The next very important concept is a gradual expansion of freedom and responsibility. A gradual expansion where you give more freedom the older he gets. This gradual expansion of freedom begins with non-critical issues. You don't want to mess up his life at a young age by allowing him to have freedom in a very important area. Guy comes in and says "Dad I want to smoke pot. What do you think?". Well I'm preparing you for freedom. Make up your own mind. You know really I know that sounds funny but I've actually heard parents say that they say well I believe that since he's going to have to make up his own mind later on I let him make up his mind and I said yeah but there are certain areas where you cannot afford to let him make up his own mind.

There are critical areas - you can't say "well if you want to try arsenic once it's all right". No you don't you cannot let him try arsenic. You'll die and there's some very critical things that you cannot give him freedom. But the non-critical things are plenty of non-critical things you can give some freedom and you give more as they get older and more and it's good for them to get used to freedom. I do think it's important though even in non-critical issues to explain your own opinion on why perhaps you would not do it even though you're going to allow him to do it because it's non-critical is not going to hurt him.
It's not gonna have any long range damage on them but you know you yourself would not do this. You say "well I'm getting you ready for freedom". And I tell my son this all time I level will I let him know what I'm doing. I say "Hey Bob. Couple of years you're gonna be a teen. I'm getting you ready for freedom so I'm not going to say no you can't do this. But let me tell you why I wouldn't do it..." And I explain my opinion all the reasons I would do it for the following reasons.

[Bob:]"Does that mean I can't do it? No I didn't say that. You get to make up your mind. Now for instance we're at the point now where where I do not - and for a couple of years I haven't - I do not make my son come to church. I don't. He'll ask me every now and then on Sunday night Hey Dad do I have to go to church tonight? I say hey remember what I told you all the time. I'm getting ready for freedom. You don't have to go to church tonight but let me tell you why I'm going to church tonight. One two three four five [reasons].

Pretty soon he goes upstairs and gets on his coat. He comes down he gets in the car. It's really fun. It's great to prepare him for freedom and one of the ways that most of the time they'll do what you want him to do. Even though you give him the ultimate responsibility is allow them the advantage of knowing your opinion and giving them your insights and your principle but still apply them. And once in a while he doesn't go upstairs and get his coat.
A couple of weeks ago he didn't. I said get ready go to church. He says man there's really something going on at Disneyworld I got to see. And I said Well you know Bob tonight the message is gonna be on this and I really think it's important and I'm going to church for the following reasons; One two three. [Bob:] "That's very interesting. But if I can stay home I'm gonna stay home". [audience laughter]. And a lot of - some of you may disagree with me but I say OK you know because I realize and in a couple years you know he's going to have freedom if he wants it. Complete! and I don't wanna blow it. I don't want him to be out of control. And so I say well OK you can if you want or you can stay home. Now he hasn't done it too many times. I can only count two times in the last year where he hasn't come to church with me. 99% of time he comes in I think it's more important to have him come willingly getting ready for freedom than to say you will come you're only 16 years old "you will come to church with me. You shall!". [Child:] "But I don't want-" "You shall come!". It gets bitter. I think it's important to recognize this concept of getting ready for that freedom if he wants it. And the question somebody asks: Is he really free at 18. That's right. If they want to drive from home they can do it at 18 and a lot of their thousands of kids on the streets that have parents don't have any control. Of course the control they have as a they can not fight for their driver's license but they'll drive anyhow. But they can actually have freedom at 18 if they want to. Of course they've got the responsibility with it and give warnings.

I think it's very important I've talked to a lot of parents who give the freedom but they don't give warnings they don't say yeah but if you do this you know what's going to happen to you. This is what's going to happen to you. You're going to get hurt. This is going to result in this. It's
important to give warnings and most important of all place responsibility. So now look I'm
giving you the right to make up your mind on this but I want you to know something. You're
going to be responsible for your actions. I'm going to hold you responsible. Me give an example.
I give my son so much money for working with me. For instance we just got through pain in the
house. I want to pay him for help me paint the house. And it's his money.

And quite often he'll want to spend his money on some things that I think are foolish. You know
it just it just blowing his money and I don't think it's right. And I'll tell him something I don't
think you should spend it for this on this for the following reasons 1 2 3 4 5. I think it's
foolishness for these following reasons. And then he'll say Well I can understand what you're
saying but I still want to buy it. I say OK I want you to know something I'm not going to advance
you any money when you see something else you really want is really neat. Like in a couple of
weeks I'm not going advance you any money if you spend that money and blow it. Man you're
gonna have to live without money. I place responsibility on him and sometime it comes back to
haunt him he'll come back. Dad can I have a couple bucks. I want to. Hey man you blew your
money man. What I told you I let you spend it but now you're gonna have to live with that
decision you made.

