



Difficult Conversations

*Preparations &
Dialogue Approach*



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CONFLICT?



Creative (+)

Destructive (-)



Opposing Forces



“A central source of endless conflict and misery...is the emotional, cognitive, and ethical failure to be self-examined.”

- Marc Gopin

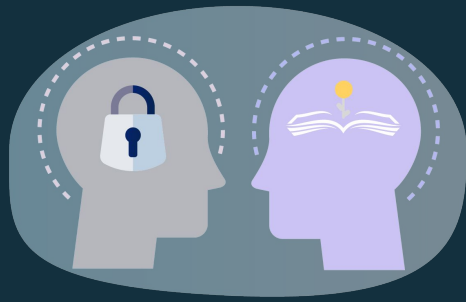
Self-Awareness



+

Self-Regulation





Are You Response-able?

1. **Self check** - Awareness & Regulation

a. Knowing your triggers and regulating your emotional/stress reactions

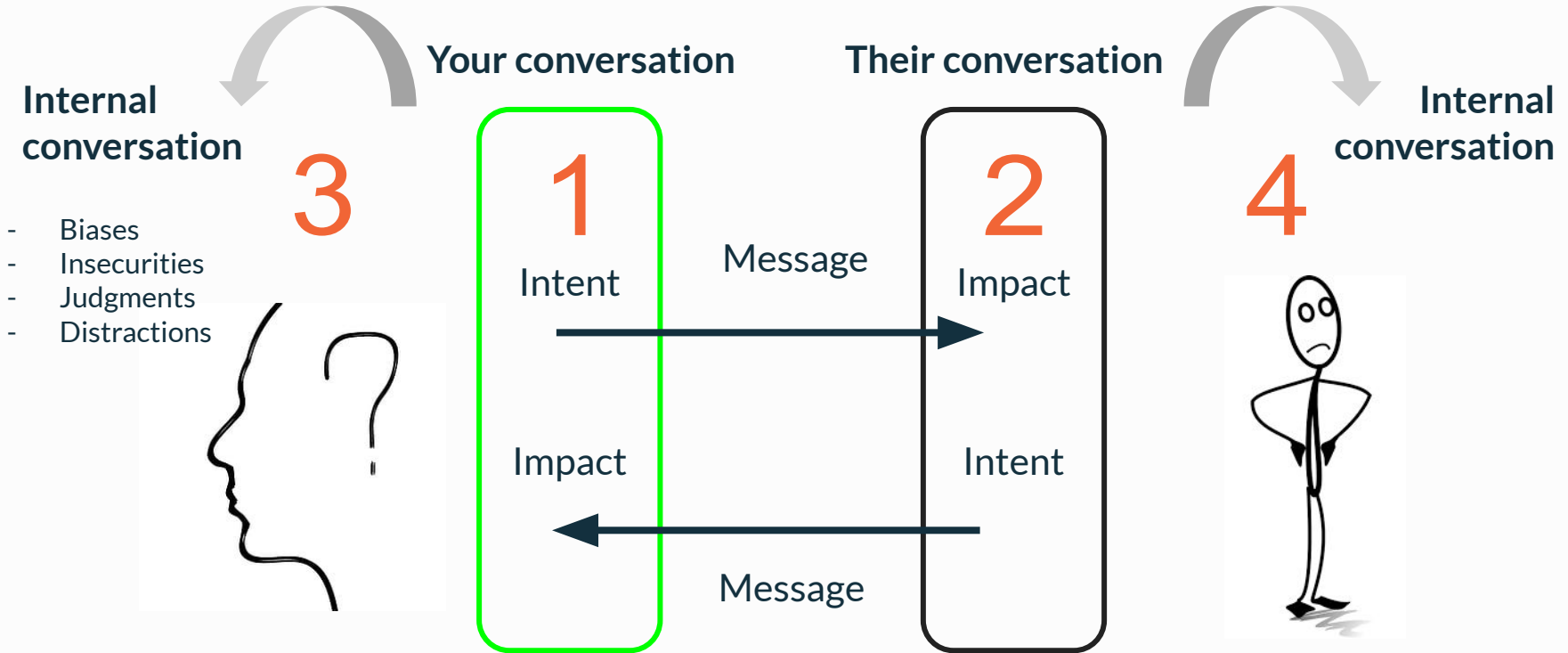
i. Are you feeling emotionally escalated?

ii. Have you stopped and created space?

iii. What is the story you're telling yourself about this other person/ this situation?

2. Your Why - What is your motivation for having this conversation? Are you willing to be fully present and engaged? Are you willing to hear their side?

Which conversation are you having?



Why is it
Challenging?

Why give it?
Why receive it?

FEEDBACK

Goal: *Reduce defensiveness so our
message can be received;
align intention and impact.*

- Cognitive dissonance
- Disruption of our values and *identity*
- Fear motivator

- Growth, learning, Clarity
- Motivation
- Enhance performance/efficiency

Preparation Principles

- **Mindset & Motivation**

- *Are you open to hearing their side?*
- *Why give this feedback?*

- **Invitation**

- *If they aren't open or ready, they may not hear what you have to say.*

- **Start and End with a positive**

- *Illustrate value, competency and recognition to enhance their receptivity.*





Behavior
Effect
Ask
Request

*A constructive approach
for difficult
conversations.*

Behavior

"When you..."
"I noticed that..."

Effect

"It.../As a result..."
"It made me feel..."

Ask

"Did you mean/intend to...?"
"Can you please clarify what the purpose/intention was?"
"What were you experiencing?"

*Listen & Repeat
so they feel heard,
and you understand*

Request

"Going forward,
would you mind /
I would prefer...
is that doable?"

