
Constructive Communication

Staying
emotionally agile
during
challenging
conversations

participant guide

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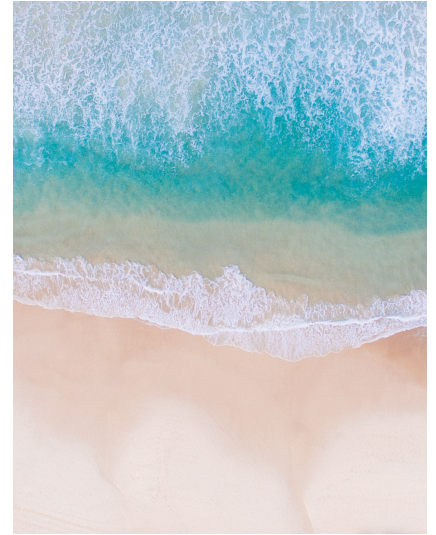


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Ideas about communication & conflict

- Materials based on *Crucial Conversations*
- We can be both honest and respectful
- Having difficult conversations is inevitable and par for the course
- How you manage this – well or poorly – affects the outcome
- Attribution theory
- How we act in conflict



managing your emotions

two claims

1. You alone are responsible for your emotions
2. You can either control your emotions or be controlled by them

a difficult person

Think of someone with whom you have a challenging relationship...

- neighbor ?
- coworker ?
- relative?

Write down some adjectives that best describe what makes them "difficult"

2

Motives in Conflict

What's the difference here?

- Be right
- Look good/save face
- Win
- Punish, blame
- Avoid conflict
- Keep the peace

- Learn
- Find the truth(s)
- Produce results
- Strengthen relationships

In conflict, we typically focus on the left side of the graph, however, these are short-term goals and do not solve conflicts.

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Facts & Stories

- What's the difference?
- Both are important
- How do I know the difference?
- What do they say or do that makes you think they are ____?
- We have control over the stories, not the facts

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Emotions

Where Emotions Come From



crucial conversations

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Notes:

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Stories: The Key to Our Emotions

You cannot have an emotion without first having a story There are an infinite number of stories to tell from the same few facts What stories are in your conflict?

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Skill #1: Manage & Change Your Emotions

What do you want long term for this relationship?

Tell yourself a good story about this person

What is a good story you could tell yourself about your "difficult" person?

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Skill #2 Turn Stories into Facts

Be behaviorally specific: what does this person say or do that makes you think they are _____?

Table Work: At your tables, list some behaviors that describe someone who is....

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Setting up Your Conversation

Step 1: Establish a healthy motive

Step 2: Ask for the space to discuss the issue

Step 3: Start with the facts

Step 4: Add your story

Step 5: Ask "Can you help me understand?"

Tip: Do this with
uncertainty,
humility and
curiosity

Notes:
