



Using Reflection v. Non-Reflection Statements

Exercise

The next time you have a conversation with your child (or another family member or friend), try using a reflection and see how they respond. Generally, you will get a more in-depth response.

Some people find it easier to begin reflections with standard phrases such as:

- “So, you feel...”
- “It sounds like you...”
- “You’re wondering if...”
- “I’m hearing you say that...”

Review examples below and practice using a reflective statement for a recent conversation you’ve had with your child.

Statement	Non-reflection	Reflection
“You never listen to me.”	“That’s not true. Your yelling is the problem.”	“You don’t think I’m listening to you.” OR “You don’t feel heard.”
“I like smoking pot and, besides, you and dad drink.”	“Don’t you know that pot is illegal and will stunt your brain development?”	“You don’t see anything wrong with smoking pot since your father and I drink.”
“I didn’t smoke last night.”	“Yeah, well one night doesn’t count for much.”	“You managed not to smoke last night.” OR “You were able to cut back last night.”
“I feel really depressed.”	“I would too if I drank like you do.”	“You’re feeling really down.”
“You just don’t understand how ticked off I am with dad – he always does this to me.”	“If you’d just listen to your father and do what he asks, you wouldn’t have this problem.”	“You think the way your dad treats you is unfair.”
“My boss put me on notice because I was late again.”	“Well, what did you expect? You’re always late and nobody will put up with it.”	“You’re afraid you might lose your job because you were late.” OR “You’re angry with your boss for noting that you were late.”