

## Ten Tips for Parents in Expressing Unconditional Love for Their Young Adult

1. To experience and know that a parent loves you unconditionally is essential to leaving the family in a healthy way. Love them to let them go.
2. Parents need to take the initiative and ensure that they communicate unconditional love through words and actions. Actions speak louder than words. Love in the context of this practice is a verb not a noun. Do it, don't just say it.
3. Recognize and try to understand late adolescent and young adult behavior in terms of a need to address developmental tasks of identity, independence and intimacy. Don't take their effort to distance from you to establish their identity as rejection.
4. Don't use or assume that your young adult will follow the same path that you took during your young adulthood and if they don't something is wrong. Differences indicate their uniqueness and are not inherently good or bad. Embrace these.
5. Express gratitude for your young adult and call out positive character traits, strengths, personal qualities, unique characteristics (their being) and not just achievements (their doing).
6. You can reach your young adult best through vulnerability- heart connections that acknowledge your mistakes, apologize and disclose your deepest desires for their happiness.
7. Approach your young adult out of what will be most loving and helpful to them in their development- identity, independence, and intimacy. Avoid acting out of your fear, hurt, anger, resentment, anxiety, guilt or what will make you feel better.
8. Connect through compassion for their mistakes and failures, and stand with them in support of their learning and recovery from these.
9. Practice and model forgiveness and self-love for this is a gift they need to take with them in their journey of leaving home. Practicing unconditional love of self is a gift you can give yourself in letting go.
10. Practice acceptance that there are things we can't change or control and have patience because this process of separation is taking longer these days. And approach this stage of life with optimism and hope and a belief that there are better days ahead.

For further help with connecting to and understanding your young adult, please consider reading *Love to Let Go* available through this website in ebook or print form.