**Problem solving conversations:**

Pre-talk: the point of this is to acknowledge that previous conversations might not have gone very well and to take responsibility. Your teen might not trust that you really do want to listen. Try: “I know we’ve tried having conversations about this before and I have got triggered and unskilful so I want to apologise for that. Would you be willing to look at this with me and see if together we can come up with some solutions that could make things better?” Share this sheet with them and see if-by letting go of having to have all the answers- you might instead be able to find solutions together.

**Step 1: Name the problem**: using unemotional, descriptive language. Try writing it down first and then see if your teen agrees, keep it to one short sentence.

For example: I’ve noticed you’re spending a lot of time in your room on your phone at the moment,

Or: “I’ve noticed that you seem more dysregulated after school than before”

Write or draw your idea here:



**Step 2: Empathise**: Start with “I’m wondering if…?” or “From your point of view is it…?

Write or draw how things might be looking from your teen’s point of view here: Get their feedback and see if they agree. Spend as much time on step 2 as you need and keep coming back to it if you reach a roadblock.



Step 3: In one sentence say what it’s like for you try this “I feel worried because the story going on in my head is that you are unhappy”. Or “I feel concerned because the story in my head is that you are getting behind in your schoolwork”



**Step 4: Brainstorm together** some solutions and write them down: Try this: “Could we brainstorm some solutions together and then as an experiment choose one that we like? If it doesn’t work we can learn from the data and try a different solution, but please know I’m in your corner until the wheels come off…”. The trick with brainstorming is that there are NO BAD IDEAS! All the ideas, even the impractical ones can get a place on the page. This can be a time to get creative and collaborative, stay non-judgemental even if a part of you think an idea can’t work.

Solution 1

Solution 2

Solution 3

Solution 4

Solution 5

Pros and cons of your favourite solution.