

# The Available Parent: Radical Optimism for Raising Teens and Tweens

Dr. John Duffy

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#### The Available Parent: Radical Optimism for Raising Teens and Tweens

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The Available Parent: Radical Optimism for Raising Teens and Tweens Dr. John Duffy \*Number one on Cyrus Webb's list of "Books Every Man Should Read"

Teenagers are left feeling unheard and misunderstood, and parents are left feeling bewildered by the changes in their child at adolescence and their sudden lack of effectiveness as parents. The parent has become

unavailable, the teen responds in kind, and a negative, often destructive cycle of communication begins. Well, the truth of the matter is, you can physically be right next to someone and still not really be available to them. If you need them to be something they're not, if you are harsh, criticizing and judging, if your anxiety is center stage, then you are not truly available. The available parent of a teenager is open to discussion, offering advice and problem-solving, but not

insisting on it. He allows his child to make some mistakes, setting limits, primarily where health and safety are concerned. He never lectures – he is available but not controlling. The available parent is self-aware, and keeps his own emotions in check when dealing with his teen. He is unconditionally loving and accepting, and open to new and different ways of thinking. As such, he is neither cruel nor dismissive, ever. The available parent is



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