

Five Questions to Ask

When someone new in your parent's life doesn't add up.

People rarely believe what they're told. They usually believe what they figure out themselves. So don't argue. Ask one of these questions, in a calm moment, then change the subject and let it sit. You'll know it landed when your parent brings it up again.

1 “Have you ever met them in person?”

If not, why not? Ask with curiosity, not like a detective. **Listen for:** a job that keeps them far away and hard to reach, like working overseas, the military, or an oil rig. Those are common cover stories.

2 “Have you tried video chatting?”

A camera that's always broken isn't bad luck. **Listen for:** excuses with a promise attached. "Once I get my new phone." A real person video-calls, even if it's awkward.

3 “Have they introduced you to anyone in their life?”

Real people have real people around them. **Listen for:** no friends, no coworkers, no family, and "what we have is just ours."

FIVE QUESTIONS • CONTINUED

1 “How often does money or an emergency come up?”

Love shouldn't come with bills. **Listen for:** small asks that grow. A gift card, then a fee, then a big one. And a defense that comes before you've accused anyone.

2 “If your best friend told you this story, what would you tell her?”

This lets your parent use their own good judgment. **Listen for:** a pause. If they go quiet, don't fill the silence.

INSTEAD OF

“This guy is obviously fake.”

TRY

“It seems like every time meeting in person comes up, something gets in the way. Does that feel odd to you?”

One question per conversation is plenty. You're planting seeds, not winning an argument.

HAS MONEY ALREADY BEEN SENT?

Don't wait. The free steps are at TheScamHotline.com/help. Call the bank's fraud line first.

Want the whole plan?

The **Parent Protection Playbook** has the word-for-word scripts for what comes next, the verification checks, and the safeguards that make it harder to happen again.

TheScamHotline.com/first

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