

## “Foundations for Success” CD Transcript

### WELCOME

CAS           Hi, this is Chris Sfassie and I’m here in the studio again almost a year after my first CD with a new friend of mine, who is not so near because she is in the UK but certainly very dear to me and her name is Sarah Newton. Sarah, welcome.

SN            Thank you.

CAS           I just want to thank you so much for joining us from the UK. I’m going to let you say more about yourself Sarah in a minute but first I would like to let our listeners know that this CD might not sound quite as good from a technological stand point because we are trying to record across the miles by phone. Brad is being so gracious as to try to accommodate with volume and tone and all that technical stuff, so we are just going to do the best that we can with what we’ve got; because the bottom line is that you and I feel very strongly with what we want to talk about today and share with our listeners is far more important than having a perfect CD. Having said that Sarah, I want to take a minute and share with our listeners how we met.....

Basically about two months ago my business coach told me about a parent-teen teleclass that you were actually leading Sarah, done at teleclass.com. It sounded very interesting, so I went ahead and I signed up and jumped on the call. All was going well because you had asked us in advance to determine what our intention was for being on the call, so I did that. I honestly felt that my intention was to get what I could get to be a better mom to my sons Ryan and Dustin, who everyone has heard about on the first CD ~ and, because a lot of my clients using the Grade-Maker have teens, I wanted to be able to offer extreme value to them as well. That was my intent for being on that call. But, what happened was that you shared a story, which I would like for you to share with our listeners in just one second and, when you did, I got very, very, clear that there was another reason all together for me being on that phone call. So if you would be so gracious as to share Luke’s story, afterwards I’ll try to tell people why it impacted my heart and my life so much.

SN            Thank you Chris. I’m just so pleased that I can share this story with your listeners and hopefully it can touch as many hearts as it did that day that you heard it. First of all, let me introduce Luke to your listeners. I want them to get a picture of what he looked like. He’s 15 years old. He’s about 5’11, blonde hair, blue eyes and full of potential. He could have been anyone’s son. I knew Luke really well. I spent more time with Luke than I did with my own family; as a police officer I had arrested Luke more than 30 times. He was a typical young offender. His father was in prison. He was on a concoction of canibus and cocaine and his mother was a prostitute. After arresting Luke for about the 30<sup>th</sup> time, I was at my wit’s end. It did not matter what I did – he would always re-offend.

I remember this one day....we were in the back of the police van and Luke had reached his bail. He was in the back of the van clearly putting on an act, looking like a hard man, Mr. Big, and I just looked at him and I said, "*Luke, what continues to make you offend?*" He looked at me and he said, "Sarah it's my job. It's what you all expect of me. If people always tell you that you are something then eventually you believe it. My teachers, my friends, my family, even you, all tell me daily that I'm no good. I'm a criminal. I just live up to it. The thing you have all assumed, I am."

I looked at him in astonishment! *Is this how he saw himself?* This young handsome, intelligent man. A funny thing happened then, he began to cry. I'd never seen any emotion from him and it totally took me by surprise. He cried all the way to court and he was still crying when I led him from the police van to the prison cell. The cell where he would later that day take his own life.

That day Luke had given me a message; a message of how if we define a role for a teen, they just become that. By defining them as rebels, as troublemakers, useless, apathetic, we are actually affirming what they already believe about themselves – that they are no good and not fit for society. Without knowing it, that day Luke had touched my heart deeply and I secretly vowed to myself that from that day forth I would make it my mission to destroy perceptions about teenagers and turn all the rage and anger into something constructive that would make a difference.

As a lone police officer I went on a bit of a quest. I discarded the usual methods of dealing with young offenders and I began asking questions like, "Who do you want to be?" "What is important to you?" "What is your gift to the world?" *The results were profound.* I saw disengaged, apathetic and dysfunctional young people become excited, inspired and motivated. During this time the re-offending rate in the area I worked dropped from 36 to 3%.

CAS           Wow!

SN           So now, five years on in my own successful business, I finally realized the legacy that Luke left me that day. It was a legacy about uplifting, supporting and appreciating young people for who they are right now. Not trying to fix them, change them, or control them; because, when we look beyond that hard exterior into the hearts and souls of these teens, there is much more than meets the eye. I can tell you Chris, I see teenagers hungry for affirmation and respect. Teenagers in need of adults in their lives to come support them and guide them unconditionally. Teenagers who don't want to be invisible. Teenagers that want to be fully seen by you. Never underestimate the power that one person can make in the life of a teenager.

I followed my calling by training parents and adults in teenagers' lives to ensure that every teenager is seen for who they are and acknowledged for that. I guess my parting question to the listeners would be, "*Are THEY ready to make a difference?*"

CAS            That is good stuff Sarah. Now people get a sense of why I went into meltdown that day that I first joined you on the phone call, because that is such a powerful story. It left me speechless the first time that I heard it and it still does today. I just feel that it is heartbreaking to think that our youth can feel so alone, like such a failure, and so hopeless that they would actually end their lives at such a tender age. You said Luke was how old? 16?

SN            15.

CAS            15. See that just totally blows my mind. That is how old Ryan is and I just find that hard to live with. When I heard that story, I felt like that is not something you can just hear and then do nothing. I just can't. Especially since it hit so close to home with everything that was going on with Ryan over this past year or so. For our listeners, I can only hope and pray that by the time you and I get done talking today, Sarah, if parents are out there somewhere struggling with teens who have lost their way and have turned to all of the wrong people places and things to find themselves, that they will be able to implement your suggestions through the "Parent As Coach" approach. To me, the beauty of it, Sarah, is that what you have to offer is something that people can use *immediately!* It's a now kind of thing. You don't have to have any kind of long term healing to start making this shift, altering the way that you look at your teen and the way that you relate to them and communicate to them.

So what I want parents to know is that from the time that I did my last CD, my oldest son Ryan made some decisions that has altered our family. It has impacted our family significantly. I'm torn about what to share honestly, Sarah, but I just feel like I want to say that I don't really think that all the nitty-gritty is what's important. What is important is that when I joined you on that call I became crystal clear that the way that I was relating to Ryan; the way I was looking at him as a result of some of his bad decisions that resulted in two misdemeanors, being expelled from public school, being placed in a state program, spending I guess to-date ten days in a juvenile detention center – caused me to not be able to look at him and relate to him the way that I wanted to....and I have to believe that I'm not the only one that is in this with their teenagers. I know that's not the case. So, I'm just praying that by the end of our time today that people will be able to take something away just like I did when I was on that phone call with you. That one 60-minute phone call, Sarah, totally altered the way that I now look at Ryan and relate to Ryan ~ and I so want to gift that to others.

