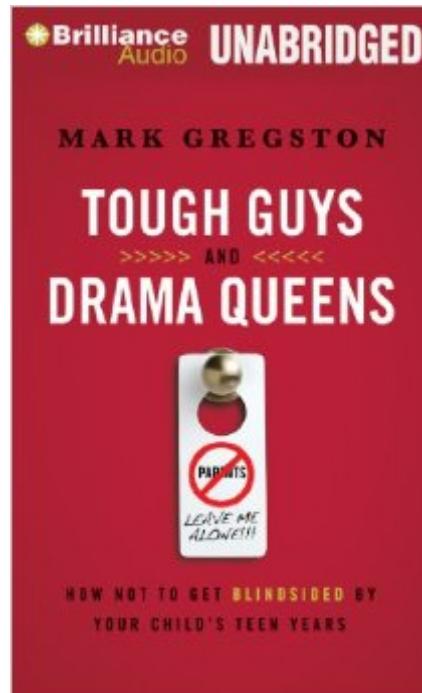


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# Tough Guys And Drama Queens: How Not To Get Blindsided By Your Child's Teen Years



## Synopsis

If you've ever lain awake at night wondering what might be around the corner of your child's adolescence, this audiobook is for you! After more than thirty-eight years of working with more than 2,500 teens, Mark Gregston, founder of Heartlight, a Christian residential counseling center, introduces Tough Guys and Drama Queens—a must-listen how-to audiobook for parents of pre-teens and teens with time-tested, biblical techniques to guide you through these unavoidably challenging years. Mark helps parents realize that some natural parenting approaches are actually counter-productive and therefore totally ineffective. In place of those he offers tried-and-true wisdom on the vital importance of relationship, forgiveness, and explains how conflict is actually the precursor to change. Every day your child is bombarded by a highly sexualized culture and over-exposed to words and images that can influence them beyond your reach. Your connection to them during these years is critical as is your response to tough issues such as: appearance performance authority & respect boundaries. Complete with bonus insights, questions to engage your child, and instruction for teachers, counselors, pastors, and other family members, Tough Guys and Drama Queens offers proactive tools to prepare you for the incredible teen years ahead.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Early in this book, Mark Gregston makes the claim that adolescence used to end in the late teens, but that in our culture it seems to go on until about the age of 26. I'm 25, and when I read that, I laughed and thought, "not me!" Then I continued reading, and the further along I got in this book, the

more I realized, "Oh no. It IS me!" Let me say that of all the things to want to consider myself, "adolescent" is not one of them. So to preface my review, I am writing this as 1. an adolescent (cringe) 2. a parent too young to have teenage children (I realize there are probably a few 25 year-olds out there with teenage children, but for the most part a 25 year-old is not going to have children in that age range) meaning that this book was not at all directed at me. But I read it anyhow, and here are my thoughts: The author makes the claim that while children haven't inherently changed, the culture has changed, and that this is the reason "old-school" parenting doesn't work. He says that parents need to adapt to this, or they will lose their teens to the culture they're immersed in. I tend to agree with this assessment. He describes numerous ways that culture is different now than it was 15 years ago, and why it is so much more overwhelming and confusing for youngsters. I found his assessment of current cultural differences and the struggles they introduce to be spot on. As the author moved from describing culture to describing parenting practices to avoid and parenting practices to start using, it was like I was reading an account of my own teen years and all the things I wished my parents had understood when I was growing up.

I have to confess. I have good teens. They aren't sneaking out at night, not drinking, not doing drugs, and they usually tell me the truth. But there are times I have felt blindsided by their emotions, their questions, and their words. In those moments, I often feel as if I'm failing at this parenting thing. I begin to fear that my good teens are going to walk away from God and make some really bad decisions in their lives. Then my gut reaction is to lecture more, tighten rules, and try to make sure they stay on the right path. That's the wrong response, unfortunately. I'm learning that teenage girls are drama queens. They just are. Not necessarily in the trouble-making, manipulative and mean way I usually think of drama queens. But to them every emotion is HUGE and every difficulty is THE END OF THE WORLD. Some of this they can't really control. Their changing hormones help blow everything out of proportion and their youth means they don't have enough life experience to have a realistic perspective yet. The "right now" of their life really does seem like forever to them. As parents, we're looking at situations with the wisdom of 20+ years more life experience. The hardest part of parenting teens is learning not to react to the drama, and not to take it personally. The second hardest part is knowing what to let go of, and where to stand firm. What battles are worth fighting, and which ones will only damage your relationship with your child? That's where I found Tough Guys and Drama Queens helpful. Mark Gregston used his 35+ years of experience working with teens and their families to write this book.

I was really looking forward to reading *Tough Guys and Drama Queens: How Not to Get Blindsided by Your Child's Teen Years* because I have a tween drama queen in the making and I was pleasantly surprised that the core of Mark Gregston's philosophy is not just how to handle the turbulent teen years but how parents can better prepare their teens for adulthood. Having worked with teens myself, I am impressed that Mark Gregston, founder of a Christian residential counseling center called Heartlight, has had thirty-eight years of experience with more than 2,500 teens. The author explains the steps of the parental roles in memorable terms. In the first five years parents try to please their children. In the elementary years, there is a shift to protecting the children. Middle school aged children need parents to provide. The remaining teen years should be about preparing them for adulthood. Unfortunately, many parents get stuck in over-pleasing, over-protecting, and over-providing modes. The result is their teenagers are not prepared to be self-reliant adults and they take on the very traits the parents were hoping to avoid, but were inevitable with their parental approach. At first, it grated with me that Mark Gregston feels that the parenting approach that worked well with me as a child would not work today with the overexposure to information, the overloading children due to our heightened technology, but then I have to admit that today's culture is significantly different than when I was a teen. There were no such things as cell phones, home computers, and cable TV in my home as I was growing up, much less the Internet, email, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, texting, digital pictures, and video games.

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