



creating

*Connection*

with the teen

**GIRL**

in your life

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# 1. Self-esteem

When your daughter's self esteem is high she will be:

- willing to try harder
- more likely to reach out for support
- open to learning from her mistakes
- less likely to engage in behaviors you disapprove of
- less likely to give in to peer pressure

How do you feel your daughter is doing in this area?

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List some things you would love to see her change in the area of self-esteem? What would that look like? How would she show up differently in the world.

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## *2. Boundaries*

Creating healthy boundaries for our daughters is so important. This will increase her feelings of safety and security. Even though she may push those limits, she still needs them and benefits from them.

How would you rate yourself in this area? Do you find yourself negotiating or giving in? Are you being respectful and consistent as opposed to "barking orders" (those are the words my daughter has used to describe me at times) in the heat of the moment? Use this space to think about how you are responding in this area.

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### *3. Unconditional Love & Acceptance*

Loving unconditionally means more than saying: "I love you." It means loving our daughters no matter what they do. And of course we do, but they may not always feel this way and it may not always be easy for us to communicate it when they are acting or behaving in a way we might not like.

Regardless, it is important to communicate our love to them in very specific ways. This may have seemed easier to do when they were babies. It can get harder when they start making their own decisions and we can confuse who are daughters ARE with what they are DOING.

When we tie our love to their accomplishments they do not feel good about themselves. They need to know that we accept who they are as the beautiful individuals they are and love them unconditionally.

Use this space to write down how you communicate your love. Is anything you can do differently in this area? Do you think your daughter feels accepted in her entirety by you?

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## 4. *Listening*

Listening is sooooo huge and not always easy! Our girls want to be seen + heard + validated (all people do). When they feel listened to they come away believing that what they had to say was valuable and that they contributed to the communication in a positive way. This makes them feel good about themselves.

When your daughter is speaking, try not to criticize, give advice or interject with ANYTHING. This can be difficult at times. This is something I continue to work on and have really struggled with. Our impulse to fix or make suggestions sometimes gets the better of us!

Think of the last time you spoke to your daughter. Were you really listening. Does she ever tell you that she feels you don't listen to her/understand her? Have you ever felt that way with someone? Do you find yourself just saying "ok" because you don't want her to know you didn't exactly hear it! What can you do to improve that?

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## 5. *Affirming*

How many times do our best intentions, for our daughters, get lost in translation? Deep inside you know she is capable of amazing things but sometimes your exchanges can make you feel defeated. Communicating that you believe she can handle a situation - builds up her confidence. When you act like you don't believe she is capable, it sends the message that you expect that she will not succeed. This can seem crazy because that is not what we mean or intend to convey. We worry and want what is best for them, however the message that comes across to our girls can sometimes end up being very different.

How can you affirm your belief and confidence in her even when you have genuine concerns and how can you express your concerns without diminishing her confidence?

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## *6. Letting Go*

As parents we will have to let go many times over the course of the journey with our children. One of the biggest things we need to let go of is our expectations. Often times our expectations can make our daughters feel like they are not good enough. Is there any one person in your life that has ever made you feel that way? What can you remind yourself of when you fear loosening the grip. Do you trust the foundation that you have laid out for her so far?



Take the time to journal about that here. Are there any expectations you need to drop?

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One of my favorite poems:

by Khalil Gibran -

*Your children are not your children.  
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.  
They come through you but not from you,  
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you. You  
may give them your love but not your thoughts,  
For they have their own thoughts.  
You may house their bodies but not their souls,  
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you  
cannot visit, not even in your dreams.  
You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like  
you.  
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.  
You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are  
sent forth.  
The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and He  
bends you with His might that His arrows may go swift and far.  
Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;  
For even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the  
bow that is stable.*

## 7. Language

The words we use make a difference. Here are some tips on effectively communicating without diminishing self worth.

- Leave out the "but." The word but negates everything that came before it. Ex: "You did great, but ...."
- Separate with the word "and" or a period (pause). Ex: "I love how you decorated your room."
- Separate compliments from requests to change behavior.
- Don't pair behavior with a compliment.

Practice re-writing some of your current language below:

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## 8. *Shifting Focus*

So often we focus on how our girls fall short (from our point of view). My daughter has told me that I always say what she did wrong! Here are some great questions to redirect your thinking and focus which will build her up in the process.

- What has my daughter done that made me smile today?
- What can I bring attention to that I admired or felt grateful for?
- How has my daughter made me proud today?

Use the space to write down some ideas of how you can celebrate her today - and then let her know!

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## 9. Modeling

I always say you are your daughter's greatest teacher and I am here to remind you of that today! The way you talk to her influences the way she feels about herself but also the way you talk to yourself (out loud) is something that she will mirror.

Do you catch yourself making self-defeating comments to yourself? For example: "I hate my hair."

How do you react when you receive a compliment. Do you accept it graciously or do you negate it somehow?

For example: Someone says they love your dress and you tell them how it was a hand me down, etc. Not that there is anything inherently wrong with that fact but it's almost like hitting back the compliment (returning it, without absorbing it). Try receiving it. Take in the compliment and simply say: "thank you."

I hope you enjoyed this workbook as an avenue for inquiry and self-discovery. In your heart you have the wisdom it takes to raise an incredible human and you have already done a great job. A great teacher doesn't give you the answers, simply shows you where to look. This is what I aim to do in all my programs, to give girls the tools for self awareness and inquiry, a space for them to remember that all the power lies inside of them.

## *Looking For A Safe Space For Your Daughter To Grow?*

Parenting isn't always easy. If you're anything like me - I didn't have very many positive examples in that department, that is why I make it my mission to do what I do and for my own daughters - I have made it a point to surround them with other strong and loving examples of women. It truly takes a village. If you are looking for a safe space for your daughter to have these concepts modeled and echoed, reach out to me at [carmincaterina@lessonsformydaughters.com](mailto:carmincaterina@lessonsformydaughters.com)