

Open letter to parents

Ban Grounding

By El Krypto

Janab/ Janaba,
Shrodheo Pita Mata,

Dear parents,

Please forgive me if I sound impertinent, but what I have to say today is of utmost importance. Living in a democratic country, in this era of freedom of speech, I find it necessary to mention a few significant details about my life, which have been tormenting my mind for a long time. I have finally mustered up enough courage to write this letter. I hope to right a few wrongs today. Again forgive any impudence on my part, and before you take any action after reading this letter, remember that I am your loving child, your *shonar tukra chhele*.

I am tired of being grounded! Enough is enough! You cannot ground me for the slightest of reasons. It is a violation of teenage right. I know that there is no law like that, but the laws need to be rectified. Remember that there were no laws against slavery once, but in due time people recognised the flaws in society and the laws against slavery were established. I strongly believe laws upholding teenage rights (like the inability of parents to ground their children) should be established in the society and thus make the world a much better place to live in.

Grounding is an inappropriate measure taken against us for the small mistakes of life. It dampens the lively teenage spirit, taking away the vitality from our existence. It is an attempt to suppress the indomitable teenage free spirit through curbing our freedom of speech, restricting our movements and reducing our lifestyle to a monotonous, boring existence, deprived of thrills and chills. In a world where even animals have rights, we teenagers are still deprived of the most basic necessity of life freedom. Freedom to do what we want, freedom to wake up when we want, freedom to sleep when sleep comes and most importantly, freedom to make small errors without having to fear of being grounded.

I slightly scratched your car that day, but that does not mean that I have to be grounded and be barred from driving. Driver bhai did it once. How come you did not stop him from driving? To err is human and to forgive divine. You taught me that yourself when I was beating up *chhotoo* for breaking my cycle. How can you forget what you preached? You need to install an additional 64-megabyte RAM chip in your brain. Your memory is so small! If you allow me to continue driving, I would surely improve and accidents as such won't happen again in the future. As the saying goes practice makes perfect. By barring me from driving you are just aggravating the situation by preventing my driving skills from developing.

You grounded me for doing badly in my exams. How many times do I have to tell you that it is the teacher's fault that I failed. If she does not give marks, what can I do? I try very hard to study and do well in the exams. My gray cells cannot take in all the information the teacher burden us with. Perhaps it is a genetic problem. Then it is your fault that I have inherited such weak gray cells. The teachers should also be considerate as not to give us so much load, when they know that we are not capable of handling the pressure. You have thus no grounds to ground me for doing badly in my studies. Remember one thing many famous people were illiterate and many did terribly at school. Take the case of Kazi Nazrul Islam. He left school at a very early stage. Akbar the Great couldn't read or write. I do not think Tendulkar studied much. And if John Major can be Prime Minister without graduating from high school, then so can I.

I came home late that day, but it was due to unavoidable circumstances. I cannot be held responsible for the grueling traffic jam in the streets and the fact that my friend wanted to treat me to dinner that day. I would have called but your phone line was busy and later my friend's mobile went out of charge.

I see no reason why you should dislike my friends because they wear earrings and have long hair. Everyone has a right to his or her individuality. It is due time you begin to respect everyone's uniqueness and their own way of thinking, no matter how different it is from yours. Regarding hair and earrings, Einstein had unkempt hair and Nazrul had pretty long hair too. Wasim Akram wears an earring and so do many other artists and players I would not care to mention today. They all have been successful in life and have stood out in the society.

Not cleaning my room is another crime you never fail to implicate me with. A teenager of today is under so much stress that he hardly gets time to do such chores. Overbearing homework from school and private tutors take up most of our time. Also there are other activities like cricket, internet chatting, listening to music, which are necessities in a teenager's life. With so many activities it is difficult to find time to clean my room which (I detest from the bottom of my heart). I am comfortable living in my room in its present condition. I wonder why it bothers you.

The huge phone bill is not a direct consequence of my actions. I try to keep the number of phone calls to a minimum. It is just that the teachers in school do not allow us to talk in class. So we have to finish our conversations on phone. Also half of the time we discuss about homework.

I ask you now what you achieve by grounding me? Do you believe that you are instilling discipline into your son? You are wrong. Being grounded just increases my frustrations and misery. It stunts my growth as a human being, prevents my talents and skills from fully developing. I have lost many of my cricketing skills since you have stopped me from going to cricket practice. I implore you to stop grounding me from today. I promise you it will have positive results and we will be able to live together in harmony.

