



# Megan de Beyer

## What is going on with our teenagers? Why are they so perplexing?

You are not alone in your confusion. Teens are irrational, highly emotional, and moody. They can also exhibit high levels of anxiety. Teenagers experience their emotions intensely. This is a reactive and self-centered stage, because their brain is dictating this attitude! They are trying to get to know themselves, and their place in the world. At the same time, they are dealing with internal mental and emotional stresses.

To further complicate matters, there are the external factors we are all feeling now. Many adults are feeling anxious about the future. Safety and security are primary concerns. Many teens are presenting with high anxiety, OCD symptoms, or generalized fear.

Are teenagers picking up on adult anxiety? Global tensions? Or information overload? My opinion is that it is due to all of these, as well as the impact of an aspirational society hugely impacted by social media (particularly Instagram).

Anxiety is the result of overstimulation and hyper-arousal. The symptoms are tunnel vision, constant worrying, hypervigilance, poor sleep, and myriad physical issues.

My concern, as a parent expert, is that we either give our teens too much power to dictate what they want OR over-parent and smother them.

It is vital that teens have agency to make decisions, but only within the limits set with an experienced, wise parent.

Hang out together  
without focusing  
on problems or  
outcomes

Switch off!  
Seriously- the  
whole family.  
Enjoy lengthy  
device breaks.

### My top tips for preventing anxiety in teens

Normalize their  
feelings - don't  
dramatize,  
romanticize, or  
dismiss them

Get into your bodies:  
grounding is essential!  
Walk barefoot in  
nature, play sports, lie  
on the grass, plant  
something with your  
bare hands, or go wild  
swimming. Plan these  
things together.

Look after yourself.  
Not only will you set  
a great example, you  
will also become a  
calm container for a  
serene family  
environment.

On the subject of SELF-CARE, Bobbejaanskloof is hosting an incredible [Gut Health Retreat](#) with Dr. Nicky Whiteman. The gut is known to be a 'second brain' and its healthy functioning is vital to wellness and longevity. [Click here](#) to book!

