

To William's mother:

It seems to me that you and his father are the real problem. Your son is obviously intelligent and able to communicate coherently. Have you ever thought about what he wants from life? You seem to have very high expectations & to have mapped out your children's future for them.

Why send him to one of the most expensive 'crammer' schools in the country when he's clearly feeling under enough pressure? Didn't his decision to attend a state school tell you anything?

He obviously doesn't share your views.

It is quite normal for young people to question their parents' values. I thought some of your statements were actually very offensive - for example, the remark that parents from leafy suburbs care about their children and make sacrifices for them. You are privileged. Most people care about their children and make sacrifices for them, but what you're able to provide for your child materially is not an indication of how much you love them.

Your husband sounds like a nightmare - a complete snob who is prepared to totally reject his child if he doesn't follow the path he mapped out for him.

I'm not surprised your son persists in smoking cannabis. He needs something to help him cope with the pressures you are clearly putting him under.

Your accounts of him stealing to fund his habit don't ring true. Cannabis is not that expensive.

He's probably just trying to shock you. The best thing your son can do is get as far away from you as possible and give up trying to get you to see things from his point of view. Don't be too complacent about your other sons either.