

Successfully Navigating Difficult Conversations

Conflict Resolution and Negotiation for MCH Leaders

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uceddLEND



Objectives

Through participation, audience members will:

- Identify basic conflict resolution styles**
- Define aspects of a crucial conversation**
- Identify strategies for managing crucial conversations**

MCH Competencies

Self

- **Self-reflection**

Style Under Stress Self-Assessment

<http://www.vitalsmarts.com/styleunderstress/>

- **Ethics and Professionalism**

Think about own discipline and approach

- **Critical Thinking**

Think through, rely on skills, then act

MCH Competencies

Others

- **Communication**
Listen and focus on context
- **Negotiation and Conflict Resolution**
Safety First!
- **Cultural Competency**
Applies across disciplines/situations/settings
- **Interdisciplinary Team Building**
**Fundamentals of playing nice
in the sandbox😊**

MCH Competencies

Wider Community

- **Working with Communities and Systems**

Conversations with school districts, stakeholders, etc.

- **Policy and Advocacy**

Conversations with policy-makers, agency leaders, local, state, and national policy partners

All I really need to know I learned in

Kindergarten

Share everything.

Play fair.

Don't hit people.

Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your own mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours.

Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody



All I really need to know I learned in
Kindergarten

Flush.

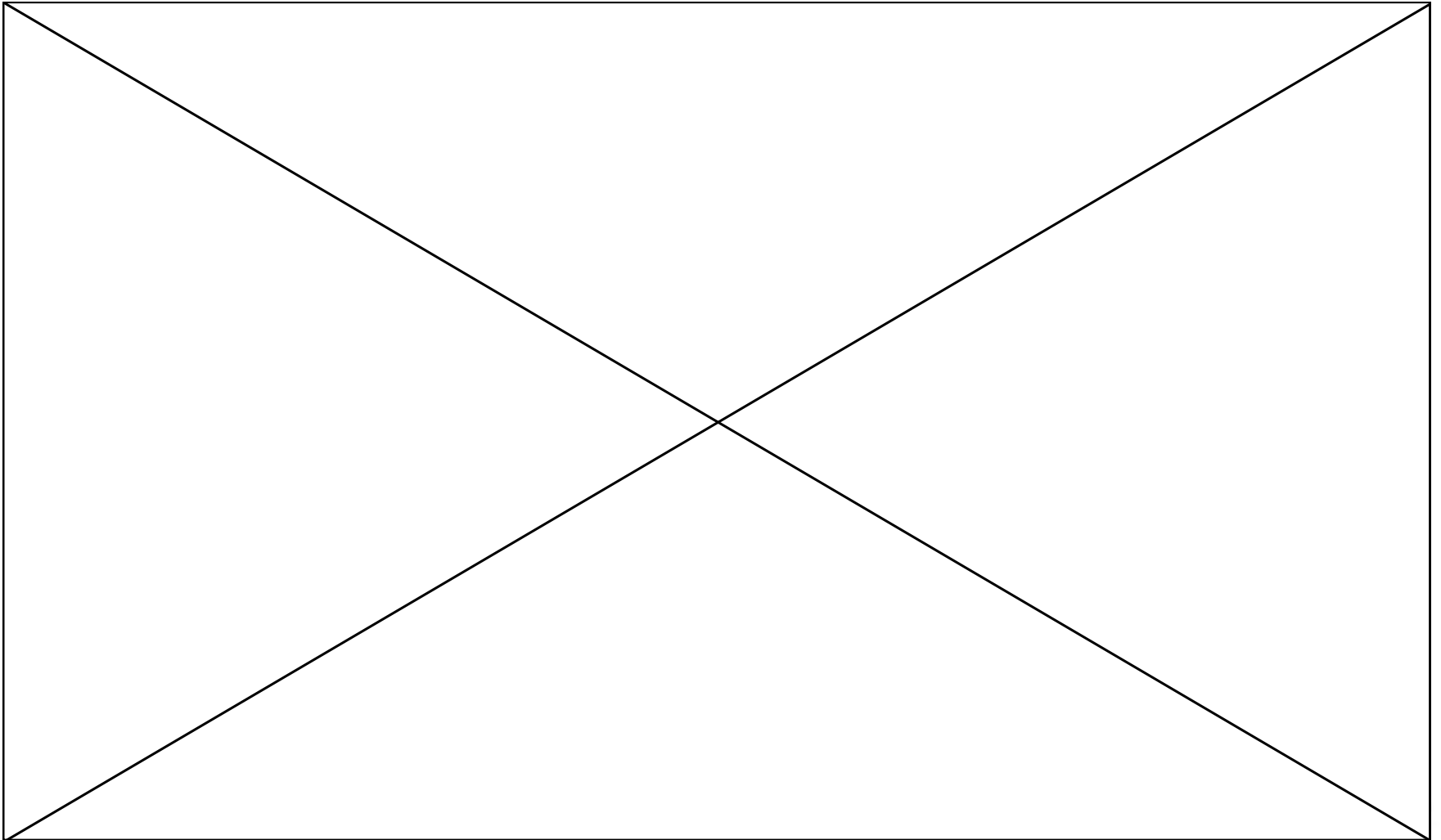
Take a nap every afternoon.

