

Strategies for Supportive Conversations

Each conversation you have with a student is an opportunity to demonstrate empathy and respond from a point of connection and support. Each conversation will, of course, be different based on your conversation style and based on the individual student's needs and context. This guide offers a starting point for thinking about the conversation and the types of questions or prompts that can help the student engage and feel supported. This model has a five-step process:

1. Inquire (ask questions to help students focus their thoughts), *listen carefully*, and restate or paraphrase to ensure you understand the student's context and intentions
2. Explore possibilities (help them think about what they might try before making suggestions)
3. Offer resources (you don't have to have all the answers, but it helps to know where to refer)
4. Build a Plan (help them think through their next steps and ways to move forward)
5. Follow-up (help students reach their goals by checking in later to continue the conversation)

