

# Starting difficult conversations

“It helps to remain calm, because if you don’t come across as reasonable, it’s harder to make people listen to you.”

“It’s important to remember the team is there for your recovery. If you think something is going to help you then speak to your care team about it. They will want to know.”

“If you want something to change, give a reason.”

“Don’t make it personal.”

“If you are emotional, the professional may be more focussed on getting you to calm down, rather than listening to what you’re saying.”

“I sometimes prefer to talk to my parents so that they can speak to the doctor for me.”

Here are some tips on starting difficult conversations from young people who’ve been there:

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## Useful phrases

I don’t agree with... because...

I didn’t get to say this in the meeting...

I would prefer...

I don’t always feel listened to.

Could you consider...

This is making me feel uncomfortable.

I think it will help me because...

Could you consider changing this?

Can we work together to come to an alternative decision?

I don’t like this because...

I am struggling with that because...

I want to feel listened to and understood.

I have changed my mind about this.

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## Word bank

### Feelings:

Happy, sad, frustrated, uncomfortable, optimistic, hopeful, worried, stressed, overwhelmed, confused, uncertain, angry, calm, enthusiastic, bored, tired.

### More describing words:

Strong, clear, reasonable, upsetting, comforting, positive, negative, helpful, unhelpful, better, worse, sensible.