When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.

And then remember the Dick-and-Jane books and the first word you learned – the biggest word of all – “LOOK.”



Sesame Street on Conflict



Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Modes



Conflict Resolution begins in Preschool

[You Poked My Heart](#)

Research on Thomas-Kilmann Instrument

1930's-1970's: Avoid conflict

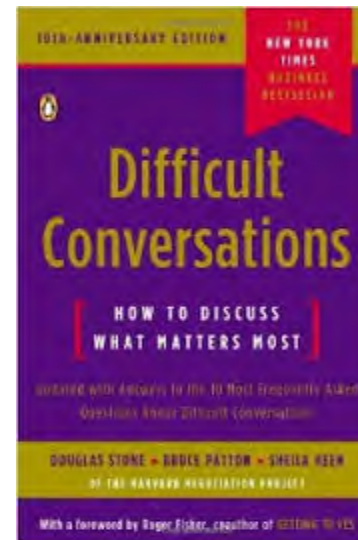
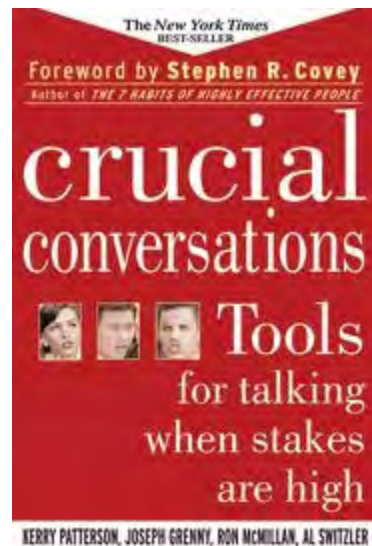
Since '70s: Natural phenomenon

- **Impact on performance and productivity**
- **Organizational climate**
 - **Dysfunctional v. Functional Conflict**
- **Quantitative studies**
 - **Mid-Level/Junior-level bank managers (CR styles)**
 - **Nurses (EI & CR styles)**

