



**Point out what you have in common:** *"We're both worried about [Jessie's cursing]."*

**Ask for help:** *"I need your input on [the cell phone] problem."*

**Ask for advice:** *"What do you think about [Chris getting a weekend job]?"*

**Be honest about how you're feeling:** *"I won't say this doesn't upset me, but I'll listen to you."*

**Be UNassuming:** *"Are you upset about [what the kids ate at my house]?"*

**Admit you got it wrong:** *"I misunderstood what you were telling me."*

**Take responsibility:** *"I shouldn't have said it that way."*

**List what you CAN do and plan the rest:** *"I can deal with [curfew] now. Can we decide on the [driver's permit when Jamie turns 16?]"*

**Acknowledge your responsibilities:** *"I know it's my job to work out the [transportation], but can we discuss some details?"*

**Take a step back and reflect:** *"Why do you think we keep fighting about [Rory's homework]?"*

**Melt the blame:** *"No one meant for this to happen."*

**Don't assume the worst of intentions:** *"I know you didn't intend to sound [mean], but when you talk like that I get [sad]."*

**Brainstorm together:** *"What [bedtime] rules would work for both us and the kids?"*

**Admit the limitations:** *"We'll never agree about [chores]; maybe we should each do our own thing."*

**Drop the defense:** *"I know I'm not your favorite person."*

**Recognize touchy topics:** *"I know it's a sensitive issue, but can we discuss [how Alex disciplines Jordan]?"*

**Acknowledge how important the other person is:** *"What you say matters to me."*

**Bring respect back into the mix:** *"I think you're a good parent. I like the way you [talk to] the kids."*

**Don't shut down for good:** *"Can we talk about this Monday? I need to think about it over the weekend."*

**Validate concerns:** *"I understand why [you worry] when [I don't answer the phone]."*

**Name the other person's value:** *"I know [honesty] matters to you."*

**Name your own value:** *"[Being on time] is important to me."*

**Use "I feel \_\_\_\_\_ statements" GENUINELY:**

*"I feel [upset] when you [laugh at my cooking] because [the kids have been doing the same thing]."*