

CONVERSATION PLANNER: HOW CAN I HAVE GOOD CONVERSATIONS ABOUT NOT DRIVING?



You want your conversations with the person with dementia to be positive, progressive and productive. You can use these points to guide those conversations.

Who should be the messenger? The person who answers yes to these questions may be in the most favorable position. Is it you or someone else? If it's not you, you may need to have a preliminary conversation with the person in the most favorable position to take action.

Is the driver your spouse or your parent?	Yes____	No____
Do you have the person's best interests in mind?	Yes____	No____
Do you know the person's physical and cognitive condition?	Yes____	No____
Do you know the person's driving abilities?	Yes____	No____
Do you have a good relationship with the person?	Yes____	No____

When is a good time to talk? It's never too early to talk about driving issues, but these conversations warrant careful attention, planning and serious discussion. Here are some good opportunities to start a conversation naturally.

- Change in frequency or severity of warning signs
- Change in health, medication or cognitive status
- Change in financial situation or vehicle ownership

What do you want your conversation to accomplish? Keep your conversations simple, short and direct. Focus on one or two key points at a time. Here are some appropriate topics with some sample conversation starters. Which of these topics do you need to discuss?

- _____ Family's willingness to help. "When you go to the grocery store, can I go? Or instead, let me drive." "We're willing to drive, but you have to let us."
- _____ Transportation needs and alternatives. "The mall is having a sale. What if I pick you up at 10?"
- _____ Observations of warning signs. "How did those scrapes get on your car? They may mean that there could be a problem judging distances. What do you think?" "We need to talk to your doctor about this."
- _____ Planning alternative transportation. "The van driver said he would make sure you got to your appointment on time."

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