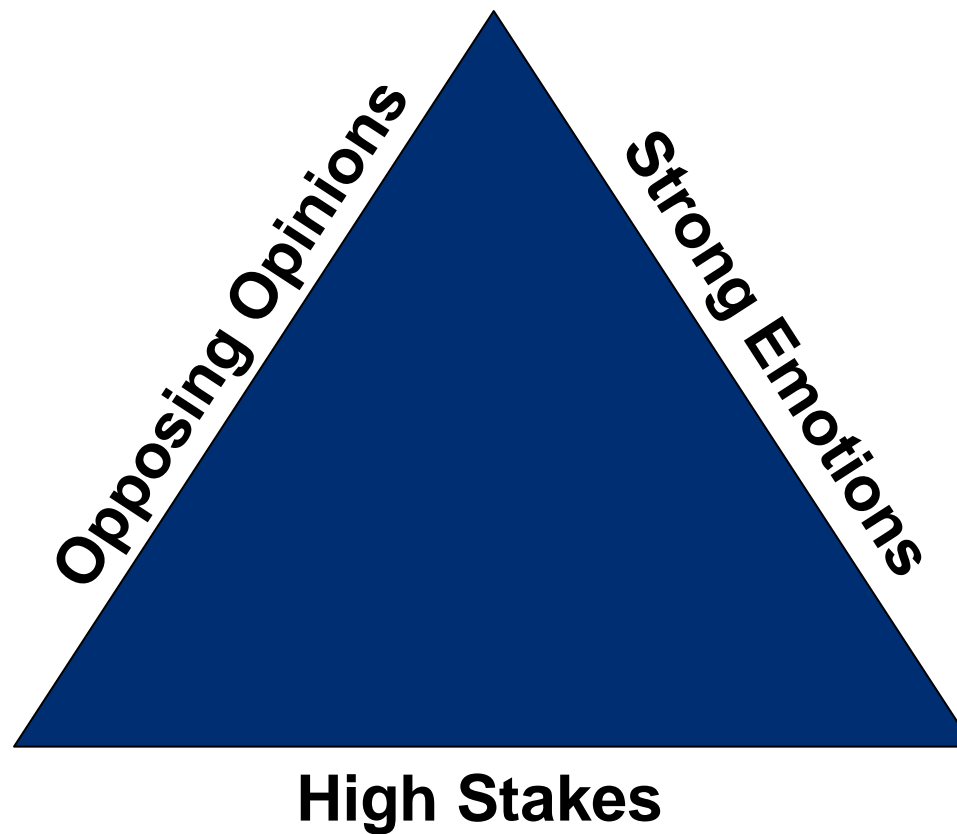
Research to Real Life



Applying Crucial Conversations

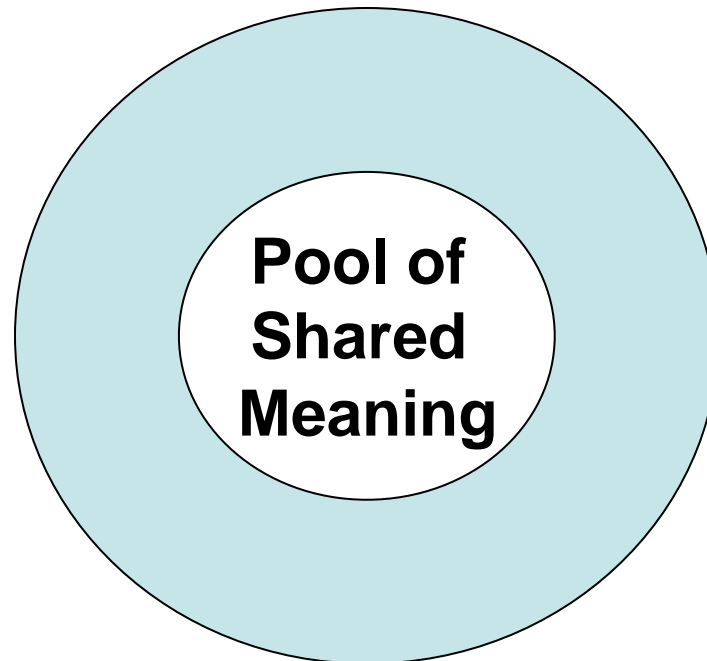


What makes a conversation crucial?



Goal in a Crucial Conversation: Share everything.

Get all information into the
Pool of Shared Meaning





Clean up your own mess.

Start with self-reflection

- 1) How did you get your way when you were a child?**
- 2) How do you get your way now?**

Clean up your own mess.

Ask Yourself

- 1) What bad results do you want to fix?
- 2) What good results are you unable to achieve right now?
- 3) What problem are you always trying to fix?
- 4) What do people complain about at home and at work?



Play Fair.

Motives

Unhealthy Motives

- Be right
- Look good/save face
- Win
- Punish/Blame
- Avoid conflict

Motives of Dialogue

- Learn
- Find the truth
- Produce results
- Strengthen relationships



Don't Hit People.

