



Sharpening your EDGE

EDGE Coaching Services

Newsletter supplement February 2021



Hi and welcome to our second Newsletter supplement. This one is focusing on teenagers at school in the current climate.

We all know most teenagers want to do well in school, but it may be they are likely falling behind with the current situation they face. The change in circumstance may mean they are not sure how best to take notes or study. Due to working from home, they have trouble focusing, completing work, or getting "stuck" or giving up easily.

How would you like to do more to help them?

In this edition, I will share the **SMART** way to support the children or teenagers at home or in your care. I encourage you to practice this at home, share the email with other parents you know, or even teachers, anyone who has an interest in empowering and developing our youth. My focus with teenagers is always to let them **"lead the way."**

On my website, under the education tab, **Parents and Carers**, I have this beautiful sentence I borrowed from the late, great Whitney Houston; the beautiful yet apt words inspire me to best the best teacher I could be, and now the best coach.

"I believe that children are our future, teach them well and let them lead the way."

As a former educator, coaching teenagers is always a source of inspiration because, if we are honest, they have probably had enough of being told what to do. In fact, they want to be treated like adults but are usually considered children, and on the other side, parents want them to act like adults but still treat them as children. It must be so frustrating for them, and we, as coaches, are here to watch them grow.

So the SMART way to support them, in Whitney's words, is to **"let them lead the way"**, empower them and allow them to make decisions.

Start by exploring; this exploratory stage allows the teenager to talk in broad terms about what they would like to achieve, what might help them, and what they want.

Questions could include:-

1. **What do you want to achieve?**
2. **What is happening now?**
3. **What's stopping you?**
4. **What needs to happen for you to be more focused, creative, happy, etc.?**
5. **What would make studying more rewarding?**
6. **What would you like to get out of this year?**



You will notice that these questions are all about just creating conversation. You haven't suggested there is a priority; you are (probably for the first time in a while) giving them a voice, allowing them to **"lead the way,"** you are just listening.

Once you have had that conversation, it is time to get SMART and create an intention, a goal, or target, if you will. As we know, SMART is an acronym. The only change for me is that I prefer R to be Rewarding rather than relevant with students as most of the studies they do are mandatory, therefore relevant (except trigonometry, maybe). So let's follow the acronym:



The SMART system to supporting your teenagers with their studies or transition

S. Be specific in creating the goal, task, or intention. Ask: **What specific goal could from what you just said?** Then talk it through and agree on a good specific goal.

M. Ensure there is a measure. Ask: **How are we going to measure your progress as we go along?** Make a solid plan together using daily, weekly, even monthly targets.

"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education."

Martin Luther King, Jr

A. Ensure it is achievable. As a coach, I believe challenging goals inspire greater motivation, so discuss maybe using a scale of 1-10 to decide if it is challenging but achievable. Ask: **How easy will it be to achieve the tasks set? How can you make them more of a challenge?** Remember, here is an excellent opportunity to let them know you believe in them and their ability to achieve great things.

R. Ensure the result will be rewarding for the student; it must be of value to the student. It could be that they feel proud or get less pressure from you as a teacher or parent; we know they would all like less hassle. Ask: **Imagine you have completed your task or goal, and it is handed in or finished; how do you feel? What difference will it make to your life? What might happen if you do not achieve it?** Remember, even though you want to be encouraging and supportive, it could also help to consider the consequences of not achieving the task or goal.

T. Ensure your task or goal is time-bound; without a deadline, teenagers may lack motivation. Ask: **What will you set as a deadline for this task or goal?** Having the teenager state and agree on an end date helps them commit, as it is their decision.

I have a **GROWTH MINDSET!**



Before we conclude this conversation, you should agree on one last thing, the new SMART goal. So you have gone through all the stages, what is the result? It should hopefully look something like this:-

"To complete my Science project by 28th of February having worked 1 hour a day on it".

At this stage, your teenager has the SMART goal that THEY have created. Now would be a good time to ask the final question.

Ask: **On a scale of 1-10, how committed are you to complete this task or goal?**

Anything 8 or higher is good; if less than 8, ask them what would make it a 9; it may be straightforward. This will promote a growth mindset, some teenagers like to challenge themselves.

Imagine if you could agree on something like this for each subject, each challenge your teenager has, an ultimate plan starts to form because the exploratory stage sets a great scene. This process will work as you are allowing the teenager to **"lead the way."**

Working with teenagers is not always an easy task; however, coaches help students improve their academic performance and learn more effectively. Building skills that will enhance their study habits, focus, organization, motivation, and ability to manage more responsibility is the cornerstone of a well-rounded student preparing for life after education. The above article is a good example of how changing the way we work with teenagers can enhance relationships and build on their strengths. It is a foolproof way of working collaboratively with teenagers who have the ability and want to succeed.

Student testimonial

"Knowing that I had one teacher, you, that genuinely believed in me and made me feel like I could achieve, all the way to the top - that often gives me the strength to keep going even though I know I have some teachers that doubt my ability."

Melissa Smith

My remit is to give your teenager the EDGE they need to unlock their potential, in these challenging times and beyond.

5 benefits to investing in Coaching for Teenagers.

1. It supplements and complements traditional teaching
2. It helps teenagers to manage themselves more effectively
3. It allows high-flyers to make further progress as well as supporting teenagers who are struggling
4. It enables teenagers to improve the soft skills needed now and in future situations
5. It is non-directive, non-judgmental, action-oriented and solution-focused

So what now:

If you would like to know more about how coaching can support your teenager by coaching them through their studies, please email me at rforde@edgebarbados.com or visit the website at www.edgebarbados.com and use the contact page. If you would like to book a call or perhaps know someone who might benefit from the support please follow the lets connect link below using control and click.

Let's Connect - Edge Barbados