



PARENT REFLECTION + CONVERSATION GUIDE

Talking to Your Teen About Therapy

How to Use This Guide

This worksheet is designed to help you prepare for, and reflect on, a conversation with your teen about therapy. It focuses on **connection over control**, and **curiosity over certainty**.

Use it before, during, or after the conversation.

1. Ground Yourself First

Before you talk to your teen, take a moment to get clear on your own perspective.

1. What's prompting this conversation right now?

(What have you noticed? Be specific and observational.)

→ _____

→ _____

2. What are you hoping therapy might support or change?

→ _____

→ _____

3. What concerns or fears are underneath this for you?

→ _____

→ _____

4. What might your teen be feeling about this (even if they haven't said it)?

→ _____

→ _____

Notes:

2. Plan the Approach (Not the Outcome)

Shift from **“How do I get them to agree?”** to **“How do I keep this relational?”**

Choose your entry point:

- “I’ve noticed...”
- “I’ve been thinking about...”
- “I wonder if...”

Write your opening sentence:

→ _____
→ _____

Language Check

Before you start, review:

- Am I observing, not diagnosing?
- Am I inviting, not telling?
- Am I open to a no (for now)?

Notes:

3. The Conversation

During the conversation, focus on listening more than explaining.

Try asking:

- “What’s your take on how things have been lately?”
- “Would talking to someone outside the family ever feel helpful—or not really?”
- “What would make something like therapy feel more comfortable (or less uncomfortable)?”

What did your teen say (words, tone, body language)?

→ _____
→ _____
→ _____

What seemed important to them?

→ _____
→ _____

Notes:

4. Offer Choice + Collaboration

If the conversation is open enough, explore:

Where can I offer my teen real control?

- Choosing the therapist
- Deciding timing
- Trying just 1-2 sessions
- Virtual vs. in-person
- Not deciding right away

Write what feels possible:

→ _____

Notes:

5. If They Say 'No'

This is not the end of the conversation: it's part of it.

Reflect:

- Did they feel heard?
- Did I stay calm and connected?
- What might they need before reconsidering?

→ _____

→ _____

Reframe

Instead of: "This didn't work."

Try: “This is one step in an ongoing conversation.

Notes:

6. Relational Check-in

After the conversation, come back to the relationship.

How is my connection with my teen right now?

→ _____

What’s one small way I can reinforce connection this week (unrelated to therapy)?

- Spend 1:1 time
- Do something they enjoy
- Check in without agenda
- Give space intentionally

→ _____

Notes:

Key Reminders

- Therapy works best when teens feel choice, safety, and fit
- You don’t need to convince—you need to stay connected
- The goal is not immediate agreement—it’s ongoing openness

“The conversation is the intervention.”

Optional Next Step (For Parents)

If your teen is hesitant, you might consider:

- Consulting with a therapist yourself for guidance

- Learning more about relational, developmentally attuned approaches
- Revisiting the conversation in a few weeks

Final Thoughts

There isn't a perfect script for talking to your teen about therapy - and you don't need one. What matters most is how your teen **experiences you** in the conversation.

When they feel respected instead of managed, listened to instead of convinced, and included instead of overruled, something important shifts. Even if they're not ready to say yes, they're more likely to stay open.

This isn't about getting it right in one conversation. It's about building a foundation of trust that makes support possible, now or later.

Stay **steady**. Stay **curious**. Stay **connected**.

The relationship you're protecting is the same one that makes growth possible.



www.countercurrenttherapy.com | 647.668.2567