## **GETTING HOMEWORK DONE**

CAS            What I would like to do is invite you to sort of begin to walk our listeners through the Foundations for Success booklet and feel free to do that anyway you'd like. If you want to make some comments about your welcome letter and then move on to Page #1 so that we can point parents toward the book and tag team coach and share with them simultaneously, that will be great. You just do whatever works for you girl.

SN (Ha Ha) I think I'm just going to jump into it Chris, like always. But what I first want to share is that this stuff works and I think you're a great example of this. It is never too late to make a difference and it only takes a moment. So, whatever condition the relationship for the listener is in, we know this stuff works.

CAS That's right.

SN And we've both been there. It's not like we're sitting here saying we're perfect parents. We're sitting here saying we're not and we know this stuff helps.

CAS Yes.

SN So, you know, parents should just take it up and play with it and use it however they need to.

CAS That's right.

SN Great! So, Chris, I'm going to start with "Getting Homework Done" which is on Page 2.

CAS OK.

SN But the first page, I think, is the foundation for this approach. So, what I can't emphasize enough is that parents need to start here because until they do, the rest will be very difficult.

CAS I agree.

SN The basis of the Parent As Coach approach come from "Choice Theory" which is a book by William Glasser, M.D. And basically what he says is that you can't make anyone do anything -- *so give it up!!!*

CAS (Ha Ha) Well, that's a tough one for parents.

SN Exactly, so what we need to remember as parents is that we can't make our teen do anything. So stop! All we can do is change our own reaction to it.

CAS That's right.

SN And I love the quote on this page, which talks about when something goes wrong, the parent tries to fix something that broken ~ rather than looking at themselves. So the whole emphasis of this is about not fixing the teen, but looking at yourself

CAS Ouch!

SN            Yeah, and I always love this question that I give to parents if the teenager isn't responding how the parent wants. I always say to the parent, "What is happening in you that isn't allowing your team to shine?" So it really is taking a introspective look and looking at everything you are doing and asking the question, "Is what I'm doing leaving me closer to or further from?" And, most of the time, what the parents are doing is moving them further away from their teen. So stop that! *Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!*

CAS            That's right!

SN            And do things that move you closer. I once heard a teen say to me, "It's not the teen that's broken, it's the relationship."

CAS            That's good.

SN            And I really think says it all.

CAS            That's good.

SN            So what we're working on is the relationship.

CAS            That's right. And it's a 2-sided relationship and YOU'RE the adult.

SN            Yes, that's very important to remember. Yes, yes! So in William Glassers "Choice Theory" it talks about the "7 deadly sins," and I'm sure that most of your listeners will recognize these or will have used them at some point.

CAS            I'm thinking so!

SN            Criticizing, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing, and controlling.

CAS            Yeah.

SN            And I'm going to add my own here that I call "rewarding to control," which is like do this and I'll give you ten bucks.

CAS            Oh, there you go!

SN            Yes, that one is a deadly sin too; that makes it 8. But that is one as well.

CAS            (Ha ha) The old bribe. The age-old bribe.

SN            Yeah, the age old bribe that parents don't think is a bribe, but we're just rewarding them to control them to do some things.

CAS            Yes.

SN So, we're still trying to control their behavior. So that's what we need to be moving from, because they don't work.

CAS Yes, they don't.

SN They move you further away from the teenager.

CAS Yeah, that definition of insanity. We keep thinking that if we keep doing things the same way, over and over again, we're going to get a different result. *Not!*

SN (We think that) eventually they will get it.

CAS Exactly!

SN And what happens is that the teenager is changing and their brain functions differently, but the parent has been managing them and administrating them up to then, (so they're used to doing that.)

CAS Yeah

SN And when the teen years come, the teen does not need that anymore and the parents still managing -- and the teen is *dying* for something else.

CAS Yes.

SN And if the parent continues to manage the teen, the teen will kick back.

CAS Yes.

SN So the parent needs to move into more of a coaching role surprisingly enough.

CAS Yes.

SN So what the parents needs to start doing is showing respect. And it's much more than showing, it's actually speaking it, telling the teenager that they respect them.

CAS Yes. Now can I jump in here and share a personal story that was so powerful in my relationship with Ryan?

SN Certainly.

CAS When I sat in on your first teleclass I was just taking notes like crazy. Oh boy. I mean I was just so excited. And one of the things I took from that call is that I really, really got what you are going to tell our listeners more about ~ the distinction

between respect verses being proud of your child. Because, when your proud, you've got that issue of possession going on; like your little possession has performed to your expectations and so you're proud of them.

I got that distinction so powerfully that whenever I got off the call I just couldn't wait to use it. Ryan happened to be with his dad at the time and, honestly Sarah, I think at that time he was there because he was doing a little bit of the, "I don't think I want to be around you and I'll just go away from you" thing. Sort of his way of speaking to his dissatisfaction with our relationship. So, he was up there and he was working and I just thought, "I have no idea how this conversation is going to go. I just know that I want to speak respect into his life immediately."

So, when I called him he was heading to one of his drug court classes. Just winging it, I thought, "Ok, I'll just create this in the moment and see what comes from it." As we were talking, I sort of got present to how he had been working really hard. It's Florida, so it was hot and he was working long 12-hour days. So, I just said to him, "Ryan, you know what, I really respect you. I know you've had the flu bug and you're still out there doing what you've got to do, in the heat, long days. I just really respect you for that and I also admire you for doing your Drug Court classes, even though I know you don't want to. I know you hate them. I just really admire you for stepping up to the plate and doing that.

And Sara I'm telling you in that little conversation something shifted between us and he was just like, "Thank you....and I love you mom." And it ended there. But, in like a day, he called and wanted to know if I wanted to go shopping with him and spend some of the money he earned. He would have slit his wrists than go shopping with me before. I mean it altered something between us and it's just continued to evolve. So, I wanted to throw that in as a personal experience in your teaching whenever I joined your session, so go on.....

SN                Yeah, it's so powerful - this respect. And what we're trying to move parents from is saying, "I'm really proud of you passing your exams" to "I really respect your commitment to passing the exam." That is the distinction here. To say respect means we hold someone in high esteem and admire them. When we say we're proud, it's like you say, we're actually saying, "I'm pleased with my possession. I'm pleased with what you have done." To say, "I'm proud" – it's all about **us**. And to say, "I respect you" – it's all about them. And, you know, this isn't what we think teenagers like. This is what they have *told* us.

CAS                Yes, I love that about your stuff. You were wise enough to actually get in there with the teens and talk to them, listen to them and get their feedback. Imagine that?!

