

Mistaken Goal Chart Looking at Adult Behavior

The Adult's mistaken notions:	What the teen is feeling	And tends to react by	And if the adult's response is:	The (mistaken) belief behind the adult's behavior is:	Teen proactive and empowering responses include:
<p>Undue Attention A demonstration of adequacy: to feel social worth or approval through the child's behavior</p>	<p>Annoyed Irritated Disregarded</p>	<p>Giving in and complying (temporarily) or ignoring parental coaxing/reminding to maintain some sense of self</p>	<p>Delighted with the "good" child, or taking the "mis"behavior personally and gets annoyed, irritated and feels compelled to make the teen behave.</p>	<p>I count (belong) only when my teen behaves well. I have a place and have status when I am seen as a good parent. I am important because my teen needs me and won't make it without me.</p>	<p>Let your parent know you care about them, but that you need to grow and become yourself. "I love you and I need to be my own person." Encourage the parent's outside interests (eg. Show your interest, ask curiosity questions.) Plan time with the parent. Look closely at how you invite the parent to serve you and create other kinds of connections where your parent is doing "with" you instead of doing "for" you. Focus on being who you really want to be, not just avoiding what your parents want you to be. Use family/class meetings.</p>
<p>Misguided Power To gain a sense of power or superiority over the child rather than the situation</p>	<p>Challenged Threatened Defeated Rebellious</p>	<p>Fighting Giving in Thinking "You can't make me." Wanting to be right</p>	<p>Intensifies behavior. Feels he/she's won when teen is upset. Engages others to be on his/her "side." Passive power.</p>	<p>I only count when I am boss, when I am in charge. I can't control the situation (I don't know what to do) so I will try to control the teen or at least make the teen behave.</p>	<p>Leave and calm down. Let your parent know that you will be glad to problem solve when you are both calm. Don't fight and don't give in. Withdraw from conflict. Be firm and kind. Notice how and where you can contribute to the family without being asked. Ask for problem solving help. Make agreements that both of you can keep. Develop mutual respect. Encourage. Use family/class meetings.</p>
<p>Revenge To assert power and get even. "He won't get away with this"</p>	<p>Hurt Angry Resentful</p>	<p>Retaliating. Getting even. Thinking "How could you do this to me?"</p>	<p>Retaliates Intensifies Escalates the same behavior or chooses another "weapon."</p>	<p>I am being hurt by the teen so I will hurt back. I feel "no good" as a parent or teacher so the teen isn't going to feel good either. I'll make her behave or she'll be sorry.</p>	<p>Acknowledge hurt feelings. Avoid taking it personally. Avoid retaliation. When both of you are calm again, use reflective listening. Share your feelings. Make amends. Show you care. Make an effort to reconnect over a neutral issue. Share appreciations. Use family/class meetings.</p>
<p>Assumed Inadequacy To give up. The situation is too much for me and probably for anyone else too.</p>	<p>Hopeless Helpless Inadequate Abandoned</p>	<p>Giving up. Withdrawing or taking over the job of parenting.</p>	<p>Retreats further Passive No improvement No response</p>	<p>Given the situation, I am no good as a parent or teacher – maybe at all. I would like to demonstrate that no one else can handle this child either because that might help me feel not as bad. I've done everything possible and I quit.</p>	<p>Stop all criticism. Have faith in the parent's abilities. Don't take it personally. Support their "other life" interests. Use family/class meetings. Develop a relationship with the parent that is non-demanding.</p>

By Jody McVittie, inspired by James Bitter's "The mistaken notions of adults with children"