

# Let's Talk About It

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## To "Let Go" Takes Love

Dear friend, do you have difficulty letting go of relationships that have gone sour? Do you have difficulty allowing your adult children to live independent lives? Do you have difficulty letting your children make their own mistakes in life?

Sometimes letting go means there will be no more interaction between you and another person. This is not always the case. Letting go can also mean that although there is still a relationship, you are allowing your family members or friends to make decisions for themselves. This is even more important when family members mess up their lives with drugs, alcohol, or other destructive behaviors. Always "rescuing" them and not allowing them to experience the consequences of their actions will cripple them emotionally. They will not learn the lessons that can enrich their lives.

### LET THEM GO

Too many parents stifle the growth toward independence and self-reliance by parenting their adult children. Letting go may mean leaving your son in jail and not seeking bail. Letting go may mean requiring your adult daughter to buy her own food and clothing. Letting go may mean not cooking, washing, or ironing for your adult children living in the home with you. Letting go may mean requiring rent from your working adult children staying in the home with you. Letting go may mean that the parent must say, "It's time for you, my working adult son, to live on your own. I want you to be out of the house in three months. That does not mean you cannot visit or occasionally come for dinner. It means that I will no longer plan your life for you. You are totally in charge of it."

To let go takes love. Here is a very popular poem (author unknown) that illustrates the point. It is entitled "To Let Go Takes Love:"

### To Let Go Takes Love

To "let go" does not mean to stop caring; it means I can't do it for someone else.

To "let go" is not to cut myself off; it is the realization that I can't control another.

To "let go" is not to enable, but to allow learning from natural consequences.

To "let go" is to admit powerlessness, which means the outcome is not in my hands.

To "let go" is not to try to change or blame another; it is to make the most of myself.

To "let go" is not to care for, but to care about.

To "let go" is not to "fix", but to be supportive.

To "let go" is not to judge, but to allow another to be a human being.

To "let go" is not to be in the middle arranging all the outcomes, but to allow others to affect their own destinies.

To "let go" is not to be protective; it is to permit another to face reality.

To "let go" is not to deny, but to accept.

To "let go" is not to nag, scold, or argue, but instead to search out my own shortcomings and to correct them.

To "let go" is not to adjust everything to my desires, but to take each day as it comes, and to cherish myself in it.

To "let go" is not to criticize and regulate anybody, but to try to become what I dream I can be.

To "let go" is not to regret the past, but to grow and to live for the future.

To "let go" is to fear less and to love more.