

“How To Communicate With Your Generation Z Son”

**-The feeling of dread was excruciating
My son and I were drifting apart-**

The thought of the unknown turned my stomach...

The news of having another child sent shockwaves threw every cell of my body. But this one felt different.

My wife looked different. My wife had a glow about her. She had never been more beautiful.

After visiting her obstetrician, my wife said they'd scheduled an ultra sound in three weeks. They were going to let us know the gender of the baby.

My wife insisted I be there. *I was as nervous as a teenager getting his first kiss.*

We drove downtown to Presbyterian Hospital in Manhattan. The hospital were they had delivered my three daughters.

Dr. Holland ordered us to the examination room. She spread the gel like substance over my wife's belly and hooked her up.

You could hear and see the fetus floating around inside my wife's belly. Dr. Holland spoke about the development of the babies fingers and toes.

She said the babies heart rate was very good. She stated the babies health was a passing grade.

And then Dr. Holland pointed at something hanging below the umbilical cord. And a few seconds later she said the words my wife and I had been waiting years to hear.

CONGRATULATIONS, YOU'RE HAVING A BOY!!!

Being the father of a son was different...

On my son's second birthday, I took him to Tennessee to meet his southern family. My mother said he had a nice shaped head. My father said it took me long enough to make a boy happen.

And my grandmother declared I was walking around like a peacock with his chest poked out.

Boys are different. If I asked my daughters what they wanted to eat. They would reply "Red Lobster Or The Cheesecake Factory."

If I asked my son he'd say a slice of pizza or a hot dog. The cost of my daughters hair at a beauty salon. Or a haircut for my son. Was night and day.

My son and I felt connected at the hip like two peas in a pod. The relationship was as solid as a rock.

He was proud to have me as a father. And likewise I was as gleeful to have him as a son.

But as he got older something I never saw coming started to rip the fabric of our connection. Any conversation seemed to be a war of words between father and son.

The Divide Was Eating At My Soul. Something had to give.

The day it all came to a volcanic explosion...

It happened on a Wednesday! The day we both reached a point of no return. He was 14 years old at the time. And we could no longer communicate.

We were growing apart in such a way I could never image. Both our voices would grow louder and louder. Thank God it didn't get physical.

After what seem like the most negative day of my life, I left my son's bedroom in total anguish. I'd lost my son and the thought scared me to death.

The sad truth was my son appeared as much afraid. Because he was losing his father. Then the miracle happened.

I got in my car and took a drive up the Bronx River Parkway. I found the Parkway to be soothing and a place where I could collect my thoughts.

Then out of nowhere I got a text. Not any text but a text from my SON!

Communication became the key to healing...

His text said how sorry he was for arguing with me about something so unimportant. I replied with similar thoughts. I didn't even know what the argument was all about.

Looking back it was a culmination of things. Words growing ever more aggressive.

I pulled off the Parkway and steered into Stop & Shop parking lot. We text back and forth as time seemed to stand still.

We both were able to express ourselves without all the yelling and screaming. And then it hit me.

The world has made our children more expressive, more vocal. What might seem as a child being disrespectful to his parent.

In actuality it's a child speaking in the language or native tongue of our children today.

Since then my relationship with my son has grown closer. I realize texting him is the best way for me to communicate with him.

I've shared this secret with disgruntled parents going through the changes of Generation Z's.

I wasn't the only one...

Recently my son-law was telling me how he and his 16 year old son were having problems. He said he could no longer talk to his son because every discussion turned into an argument. Or even worse he felt like he was talking to a brick wall.

Generation Z's characteristics speaks volumes...

“...They've never known a world without the internet/cell phone...”

“...They're accepting or I'd like to believe they're very forgiving...”

“...They're very health conscious (never seen with a cigarette). But cannabis? Well that's another story...”

“...They're private. The door to their bedroom is always locked...”

“...They have the entrepreneurial spirit. My son has a clothing brand and my daughter makes and sells sea moss...”

These are a few dynamics which makes the Generation Z boy or girl unique individuals. We can't expect our old way of thinking to manifest their hopes and dreams.

Now, I *listen* when they speak and appreciate what they've become.

We have to accept the truth...

It might not seem right or even productive but we must reach out to our children. We have to adapt to their way of thinking like it or not. The world has transformed into a place unfamiliar.

We can either get with the times or lose our children forever. I'm not saying texting is the only way to communicate with our children.

But we can't throw our arms in the air and give up. These are our boys (and girls)!

Ten years ago if you'd told me texting was one of the best ways to reach my son I'd think you was crazy. But I've seen me and my son's relationship blossom by sending a simple text. An ordinary but caring text.

Sometimes the answer is right in front of our face. My advice is simple. Try texting your child.

I promise everything will work out fine.