

BEFORE THE BLUEPRINTS, THE CONVERSATION

The Family Conversation Kit

How to raise the idea of living closer — with a parent, an adult child, or a sibling — without it landing as pressure. Scripts, timing, and the hard responses, handled.

The building is the easy part.

Every family that builds with KĒĒP started with one conversation that felt harder than it should. Not because anyone disagreed — but because the words carry weight. “Move in with us” can sound like charity. “Let us take care of you” can sound like the end of independence. “We need help with the mortgage” can sound like failure.

None of that is what you mean. What you mean is: I want you close, on your own terms, with your own front door. This guide gives you the words to say exactly that — and a way to hold the conversation so everyone leaves it feeling more like a family, not less.

THE ONE IDEA TO HOLD ONTO

An ADU isn’t about moving someone in. It’s about building independence next door — same lot, separate home, everyone keeps their dignity and their space. Lead with that, and most of the tension disappears.

01 Before you say a word

Three things that decide whether this lands well — none of them are the words themselves.

Pick the moment, not the meeting. The worst version of this conversation is a scheduled sit-down that feels like an intervention. The best version happens on a drive, a walk, over dishes — somewhere no one has to hold eye contact and anyone can pause. Low stakes, low pressure, easy to revisit tomorrow.

Come with a wondering, not a plan. If you arrive with a finished decision, you’ve given them one job: approve or reject it. If you arrive curious — “I’ve been thinking about something, can I run it by you?” — you’ve invited them in. People defend their independence hardest when they feel it’s being decided for them.

Know your own why first. Before you raise it, finish this sentence for yourself: “I want this because...” If the honest answer is about control or guilt, they’ll feel it. If it’s about wanting more ordinary time together — Sunday dinners, grandkids down the hall, help that goes both ways — say that part out loud.

TRY THIS OPENER

I've been thinking about what the next few years could look like for all of us, and I had an idea I'm kind of excited about. It's not a decision, I just want to think out loud with you. Is now okay?

02 The scripts

Real openers for the four most common situations. Say them in your own words — these are the shape, not a script to memorize.

1

Talking to a parent about aging closer

"Mom, I don't want us to wait until something forces a decision. I'd rather build something now, while it's a choice — a small home in the backyard that's yours. Your door, your kitchen, your rules. Just closer."

2

Talking to an adult child who needs a landing pad

"Rent out there is brutal, and I hate that it's keeping you from saving. What if we built a real unit here — not your old bedroom, an actual place with its own entrance? You get independence, we get you close for a few years while you get ahead."

3

Raising it with a sibling before you approach Mom or Dad

"Before I say anything to Mom, I wanted to talk to you. I've been looking at building an ADU on her lot so she can age in place near me. I don't want to do anything without you in it — can we figure out what's fair together?"

4

When the parent owns the property and you'd fund the build

"This is your home and your land — that doesn't change. I'd handle the build so there's a place for me here too, close by. Think of it as investing in staying a family under one roof, even if it's two front doors."

03 The hard responses — and how to meet them

Almost every family hits one of these. Here's what's underneath it, and a way through.

"I don't want to be a burden." What they're really saying is "I'm afraid of losing my independence." Don't argue with the feeling — reframe the setup. "That's exactly why it's a separate home, not a spare room. You keep everything that's yours. This is the opposite of being a burden — it's staying independent longer."

“It’s too expensive / I don’t want your money tied up.” Money fear is usually a stand-in for guilt. Move it from a cost to an investment. “It’s not money gone — it stays in the family, in property we own, and it’s a fraction of what assisted living runs. We’d rather put it into a home than into rent for a facility.”

“What will your brother/sister think?” This is a fairness worry. Name it and bring it into the open. “Good question — I don’t want to spring it on them either. Let’s figure out together what feels fair, and I’ll talk to them before anything’s decided.” (Guide 02, The Sibling Money Agreement, is built for exactly this.)

“Let me think about it.” That’s not a no — it’s a request for room. Give it freely. “Of course. No rush at all. I just wanted the idea on the table. Want to look at what one actually costs together sometime, no commitment?”

IF IT GETS TENSE, THIS RESETS IT

You know what, forget the details for a second. The only thing I actually care about is having more regular time with you. Everything else is just how we get there. We’ll figure out the rest together.

04 Turning a “maybe” into a plan

Once the door is open, keep the momentum gentle. Three low-pressure next steps.

- ☐ **Look at real numbers together, not brochures**
Nothing settles the “can we even afford this” question like a concrete figure. KĒĒP’s feasibility assessment is free and reads your actual lot — no commitment, no salesperson in the living room.
- ☐ **Walk the backyard as a family**
Standing in the space where it would go makes it real in a way a conversation never does. Talk about where the door faces, the morning light, the garden.
- ☐ **Agree on the money conversation before it’s needed**
If siblings or shared finances are involved, get everyone aligned early. It’s far easier before a plan exists than after.

YOUR FREE NEXT STEP

When you’re ready to put a real number to the idea, KĒĒP’s 48-hour feasibility assessment tells you what fits your lot and what it would cost — in writing, with no obligation. It’s the easiest way to turn a kitchen-table conversation into a plan. Start at keepadu.com.