



PARENT REFLECTION GUIDE

Teen Emotional Well-Being

How to Use This Guide

It's not always easy to tell the difference between typical teen moodiness and something more concerning.

This guide isn't designed to give you a diagnosis.

It's designed to help you **slow down, get curious, and understand what might be underneath the surface**, for both teens and the adults supporting them.

You're not looking for certainty. You're looking for patterns, context, and connection.

1. Noticing Patterns (For Parents + Caregivers)

Use this section to step back and observe over time.

Reflect:

- What specific changes have I noticed in my teen's mood or behaviour?
- When did these changes begin?
- Are these shifts consistent, or do they come and go?
- How intense do these emotional reactions feel?
- How is this impacting their daily life (school, friendships, routines)?

Scale Reflection (1-5):

- Mood consistency: 1 (very stable) → 5 (highly unpredictable)
- Social engagement: 1 (very connected) → 5 (very withdrawn)
- Energy/motivation: 1 (typical) → 5 (significantly reduced)

Look for trends, not isolated moments.

Notes:

2. Context Matters

Teens don't exist in a vacuum. Their emotional world is shaped by what's happening around them.

Consider:

- What stressors are present right now? (school, friendships, identity, world events)
- Has anything recently changed in their life?
- How much time are they spending online, and how might that be impacting them?
- What pressures (spoken or unspoken) might they be carrying?

Prompt:

- *If my teen's mood makes sense, what might it be a response to?*

Not all distress is disorder. Some of it is a response to overwhelm.

Notes:

3. Your Relationship as a Clue

Often, the parent-teen relationship gives us important information.

Reflect:

- When my teen is struggling, how do I typically respond?
- Do they tend to move toward me or away from me during hard moments?
- What conversations feel easy between us? Which feel difficult?
- Am I leading with curiosity, or urgency?

Try This Shift:

Instead of: "What's wrong?"

Try: "I've noticed things seem heavy lately. Want to talk, or just sit together?"

Connection often opens doors that pressure closes.

Notes:

4. Teen Self-Reflection

(You can invite your teen to complete this on their own or together.)

Check in with yourself:

- What has been affecting my mood the most lately?
- When do I feel most overwhelmed?
- When do I feel most like myself?
- Who do I feel safest talking to?
- What do I wish people understood about me right now?

Optional Rating (1–5):

- Stress level
- Energy level
- Feeling connected to others
- Enjoyment in daily life

You don't need to explain everything; just start noticing.

Notes:

5. Gentle Checkpoints

Use these as guideposts, not alarms.

You may want to seek additional support if you notice:

- Low mood lasting most days over a few weeks
- Loss of interest in things they used to enjoy
- Ongoing withdrawal or isolation
- Significant changes in sleep, appetite, or energy
- Expressions of hopelessness

Support isn't a last resort; it's a resource.

Notes:

6. Small Ways to Strengthen Connection

You don't need a perfect conversation. You need **consistent moments of connection**.

Try:

- Sitting with them without needing to talk
- Driving together (low-pressure conversations)
- Sharing something about your own day first
- Validating before problem-solving

Simple script:

- "That sounds really hard."
- "I get why you'd feel that way."
- "I'm here if you want to talk."

Feeling understood is often more powerful than being advised.

Notes:

7. When You're Not Sure What to Do

If you're feeling uncertain, that makes sense.

Parenting teens doesn't come with clear lines, and neither does emotional development.

You don't have to figure it out alone.

Support can help you:

- Make sense of what you're seeing
- Respond in ways that strengthen your relationship
- Create space for your teen to feel safe opening up

Notes:

Closing Reflection

Take a moment to pause and ask:

- What's one thing I understand better about my teen (or myself) after this?
- What's one small shift I can make this week?

The goal isn't to eliminate hard feelings. It's to stay connected through them.

Final Thoughts

If you're navigating uncertainty around your teen's emotional well-being, support is available.

- Book an initial session
- Explore therapy for teens and families
- Continue the conversation through our blog and resources

Connection is the work, and you don't have to do it alone.



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