

Dad's **GREAT ADVICE**

FOR

Teens

**Stuff Every Teen
Needs to Know About...**

Parents
Friends
Social media
Drinking
Dating
Relationships
Finding Happiness



MARC FIENBERG

CONTENTS

Do You Really Need to Read This Book?	1
Wait! Before You Begin...	5
Great Advice #1	
Don't Do Really Dumb Things	7
Great Advice #2	
Don't Make Your Parents Happy	13
Great Advice #3	
Spend Your 44 Hours Wisely	19
Great Advice #4	
Don't Believe a Word Your Boyfriend/Girlfriend Says	25
Great Advice #5	
Be Contradistinctive	31
Great Advice #6	
Remember That You Only See Edited Lives	35
Great Advice #7	
Be a Creator, Not a Consumer	41
Great Advice #8	
The Images You Post Define Your Image Forever	45
Great Advice #9	
Step Into the Arena	51
Great Advice #10	
Don't Neglect Your Friends for Your Significant Other	55
Great Advice #11	
Learn How to Apologize	61
Great Advice #12	
Don't Fear Your Crush, Crush Your Fear	67
INTERMISSION	
You Deserve a Break... and a Reward	73

Great Advice #13	
You Will Become Your Friends _____	75
Great Advice #14	
Try Everything _____	81
Great Advice #15	
Don't Trust Your Brain to Make Decisions _____	85
Great Advice #16	
Start Your Career Now _____	91
Great Advice #17	
Remember That It Always Gets Better _____	97
Great Advice #18	
Put Yourself in Others' Shoes _____	101
Great Advice #19	
Don't Follow All the Great Advice in This Book _____	107
Great Advice #20	
Don't Grow Up Too Fast _____	111
Great Advice #21	
If You Decide to Grow Up Fast, Do It Wisely _____	117
Great Advice #22	
Decide for Yourself When You're Ready to Have Sex _____	127
Great Advice #23	
Remain a Condom Virgin _____	133
Great Advice #24	
Compare Yourself to Only One Person _____	137
Great Advice #25	
Take Action, Right Now _____	141
EXTRAS _____	149

BONUS ADVICE

Great Advice #1

Figure Out How to Be Successful _____ 159

Great Advice #4

Don't Have Too Many Friends _____ 165

Great Advice #2

Treat Your Car Like a Gun _____ 169

Great Advice #18

Have Deep, Meaningful Conversations _____ 175

Great Advice #21

Fail on Your Way to Success _____ 181

Great Advice #14

If You Drink a Sip, Don't Drive _____ 185

Great Advice #10

Help Somebody _____ 191

About the Author _____ 196

GREAT ADVICE #9

STEP INTO THE ARENA

*Get out of your comfort zone
and take risks in life.*

Teens get embarrassed. A lot. I mean A LOT. I'm guessing you're embarrassed just reading this and knowing that I'm addressing you directly, right?

You probably care a lot about what your friends and acquaintances and family think about you. You probably even care about what crazy Aunt Edna thinks about you. And naturally, because you don't enjoy being embarrassed, you tend to try to minimize the amount of embarrassment you experience. That's to be expected. But it's such a shame.

It's a shame because one of the main side effects of trying to minimize the amount of embarrassment you experience is playing it safe. And playing it safe is an awful way to live your life—especially when you're a teen and the stakes of not playing it safe are so low.

Yes, yes, I fully appreciate the enormous risk you're taking by leaving the house with your hair looking like that (great mohawk, by the way). I understand that your life will be over if people ever hear what a terrible karaoke singer you are. I know that you will be ostracized from your community if anyone learns that you've

been to seven Justin Bieber concerts (and perhaps you *should* be ostracized).

We all understand that the stakes are pretty high for a teen, and the risks you are sometimes tempted to take are big ones. But I have to let you in on a secret: When you compare these risks to some of the risks you'll be taking when you're an adult, they pale in comparison. And so...

Learn to take risks. Learn to take lots of risks. Now. While you don't have much to lose. And let me assure you that, if you don't have a spouse or kids to take care of, and if you do have parents that are around to support you emotionally and financially, then you really do not have much to lose.

Try out for the cross-country team! I know, if you do, you risk the embarrassment of being the slowest person on the team, and having to hang your head in shame each time you come in last place, and endure the taunts of everyone on the team calling you "The Tortoise." But if you don't try out for the team, play it safe, and sit on the sidelines, you risk the silent torture of watching everyone else enjoy the thrill of competition week after week, and wondering if you could have beaten them all if only you had just taken a risk.

Raise your hand in class when the teacher asks a tough question! I know, if you do, you risk a few moments of shame when you answer "The Battle of Gettysburg" when the question your math teacher asked was, "What is the square root of forty-nine?" But if you remain silent and don't raise your hand, you risk letting another student answer the question, giving the exact same answer that you would've given, and hearing the accolades of the teacher saying to somebody else, "So impressive that you knew that answer!"

