



Striking a balance with your teens this holiday season.

Your teenagers have worked hard through the academic year, weighed down by the assessments, exams, homework & school pressures. This break is THEIRS to unwind, relax & chill.

As parents, let's decide not to judge how they spend their time during this break... now that's going to be tough, but we surely can try!

Although basic house rules are good, and can be utilized long term too. I'm sharing few tried & tested tricks that can keep your teen constructively engaged & strengthens your bond:

- 1) Ask them to divide their 24 hours in a schedule that is fair to them. Between sleeping, eating, their personal routine, playing video games and watching Netflix ask them for two hours of their day for home chores. Simple chores like making their bed, cleaning their room, setting the table for meals should be a part of their daily routine.
- 2) Try One family meal together & no phones or gadgets allowed during these meals. In return as a parent you won't roll your eyes over their use of electronics, disheveled hair, monosyllabic conversations, little eye contact, "morning" instead of good morning, etc for the rest of the day.
- 3) Plan once a week family movie night with pizza & popcorn. Alternate the movie choices between parents & teens. Usual rule of gadgets away for everyone during family movie night apply.
- 4) Once a week try a **MYOM** morning. **Make Your Own Meal** mornings are fun as it also teaches your teens cooking skills which will help them when they are in university. Sure there's chaos in your kitchen but it's all worth it!
- 5) Weekly family guided meditation mornings! I believe, if there is any legacy we can leave for the next generation it's the art of meditation. Guided Meditation isn't as boring or difficult as it sounds, on the contrary there are many new age apps (e.g. Inside Timer etc...) that are now available where you can meditate from 5 minutes to 50 minutes or more. Science has proven that meditation has innumerable benefits like reduction of stress and anxiety, improved concentration & many more...
- 6) Family game nights! There's much to choose from Wii, Pictionary, charades, scrabble, even Play Station (yeah, why not? never too late to learn things if it helps you bond with your teens)

- 7) For those of you who travel at this time of the year, take it a step forward & ask your teens to journal their experiences. Journaling has many benefits: discipline of penning your thoughts helps in self reflection & gives you clarity in your thoughts.

Last but not the least, remember : do not judge, do not lecture, do not expect much from your teens instead focus only on LISTENING to your teens, learning what gets them psyched and what makes them want to engage.

Adios for now... until next time.

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