

Introduction to Crucial Conversations

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Crucial Conversations

- A conversation between employees where
 - Stakes are high
 - Opinions vary
 - Emotions run strong



Crucial Conversations

- How we typically handle critical conversations
 - Avoid
 - Face and handle poorly
 - Face and handle well

Staying Focused On What You Want

- What do you really want?
 - Refocus your brain
 - Find your bearings
 - Take charge of your body
- Common deviations
 - Wanting to win
 - Seeking revenge
 - Hoping to remain safe



Staying Focused On What You Want

- Refuse the fool's choice
- Open yourself to change
- Search for the elusive and
 - Clarify what you really want
 - Clarify what you really don't want
 - Present your brain with a more complex problem



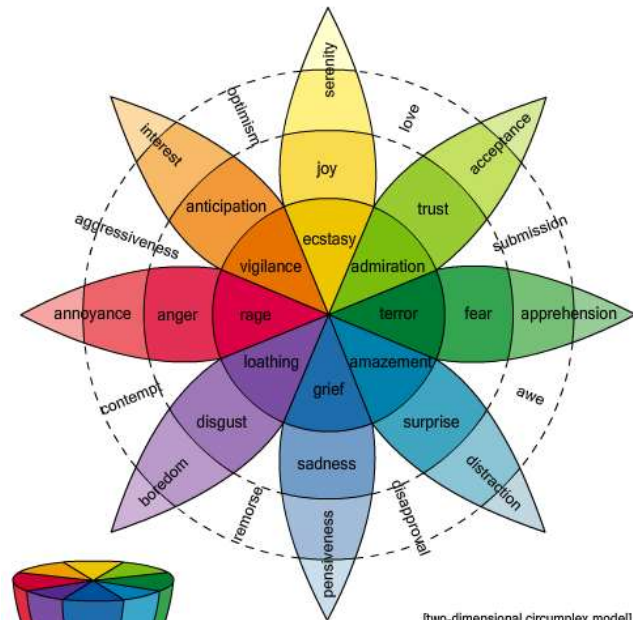
Staying Focused On What You Want

- Fool' s Choice
 - Is there a way to tell your boss your real concerns *and* not insult or offend him/her?
 - Is there a way to talk to your coworker about his/her annoying behavior *and* not come across as self-righteous or demanding?

Identifying a Crucial Conversation

- Notice physical signals
- Notice emotions
- Notice behaviors

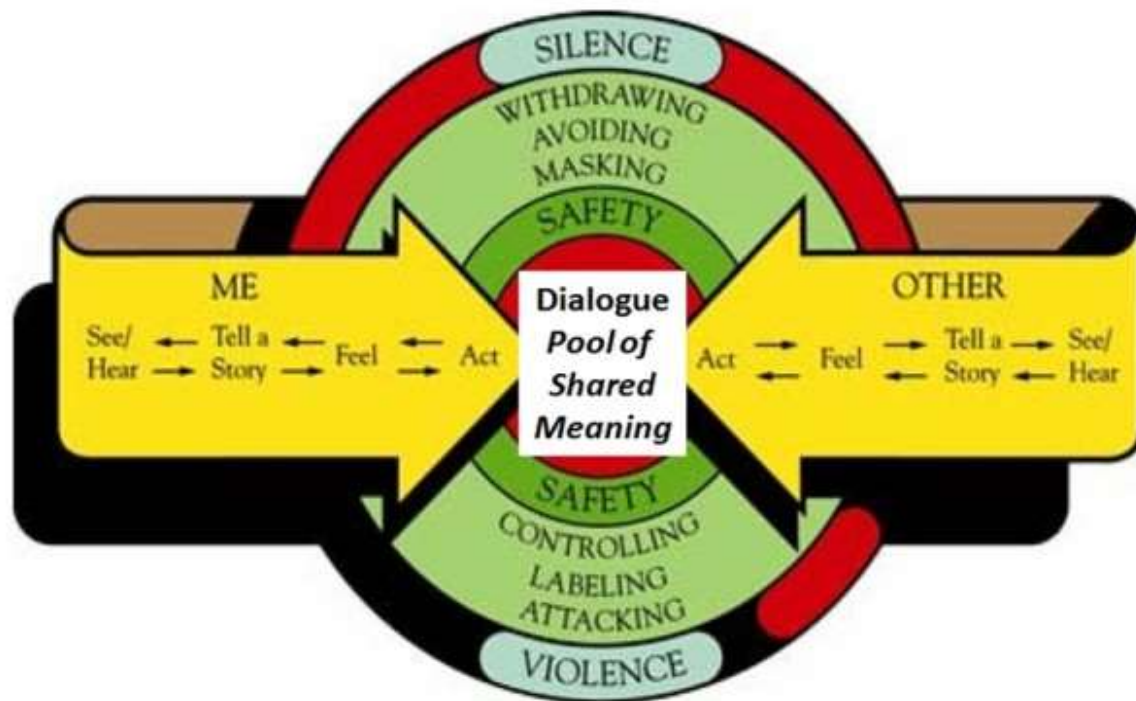
Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions



[two-dimensional circumplex model]

[three-dimensional circumplex model]

Identifying a Critical Conversation



Making It Safe

- Step out and make it safe, then step back in
- Mutual purpose
 - Watch for sign that mutual purpose is at risk
 - Remember the mutual in mutual purpose
 - What do I want for me?
 - What do I want for others?
 - What do I want for the relationship?
 - Look for the mutuality

Making It Safe

- Mutual Respect
 - Watch for sign that people are defending their dignity
 - Look for ways you are similar
- Apologize when appropriate



Making It Safe

- Contrast to fix misunderstanding
 - Do/don't statement that:
 - Addresses others' concerns that you don't respect them or that you have a malicious purpose
 - Confirms your respect or clarifies your real purpose

Making It Safe

- Contrasting is not apologizing
- Contrasting provides context and proportion
- Use contrasting for prevention or first aid

Making It Safe

- Mutual purpose
 - Commit to seek mutual purpose
 - Recognize the purpose behind the strategy
 - Invent a mutual purpose
 - Brainstorm new strategies



Staying In Dialogue

- Two bold claims
 - Others don't make you mad; you make you mad
 - Once you've created your emotions, you have only two options:
 - Act on them or
 - Be acted on by them



Staying In Dialogue

- Stories create feelings.
- Stories explain what's going on.
- Even if you don't realize it, you are telling yourself stories.
- Any set of facts can be used to tell an infinite number of stories.
- If we take control of our stories, they won't control us.

Staying In Dialogue

- Retrace your path
 - Notice your behavior.
Ask:
 - Am I in some form of silence or violence?
 - Get in touch with your feelings.
 - What emotions are encouraging me to act this way?



Staying In Dialogue

- Retrace Your Path
 - Analyze your stories.
 - Question your feelings and stories
 - Don't confuse stories with facts
 - Get back to the facts.
 - Separate fact from story by focusing on behavior
 - Spot the story by watching for “hot” words

Staying In Dialogue

- Retrace your path
 - Watch for three clever stories
 - Victim – It's not my fault.
 - Villain – It's all your fault.
 - Helpless stories – There's nothing else I can do.
 - Why do we tell these stories?
 - They match reality
 - They get us off the hook
 - They keep us from acknowledging our own sellouts.

Staying in Dialogue

- Tell the rest of the story
 - Turn victims into actors
 - Turn villains into humans
 - Turn the helpless into the able
 - What do I really want?
For me? For others?
For the relationship?
 - What would I do right now if I really wanted these results?



Advocating Your Path

- Share your facts
 - Facts are the least controversial.
 - Facts are the most persuasive.
 - Facts are least insulting
 - Begin your path with facts.
- Tell your story
 - It takes confidence.
 - Look for safety problems
 - Use contrasting

Advocating Your Path

- Ask for the others' paths
- Talk tentatively
- Encourage testing
 - Invite opposing views
 - Mean it
 - Play devils advocate

Listening When Others Are Emotional

- Get ready to listen
 - Be sincere
 - Be curious
 - Stay curious
 - Be patient
- Encourage others to retrace their path
 - Every sentence has a history
 - Break the cycle



Listening When Others Are Emotional



- Ask to get things rolling
- Mirror to confirm feelings
- Paraphrase to acknowledge the story
- Prime when you're getting nowhere
 - Agree
 - Build
 - Compare

Thank you!!!!