

Tool 5.4: Planning positive conversations

When planning for a potentially challenging conversation with someone you care about, consider PIVA.

P	<p>Positive framing of your request increases the chance that you'll be heard.</p> <p>It helps you both remember what you appreciate about the other person. Tell them something you like about them. Or just tell them you love them. Tell them what you want, not what you don't want.</p>
I	<p>I-statements reduce the chance of defensiveness getting in the way.</p> <p>I-statements communicate our needs and wishes without blaming or criticizing the other person. For example, instead of saying "You make me so sad," you can say "I feel sad when you yell at me."</p> <p>When you're making a request, you can use I-statements too: "I'd like to ask you to tell me how you're feeling without yelling at me."</p>
V	<p>Validate what you can.</p> <p>Show your loved one you care about them and respect them by trying to understand their point of view, even if you don't agree with it. Validate what you can—especially their feelings. Really listen. Ask questions and clarify what you think you've heard.</p>
A	<p>Ask how you can help.</p> <p>Neither one of you is perfect. Understanding and acknowledging your role in a problematic pattern of behavior can help diffuse conflicts.</p>