

Individuality: Discovering who you are meant to be (so you can make a difference).

PARENTING WITH INDIVIDUALITY

Teenagers and Discovery

Part of what makes adolescence so exciting for teenagers (and so scary for parents!) is the process of self-discovery. While this is different for every child, it involves pushing boundaries, pulling away, and maybe even "trying on" new skills, personality traits, or hobbies. It's tough to sit back as a parent and watch your child change so much in such a short amount of time, but it is all a part of growing up.

Your role in this time is to be there. Be there to have hard conversations when they are ready, to hear the new band they like, or to meet their new friends.

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT INDIVIDUALITY:

For parent reflection:

- What about your child discovering who they are scares you? What excites you for their future?
- What about yourself do you really like? How can you model self-discovery to your teen?

Making a Difference

As your teenager discovers strengths and interests, the next step is to have a conversation about how they can make a difference. That difference might be big, and have an impact on many people, or it might be small, and have an impact on a sibling, grandparent, neighbor, or friend.

Making a difference is a big deal no matter the scale, and your teenager needs to hear that reminder. It may not get many "likes" or "shares," but they can make a difference every day.

With your child:

- Who are some adults that you admire? What about them is admirable?
- What about yourself do you really like? How can I help you build that strength?
- Who else in your life points out your strengths? How can you make sure they get plenty of space in your life to help you see that in yourself?
- How can you make a difference every day?

INDIVIDUALITY

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Discovering who you are meant to be (so you can make a difference)

WEEK ONE: What is individuality?

At this point in your lives, you are naturally trying to discover who you are meant to be. The problem is, sometimes negative influences speak into that discovery. In whatever case, this month could be pivotal in your life.

WEEK TWO: Your legacy/reputation is what you choose

What is it about you that is unique? What gifts, talents, strengths, or interests do you have that make you look forward to your future? Identifying these things about yourself gives you the freedom to push hard toward your goals knowing that you are working toward something that will be meaningful and impactful in your life. In turn, you can discover being your unique self can make a difference in the lives of others.

WEEK THREE: How can I make a difference?

As a young person, it may seem like you don't have a chance to make a difference. Big issues abound, including climate change, race relations, politics, and so many others. How can you use your skills and gifts to make a difference in those areas that you care about most?

WEEK FOUR: CHALLENGE: Big Impact

There are young people making a difference every day all around the world. Some of their stories get told, and some don't. Whether or not it gets you any followers on TikTok, what is it about you that makes you an individual, and how can you embrace that?