

# The Top 10 Things a Parent Can Do To Help Their Child Reach Their Ultimate Potential

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## 1. Don't limit them

Often we can stifle the imagination of our children by passing comment in a negative way; it can even be communicated by our tone of voice. We need to be careful what signals we give and make only positive, challenging comments that will not put limits on their thinking. (Also note number 6.)

## 2. Remove obstacles - empower, support.

If there is any way we can make their path smoother by removing anything that could get in their way then we should do it. Our job is to give them the power to make it in life, to offer support, to give them the head start they need.

## 3. Listen and respect them.

Many young people I work with feel that their parents just don't understand, and partly this is because the parents haven't listened to their daughter or son. You see they do live in a different world to the world that existed when we were their age. We need to respect these differences and respect them for the way they have to deal with different pressures and expectations.

## 4. Don't expect them to live out your unfulfilled potential.

This can be a big one - where you wanted to be a doctor, but for whatever reason didn't make it; so you now want, expect that your child become a doctor. This doesn't work where the young person is interested in something totally different. They will need their own dream and their own desires, otherwise motivation will be difficult if not impossible.

## 5. Release them - let the fledglings fly.

There will come a time when we have to let them go. For an eagle to fly it has to be pushed out of the nest. I am not suggesting we go that far, but we certainly need to give them the freedom to try it on their own (but keep reading to the next point as well).

## 6. Watch attentively and be there when needed.

Of course when they fly we don't forget about them and our love for them does not diminish. The balance comes in allowing them to fall but not to entirely fail. To be there when needed (from their perspective) but yet not to interfere.

## 7. Give them unconditional love and acceptance.

One place that should be a haven of love and acceptance for a young person is the family. Many times they will do things that seem difficult to agree with BUT that doesn't allow the parent to stop loving. Love, in its true sense, is not conditional upon behaviour. The journey to adulthood is not an easy one but will be helped by feeling and being accepted for who they are, not for what they achieve.

## 8. Affirm them.

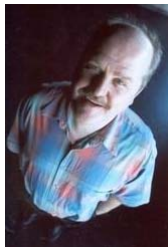
One way that they will know that they are accepted is through the powerful means of affirmation. Tell them that you accept them; find positive words to say - they will hear enough negativity throughout their life to allow you to run the risk of being positive all the time.

## 9. Encourage them.

Encourage - give them courage. If you love, accept and affirm them then they will automatically become encouraged. Their level of courage will directly affect their willingness to take risks. Their willingness to take risks will have a definite link with them reaching their ultimate potential.

## 10. Hire a coach for them.

Of course sometimes they won't always listen to the best advice if it comes from Mom or Dad. Please don't feel rejected - it is the norm as young people grow up and work out their own values and belief systems. However this is where a coach can be of great benefit. A personal coach works similarly to a sports coach - except the game is called life. [Or you could hire a coach for yourself!].



### About Nigel

Nigel has been paid to work with young people since 1991 and did it voluntarily before then. He actually believes he hasn't been to work since then because he enjoys himself so much. He is available for private consultation and coaching as well as having resources available e.g. **Understanding Teenagers A-Z**.

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