

Choice for Teenagers

Dr Audrey Coatesworth

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The 131 poems in this book are written for teenagers by a retired English psychiatrist. As an introduction to this book, Dr Coatesworth writes:- "I qualified at Edinburgh University Medical School in 1962. For over thirty-five years, until my forced retirement due to ill health in 2006, I worked as a psychiatrist. During my work, the patients who came to see me had often had experiences in their childhood or teenage years which were causing great problems in their adult lives. The experiences had varied, of course. Some had been deliberate – by themselves or others, some misguided and some accidental or unfortunate. In other words, some of the traumas could have been avoided with different care and circumstances, and others could not. I realised, as with other illnesses, that prevention would have been much better than cure - if that could have been possible. Having been a psychiatrist for so many years, I cannot help but see beyond present actions. Life is not meant to be, and never will be, all fun and there can be 'normal' traumas in our daily lives. We must all learn to cope with these as they are part of everyone's life experiences. However, over and above these, there are increasing opportunities in our present day culture for damaging traumas which could adversely affect a young person's future. Teenagers taking drugs or excess alcohol are just two examples. That behaviour does not mean, for me, just a foolish habit to be excused as part of 'growing up'. On the contrary, I know that brains and livers are being damaged and future health devastated in the process. So, I wondered if and how I could share, with young people and teenagers, some of what I have learned during my life and work. I love writing verses and so my three poetry books in this series 'Verses that mean a lot' -'Growing Up', 'Coping with Illness and Grief', and this book, 'Choice for Teenagers' - are my answer. Each title gives some indication of what the poems are about. I have not tried to cover all aspects of life! The poems are a collection which I hope you will find enjoyable, some amusing but above all, interesting and challenging. Your teenage years are so important. If you will accept some advice, could I suggest that you cherish these years. They are a one-off opportunity which cannot be repeated."



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