



Parent Conversation Cheat Sheet

Talking With Your Young Adult About Stress



1

Before You Start

- Stay calm.
- Stay curious.
- Listen more than you talk.
- Do not rush to solve the problem.
- Focus on connection first.



2

A Good Opening Line

“You seem like you have a lot on your mind. Do you want me to listen, help you make a plan, or help you handle something?”

That question gives them choices without adding pressure.

3

Helpful Questions to Ask

- What has felt hardest lately?
- What feels most overwhelming right now?
- Would you like me to listen or help brainstorm?
- What would make this week feel more manageable?
- Is there one practical thing I can help with?
- Do you feel supported where you live, work, or go to school?
- Would you like me to check in tomorrow?



4

Supportive Things to Say

- You do not have to solve everything today.
- I am here to listen without judging.
- Asking for help is responsible.
- We can take this one step at a time.
- I trust you to make decisions.
- You do not have to face this alone.
- Your experience does not have to look like mine.
- We can find additional support together.



5

If They Start Opening Up

Try gentle follow-up questions:

How long have you been feeling this way?

What part of this feels the hardest?

Do you want help thinking through the next step?

Is there anything you wish I understood better?

What would feel supportive from me right now?



Tip: Avoid asking several questions at once. Give them time to think, answer, and even sit in silence.

6

What to Avoid Saying

Even well-intended comments can shut the conversation down:

“Everyone feels stressed.”

“I had it harder at your age.”

“You just need to manage your time.”

“You have nothing to worry about.”

“You should be grateful.”

“People have it a lot worse than you.”

“You are making this too complicated.”

“When I was your age, I had everything figured out.”



7

The Goal

You do not have to fix everything.

Focus on staying connected.

Listen without comparison. Offer help without taking over.



One Sentence to Remember

“I’m here, I’m listening, and we can figure out the next step together.”