
**About the author:** Glasser was educated at Case Western Reserve University where he received his B.S. and M.A. degrees in clinical psychology and an M.D. in Psychiatry. He completed his medical internship at UCLA and psychiatric residency at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Los Angeles.

**Summary:** Glasser advocates “choice theory” in which parents avoid trying to run their children’s lives and, instead, allow them to make their own decisions—and learn from the consequences. The book showcases nine examples of Glasser’s theory in action. A range of problem behaviors are examined including eating disorders, drug abuse, poor school performance and juvenile crime. Basing parenting actions on choice theory leads to improved communication between parent and child, according to Glasser. Honest, effective talk is the foundation required to repair and restore parent-child relationships. Parents must reject old parenting habits, which Glasser characterizes as efforts at external control. External control is evident when parents attempt to coerce the child to do what they want, rather than what the child wants. Teens, too, may engage in such external control with their parents. The goal is to establish a more equal level of power between the parties, thus leading to more fluent relationships.

Glasser describes seven “connecting habits” that parents can use to increase their communication skills. These habits are caring, trusting, listening, supporting, negotiating, befriending, and encouraging. Conversely, the “seven deadly habits” of poor communication are criticizing, blaming, complaining, nagging, threatening, punishing, and rewarding to control (i.e., “if you do this for me, I will do that for you”).

Among Glasser’s advice to parents is that they stop using common sense when dealing with their teens, avoid the use of external control behaviors, learn the principles of choice theory (and then apply them), and choose to engage in the seven “connecting habits” for effective communication.

**Reviewer** Brian Schulze has a B.F.A. and is a former graduate student at Northern Illinois University.