Using B.E.A.R.

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

“You never give me the information I need on time. You are impossible to work with!”

CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

*“When I don’t receive the monthly financial statements and inventory reports in a timely manner (**Behavior**),*

*it affects my ability to plan for upcoming expenses, make inventory purchasing decisions, and discuss strategy with investors. (**Effect**).*

*What challenges occur that might create delays on your end? (**Ask**) (**Listen and Repeat**)*

*If you run a little late on these monthly reports in the future, would you let me know at least a few days before so I can reset my expectations? (**Request**)”*

Using B.E.A.R.

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

“All I hear from you is complaining. Never any solutions. I don’t want to hear it anymore.”

CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

*“When you come to me with concerns, without ideas or specific questions (**Behavior**),*

*I feel rather frustrated because I know you can come up with creative solutions (**Effect**).*

*What are some ideas that you can think of to help with this matter? (**Ask**)? (**Listen and Repeat**)*

*Moving forward, whenever there’s an issue like this that arises, can you bring some ideas to me directly and we will brainstorm together (**Request**)?”*

Practice Restating with B.E.A.R.

- I can't stand the way you talk to your team. Makes me not want to come to these meetings.
- Why are you always running late? I can't count on you, and it makes me look stupid.
- You make a big deal out of everything. Stop being so dramatic. Just be professional and get back to work.
- You yell at me all the time. You're so rude and disrespectful, and I've had enough.

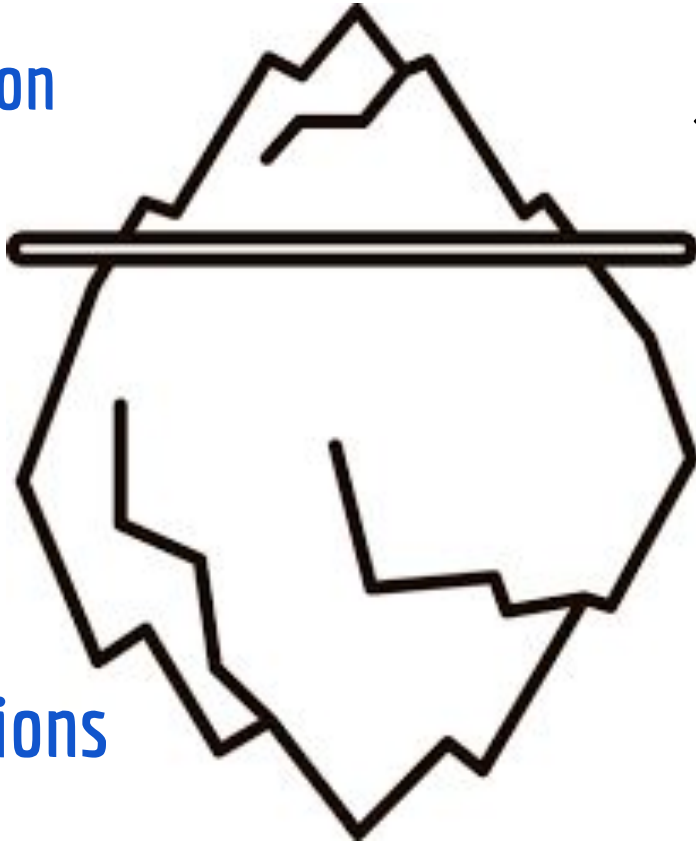
Role Play Scenario

The Presentation:

You (Role "A") are selected to present to the key stakeholders in your organization the goals/objectives/mission for the coming year. This presentation is extremely important because it impacts funding. However, speaking in front of people is a secret fear of yours. You decide to practice the presentation in front of **Quinn (Role "B")** your co-worker and someone you consider a friend. You talk fast to get it over as soon as possible. You don't smile or make eye contact. You fold your arms and stay as serious as possible. You have a very long and complicated slide presentation that has no focus. Quinn has a hard time listening to your monotone voice. The practice presentation is a disaster. It is time for **Quinn (Role "A")** to give feedback.

ONE solution

Positions



Interests

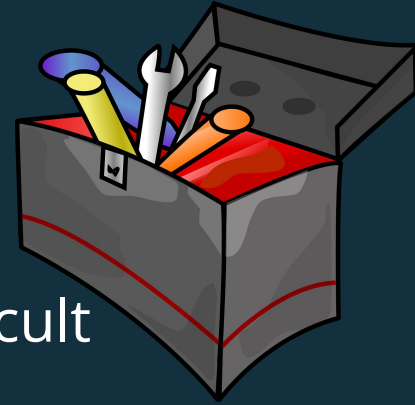


MANY solutions



“How can we _____, while
at the same time _____?”

Toolbox Takeaways:



1. Be sure to invite a conversation, rather than sporadically give effective feedback/ spark a difficult conversation.
1. Make sure you are **response-able** and recognize what your motivation is for sparking the feedback conversation.
1. Use the **BEAR** approach to help guide your dialogue; don't forget to ASK and give them a chance to correct any misunderstandings and/or share their perspective.

These skills are like muscles!

They require development and consistent use.

No one is ever perfect.





Interested In Continuing The Journey?

*Join the Boulder Community in a
Full 2-Day Workshop!*

Day 1: De-escalation Skills

Preparations & Techniques

Day 2: Difficult Conversations

The Art & Skill of Giving & Receiving Feedback

WHEN: Thursday, February 20th 2025 & Friday, February 21st 2025

8:30am Breakfast/Networking

9:00am-4:00pm Workshop (Lunch included)

WHERE: Elevations Credit Union

HOW?: Sign-up on the Boulder Chamber's Website