Seeking your love and cooperation.

Your loving son.



Poisha Chai

By The Lizard King

Ammu Abbu Khola chithi dilum tomar kache
Tomar peyarer Lizard ekhon kothae kemon ache...
Tumi jano na
Bhikka korche pothe potheeeeeee for dating Amina!

Sorry folks! Here I am, back again with yet another boring feature of mine, articles that do little to reduce the boredom of dreadful, manic Thursdays. But I am helpless...there is nothing I can't do. I have got three dates for the weekend, huge Internet bills to pay but not a single poisha in my pocket. **I am BROKE!** I often wonder why is this state of abject money-less-ness called broke. I mean what is it that is broken here? Our pockets? Come on that's absurd! The reasonable thing that can be broken due to this is our hearts. Confused? OK allow me to clarify.

Tell me how many of you have ever subjected to this state? Oh I am sure most of you reading the article have encountered this dreadful condition at least once in your lifetime; provided your life spanned a time limit greater or equal to thirteen years! Although our parents will seriously disagree but we teenagers do need money for various reasons that can fill an entire RS issue! Nevertheless, 'allowance' for us teenagers is something something completely

unheard of in this part of the world. Parents here have this weird notion (I don't know why) that teenagers should not be given **HARD CASH**, as this will slowly but surely lead them to astray. They believe the first thing that we will do, if we get the money, is buy a pack of cigarettes or porno literature. I hate to admit that this is indeed the case for some but why should the majority suffer for an iota of the whole teen population!

Dear parents, if any of you are reading...teen life is not what it used to be twenty or thirty years back. The whole culture of dating and going out was non-existent in those days. Friendship was considered unconditional and loafing around a sheer social crime. Only 'bouncers' and 'toto company managers' were fit for these! That so called 'golden era' even if it ever existed is no more to be found in society. Each step of the way in society now requires money...even teenagers.

'Money money sweeter than honey' is now truer than ever before. Look pops and moms we have got girl friends to maintain and boy they don't come cheap! Ahem...no offence girls. We got to treat them at Sticky Fingers and Wimpy's once in a while. Then there is Valentine's; Friendship Days; Yearly, monthly, weekly and yes even daily anniversaries! Now you may say...hell with your girl friends. Come on dad be reasonable we have got our hormones overflowing and besides there isn't anything else to do either. I am sure you would have loved the opportunity to have a GF when you were my age. All mothers out there- it goes for you too! Then we have friends. Ok fine. Just for your pocket's sake I shall forget about my friends and girl friends for a while. But what about the cool Final Fantasy VIII game CD I saw at Eastern Plaza the other day, the Santana CD or the latest Michael Chrichton novel that I am just dying to buy. Now you will say these are craps. Huh! Parents will be parents...*Dheki shorge geleo dhaan bhangbe!* I believe and I am not alone in this belief that if teenagers are given a certain amount of money as allowance, petty crimes such as *hath safai* on dad's wallet or mother's purse will soon hit an all time lowest mark. Teenagers need money there is no denial to that. If they don't have a source to get it, peer pressure will force them to utilize unfair means.

Now coming back to the heart breaking part. Why is it that we always get a harsh look from our parents whenever we ask for money? After all they are our only source! Teenagers in Bangladesh do not have the opportunity to work and earn a few poishas. I tell you if there is one thing that still gives me cold feet; it has got to be *amar pitaajir Rokto chokhu* and that monstrous *hunkar "Taka diye ki korba"*. Good question! *Taito taka diye ki korbo...dhue pani khabo?* As a child I was, not allowed to drink tea because it would have supposedly affect my liver! Is pocket money something like that...some sort of adult material that will spoil my hands or feet? Parents no longer have the time to go to shopping centers and all the other places and look into our requirements. **NO I AM NOT ASKING YOU TO DO THAT EITHER!** Just give us the money that we want...ok fine not the whole amount but let's start with 50% and TRUST US. All teenagers crave for the trust of their parents (something that doesn't come by easily). We should get it too. Don't you parents think it's high time that we get some respect? If you want us to behave like grown-ups then start treating us like grown-ups and oh yes give me 500!