

Script

When Your Child Isn't Being Logical

Scenario: It's summer, and Heather and her mom start talking about the upcoming school year. All of a sudden, Heather becomes very negative and resistant to everything her mom says.

Heather: I know this year is going to stink.

Mom: Why? You're going to the same school and you know a lot of the kids already.

Heather: It doesn't matter. I'm going to have an awful year.

Mom: Why?

Heather: Because all of the teachers are mean.

Mom: No they're not. Your brother had Mrs. Smith and he really liked her.

Heather: Maybe he did, but I won't.

Mom, realizing she's not getting anywhere, recognizes that Heather is probably in Yuck and she won't get anywhere with her.

Mom: Heather?

Heather (cautiously): What?

Mom: What's going on?

Heather (irritably): Nothing.

Mom: Hey. I know new school years can be tough, even if you do know the school and the people. Is there anything worrying you?

Heather: No.

Mom: OK, I'm just going to sit here with you for a little while.

The two sit in silence for a few minutes.

Heather: The meanest teacher is in this grade and I'm afraid I might get her.

Mom: Do you want to talk about that?

Heather: No. Not now.

Mom (realizing that pushing Heather doesn't work): OK. Well I'll be around if you want to, OK? And I'll listen without implying that you're wrong.

Heather: OK.

NOTE: If Heather never opened up or became more logical, Heather's mom would need to accept that she'd probably need to talk to Heather about it another time.



- **KEY TAKEAWAY:** Initially Heather's mom tried to help her "see the logic." When that didn't work, she realized that Heather was likely in Yuck caused by something else. Instead of trying to make her think logically (or worrying when she didn't), Heather's mom tried to **help her feel safe enough to talk about what was really bothering her.**
- **TIP:** This situation will go much better in the moment if Heather's mom has been proactively **demonstrating to Heather that she is "safe"** (by making deposits regularly and listening without judgment). She also needs to **work on her own Yuck so that she doesn't get sucked in** when Heather doesn't respond the way she wants her to.