

Five Powerful Strategies Grandparents Can Use to Lead Their Grandkids in Deeper Conversations

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Lead Them to LAUGH

Your goal is to lay a solid and connected foundation with your grandkids by bonding with them through shared laughter while enhancing their own self-discovery. Neuroscientists confirm the importance of laughing together, claiming that **our brains release chemicals when we laugh in ways that strengthen long-term relationships and reinforce social bonding**. So if laughter is the best medicine, then every grandparent would benefit from increasing their skill set in activating it with their grandkids, wouldn't you say?

Ask your grandchild:

1. What about me makes you laugh?
2. What item of my clothing would you love to see me get rid of?
3. Do you ever think about your wedding day? If so, what do you imagine? If not, why not?
4. What are three outrageous things you wish you had the nerve to do?
5. If you could be any animal, which one would you say is most like you and why?

Lead Them to LOVE

Your goal is to lead your grandkids to love themselves while embracing who they are in a positive way. Then out of the overflow, they can pour their beauty and lovingkindness into others with an empowered desire to positively impact the world. Because you play a key role in the strength of your grandchildren's health and well-being, when you consistently deposit love into their heart space, they never have to doubt that they're worthy of love, which sets a solid foundation for the way they see themselves and subsequently give to others. ***Then they won't go looking for love in all the wrong places; instead, they'll be looking to love in all the right places.*** They will thrive when they live to love.

Ask your grandchild:

1. What do you see as your three greatest strengths and gifts? [This would be a good time to tell them what you see as their strengths and gifts.]
2. If I were to fill up your love tank and make you feel more loved, special, accepted, and enjoyed, what could I do *specifically* to make that happen?
3. They say that self-limiting beliefs sabotage our dreams. What are a couple of negative beliefs you have about yourself that have stifled your dreaming more?
4. How would you define the term *world changer*, and how can you envision it describing you now or in the future?
5. If you and I were to volunteer together, what could we do and what positive impact to our relationship and to the community do you imagine from our joining to make a difference?

Lead Them to LOOK

Your goal is to walk with your grandkids into deeper, more open self-examination regarding their relationships with themselves and with others. ***If you don't weigh in on these subjects with them, then every other voice will speak into their lives without yours being included.*** And because the loudest voices usually win, often drowning out their own, it's of vital importance that your input be clear, consistent, constructive, and celebratory. You can invite them to be honest with themselves and with you, coupled with encouragement to admit weakness and confusion, as you create an atmosphere of safety.

Ask your grandchild:

1. Do I do anything that shuts you down or makes you less confident to share your thoughts and feelings with me?
2. Where and when is it *easiest/hardest* for you to be your true self?
3. Where and when is it *easiest/hardest* to stand up, stand strong, and stand alone and is there any way I can better support you to be a leader, change-maker, and independent thinker?
4. If the sky was the limit, money was no object, time had no relevance, and anything was possible, what could you imagine doing with your life?
5. From watching me, what have you learned about relating to God as a Father or *connecting/not connecting* with your spiritual side?

Lead Them to LAMENT

Your goal is to get close enough to your grandkids to hear their heart cries about grief they may be carrying while making amends for any hurts you may have caused. This also creates space for hearing about pain they may be holding from their parents or others. **You have an opportunity here to be a catalyst to their healing process by being a safe witness to their story.** Your listening ear will go a long way to healing their hearts as you carry their pain with them.

Ask your grandchild:

1. What is one thing about you that would help me be a better grandparent to you if I understood it?
2. When you think about our relationship through the years, when do you remember us being the closest, and are we as close as you'd like us to be now?
3. Do I, your parents or others do anything that shuts you down or makes you less confident to share your thoughts and feelings?
4. Can you remember any specific words I've spoken to you or others have spoken to you that have stuck with you that have made you feel *better/worse* about yourself?
5. Do you ever get mad at God or blame him for taking someone away from you? If so, what does that feel like, and if not, why not?

Lead Them to LISTEN

Your goal is to facilitate the activation of your grandkid's voice by letting them ask you questions about your life as they hone their ability to listen intently. Your grandchild will be inspired **when hearing about obstacles you've overcome to get where you are today, which gives them more freedom to tell you what's going on in their lives and admit their struggles.** The added benefit is that you can help them strengthen their interpersonal skills. True listening has become a lost art in our fast-paced, distraction-driven, technology-laden age, and who better than you to practice the art of talking and listening!

Your grandchild asks you:

1. What is one of your happiest childhood memories?
2. What is one of the most stupid things you've ever done?
3. What is something no one told you that you had to learn the hard way?
4. Can you describe the kind of forever love you believe is worth the wait?
5. Who were your positive spiritual role models and mentors at my age? What about now?