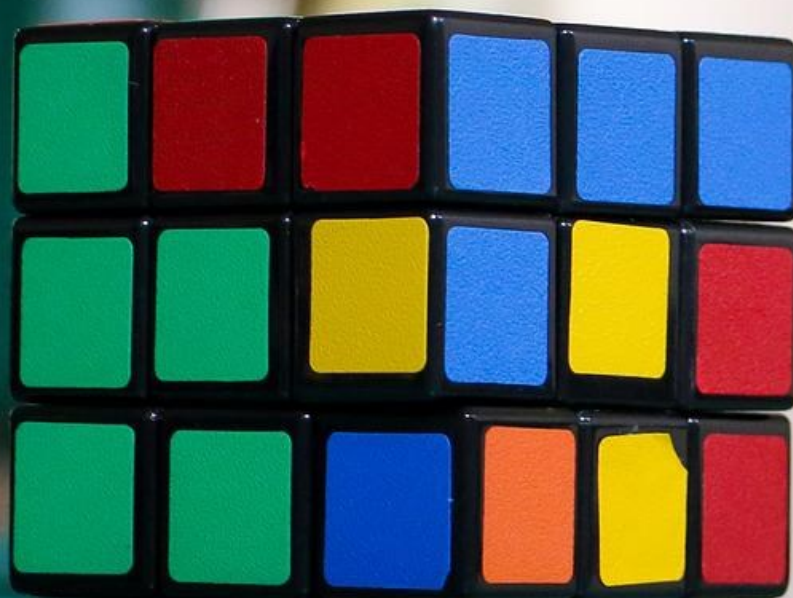




HOW TO HAVE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS



**ONLINE TRAINING
10 OCTOBER 2023**

WELCOME

Welcome to our morning on how to have difficult conversations. In our time together, we will:

- Explore some of the experiences, positive and negative, of the difficult conversations in our lives.
- Reflect on our own natural style in difficult conversations, using three metaphors.
- Consider why difficult conversations are difficult and how we can prepare well for them.
- Understand the ramifications of ignoring or delaying difficult conversations.
- Examine five keys for doing difficult conversations well.
- Be equipped with how we can prepare in advance for conversations.
- Review with God what our next steps might be.



SUGGESTIONS FOR GOOD ZOOM ENGAGEMENT

- **Please participate, don't just observe** Ask questions (use virtual hand or just dive in with a question), contribute your best insights.
- **Set aside distractions** Close down other programmes, resist the temptations of your phone/tablet, put out of reach other reading material.
- **Keep your video on throughout** It will help you be fully present, and will help others engage with you. A blank screen is rather dispiriting.
- **Don't mute your sound** It helps with the flow of interaction, and an occasional background noise actually makes it feel less artificial. However, if there is a lot of noise in your room, or you are meeting as a group in one place, please do mute.
- **Combat Zoom fatigue** Two things will help combat weariness. Hide your self view (right click on your own image and select hide self view) and take regular stretch breaks (every 20 minutes or so stand up, stretch, take a few deep breaths).
- **Be patient** At some point something will go wrong. Please be patient with us as we try to sort it out.

GUIDELINES FOR GOOD INTERACTION

- **Learning together** We are all here to learn from God and one another. **Adopt a learning posture.**
- **Participate** Share your thoughts, insights and questions. Listen carefully to what others say. **Have an enquiring mind.** You'll get the most out of it if you do.
- **Confidentiality** What is said in the room cannot be shared outside the room attributed to anyone in the room. That makes it a safe place for us to be honest and share more deeply. **Choose honesty and openness.**
- **Reality check** It is always easy to become disconnected from reality in a training session, so please keep us connected with reality by taking us back to how things really are in your context. **Keep grounded.**
- **Next step** We will cover a lot of ground, but throughout our time together **be attentive** to what might be your next step following this morning's session. We will give you a chance to identify that at the end of the morning.

TIMINGS

9.30	Welcome and prayer
9.45	Introduction and Session 1
11.00	Break
11.20	Session 2
12.30	End

Timings are for guidance only, apart from the end time. We will finish by 12.30.

LEAD ON

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LET YOUR CONVERSATION
BE ALWAYS FULL OF
GRACE, SEASONED WITH
SALT, SO THAT YOU MAY
KNOW HOW TO ANSWER
EVERYONE.
COLOSSIANS 4.6

Exercise in Breakout Rooms

- How do you feel when you know you have to have a difficult conversation?
- How do you feel when a difficult conversation goes well?
- How do you feel when a difficult conversation goes badly?

The Role of Our Emotions



WHAT IS YOUR CONVERSATIONAL STYLE?

Turtle



Hawk



Chameleon



- Which of these am I most like?
- Would those closest to me agree with that assessment?

WHAT'S SO DIFFICULT ABOUT A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION?

'We don't live in a shared reality, we each live in a reality of our own, and causing upset is often the price of trying to reach each other. It's always easier to dismiss other people than to go through the awkward and time consuming process of understanding them. We have given 'taking offense' a social status it doesn't deserve: it's not much more than a way of avoiding difficult conversations.

Frankie Boyle

'THE VITAL BEHAVIOUR THAT
ENABLES ALMOST ANY
POSITIVE ORGANISATIONAL
OUTCOME IS CANDOUR AT
MOMENTS OF ACUTE
EMOTIONAL AND POLITICAL
RISK.'

Crucial Conversations by
Patterson, Grenny, McMillan &
Switzler

OUR EXPERIENCES

Negative outcome, conversation starter

Positive outcome, conversation starter

Negative outcome, conversation participant

Positive outcome, conversation participant

WHAT'S IN THE BIBLE?



KEYS TO CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS

RECOGNISE THAT IT IS CRUCIAL

IF YOU HAVE A CHOICE, TIME IT RIGHT

H

A

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T

BE AWARE OF THE POWER PLAY

START WITH HEART

MAKE IT SAFE

- Establish mutual purpose
- Establish mutual respect
- Watch things carefully
- Step out and strengthen



BE PREPARED

PRAY

WISDOM OF OTHERS

OUTCOME

‘Asking a question before answering is valuable at the start of a conversation, and throughout. It helps motivate the turtle, inform the hawk and calm the chameleon. As this was his habit on earth, it also represents Jesus well.

Lori Stanley Roeleveld

KEY POINTS

OPENING LINES

DEEP BREATH!

THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE

‘THE AWESOME BEAUTY AND TERRIFYING TRUTH OF HARD CONVERSATIONS IS THAT EVEN IF THE OUTCOME ISN’T WHAT YOU HAD HOPED, [THE CONVERSATION] STILL HAS THE POWER TO SET AT ONE OF THE PARTICIPANTS FREE.’

Lori Stanley Roeleveld

TIME FOR REFLECTION

- What might God want to say to me today about my speech?
- Is there someone with whom I need a crucial conversation? What is my attitude towards them/it?
- Is there a particular conversation or meeting that I am anxious about and that I want to ask for wisdom for? What preparation can I make?



FURTHER RESOURCES:

- The Art of Hard Conversations, by Lori Stanley Roeleveld.
- Crucial Conversations Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High, by Joseph Grenny, Kerry Patterson, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler, Emily Gregory.
- Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most by Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton and Sheila Heen.