SN                So what the parent has to do is kind of put away all their baggage about what respect means and just say it, because it works. And to all the parents out there who say, "Well I respect my teenager!", I would say, "Well, ask them." Cause that's the only

test on whether you respect your teenager is whether you ask them and the teenager says, “Yes I feel respected by you.”

CAS Yes, significant difference.

SN If you haven’t done that, you haven’t completed this work as far as I’m concerned.

CAS That’s right, until you get it past your lips.

SN That’s right. So that’s fundamental. Respecting and actually listening to them, but not just listening, listening to understand.

CAS Yeah, that’s so hard.

SN Trying to see what it is like from their point of view, which is a real challenge.

CAS It is. It’s one of the hardest ones for me I’ve got to tell you. When you’ve got a child who has a real hard time expressing themselves appropriately and its always very aggressive and falls into (in my listening of it) as being disrespectful – it’s *hard* to get past that; to get on the other side and get behind them and see things from their point of view. *It’s hard.*

SN It’s very challenging, but unless we do we can’t really respond because we don’t know how it feels to be a 15 year old in today’s society. If we can say, “Well, when I was a teen.....” You know, that doesn’t cut it. Because who cares!

CAS (Ha ha) Because we’re not!

SN We’re not! And it’s all about them and we’ve got to really try and get into their shoes.

CAS Yeah.

SN And see what it must be like for them.

CAS Yes.

SN I mean I don’t know for you Chris, but for me when I was growing up drugs for me and crime where just not part of my life.

CAS Yes.

SN And now every teenager, at some point now a days, this is part of their lives.



CAS Yes.

SN And they are dealing with adult decisions much earlier.

CAS Yes.

SN And we actually *don't* know how that feels and we need to find out.

CAS I love how you shared about the point of view with the camera analogy.

SN Yeah

CAS Share that with our listeners.

SN Well, Diana Haskins who made the Parent As Coach approach up, or didn't make it up but went out and actually asked teenagers, she used to be a film producer. And a point of view is an actual film shot. And when it says point of view shot what the director knows is that the person who is the actor moves, and the camera takes the actors place. So, it's one of those shots where it looks like you are looking out through the actors eyes. That's called the point of view shot.

CAS Yeah, that's good.

SN So what you're trying to do is kind of take the teen out the shot and put yourself out there instead and look through life though their eyes.

CAS Yes. And my other second favorite (saying), listening with the lips shut. Boy did I get to practice that one the other day, oh my!

SN Yeah, point of view listening is quite difficult, so we take it in a 3 step process. Listening with the lips shut, yeah that's the most challenging.

CAS Oh it is.

SN It's almost like zip that mouth up. When that teenager is talking to you, don't say anything, because you don't need to. And then move on to what we call heart to heart listening, where the parents actually stops what they are doing and get their body in a position where their left side is facing forward slightly towards their teen.

CAS Yes.

SN Because their heart is bigger on their left side, so you want to sort of line up your heart with theirs. It stops the parent first of all, so they're not washing up or doing the dishes, or taking out the garbage. They are actually facing their teenager with their heart forward. And there's a connection in that that's different than just listening to them while you're still on the computer.

CAS Yes, it's very powerful.

SN It's like saying to them, "You have my undivided attention for this minute. And who gives that?"

CAS Yes.

SN No one.

CAS That's right.

SN They don't get that anywhere else and they desperately need that.

CAS Yes, we've got one mouth and two ears. (Ha ha)

SN Exactly, yeah. Once we're into that heart-to-heart listening then we can begin to see what life looks like through their eyes.

CAS Yes.

SN Cause we're really connected to them.

CAS Yeah and its always an eye opener cause I'll tell you, honestly, just recently, in the last couple of days when I had to sit in a session and listen to what Ryan was saying to his case worker I swear to you I felt like he was describing Eminem's mother. I'm not kidding you. I'm not kidding you. And there was that part of me that, if looks could have killed, I would have like, you know, stapled him to the leather couch with my eyes. I just couldn't believe it and yet I was so committed to taking the coaching cause I seen how effective it is and when I was just determined to shut my mouth and just listen through his point of view, I'm going to promise you I came away with some things from that that were phenomenal, just phenomenal.

SN Yeah absolutely, everything in life is useful. So even if we don't like what we're hearing, we need to listen cause, most likely, there is something in there for us to learn. Well, there always is. They (our teens) are here to teach us.

CAS That's right.

SN And we can learn so much if we just listen.

CAS Yes, it's a gift. I love your phrase, listening for the gift. Its like that's so beautiful. It is a gift because of what comes on the other side in our relationship with the teen as a result of implementing these principles.

SN Yeah, absolutely. This is something that I actually used for coaching. It was what I used a lot for the young offenders when I sat down to listen to them. I

listened for what their gift was to the world, because I truly believed there was one in there to reflect back to them. “Wow, this is what I hear, this amazing quality you have.” And they never heard that before, ever. And even saying that to them can make a difference in that moment. So, listening for the gift, because there always is one. Whether it’s a gift to you, a gift to someone else or a gift you can give back to your teen about what they have just said. There always is one.

CAS Yes, the mirroring back (is always a good idea.)

SN And then we get to appreciating. Now, how often do we say thank you to them?

CAS Yes, that was huge for me because I thought, “My gosh. Here I am, you know, Miss Professional Britches with everyone else, but as I started paying close attention to that, I got crystal clear that I was not doing as good of job with basic manners with my own kids that I did with everybody else.

SN Most parents will find that they are treating their best friends better than their child. And you know we need to look at that.

CAS Yeah, I’ll take that coaching!

SN What’s kind of happening there.

CAS I know. It’s crazy, Sarah. It is crazy that we love them with all of our heart and soul and being, you know, and then we do that. It’s crazy, but it can stop.

SN Exactly and that reminds me of the fable. I can’t remember a whole lot of it, where the poor man goes looking for oil and he leaves his house and sells it and goes looking all over the place for oil and then the people who buy his house struck oil in the back yard.

CAS Yes.

SN That sort of reminds me of that.

CAS Yes, yes.

SN And there’s another big distinction in this and that is the supporting element.

CAS Yes.

SN And the distinction is between support and rescue.

CAS Yeah, a big one.

SN           Big one, where support is giving aid and courage to our teenagers, rescuing is taking them out of danger. And what I find so often is that parents are too busy rescuing. You know, the teen comes up and says, “You know, mom, can I have 10 dollars for something?” And, without a thought, the parents give it. They are rescuing when actually they can be supporting by saying, “Hold on! This is not a dangerous situation. You don’t need rescuing. I choose not to give you ten dollars. How can I support you in getting what it is that you need this moment?”

