

THREE TRICKY TOPICS WITH PROMPTS FOR HONEST CONVERSATION WITH YOUR ADULT CHILD



A step-by-step blueprint
with prompts for hard
conversations with your
adult child

Before you start the conversation...

There are some conversations that are painful for the mom and her adult child. With many hot topics in culture, it's difficult to know what to say. I know because I've experienced it myself with my kids, and you've told me about your challenges, too.



important tip

Before you have this conversation, pray. When you get before God, He will equip you with self-control and compassion instead of reacting with big emotions. Choose the way of Christ by being calm, gentle, and compassionate toward your child.

These scripts with prompts are a blueprint to engage in these conversations with respect and kindness. They are merely guides and a place to start. May these prompts give you courage to engage with your adult children.

Before you have any hard conversation, begin it with private prayer. Get before God and commit to walk in His ways as you navigate these challenging topics. Choose the way of Christ which is: calmness, gentleness, and compassion.



What is the goal of this conversation?

1. Do you want to have a better connection by being honest with each other?
2. Do you want to understand your child and offer empathy?
3. Do you want to repair a rift in your relationship by being a respectful, compassionate listener?

“Remember, momma, there will be time for you to process your emotions once the conversation is over. Save those big feelings for God instead of flinging them on your adult child. Gentleness, compassion, and respect will go a long way in the conversations. You can do it.”



Scenerio #1

Your Child Doesn't Believe In God Anymore

You have noticed your child talks less about God, attends church less, or they have come out and told you they don't believe in God anymore. Take a deep breath, momma, and try these prompts the next time you talk.

3 Prompts For Mom:

- I notice you rarely mention God anymore. Can you tell me where you're at with God?
 - I notice you don't like to go to church. Can you tell me about that?
 - You've mentioned some new views about God and the church. Can you tell me more about your insights?
-

3 Responses From Your Adult Child

- I don't want to get into this mom. You're just going to be mad at me.
- It's complicated, mom. I feel confused and disappointed in the church. Who goes to church anymore? I hate Christians and their "holier than thou" attitudes.
- Have you studied science mom? I just think science makes more sense than faith.

3 Responses For Mom

- I'm sorry I've overreacted in the past. When you walk away from God it feels like I've failed you as a mom. I feel immense shame. But this isn't about me. I want to listen and understand what you have to say. Please continue. Even if I cry, I promise I'll work through it. I love you. Please share your heart with me.
 - I understand it's complicated. I remember feeling that way, too. Tell me where you have been hurt by people from church. How has seeing hypocrisy in other Christians hurt you?
 - I'd love to hear about the new perspectives you've discovered about science, God, and church. Tell me more.
-

3 Responses To Continue the Conversation

- Tell me more. I really want to understand.
- Thank you for sharing your heart. Is there anything else you want to say?
- That was brave of you to share. Is it okay if I ask you a question?

Mom's Response: How do you know that?

Apologist, Mary Jo Sharp, says, "Instead of immediately taking up arms against a person who has made an objection to the Christian faith, make them support their statement."

This helps our children seriously think about why they believe what they believe, and it gives us insight on how much conviction they hold, or are they basing their opinions on "sound bites" from culture that supports what they want to be true?



Scenerio #2

Holiday Expectations and Plans

How do we navigate the conversations about holiday expectations and plans? It is stressful for everyone! Often moms hold unnecessary expectations that make it difficult for families to gather for the holidays. Hopefully these prompts will guide you to be flexible and content with how holidays change once our kids are grown.

3 Prompts For Mom:

- Can we talk about holiday plans?
 - I often feel overlooked and undervalued because you don't want to be here for the holidays anymore. Can we talk about it?
 - Is there an agreement we could come to that works for everyone this holiday season?
-

3 Responses From Your Adult Child

- Oh no! Not this! It's just going to end up in another big argument. I'd rather just avoid it.
- Mom, we don't come home because you think we can only celebrate on a certain day. It makes it hard for us now that we have families of our own. I wish you were more flexible. Doesn't it matter that we're together. Who cares what day it is?
- I'd love to come to an agreement that works for everyone but we need to have some give and take. It's really hard to please everyone.

3 Responses For Mom

- I know it's been hard in the past, and I don't want to argue today. Can you tell me what's on your heart?
- I want to be more flexible and understand where you're coming from. Can you explain it to me please?
- I know every option isn't going to work for everyone, but can we at least come to a consensus on a plan that works for most of us, then we'll call it a win. Some family together is better than no family together.

3 Responses To Continue The Conversation

- What traditions should we keep and which ones can we set aside?
- What could it look like if we shared holidays with your in-laws?
- Here's what's important to me about the holidays. What's important for you?



Scenerio #3

Abortion and Overturning of Roe Vs. Wade

This is one of the many hot button topics in culture today. We are finding many of our adult children have differing views from us. Here are some prompts to help navigate this challenging topic. As apologist Lisa Jo Sharp says, “the goal of these conversations is to listen for understanding.”

3 Prompts For Mom:

- What do you think about the overturning of Roe Vs. Wade? How does that impact you?
 - You seem to have a lot of emotion around this issue. Would you mind telling me your story?
 - It seems like you have changed your views on abortion. Can you tell me about it?
-

3 Responses From Your Adult Child

- What do you mean, what do I think? I think it's the most awful thing in the world for women. Why do you want to keep women oppressed?
- I'm upset! I'm afraid for the world! What about poor women and women who will die if they carry the baby? What about them?
- It's ridiculous not to change mom. We don't live in the same world you did. We have to change with the times. It's just a bunch of cells. What's the big deal when most abortions happen in the first trimester?

3 Responses For Mom

- Tell me more about how this is oppressing women.
 - Tell me about how it causes you fear. How does it impact poor women and women with health concerns?
 - I'd love to hear your perspective on how life is created. How does God factor into your opinions?
-

3 Responses To Continue The Conversation

- Do you see any solutions apart from abortion?
- What can we as a society do to support women and the poor?
- How do we value life on both ends of the spectrum from the unborn to the elderly?

Mom's Response: How do you know that?

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Conclusion and Next Steps

I hope this was helpful, momma. I know it is unnerving for you to hear where your child is on this issue. You were brave to enter a difficult conversations with your child.

I am not going to abandon you. Expect a few follow up emails so I can help you process your emotions because if you're like me, you feel a little shaky after this hard conversation. I'm here for you!

Try this Breathe Prayer:

Breathe in: I will get through this.

Breathe out: God is with me.



***Are we friends on Instagram yet,
because if we're not, we need to be! I
have lots of helpful tips over there.
You can find me @phenkelman***



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