

IS ANYBODY LISTENING??

5 tips for finding trustworthy adults



By Margit Crane
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Do any of these sound familiar?

"Life is so big and I don't really get where I fit in."

"Am I always going to feel this way? Will things get better?"

"I want to be successful and happy but I'm not really sure where to start."

"Sure, things are great now, but what happens when I'm out on my own?"

"My sister (brother) is close to my parents, but we just don't get each other."

"Every time I try to talk to my parents we end up yelling."

"Some stuff is private; I would be embarrassed to talk to my parents about it!"

"I have so many questions. If only I had someone to talk to who would really listen!"



If you are a between the ages of 11 and 24, these thoughts and questions are TOTALLY NORMAL!

Sure, you can talk to your friends, but when you REALLY need help, especially about these kinds of “adult topics,” I mean, they’ll listen and they’ll sympathize, but YOU DESERVE MORE THAN THAT!

Really, aren’t you looking for a *solution*? That’s hard to get from someone who hasn’t solved any of it for themselves yet!

What I’m proposing is that to make it through all the teenage angst (and it’s real, AND you’re NOT CRAZY), you have to find someone to talk to who has been through it all before you...someone SUCCESSFUL. I don’t mean like money-successful or able-to-score-successful...although those are good too! I’m talking about finding someone who

is really happy with their life...someone who has been through hell and come out the other end, feeling whole and content and wiser for having lived through it all. And frankly, that means an ADULT.

So, the trick then is to *find an adult that you can trust*, who will guide you in a really caring way but won't try to take over your life, you know what I mean?

So that's why I wrote this—so you can check out the adults around you and figure out who is safe to talk to AND WHO ISN'T.

I really hope this eBook helps you, because that's my goal.

Take care and be good to yourself,

Margit

5 tips for finding trustworthy adults

1. Watch how they are with others--either with people your age or with their own friends. Adults who are mean or who make fun of people may be entertaining to observe but they aren't trustworthy and you might as well just stay away. These are adults who are struggling themselves and who will not be able to give you the attention and care that you deserve. Many mean or sarcastic people, even if they say "I'm just kidding," are really unhappy and somewhere deep inside they have decided that they can feel better about themselves if they point out the faults of other people. Anyone *that* messed up, even if they have a "good reason," is *much more interested in their own needs*. As soon as you do or say something that they think is stupid they either

drop you or start making fun of you! Why give them the chance? Better to steer clear of them.

2. **They should keep their hands to themselves.** A pat on the back is cool, but a hand on your leg? Ew. Hugging is ok—if you know them already--, but they shouldn't be hanging on to you. Ew, Ew. What kind of adult needs to hang onto a teen??? Ew. Ew. Ew. *Stay away!!* The tricky thing here is that it feels good when an adult that you like pays attention to you. Sometimes it seems like maybe they're just being extra nice. An adult that touches you a lot, *even if you don't mind*, is not being respectful of you. Remember that they're adults and they're supposed to know what is appropriate. To ignore that and to just do whatever they feel like means that they're putting their own needs ahead of

yours. That is not an adult that you can trust. Not only are they USING you, they are ABUSING you.

3. Are they friendly with a variety of people or just with the *young* people? A healthy adult can get along with many different kinds of people. That's pretty much part of the definition of being an adult! (And notice that I'm speaking of *emotional age* and not chronological age. Being an adult doesn't just mean being older than 21 or 30 or 50 even. It also means having a healthy emotional life). Real adults—ones that you can choose to trust--are able to enjoy relationships with other adults; they can successfully begin, sustain, and even end meaningful relationships without causing serious damage to themselves and others. *It is really important to find an adult who is "all grown up."* That's a person who

can listen to what you have to say and also offer some very cool wisdom.

4. **Do they try to get you to do anything you don't want to do?** I'm not just talking about trying to get you to do sexual stuff. What I mean is, are they really bossing you around or are they simply asking you to do your part? If you mess up, do they punish you physically or try to shame you?

It's hard raising kids and trying to teach them responsibility but there is a kind way to do it and an unkind way. Think back to your childhood, or to a time when you got along with your parents. Were they kind? If so, any conflicts you have now may be just the result of two sides not knowing how to get along anymore. It makes sense for a parent or guardian to ask you to do chores around the house.

If you're visiting a relative or a family friend, chipping in by doing the dishes or taking out the trash is logical. But if cruelty—repeated insults or mockery, or physical confrontation—is commonplace in the adults around you, they cannot be trusted with your deepest feelings. They may deserve your love *but not your trust*...not until both sides get help and can resolve your differences.

This is also true of non-family members: being bossed around and shamed is a warning sign that you cannot trust that person. You may be asked to obey or show respect to them, such as in the case of a teacher or a sports coach or a policeman, but *they are not behaving in a trustworthy manner*.

5. If an adult offers you drugs or alcohol or porn
THEY ARE NOT INTERESTED IN HELPING YOU. Even

if they are the parent(s) of your best friend, or they are themselves your own parents' best friends, *they are not to be trusted. I don't care how cool it may seem.* And I know that it can feel pretty cool sometimes... **But there is not a single trustworthy adult on this whole planet that would offer you something that is so obviously inappropriate.** This one is a no-brainer for me. How do I know? *Because it happened to me,* more than once, when I was young. I thought it was cool. I thought I was being treated like an adult. I thought I was being respected as an equal. **I WAS WRONG. I WAS BEING USED.** Those adults were very, very sick and I didn't want to believe it because I was lonely and wanted some attention. I got attention, but not in a good way. Trust me on this, guys. *Stay far away from this kind of adult.*

What's next?

Well, if you're lucky, you may find that you have trustworthy adults right in your family and that's pretty cool. Or maybe your parents have a friend or two that you can trust.

If not, you get to use this checklist and your gut and start "interviewing" adults. It's not like a real interview but you're going to want to ask questions to find out a bit about them to see if they're trustworthy. Don't jump in right away with some deep, dark secret. Just listening to them will clue you in. If you just keep talking and listening you will start to feel your gut react when things are "off." If you start to feel a rush of adrenalin or you are sick to your stomach, or if a voice in your head is telling

you to 'stay away,' listen to those signals and be cautious.

If you feel you can't wait, you know that there are adults in your school who will help you if you are confused or scared or in pain. They may not be the most interesting or the coolest. They may dress funny or have comb-overs or wear too much make-up. But if you need them, they are there, ready to give you the kindness and direction that you need without asking for anything in return.

Who is Margit?



Well, once upon a time, I was an unhappy but optimistic teenager. I was lucky enough to have adults around me whom I could trust and that was really important to me because there were also adults around me that I couldn't trust.

If you check out my website, you can read more about me, and you can read what other people have said about me. www.RockTheWorldCoaching.com
I also have a MySpace page with an advice column:
<http://www.myspace.com/coachmargit>

If you Google me, you'll find out TONS about me.

Why am I telling you this? So you can practice finding trustworthy adults!

Email me, if you'd like. Write Teen with a question in the subject line so the email doesn't get deleted.

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TTFN,

Margit