CAS           Yes.

SN           That’s a distinction for parents to leave in their head and look at ~ how they respond to their teen. How often are they in rescue mode?

CAS           Yes.

SN           And, there is no doubt, that the teen needs rescuing at some point. But, if we’re always rescuing, we’re not teaching them about responsibility. And that is really hard, because if we’re supporting them they will have to take the knocks and have to take the consequence.

CAS           Yeah and they’ll have to *think* and come up with solutions for their problems. I shared with you recently cause you knew you were dealing with a big RESCUER, about when I was very committed to giving them [the boys] the opportunity to think things through and negotiate with me and come to points of agreement. Well, I mean both of them, separately, they didn’t know what each other said, both of them separately said, “I don’t want to think about this. You think about it and figure it out and solve it.” It’s like, “Nooooooooo, sorry, those days are over. I won’t be doing that anymore. I know it’s going to be a shift, but I think in the end you’ll like it. But, you know, it’s clearly a shift.”

SN           And this can be the times where they shout and get very angry with the parents.

CAS           Oh yes.

SN           Cause the parent isn’t rescuing and the parents aren’t solving their problems and we are doing them injustice [when we rescue them] because they will never learn how to do their own problem solving.

CAS           Yes, yes. I really got that in that minute with both of my boys. It was like, “Oh my gosh, they were coming right out and saying -- I don’t want to think. YOU think. YOU fix it.” It’s like, “I don’t think so.....”

SN           It’s your turn now.

CAS            Yep, it's your turn. Mom's tired. Hey, as my little niece would say, "I done."

SN            Yes so the question you know the parents always need to ask is, "Am I supporting here or am I rescuing?" And is it really appropriate that I rescue? Most of the time it isn't.

## AGREEMENTS

CAS            Well Sarah what I would like to throw out here is that we may have found a good time to roll on over to page 3 because it gets into some of the methods for making agreements with our children and it has been huge for me with my kids. I agree Sarah with your methods for creating agreements! (laughter) So, go ahead and talk to the parents about that.

SN            Great, well before I do, I want to give another distinction here; one which I know was a real help to you – which is the distinction between an ask and a tell. Now an ask being, "to make a request for an answer." So we ask something and we request an answer. A tell is "an order or an instruct." Both are great in parenting. When the parent has a teen, we tend to sort of ask more than tell ~ or some people may tell more than ask. What we need to think about is what we are about to say. Is it an "ask" or is it a "tell" and not disguise one as the other.

I can give you a perfect example of this that happened with my five year old today and I was so angry with myself for doing it. I said to her, "Bronte, please can you put your shoes on now?" And she said "no". I looked at her astonished and said, "*What do you mean no?*" and she said, "Well you asked me. You didn't tell me!" I go, "OK" and that is the perfect example. What I was trying to do was to tell her to put her shoes on.

CAS            Since I'm like the non-confrontational peacemaker I would really want to be telling, but I'd do it like an ask.

SN            Which is exactly what I did. It was a tell. "Put your shoes on. We're going now." And she would have done it.

CAS            Yes.

SN            But what I asked her was, "Would you please put your shoes on now?" I was asking it the way I phrased it and what most parents are doing is disguising "tells" as "asks" because they think they will get what they want.

CAS            Uh huh.

SN            What we need to distinguish first is, is what I'm saying a tell or an ask. If it's a "tell" then we can't make an agreement about a tell, because it's, "do this" and then

they do it, or they choose not to ~ but it's a tell. When we make an agreement, we must be clear that it is around an ask, which means that they can actually say, "yes"; they can say "no"; or they can negotiate. If there isn't that opportunity for them, then it's a tell. If we are leaving the house now then they can't say no and they can't negotiate. If you're leaving the house now then it's a tell.

CAS Yes that's right, because for me it's like the mom bus is leaving. You'll either catch it or you'll miss it. Depending on what is on the other side, they have the opportunity to make that decision; but it is definitely a powerful process. Now the other side of this that I have learned recently here, Sarah, since I've really been into all this with the boys, is that it just reinforced to me the value of the Grade-Maker. When you do finally get to that point of negotiation and you've come to an agreement, being able to put things in writing in that book, whether it is just using the form at the basic level as a [task] slip or actually defining that task or responsibility or chore on the back side of that [task] slip, it is phenomenal. It's wonderful. So this [concept] is very, very good inside of the Grade-Maker system as well.

SN Absolutely I can see how that would work really well. So before we make an agreement we need to have an ask, not a tell. That is the most important thing. Sometimes we might think it is a tell when actually there is some negotiating, so it can be an ask.

CAS I think we have to pick and choose our battles on those tells too because what I noticed was I need to be careful. I almost gave myself a commitment that I was going to make tells the exception instead of doing it 24/7.

SN Just be gentle with yourself. What we see work with agreements in the coaching world is what I call an "accountability triangle." So the listeners can kind of imagine a triangle. At the bottom of the triangle I write, "bottom line," and I'm going to explain these in a minute. On the left hand side of the triangle there is, the "ask" or the "request" and on the right hand side there is the "agreement." First of all, before the parent goes into the agreement, they have decided that it is an ask. They then need to know what their bottom line around this ask is. So if it is an agreement around the time that the teenager has to be in the parent might say to themselves, "What is my bottom line? What will I absolutely not go past?" It might be 11pm, so the parent knows that is their bottom line and that they won't negotiate past that. Without the parent knowing what their bottom line is, the teen will have one over on them.

CAS You've got that right!

SN The teen will know that the parent is not grounded when they come into this agreement. So the teen will push it and push it and if the parent hasn't made the decision [about their bottom line] in the last minute they will say yes to something that really feels bad for them. So the parent goes in armed with these two things. They know what their bottom line is and they know that this is an ask. They then make the request. So they might say something like, "I want us to come to an agreement about the time that

you are going to be in, I request that we sit down and have a conversation about this now.” Can you see the difference between that and what normally happens?

CAS Yes.

SN You will be in at 10! [demanding]

CAS Yes.

SN If we want the teen to buy into this agreement we need to have them in the negotiation process or else they will feel it is something being done to them rather than something they are involved in.

CAS That’s right.

SN So the parent makes the request and they sit down and they have a discussion about what is the best time to come in; the parents not going beyond their bottom line because they know that doesn’t feel good for them. So eventually they come to an agreement. It’s really important then that the parents say, “So we have an agreement on school nights you will be in by 10:30, is that correct?” and then the teen either says “yes” or “no” or “No, I didn’t really mean that. Can we re-negotiate it?” That is the system that always works, I know you’ve used this a lot Chris.

CAS Oh big time, big time.

