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Chicken Soup for the TEENAGE Soul III

Jack Canfield
Mark Victor Hansen
Kimberly Kirberger

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More Stories of Life,
Love and Learning

Jack Canfield

Mark Victor Hansen

Kimberly Kirberger



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Introduction

The Faces of Our Youth

Many older people seem to take an unmerited pride in the mere fact they are adults.

When youth comes crashing in on them with enthusiasm and ideals, they put on their most patronizing smiles and send them out with what they call their blessings.

But you and I know that they have not given their blessings but a cold shower.

They pat the young man or young woman on the back and say:

"You're young. Enjoy your enthusiasm and your ideals while you can.

For when you grow up and grow out into the world you'll see how foolish your ideas actually were."

And, the trouble is, young people do grow up and grow away from their ideals.

And that is one reason why the world into which they go gets better so slowly.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Dear Teen,

We are so excited. After two years of reading thousands upon thousands of stories and poems we have compiled



what we believe to be the best *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul* book yet. It hasn't been easy. In fact, for some reason this book took more hard work than its two predecessors put together.

We received over fifty thousand submissions for this book, and letters and stories are still pouring in by the hundreds. (We will use them in *Teen IV*.) There were twenty teenagers who read each story that came in and picked their favorites. (Their favorites consisted of over five thousand stories!) We then read each one and picked our favorites based on subject matter, writing style, and, most important, shared wisdom. What we ended up with is a book so packed with experience, emotion, happiness and heartache that whoever reads it will certainly be changed for life.

It is hard to express the gratitude we feel to all the teenagers who so courageously shared their stories and poetry with us. Every single submission touched us deeply and affected the final results of this book.

We are also very grateful to all the teenagers who have written to thank us for compiling these books. We do work hard to make these books what they are, but please know that it is you, the teenager, who is the main force that drives these books and their success, and for that you should be very proud.

Please feel free to read this book in whatever manner works best for you. Skip around, go from front to back, read it all at once or over time. This is your book. We hope it serves you well.

With love,

Jack, Mark and Kimberly



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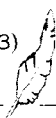
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RELATIONSHIPS

Love means each person is free to follow his or her own heart.

Melody Beattie



Never Been Dissed—Until Now

What can I say? Sometimes I'm a little dumb. I consider Cheetos a major food group. I play the air guitar. I think burping is funny. And, worst of all, I screwed up my chance with Darcy by listening to a bunch of other jerks who were just as clueless as me.

Darcy was kinda like the Jewel CD I loved. I played that thing over and over on the way to school, but the second I pulled into the parking lot, it got stuffed under my seat for, uh, safekeeping and replaced with the Beastie Boys.

Imagine me confessing to my friends that I, captain of the basketball team, was dating Darcy, captain of the debate team. Believe me, I didn't plan on falling for the school brain. But I was blown away by the first words she ever spoke to me.

"Uh, are you lost? This is the li-brar-y. The gym is on the other side of the school, remember?" she said, enunciating the words like she was talking to a toddler. Ouch.

Even though we went to the same school, Darcy and I lived in completely different worlds. She spent her time with the Net nerds, and I roamed the halls like Moses parting the Red Sea of fans who worshipped the guys on my team. I was totally knocked for a loop when she broke the silence.

"Books. I need a book," I stammered, suddenly unable to remember my assignment. She pointed to a row of books on Thomas Edison—just the man I was looking for—and before I could turn to thank her, she was gone.



When I did catch up with her again, she was on her tippy toes reaching for an encyclopedia in the next aisle. "Need a ladder? Or how 'bout some platforms?" I asked giving her a taste of her own sarcasm.

"How about giving me a hand?" she replied. "Oh, that's right. Books are *square*, not round like a basketball. Think you can hold one?" *Cha-ching!* This girl has guts, I thought. When I started laughing, Darcy totally cracked up and started snort-laughing. The number-two pencils holding up her hair were shaking.

"I can't believe I said that to you. I can't believe you're laughing. This is so surreal," she laughed. "Oh, sorry, that's a big word. Do you need a dictionary?" More laughing, more snorting. We went on like that for a while, ripping on each other until I thought my sides would split.

For the rest of the day—okay, the rest of the *week*—every time I thought about her, I felt the same gut-socking, dizzy feeling I get before a big game. Then I found myself taking different routes to get to class just to see if I'd bump into her, and when I did... doh! We didn't say a word to each other, but the joke was still going. I'd innocently make gorilla noises, and she'd die laughing. Or she'd take off her glasses and bump into walls, sending her books, pen and protractor flying everywhere. She taped Brain Gum to my locker. I glued a pair of sweaty gym socks to hers. Two weeks into our secret game, Darcy asked me out. Correction: she blackmailed me into a date. I found a ransom note in my locker saying that if I ever wanted to see my lucky jockstrap again, I'd better meet her at a nearby coffee shop. What guy wouldn't love a girl with that sense of humor?

After that first date, we spent nearly every day together talking about everything—cheesy Kung Fu movies (our

