

Catch yourself | Christin Smith Myers

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I start most mornings out by myself. But recently I went for an early-morning walk with my husband. I knew he needed to get out of the house because he would be stuck inside while our kids had yet another 2-hour delay. So we decided to spend some time together.

Sounds lovely, doesn't it?

It wasn't.

Fifteen minutes into the walk I noticed that almost every single thing we were saying was negative. We complained about how poorly the residents and the borough had taken care of removing ice and snow from the sidewalks, vented about a work situation, expressed concerns about the kids, and discussed the latest depressing political news. We were in a downward spiral.

Mind you, I'm not blaming my husband. I started at least half of the negative conversations.

But here's the thing. You can change the tone when you catch yourself being negative. I find asking a really specific question can help turn the conversation around. Here are my favorite conversation shifters:

- What's one thing that's going really well right now?
- What are you thankful for?
- What's good about this situation?
- What have you learned from the experience?
- What are you excited about?

If you don't like where a conversation (or an afternoon, or a month) is going, catch yourself and then change the direction.