



Excerpt from Chapter One of "Embracing Rebellion; If You Can Raise Teenagers, You Can Lead Anyone"

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Scene One

" 'You kids nowadays don't appreciate all the hard work we adults do for you!' shouted Steve.

"Oh boy, here we go again," thought his son, Louis; "the old, 'You don't appreciate us' speech again." "To heck with you!" he yelled. "All I did was leave my shoes in the middle of the floor and you go off on me. You're such a jerk!"

"Give me a break!" yelled Steve. "It's not just your shoes. You don't finish anything. Your room looks like a pig sty. You leave your junk all over the house, and getting you to do any household chores is like pulling teeth. You're just plain lazy!"

"Well, maybe I don't want to end up a workaholic like you!" shouted Louis. "You're gone so much I hardly know who you are. When you do finally get home you are so crabby all you do is yell at us."

"Well, you try to earn enough money to support this family," yelled Steve. "You act like money grows on trees! When I was a kid, I worked my tail off and was grateful to get a dollar an hour for it. My father taught me the value of work."

"We have enough money!" shouted Louis. "I'd prefer to move into a smaller house than to have to put up with your one-track mind about accomplishments. It seems like the only thing that matters to you is what anyone produces. You don't care about me, only what I can achieve. When it comes to school, you never have time for anything except to ask me how my grades are. And all I hear about is where I am coming up short. I seem to never do anything right."

"Well, you act like you have all of the answers!" yelled Steve. "You never shut up long enough to find out what I think. You're so sure of yourself. I am three times your age with a lot more experience and you act like I am an idiot!"

"It's not that I think that you are an idiot," yelled Louis. "It's just that it's always your way or the highway. There is no flexibility. Times have changed, Dad. And I'm not you. What worked for you won't work for me. I feel like you are just trying to force feed me your philosophy. You are so out of touch with reality. I don't live in the world you live in. My friends and I care about different things than you do!"

"Yeah, like smoking pot and chasing girls! You can't even see that your friends are taking you down the road to ruin. If you'd shut up and listen to me, I could teach you some sense!" yelled Steve.

"What a load of crap! It's always a lecture. To heck with you!" Louis yelled as he stormed off to his bedroom and slammed the door. "Well, if I smoke pot, I have a good reason to," he thought. "I'm getting out of here and go hang out with my friends and see if I can have some real fun. At least they understand me."

As many of us are aware, dialogues similar to the previous one are played out many times a day in homes all across America. What is just as sad, in my opinion, is that in a more subtle way, the same dialogue is going on in businesses all across the country. So why are we stuck? Why are so many families and organizations spending their time fighting each other when they ought to be supporting each other? Why do so many bosses and parents feel that their employees or children are uncooperative? And why do so many employees and children feel that no one is listening? There are many reasons, I am sure. But one that is often overlooked, I believe, is an unhealthy view of the role of rebellion. It may seem crazy to you, but I believe leaders need to embrace rebellion in order to overcome it. The only way to surmount this challenge is to see it as an opportunity, and to grow from it."