hopefully reduce anxiety during the most challenging days.

Being open to possibilities & developing an expansive mindset will help you to deal with whatever the outcome may be. Focusing on the positives & staying grounded in the moment will be your key to success.