SN Give some examples of how this has worked for you.

CAS You know I have to default back to the Grade-Maker because it’s been so applicable at every level, whether it was the school routine or now that we are into summer. We had to revisit our system and say , “ok.” We are usually doing a family meeting on Tuesday the way our schedule looks, just to sit down around the table and touch in, whether its lunch, dinner, pizza, quick snack- whatever it is ~ just a connection for getting some agreements ~ and it’s been very interesting. Of course, they had this vision of summer being nothing but stay up all night, sleep in all day, do nothing. Dustin even had a strategy that, boy, he did so great during the school year and, since Ryan had all of his issues, he thought Ryan should just kick in and handle everything all summer. Ryan wasn’t enrolled in that Sarah! So, we had to have a lot of conversations around the negotiating. But, you are so correct, until I got clear about my bottom line on a couple of things it was very “not pretty.”

Now I can give a specific example of something that was very “not pretty.” Ryan. The program that he is in is very intense and it is just sucking up our life as far as time. There are three group sessions, one individual, there is one self-help ~ and this is every week ~ and there are the sessions before the judge, and, Sarah I got to the place where I was like “Who did the crime and who is doing the time? Me – and I’m not very happy about it.” So I had to look at that and I finally said, “OK, the frustration is coming from me running around like a chicken with its head cut off trying to keep up with this whole routine and

the fact is, I didn't make the bad decision. I didn't do the crime and I don't want to do the time anymore. So I sat down with Ryan and I said, "I recognize that you aren't going to be very happy about this, but I want you to know this is what I've been doing [being your taxi] and it's making me angry and it's impacting our relationship and what I'm going to do is tell you that I'm cleaning it up. I'm not going to do it anymore. But, what I will do to support you is give you a ride to the bus. If you want that support then great. You'll still be at your classes and if you choose to not take that support, specific consequences lay on the other side that you already know about as a result of the program that you are in.

I've got to tell you that for, I'm guessing, like two weeks, he did nothing. He did not go to "group," he did not go to "individual," he did not go to "self-help" ~ and I was beside myself! I thought, "Oh my gosh, he's going to the detention center" ....and he did. He just got out yesterday and the first words out of his mouth were, 'You know what? It's time for me to have a different plan. I've got a plan for getting to class and doing what I need to do so I can just get back on with my life" and I'm thinking, "Oh yes, yes." So it is painful, but it is powerful.

SN That is the distinction between support and rescue. By giving support we allow them to learn and grow.

CAS But it's not easy. Was I crying? Did I feel like a horrible mother? Oh yes. But, in my heart, I just had to get past the present and look to the long term.

SN So when we make an agreement with them there are a lot of places to say yes, no, or renegotiate, and as a parent we need to know how to deal with that.

CAS Yes.

SN The yes ones are easy because they make the agreement and it goes into the Grade-Maker. If they say no to the request, first of all, lets say the request was to sit down and talk about what time they are coming in and they say no. The parent says, "Well, we need to have a conversation about this and I'll leave it up to you about how it happens. Tell me how do you want this to happen?" The parent doesn't let the child get away with saying no, it's then that they come back with something. Be armed and ready with that.

CAS Yes.

SN Say it's about a chore and the parent is asking the teen to do a chore and the teen says, "No, I don't want to do that." The parent says, "What DO you want to be responsible for then?" and if it's around the homework then the parents say, "This is your responsibility so what are we going to do?"

CAS Yes, mine always is, "I've already graduated, you know. You're the one that is in school. You're the one that has got to get this done. How can I support you in doing it?"



SN Exactly and that support is really key. You're saying to the teen, "This needs doing. We're making an agreement about something here and I'm going to support you. I'm not going to rescue you." So the teen knows, you know, that it's a negotiation that's happening. This is where the parent needs to know their bottom line and that they don't negotiate past that if it feels bad for them.

CAS It will and you'll feel angry and bitter and resentful and then you've got that in your relationship and you're right back to where you started.

SN Yes, especially if you go back to the 11pm time and the teen says 11:30. The parent can say, "You know, that doesn't feel good for me. How about 11?" But they do not go beyond their bottom line. This system always works. It takes a while for the parents to get used to it and a while for the teens to get used to it too.

CAS Yes, that has been my experience lately. I guess I have been working with you as a personal life coach for almost two months now and it has been quite intense. But as I have told you, there is no turning back. There is no turning back because, Sarah, I see what is available for me and for Ryan and Dustin inside of this relationship. I saw when I was crying like a maniac on your first call what was no longer available for me when I was just stuck in looking at Ryan specifically, and everything that was going on, and just looking at him like he was some kind of, you know, loser or control freak or manipulator or liar. There is nothing available in it.

SN Exactly. When we talk about these agreements the parent needs to be very clear that there is a consequence if the agreement is broken.

CAS Yes.

SN Not a punishment.

CAS Yes, you do need to say a lot about that because I know that is another one that is gray and muddy for people.

### **CONSEQUENCES VS PUNISHMENT**

SN Well a consequence is basically a result of an action or an inaction. It's kind of a natural thing that happens.

CAS Yes.

SN As adults we have these all the time if we don't go to work we get "sacked." [fired] It's a natural consequence. Teens don't actually know these at the moment. A punishment is a penalty. It's something that is given for a crime. That is the definition of it in the dictionary. As far as I'm concerned, even if the crime has been committed, the only people who can issue a punishment is the judicial system. It's not our job. We issue consequences. The object of the consequence, or what we want to have come out, is that

they learn something. So this “grounded and sent to the room” thing ~ I don’t know about you, but that hasn’t happened to me since I’ve become an adult. I quite wish someone would send me to my room.

CAS That’s right.

SN You know we’re not teaching them anything. We are teaching them that if you do this wrong I’ll send you to your room until I say you can come out. Almost always the teen can manipulate the parent into letting them out anyway.

CAS That’s right.

SN So the consequence needs to really relate to what the agreement is. So if the agreement is about coming in at a certain time and the child is late then the consequence looks like it could be related to that.

CAS Oh and you know, Sarah, with you saying that ~ one thing that I really learned in the process was to give myself some space and time. Like I used to feel like I just had to have the answer here and now, whenever we were in the midst of whatever the particular problem was. Now that I give that 24 hour time frame, I can say, “I need you [my sons] to come back to me with a solution for this problem, a couple of solutions so that I have something to pick from, within 24 hours.” It gives us some time to put some distance between the situation and the emotions and everything else and really think through it and think through something [a solution] that is good. I mean, good problem solving stuff.

