

# The Importance of Fathers

In the womb you have a connection with your mother. Your father is outside of you. A different kind of bonding and relationship is developed.

Gabrielle Roth in *MAPS TO ECSTASY*, suggests that your relationship with your father determines your relationship to the rest of the world.

If you are curious to see how true this is, look closely at your relationship with your father and see if that affects how you relate to others. You may be amazed at how powerful his influence has been.

## A good father:

- offers protection, guidance and support,
- stays closely connected to you as you move through your changes,
- listens, is open, is willing to share and gives you his attention,
- assures you that your changing body and emotions are okay,
- teaches you how to relate to others and the world,
- encourages you to achieve, compete and perform,
- gives genuine praise for your achievements and celebrates them,
- shows you how to be in your heart with yourself and others,
- teaches you about and assists you around issues to do with money,
- lets you know that your emerging sexuality is natural and healthy.

Your relationship with your father determines whether you can be yourself and express your heart or whether you strive to achieve, perform, charm, seduce, compete, please, demand, negate or destroy – to feel recognised. Whatever you do to get daddy's attention and approval you may do in your relationships with others.

Parenting can be challenging for fathers. If they have been providing for the family, they have the daily stress of creating income. They may also be removed from the emotional environment of the home for most of the time. This can leave some children wondering where dad is and why they feel abandoned. More and more fathers are absent, either because they are at work or because they've left the family altogether. The long-term effect of this has a big impact on society.

**To young males:** It's particularly important that you spend time with your father and other men. Not only being spectators in something but also doing things together. To have physical contact, to be challenged and to test your strength allows you to find your limits and go beyond them. In this way your father feeds you in a vital and energetic way. Doing things together provides nourishment for you as you are growing up. This is as important as the milk of your mother was when you were a baby.

If your father is not around ask a close family friend or relative to step in for him in ways that support you.

**A message to Dads:** Never doubt how important you are in your child's/teenager's life. Even if you have been unavailable or unloving up until this point, it's never too late to offer your hand to your son or daughter. As young adults your children may understand what you have been going through more easily than when they were younger. You can talk together and repair broken bridges. As the adult you can help the healing. Are you willing to?



*Do things  
together!*