

NEWGRAD LAUNCHPAD PRESENTS

Say This, Not That

What to Say When the Usual Words Stop Working

You love your young adult. But the words that used to work don't anymore. You ask about the future and the door closes. You offer advice and the conversation ends.

This guide gives you 20 simple swaps. The phrase that shuts them down, and the calm, connected version that keeps the conversation open.

No lectures. No pressure. Just better words, ready when you need them.

EVAN SANCHEZ

Certified Life + Energy Coach

newgradlaunchpadcoaching.com

BEFORE YOU USE THESE

The Words Are Half of It

These swaps are not magic phrases. They are a starting point.

The phrase on the left is one most of us have said. It usually comes from worry, not malice. The trouble is that worry tends to land as pressure, and pressure makes a stuck young adult pull away.

The phrase on the right does three things. It lets them feel heard, it drops the advice, and it ends on a question that hands the next step back to them.

Use them in your own words. Say one. Then stop talking and listen.

01 **Lead with calm.**

If you're activated, wait. The words only work when you're steady.

02 **Pick one.**

Don't run the whole list at them. One swap per conversation.

03 **Let the question breathe.**

After you ask, say nothing. The silence is doing the work.

Remember: You are not the fixer. You are the calm in the room.

SECTION 1

1

Pressure vs Clarity

Pushing harder feels like helping. To a stuck grad it lands as pressure, and pressure makes them withdraw. These swaps trade the push for an open door.

SECTION 1 | PRESSURE VS CLARITY

Pushing harder feels like helping. To a stuck grad it lands as pressure, and pressure makes them withdraw. These swaps trade the push for an open door.

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"When are you going to get a job?"

SAY THIS

"It sounds like the search has been heavier than you expected. What part of it feels the most stuck right now?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"You just need to apply to more places."

SAY THIS

"It sounds like you've been putting in effort without much coming back. If we set the applications aside for a second, what kind of work would feel even a little right to you?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"What's your plan?"

SAY THIS

"I'm not asking you to have it all mapped out. What's one small thing that feels like it could move this week?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"You can't just sit in your room forever."

SAY THIS

"It sounds like home feels like the safer option right now. What would need to feel true for the next step to feel worth taking?"

SECTION 2

2

Comparison and Shame

Comparison tells your young adult they're behind. Shame convinces them they can't catch up. Both end the conversation. These swaps keep them in it.

SECTION 2 | COMPARISON AND SHAME

Comparison tells your young adult they're behind. Shame convinces them they can't catch up. Both end the conversation. These swaps keep them in it.

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"When I was your age, I already had..."

SAY THIS

"I know the path I had doesn't exist the same way for you. What does the road in front of you actually look like from where you sit?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"Why can't you figure it out like your sister did?"

SAY THIS

"I want to understand your situation on its own terms, not anyone else's. What feels like the hardest part for you right now?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"You're being lazy."

SAY THIS

"It looks like something keeps getting in the way before you start. What do you think is really going on underneath it?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"Everyone else your age is moving on."

SAY THIS

"I think a lot of people your age are quietly struggling with this too. What would feel like progress to you, regardless of what anyone else is doing?"

SECTION 3

3

Guilt and Obligation

Guilt turns your help into a debt and your love into a condition. It buys short-term movement and long-term distance. These swaps say the hard thing without the hook.

SECTION 3 | GUILT AND OBLIGATION

Guilt turns your help into a debt and your love into a condition. It buys short-term movement and long-term distance. These swaps say the hard thing without the hook.

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"I'm disappointed in you."

SAY THIS

"I love you, and that doesn't depend on what you've figured out yet. What kind of support would actually help right now?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"After everything we've done for you..."

SAY THIS

"It sounds like we've both been carrying some frustration about this. What's one thing we could each do differently here?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"If you cared, you'd be trying harder."

SAY THIS

"I know you care about your own life. What's getting in the way of the part you want to move on?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"I don't know where we went wrong."

SAY THIS

"I want to understand you better, not figure out who's to blame. What's something you wish I understood about where you are?"

SECTION 4

4

Living Under One Roof

When a grad moves back home, the daily friction is real: the closed door, the dishes, the money. These swaps let you hold a standard without starting a fight.

SECTION 4 | LIVING UNDER ONE ROOF

When a grad moves back home, the daily friction is real: the closed door, the dishes, the money. These swaps let you hold a standard without starting a fight.

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"You need to start contributing around here."

SAY THIS

"It seems like it's been easy having things handled while you're home. How would it look for you to take a couple of those on so it feels fair to both of us?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"Why is your door always closed?"

SAY THIS

"I miss seeing you around the house. Would you be up for dinner together a couple of nights this week?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"We're not paying for everything forever."

SAY THIS

"I want to be straight with you about money so it doesn't surprise either of us. Can we sit down and map out what's yours to cover going forward?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"You treat this place like a hotel."

SAY THIS

"I need our shared space to feel respected so I'm comfortable in my own home. What's a fair way for us to handle the common areas?"

SECTION 5

5

Handing Back Ownership

Every time you supply the answer, you take the next step away from them. These swaps put the wheel back in their hands, which is where momentum actually starts.

SECTION 5 | HANDING BACK OWNERSHIP

Every time you supply the answer, you take the next step away from them. These swaps put the wheel back in their hands, which is where momentum actually starts.

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"Here's what you should do."

SAY THIS

"I have some thoughts, but I don't want to take this over. What do you think makes the most sense for you?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"Just let me handle it."

SAY THIS

"I could step in, but I think you've got this one. What's the first move you'd make?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"You always say that and nothing changes."

SAY THIS

"It sounds like the follow-through is the hard part, and I get that. What would make it easier to take one step this week?"

INSTEAD OF SAYING

"Do you even want this?"

SAY THIS

"It looks like things have felt heavy lately. I've watched you do hard things before. What helped you get through those?"

You showed up today. That tells me everything.

Most parents keep waiting. Hoping things change. Watching their young adult stay stuck and telling themselves it will get better.

You're not doing that. You picked up this guide. That's different.

If you're ready to stop guessing and start having real conversations that move things forward, I'd like to work with you directly.

The Career Independence Parenting Session is where we start. 30 minutes. We figure out exactly what's getting in the way and what to do about it.

**Book Your Career Independence
Parenting Session**

CONNECT WITH EVAN

newgradlaunchpadcoaching.com

linkedin.com/in/evanssanchez

instagram.com/newgradlaunchpadcoaching

youtube.com/@NewGradLaunchPad

Evan@NewGradLaunchPadCoaching.com

Evan Sanchez

Founder, NewGrad LaunchPad | Certified Life + Energy Coach