SN Absolutely we suggest that this happen all the time. If an agreement is broken, the parent says, “You know, an agreement has been broken and there will be a consequence for this and we’re both going to give ourselves 24 hours to think about what that consequence will be.” What we find is that, most of the time, teens come back with a consequence that parents haven’t even thought of.

CAS Oh yea.

SN Or it’s far worse than what the parent was thinking anyway.

CAS Yea.

SN Yes, this waiting process allows the parent to calm down and think about, “What do I want the teen to learn here and what can the consequence be around that?”

CAS Yes, it’s taking the pressure off of me because I was in fix-it mode all the time ~ and you get tired of it. One of the examples that comes to mind is the brand new edger. Don’t ask me what they did with it, ran over a stump that was just cut down or something, and it was like, before your training, I would have just been in a tizzy and wanting to just go into fix it mode. But, instead, it was like, “OK, so the edger is broke. Tomorrow I need you to come up with a couple of suggestions. We’ll meet at 2pm and

talk about this some more and they came back with ideas that were fabulous. They know a kid down the street that's really good at repairs. They thought of grandpa. I mean, I wouldn't have thought of that. It was very cool.

SN It is and what we're actually teaching them is how to solve problems. So you know we always need to insist that there is a 24-hour period and that the parent and the teen get back together and discuss the consequence. It's an agreement that you've reached almost about the consequence. The parent is doing something for the teen or else the teen is never going to do it.

CAS That process has been very insightful to me because, in my mind, I felt like I was always trying to look for what I always called a loving and logical consequence. In retrospect when I really look at some of the stuff it wasn't the learning opportunity. It wasn't connected directly to a learning opportunity, it really wasn't.

SN They need to see that. They need to see how the consequence is related to the breaking of what was the agreement, because if they don't understand that link they are more likely to break the agreement again.

CAS I think that is very, very key. I know it has been with me for the boys.

SN So this consequence is vital because if the parent doesn't issue a consequence and an agreement is broken, you've lost all ground. Then the teen knows "I can break any agreement because nothing happens to me".

CAS One other thing too Sarah, since we cover agreements so well in the first CD around Grade-Maker training. I also want to talk about what I noticed during the summer. There were things that I noticed between the boys and I that weren't really related to the Grade-Maker, but they were very important. They might not as specific as a chore, it might be something else all together. It alludes me right now, but we ended up and we created a separate agreement notebook and when we have something that falls outside of their [Grade-Maker] system, we have started minimizing frustration and confusion and anger between us around agreements by just jotting that down in the agreement notebook the date, what the agreement was (once we have mirrored it back to each other and are all clear about the agreement) and then we just do a quick sign-off so that's it. There is no more to discuss or argue about. All we do, both of us, is just go back to that book when things come up. We no longer have to argue. It's just, you know, we agreed on such-and-such a date that this was the way *that* was going to go. Now, where are we at? Are you going to honor it [the agreement] or are we needing to talk about renegotiating this thing or what do we need to do here? It neutralizes the situation.

SN Absolutely. It's important that they know what they are signing up for is a proper agreement and they can't say later, "I didn't make that."

CAS That's right. That's exactly right.

## **NUTURING RESPONSIBILITY**

CAS Is there anything coaching wise that you want to say around that little nurturing responsibility piece? Or do you want to flip on over to the “teen transition?”

SN The only thing I have to say about responsibility is if we want it in our teens, we have to be the role model ourselves and ask ourselves, “How am I showing my teen responsibility?” Because, if we are not responsible they will never be.

CAS Yes.

SN So, just to look at themselves as a parent and ask themselves that question.

CAS Yes, that is something that, if the parents want their students to be faithful in using that Grade-Maker system, they have got to give them the time of day to sit down and talk about what goes in it. They have got to talk about the responsibilities and chores and these things we are talking about. If they are going to meet with them ~ if it’s a younger child daily or a teen once or twice a week ~ honor those meetings.

SN The teen can make the agreement with the parents, absolutely.

CAS Absolutely, that’s right. It’s a two way street.

## **TEEN TRANSITION**

CAS OK and that takes us over to “Making the Teen Transition Easier.” I know a lot of this we have talked about in the course of our other conversations, but if there is anything else that you want to add to that section, feel free on page 5.

SN Most of that is pretty self explanatory. the only thing I see there is that most parents focus on what is NOT working. I would ask them to think daily what is right in my relationship with my teen, not what is not working, but what is right.

CAS Yes.

SN Because we don’t do that. We don’t focus on what is actually working.

CAS Yes.

SN Because if we focus on what is not working then we will get more of what is not working.

CAS Oh I went through that with Dustin, you know. He had all these great grades and he had this one not so great grade and that is immediately what my attention went to. He let me know that he thought that was very interesting; that what I noticed was that one (in my mind) poor grade compared to all those other great grades. Boy, did that put me in my place real quick. Sarah, on that note, one thing that I did want to say that is very, very

important to me about this conversation. There are so many reasons that I wanted you to share. But, one of the things that I wanted to say to parents as a part of having you on the line today is that there is a good use of the Grade-Maker and a bad use of the Grade-Maker. I don't want anything to do with putting our kids into some kind of performance trap, like their value and their worth is based around their grades, because I don't believe that. I do not believe that. I believe that system is fabulous because it gives us a chance to do beautiful things like connect with our kids and support them in the way that you are defining support; getting things out of their head. You used the word de-cluttering. I see it as you're so good with sifting and sorting through life issues and I'm so good with sifting and sorting through activities and events and time management issues. So when we use that [Grade-Maker] system the right way it is a powerful, powerful system. But it can be misused. I think that would be a very sad situation and I don't want to see that with anybody that has purchased the system. So please, please parents, have nothing to do with making your kids feel like they've got to be this straight-A student before you are going to love them and value them and see their worth because that is the last thing that I want to be a part of.

SN It's a journey together. It's not the parents saying, "I've got all this sorted and I'm going to make you do all this." It's a journey together.

CAS Yes it is.

SN That's what the whole life is.

CAS Yes.

SN It's not the parent being the one that knows it all.

CAS That's right.

SN Most of the time ~ they don't.

CAS We sure don't.

SN It's a journey together.

## **WHEN THINGS GO WRONG**

CAS Ok, well then in that case I'm trying to see where we're at here. I guess that would take us to page 6. We now have ten tips for when things are going wrong. I thought that those were quite good and I know that we have covered a number of those. Sarah, I think for me on that one, the one that I had starred was getting yourself out of the way. That is a toughie.

SN It's not about us. It's about them. It's not about our expectations for our children. It's about what they want.

CAS Yes.

SN And we've just got to. We're not making a clone of ourselves. We are making another human. We've really got to sort of get ourselves out of the way and stop wanting to be right ~ and stop wanting to be perfect parents, because it doesn't exist! Just allow them to be who they want to be.

