

Read This First

If you are in an unsafe situation, remove yourself. There is an element of abuse which encourages dominance and force as an acceptable way to "win" a conversation. If you are not feeling safe, walk away.

The following sentence stems and phrases allow you to advocate for yourself when you are in a conflict. Questions can disarm people and help them listen better. Make sure you are also listening and paraphrasing with the person you are talking with. Try to understand their perspective too and come to agreements.

- I heard you say _____, can you understand that I _____?
- Help me understand _____?
- It seems like we are both passionate about our views, maybe we slow down and take some space to think.
- I value this relationship too much to keep arguing about this.
- Do you want to have a conversation with me, or an argument?
- What is your biggest concern when you say _____?
- Can we take a pause here and start this conversation again later?
- I have a different perspective would you like to hear it?
- My assumption is _____, how about you?
- Here's my perspective _____, can you challenge my thinking?
- I'd like to challenge your thinking on _____, can I do that?
- What I'm hearing you say is _____. (Then listen to if you heard them correctly or not)
- Help me understand your feelings about this.
- I'm not sure the answer to that, let me look into it and get back to you.
- This is something I'm learning more about, let's set aside some time to really talk when I have some more information.
- I respectfully disagree because _____.
- I see your point, in my experience _____.
- What do you think we agree about?
- _____, crosses the line for me and we need to find a new way forward.
- When _____ happens, I feel _____ how about you?