Take it from President Teddy Roosevelt, the eight-time winner of the prestigious "best presidential mustache" award, who said (paraphrasing), "The people who criticize others do not count. The credit belongs to the person who steps into the arena, whose face is

marred by dust and sweat and blood, who tries valiantly, and who, at best, knows the triumph of winning, and at worst, fails while daring greatly. That person never has to worry about being one of those frightened critics who doesn't ever win or lose because they never even tried."

As good ol' Teddy says, step into the arena! As long as the risks you take are not dangerous or irreparable, take those risks! Don't sit on the sidelines when you could be in the arena playing the game. Being in the arena is exhilarating. Being in the arena is exciting. Being in the arena is fun. Being in the arena means you have the chance to experience all of that, and win big. Being in the arena means that, even if you lose, you had an amazing experience, became stronger in the process, and did more than every other person sitting on the sidelines, watching you compete in the arena.

Step into the arena. Take some risks.

#takerisks

#stepintothearena

#riskit

#failwhiledaringgreatly

*“Take risks. If
you win, you
will be happy.
If you lose, you
will be wise.”*

–Unknown

DON'T FEAR YOUR CRUSH, CRUSH YOUR FEAR

Stop wondering if they like you. Get past your fear of embarrassment and make a move on your crush. It's worth the risk.

There are lots of things that aren't great about being a teenager. You're smarter than your parents, but you still have to listen to them. You don't get any privacy. And don't get me started on your teachers.

But one of the greatest things about being a teenager is arriving at the stage of life where you start liking people. "But I've always liked people," you say. I'm not talking about liking people; I'm talking about "liking" people! Boyfriends, girlfriends, crushes. (Wink, wink.)

The thing that contributes most to your happiness in life probably isn't what you think it is. It's not money. It's not your grades or future career. It's not even being famous. It's your relationships. Not only your relationships with your friends and family, but also your relationship with that one person in your life who you're closest with: a boyfriend, girlfriend, significant other, partner, better half, ball and chain, bae, crush, companion, sweetheart, boo, paramour, soulmate, true love, or anything else you want to call them.

Is it necessary to have a significant other to be happy? Nope. Friends and family do the trick for lots and lots of people. In fact, it's estimated that about 1 percent of the population don't have any interest at all in romantic or sexual relationships.

But for the rest of us that do, our crushes can be the most exciting part of our lives. I believe (as do many others) that finding that special somebody who lights your fire is the most rewarding, important, exciting, valuable, and special aspect of most people's lives. More than your career. More than money. More than almost anything else I can think of, except perhaps having kids (which, as you may know, is a byproduct of having that special somebody).

So if you're at the stage where you "like" someone and have a crush, especially if it's your first crush, you're probably amazingly exhilarated and amazingly terrified at the same time. Exhilarated at the prospect that your crush might like you too, but terrified at the prospect that your crush might not feel the same. Or maybe even more terrified at the prospect that your crush WILL like you.

If you're like a lot of teens, this feeling of being terrified usually wins out over the feeling of exhilaration, and as a result, you might go out of your way to make sure that your crush never finds out about your feelings. After all, if that person discovers your feelings, you risk the chance that maybe they just want to be friends, and OMG, you'll experience a level of embarrassment and sadness and disappointment never seen before by anyone on this planet. (Except by the other few billion people who have also been rejected by somebody they like.)

It's true. Having a crush on somebody who doesn't feel the same kind of sucks. And it sucks so bad that I can't blame you for not wanting to let your crush know that you like them. But the problem is that, as much as it sucks to find out your crush doesn't like you the way you like them, there's something that sucks ten times more than that....

Not doing anything while your crush secretly has the exact same feelings about you as you have about them. That really sucks. That worse than sucks. That supersucks.

It supersucks when another day goes by that you could be spending together with your crush, at a level of happiness you've probably never experienced before, but instead you both remain apart, cowering in fear. It supersucks wondering each and every day, for weeks, and months, and maybe even years, whether or not your crush likes you, hoping they'll take the risk that you're too afraid to take and say something first, revealing their true feelings for you. It supersucks finding out at your high school reunion twenty years later that you both had a major crush on each other, but neither one of you did anything about it, and missed out on something really special.

Having a special, romantic relationship with somebody is the stuff life is made of. I'd even go so far as to say that it's kind of the whole reason we've been put here on this planet. It's so amazing that you can't sit around in fear doing nothing, while the chance of experiencing a relationship like that passes you by. You must do something. You have to make things happen. You have to find out.

Tell your crush you like them.

Or if that's too scary for you, do something bold to build a relationship with them. Sit down next to them at lunchtime. Text them a joke. Share a doughnut. Watch a video together. Ask if they want to do homework with you. Invite them to a movie. Ask them to dance.

If they don't feel the same about you, you'll experience a little bit of disappointment and sadness (and maybe even some embarrassment), but you'll also have the benefit of not wasting any more time on a relationship that won't happen, and be able to move on to building a relationship with somebody new that *is* interested.

But...

If they do feel the same about you, you'll experience one of the absolute best things you can possibly experience in this life of yours.

Crush your fear. Tell your crush you like them. Now.

#crushyourfear

#tellyourcrush

#supersucks

#tellhim

#tellher

*“If you don’t go
after what you
want, you’ll
never have it.”*

–Nora Roberts