CAS I think that I had an eye opener that I shared with you. What I was noticing was it was so easy to love Dustin the brilliant kid, the straight-A student. He gets invited to the Student Ambassador program and the Duke University Talent Search [TIP Program] wanted him to do in 7<sup>th</sup> grade the college testing on the SAT. His last scores that he just got, he missed one in math on the FCAT and three, I think, on the reading. Well, isn't that easy; doesn't that just make me look like the great parent when you've got all of those great reports? But, boy, what an inquiry it was when all of that stuff started going on with Ryan. Being able to get off of it and let go of it and look at him as so awesome and so great even though he was a young adult making bad decisions. He's still awesome to me. He's brilliant, he's funny, there are just so many fantastic attributes there that I think were going by the wayside because of some of the things that we tend to think of when it comes to the academics and everything. Really is more about us than it is about the kids.

SN Absolutely, and that reminds me of the situation that I know you are in about the good kid and the bad kid.

CAS Yea.

SN If we go, "Well, this one is wonderful and this one is awful!" then we just get more of the awful, you know. So it's not just about academics, it's about who they are and who they want to be, and not what we want for them.

CAS That's right.

## **PURPOSE**

CAS They were designed with a purpose. We were talking about that on another call recently, designed with a purpose. And, boy, if they're not living that out [what a loss.] Is there is any quick thing that you want to say about purpose that would tie into the Dream Life Sheet that is in the Grade-Maker? If there is any challenge you want to throw out there around "purpose" for parents and supporting their teens in finding purpose, feel free to do that to.

SN The challenge that I would like, is for the parents to ask the teen, "What is your purpose in life?" Keep asking, because the teen might first of all look at them bizarrely, like what are you talking about? But if the parents leave it for a sufficient time, say a month, and just keep asking, the teen will eventually start to figure it out. We're giving them a gift, we're actually saying to them you've got a gift in life and I'm asking you

what it is. Because they will always come up with something. Just plant that seed there that they have a purpose. It doesn't matter how they respond. This is where we really need to get ourselves out of the way. Whatever they say is fine, but don't let that stop the asking.

CAS Yes. I can remember Dustin years ago got very intrigued by an eye surgery that his grandma got. He just saw that as such a gift with what they were able to do with her eye, so he had decided that he was going to do. We talked a lot about it. He talked a lot about what his life would look like ~ clear down to the way his practice would be, and how he would have time to spend with his family, and vacations, and those kinds of things. It was very cool. Of course, Ryan was the rap star, you know, all of this. It was very funny to see what I started to notice about myself in that exercise. I certainly had my expectations, whether I had verbalized them or cemented them for myself, because when Ryan started talking about all the rap star stuff it was like "Alrighty...."

SN You've just got to be like "Hey, how does that fit into your purpose or what you are here to do?"

CAS Yea.

SN It doesn't matter what comes back. Just holding them high enough to have a purpose is the whole point of that.

CAS That's right. That's right.

## **GREAT LISTENER**

CAS Now on page 7 we have the "Becoming a Great Listener." We talked a lot about the listening with the lips shut and listening for the gift. Is there anything that we missed there?

SN Probably that the parent doesn't really have an agenda.

CAS That's a good one.

SN So they just listen for the sake of listening. I have this great thing that I keep with me a lot and it just says, "Wait on it."

CAS Yes, that's good, that's very good. I know another one you have down there is, "What is my intention in this conversation?" That was another very powerful one.

SN Definitely.

CAS Yep, very, very good stuff. Of course, with regard to fun, what I was going to share with you is that when I was actually listening for the gift and was listening with my

big fat lips shut on that occasion when Ryan was talking with his case worker and I was ready to hurt him, what I got out of that conversation is that he made a comment about fun. Don't ask me what it was, but it related specifically to fun ~ like not having any ~ what have you. So we just did a fun weekend this past weekend and we now have a commitment that Sunday is our day and that we will talk together and come up with something each Sunday afternoon after church that looks like fun for everybody involved. We had to talk about some criteria around it, like I can't be forking over 100 bucks every weekend as a single mom. It's got to be the kind of fun that we can create. So it could be something as small as sitting down playing cards, board games, or a video together. Or it could be something like yesterday; we actually had it be a big day where we went to a go-kart place. But I really got, once I shut my mouth and listened, that I did need to be more committed towards fun.

SN Good, that's a good one. I like that one.

CAS Yea, that was good.

### **GIVING an "A"**

CAS Now we're to the "Giving an A" which I want to make sure you had plenty of time for that ~ so go for it.

SN This is one of my favorite tools actually. I love this. This has transformed my life as it has everyone I've shared it with. It came from a book called, The Art of Possibility, by Benjamin Zander which is a fantastic book. As I started to read it, it's all about getting an A as he calls it. I started to think about how this relates to parents and teenagers and it kind of came to me. I was actually coaching a client and her child was self-harming, lots of things going on there. She was furious that she wasn't involved in his process with his psychotherapist and I said, "What can you do here to have yourself be involved in this process?" She said, "Well I'm going to go to the psychotherapist and insist that I be allowed there." And it went on like this. I just sat there and went to her, "How about if the whole family had a Grade A in life? How about if you'd all gone to school and been given a Grade A in how you live your life. What would you do then?" And she said, "I'd just sit down and talk to Louis"

CAS Yea.

SN I thought, "Hey, there we go, there's a concept!"

CAS There's a novel idea.

SN What I find a lot is that parents are saying, "I can't say that to them. They won't understand. They won't know how to answer. I won't know how to deal with what they say." And what I say is, everyone has got an A here. You have an A as a parent. You know exactly what to say. Your child has an A. When we see them as having an A, we



can say anything to them because we know they can answer back. We know that they can answer, “What is my purpose in life?” because we know they have a Grade A.

CAS Yes.

SN Even if they can’t, what we are doing is we are opening a space up for them to step into. Like you said to Ryan, “I have given you a grade A.” Ryan may still be not quite doing what society would expect him to do, but you have given him a grade A.

CAS Yes I have.

SN Slowly he’s stepping into this.

CAS Yes he is.

SN Because if it’s there, then they can reach for it.

CAS Yes he is.

SN If we’re giving them a D or an F, then that’s where they will go.

CAS That’s right.

SN This tool is so simple. It’s just a shift in perspective of what we’re seeing.

CAS That’s right.

SN It’s, before we go into anything, saying “I have a grade A. They have a grade A. Everyone has a grade A. My life has a grade A!”

CAS That’s right. I’m with you. This has been huge in my relationship with Ryan and with others. I remember the one coaching call that I had with you. I was terrified to share a certain situation with Ryan because I was just so sure that there was going to be serious anger and aggression involved. I mean immediately when you said to me, one sentence, “Where is the A in this?”; it was like, alrighty. I mean, I had to stop and as soon as I altered that perspective and looked at him like, hey, he can handle this. I can handle this. This is a-ok. It was! I’m not kidding you. It was. It went from what I thought in my heart was going to be a very serious intense situation, explosive and not pretty, to it turning out to be a defining moment for Ryan and I. I think he ended up having an appreciation for the fact that I was just very straight with him. I said, “I know you’re not going to be very happy about this, but I know you can handle it; and I’ve got to be honest about you with something.” I got it out there on the table and it was great.

SN Yes, and we’re almost, by giving them an A, telling them that I know you want to be constructive here, I know you want to help.

CAS Yes.

SN Just our focus on what is wrong to what is actually possible.

CAS Yes, believing the best.

SN I love what Benjamin Zander says when he says “It’s not an expectation to live up to, it’s a possibility to live into”

CAS I thought that was good.

SN I just thought that was amazing.

CAS You know it’s funny because I ended up, when I was thinking about the cover for your little booklet in the system, that was what struck me so profoundly ~ which is why I put “Possibilities VS Problems.” When we are implementing these tips and techniques and approaches and methods, it is just endless possibility, Sarah.

SN It is. It’s so small and it’s so easy, and it can be in any situation. If the parents find themselves really struggling, they just need to ask, “Where is the A here?”

CAS Yes.

SN It automatically shifts your perspective because they will start having the conversations that they haven’t had. They’ll start believing the things they dared not believe before.

CAS That’s right.

SN Believing in things about themselves.

CAS That’s right. I was sharing with you earlier, whenever we had to take a slight break here, that for the first time in two years whenever I picked Ryan up yesterday from the Juvenile Detention Center, what an unbelievable transformation had taken place; because, even before he went, he was still sort of stuck in anger about me being true to my bottom line and taking a stand and not being willing to lie about him breaking curfew, or lie about him using drugs in the house and that kind of thing. It was a tough, tough stand to take and clear to the day that they cuffed him and took him, he was still so furious about ME being the reason he was there.

Well, he ended up and he called me two or three times just to talk to me and tell me that he loved me and, whenever I picked him up, he immediately started talking for the first time in, well, I guess his first charge was in October of 2002, for the first time he was using words like, “You know what, I’ve decided I need a new plan and my new plan is going to be looking like me doing whatever I have got to do to get off of this probation. I want my life back. There are things I want to do. I want to enjoy life and I recognize it is

going to have to be without drugs. If I'm going to be off of probation, it's going to have to be without me breaking the rules" and those kinds of things. Sarah, this is the first time that that kind of conversation has come out of his mouth. Brad [the studio tech] is sitting here in the studio with me. He knows clear up until my session with him last week I was still sharing with him, heart-broken, about Ryan just announcing to the death that he was *not* going to change; that he was who he was and that he was going to do what he wanted to do ~ and quite frankly didn't care who it hurt. I mean, you just continue to speak into their life how awesome they are to you and that possibility is there.

SN If you would have given him an F, he'd have given one to himself.

CAS Yes.

SN You know, then he would have never got there. You saw him as an A. You know, you have to have that space available. Now he's stepping into it. Until someone else sees us like that, we can't see ourselves. It's like with my coach, until my coach sees me doing something, I can't see myself doing it. You know, we all need to be given a Grade A by someone in our lives, because we won't give them to ourselves.

CAS Yea, that's right. There is the good challenge for us to give everybody, is to be really, really good about giving yourself that Grade A because I know that has been challenging for me. That's a good one. Then it gives us, inside of parenting, it gives us access to what we need to be that great parent that we want to be.

SN Exactly.

CAS That's right.

SN I say to parents to write a letter to themselves about why they've got an A in parenting.

CAS Yes. You know, another thing too, Sarah, that I wanted to toss out there that has been so valuable to me while you have been coaching me is the forgiveness journal. If you're really, really wrestling like I was with Ryan and it was just such intense anger, pain and disappointment and heartache that you feel you can't even hardly breathe ~ that forgiveness journal [is powerful.] Just write down each day anything that you need to forgive someone else for and cap it off with, "I know we did the best we could with what was available to us and, if we could do it again, I'd do it this way." That is profound. What I have noticed happening is, it's almost like it starts to open up for me how I can do something differently the next time – then I end up living in to it.

SN Absolutely, very powerful to do that forgiveness journal.

CAS It is.

SN Because a lot of times parents have got lots of anger that they just have to let go of or else they can't see their teen with a Grade A. There is still this F stuff going on.

CAS That's right.

SN The fails will still be there, and you know it's ok to be angry. We need to forgive ourselves at some point and our teen and everyone else for being angry and to make some sense in that, to move on, and get this A so they can actually become that.

CAS That's right, it's not the least bit about denial. It's just saying that I know we both have what we need to get through this and we will get through it.

SN Absolutely.

CAS Absolutely, well I'll tell you one thing, Sarah, I hate for this thing to ever come to an end, but it must. I guess as far as a sign off, I want to let people know that you have invited me to become a case-study, a little guinea pig so to speak, because of my journey as a single mom with Ryan and Dustin and I have taken you up on that offer. I have seen it as a gift to myself to do that journaling. So I want people to know that they can visit that journal, "A Parent Diary" on your website which is [www.coaching4teens.com](http://www.coaching4teens.com). If they just scroll down to the bottom of the page they will see that parent diary there and they can sort of follow Ryan and I and Dustin and I's journey, if they like.

They will also have the opportunity to do what I did and take advantage of all of your different classes and free stuff. The one night you about killed me because I was up until 3 in the morning reading every single article that was on your "Rebel with a Cause" newsletter. It's good stuff, Sarah, and I just want to make sure that people know this resource is out there for them because you have meant so much to me. I tell you truthfully, Sarah, you just are a Godsend to me and to Ryan and to Dustin. That call, that day [on your teleclass] was a divine appointment. There was no coincidence about it. God knew my heart and what Chris needed and what Ryan needed and what Dustin needed ~ and I just love you and I appreciate you. When I grow up I want to be a coach just like you! (giggle)

SN Thank you so much. That really means a lot to me to hear this.

CAS You are so welcome and, I guess, until our parents have a chance to visit that website and see what they can find of value to them, I want to say that:

*This is Chris Sfassie and Sarah Newton signing off, encouraging every adult listening to this CD to create countless possibilities with your teen ~ instead of painful problems!*