Yeah but you got plenty money Dad. You give me a couple bucks. Yeah I can't. You're right. But
I want you to get used to responsibility. Someday you're gonna have it. So I'm trying to give you
some right now. And I call your attention to the fact that if you spent this money you wouldn't
have anything for something you wanted later on. Now you want something right. You don't have it right. You spend something and something I think is foolish I think by now you think it was foolish. Yeah. You go walking away kicking a dirt kind of mad at me you know. But this this man placing responsibility is very important.

It is important to make occasional audits on your children. It really is. Don't take their word for everything they do. And boy the big thing that comes up is Dad don't you trust me. And you know what I say no. And so we say oh shame you shouldn't ever say that your children you know. You know how I respond. I say no I don't trust you because you're just like I was when I was your age. It's not you personally I don't trust it's your adolescence I don't trust you see because I was there I was your age and I remember I needed some help. And I needed my dad to check on me once in a while to keep me where I should be. And I don't trust your adolescence Bob. So you know you're right. I don't trust you.

Explain an honest trust situation with him. Explain what you mean. Explain the fact that you you want to trust them and that's why you're occasionally you're checking because you want to build your trust in them. And of course if they're doing what they're supposed to be doing this will build your trust. For instance let me give you a practical example. I can't tell you how many time I've been at parties three o'clock in the morning Pop parties you know you're round up a bunch of kids and start calling parents and you call these parents and you say all of a sudden for a mother of Suzy whatever we have your daughter here we wrestled a pot party over at Penrose a pot
party. She's supposed to be over at Gladys his house you know. And while Gladys is whether to but they're not at Gladys house you know and you call Gladys his mother and we'll see both of you over to his house you know and they're all across the yard. You know they're all supposed to be different places. They're neither. I think it's real important when for instance on an overnight thing like that when they're teenagers 14/15 years old I think it's great for a parent to call the parents of the House they're going to.

That seems basic to me but a lot personal do it cause Mrs. Jones Bob says he wants to come over to your house at night spend a night with John. All right when you know I don't know anything about it you know. Wow that'd be nice to know. In fact John said he was going over to Bob's house tonight. Oh yeah. Fortunately that's never happened to me on his check but it could. And when I do call you know Bob's first reaction when this first happened. Gee Dad you treat me like a little kid. No. You know I'm just interested in you trying to make sure that everything's just right. Don't you trust me? Well I don't trust your adolescence completely. And I I really want to make sure it's all right with Mrs. Jones. I don't want you over here if she doesn't want you there. You talk to her.

And so you explain this thing and you re-evaluate and adjust freedom where necessary but every now and then you have to re-evaluate and you have to take a look at the situation where they violated your trust a little bit. You have to pull back and you have to call your attention to that say no look before I let you make up your mind on this but you violated my trust and I'm sorry
but I'm going to pull back the reins a little bit until you prove once again that I can trust you and be very candidly. But the overall trend is one of building toward complete freedom.

If you've got a teenager and you're not building toward complete freedom you could be in trouble. Results are peace to the recipient. Hebrews Twelve eleven. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful but sorrowful. Yet to those who have been trained by it afterword it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness so to the person that the recipient of discipline ultimately it brings peaceful fruit of righteousness brings peace. Proverbs 29 17 happiness to the parent. Would you believe proverbs 29 17.

I've heard some people put it this way they say you know children can either be the greatest joy in the world and the greatest fulfillment or they can be the greatest curse and I've seen some parents who were literally destroyed emotionally and everything else by their children. Their children have gone off on such weird rebellious kicks that their whole their whole lives are ruined. I mean the parents you know they're in such deep distress over the children that they really can't live a happy life. But yet it says it when you discipline your children.

Proverbs 29 17 let me read this to you. Correct your son. He will give you comfort. He will also delight your soul. Really bring happiness and I guess that's. The last of the results. But let me just conclude by saying this. One of the most important. Concepts that is overlooked today is this
matter of discipline. And I think it's. Important to recognize the concepts we've gone over and lastly I'd like to read the following quote from Jay Adams again on competent console from his book. As children grow into their teens the problem becomes less a matter of the parents structuring responsibility and discipline into the life of a child and more a matter of helping the child to assume responsibility for structuring his own life. Once again that the concept of preparing for freedom gradual freedom structuring in his own life. Responsibility. Let's bow our head in a word of prayer tonight as we've talked about discipline.

Father this is an area that we've talked about tonight that is so important. Often abused and many times even overlooked. We ask that as real men - men that have been given the responsibility by you to assume this masculine role of leader that you would give us the intestinal fortitude to abide by the concepts that we've learned from your book relating to discipline. Father may we be disciplined ourselves. May we lead by example but may we also have the commitment. May we demonstrate our love by spending the time that is necessary to really be Godly men in disciplining our children. We'll be careful to thank you for we ask these things in Jesus name, Amen.

[End of Recording]