

Behavior Coaching for Cooperation and Collaboration

Step 1: Check yourself

- Are you calm? Is your expectation reasonable?

Step 2: Connect with your loved one

- “Oh wow—look at the drawing!”; “What’s happening in the show?”
- Do this for at least 2 minutes—it will be a great investment.

Step 3: Make the request

- Deliver the command: “Please do X,” rather than: “Can you do this?”
- Pay attention to your tone of voice and posture. The way you make the request can evoke different responses from your loved one. Aim for calm confidence.
- Be as concise as possible; resist giving a list of reasons why cooperation is necessary.

Step 4: Validate

- Be prepared for resistance; this is the content that you will then validate using three because statements to convey your understanding of their perspective.
“I can understand why you wouldn’t want to ____ because . . . because . . . because . . .”

Step 5: Make the request a second time and set a limit if necessary.

Practice example: Your daughter won’t stop texting at the dinner table.

1. Check yourself. Are you calm? Is your request reasonable?
2. Connect by inquiring sincerely about her friend: “How is Kayden doing these days? Is he still working at the grocery store?”
3. Make the request “Okay, love, please put your phone away until we’re done with dinner.”
4. If resistance, validate: “I can imagine you might not want to stop texting because it’s been awhile since you’ve connected. Maybe you’re worried he needs your support or that he might not be available later.”
5. Make the request again “I’m sorry. I do need you to put your phone away until the meal is done. You can try again after dinner.”
6. If your loved one doesn’t cooperate, then set a limit or communicate a consequence.

