



MANAGING THE MOMENTS

A Safe Community Coalition Initiative

TIPS FOR TALKING WITH PARENTS

Think about what get in the way of talking with your parents and how you might be contributing to the dynamic.

Be thoughtful about what you want to say because we all want to be heard, understood, and listened to.

Contracting: Contracting is when you establish ground rules for a conversation (i.e. time limit, subject matter, availability, etc.) Contracting facilitates conversations and sets boundaries and parameters so that everyone can feel safe and be on the same page. Negotiation is involved as well as setting the tone of the conversation you will have in later.

You can Contract around any topic:

- Agreeing on a time to talk: “I am available on Tuesday between 8 and 10. What is good for you?”
- Topics to discuss: “I would like to share my concerns about our conversation the other day.”
- Your needs/boundaries: “Could you please listen to what I have to say and then respond so I can keep my focus?”
- Other person’s needs: “What do you need from me so we can have this talk?”

I Messages: Use *I* to own your feelings and statements. When you say *YOU*, it is blaming and shaming and leads to defensiveness. “*I* Language/Message” have a 3- or 4-part formula:

1. When you do _____.
2. I feel _____.
3. And then _____.
4. I would prefer/appreciate/like it if _____.

Example: “When you yell at me in front of my friends, I feel embarrassed, humiliated and I get very angry and then I yell back at you. I would appreciate it if you did not do this in front of my friends.”

DO, GET, BE:

- What do I want to **do** to get what I want?
- What do I want to **get**?
- How do I want to **behave**, what approach (respectful, calming, timing) will work best?

Mimi’s 3 C’s: These help with starting a conversation. We begin less defensively, and this technique helps others to hopefully be less defensive and to be more inclined to be receptive.

1. You can be **Curious:** “I am curious about how you came to that conclusion.” Not: “Why do you think this way?”
2. You can be **Confused:** “I am confused by what you said since it sounds different than what you said the other day.” Not: “You always change your mind.”
3. You can be **Concerned:** “I am concerned. I heard you crying last night, and I am worried about you.” Not: “You are always so emotional. Get over it.”