Two Common Types of Responding

Silence

- Masking
- Avoiding
- Withdrawing

Violence

- Controlling
- Labeling
- Attacking

Silence

Masking

Understating our true opinions

Example: “Oh yeah, that’ll work like a charm. People love to wait three weeks to see the doctor.”

Avoiding

Steering completely away from sensitive issues

Example: “Speaking of work ethic, did you see *Parenthood* last night?”

Withdrawing

Pulling out of the conversation completely

Example: “I’m sorry. I really have to take this call.”



Violence

Controlling

Coercing others to your way of thinking

Example: “We tried it that way and it was an absolute disaster.”

Labeling

Putting a label on others or their ideas, so we can generalize them and ultimately, dismiss them

Example: “You’re not going to listen to them, are you? You know they are always out for themselves.”

Attacking

Winning the argument → Making others suffer

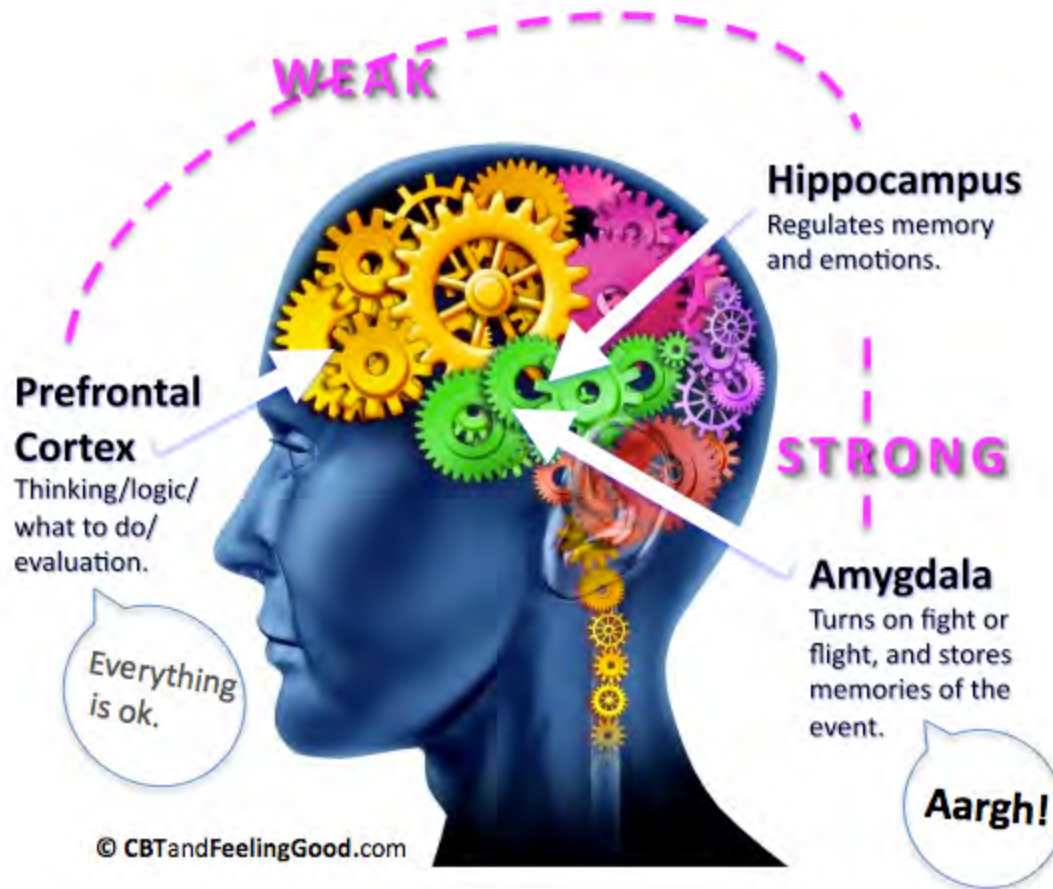
Example: “No, we are not listening to that ridiculousness, Jim.”



Don't Hit People & Share Everything

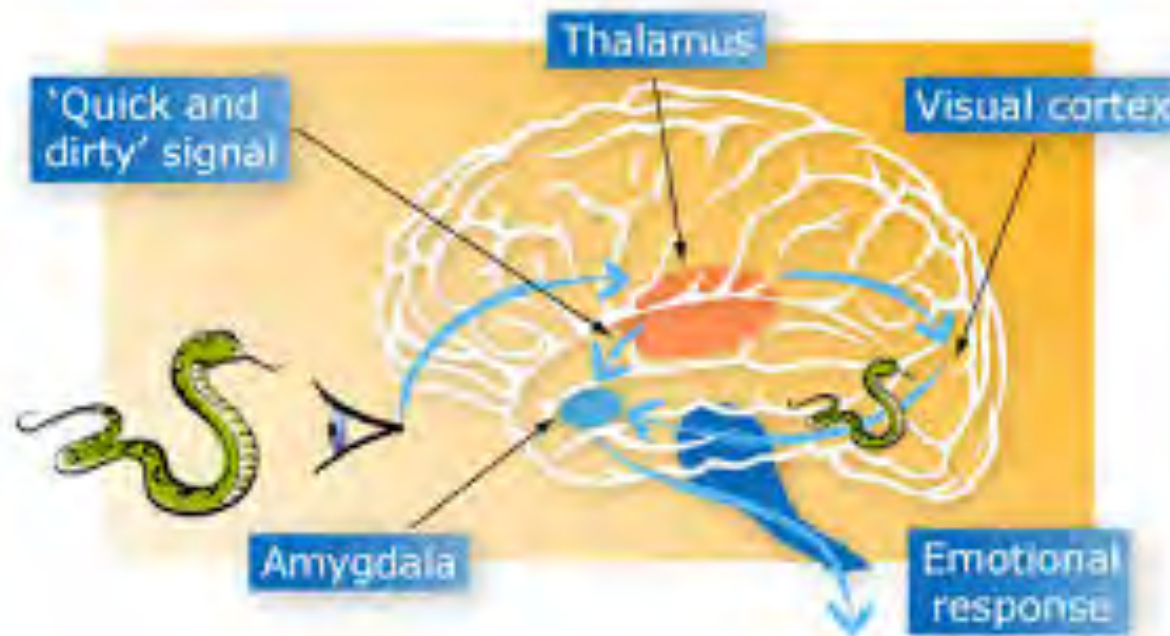


Share Everything



Daniel Goleman: Neural Hijacking

Amygdala is triggered before neocortex has a chance to deal with input from environment



Share Everything.

Problem:

Lack of blood in the brain = lack of ability to share everything you want to share (and to share it coherently!)

Solution:

Learn to create emotions that make you want to return to healthy dialogue

Share Everything.

The “how-to” for staying in dialogue when you are
angry, scared, or hurt

Watch your *thoughts*: They become your *words*.

Watch your *words*: They become your *actions*.

Watch your *actions*: They become your *habits*.

Watch your *habits*: They become your *character*.



The first word you learned – the biggest word of all – “LOOK.”





Don't take things that aren't yours.

Differentiate *real* FACTS from the stories we tell ourselves

FACT	STORY



Clean up your own mess.

We guess others' motives (quickly) and stories escalate as our emotions become more intense

Stories we tell ourselves

- **Victim Stories**
- **Villain Stories**
- **Helpless Stories**

Victim Stories

“It’s not my fault.”

The other person is bad, wrong, or dumb and we are right, good, and brilliant.

Problem:

Intentionally ignoring the role you have played

Villain Stories

“It’s all your fault.”

If we set the other person up as a villain, we feel better about insulting them.

Problem:

Creates a double standard- we ALL make mistakes!



Helpless Stories

“There’s nothing else I can do.”

If there is no other option, our actions (no matter how unhealthy) are justified.

Problem:

We do not take time to come up with alternative solutions



Share Everything

- **Skill #1: Separate Fact from Story**
- **Skill #2: Watch for Three Types of Stories**
- **Skill #3: Tell the Rest of the Story**

Share Everything



Tell the Rest of the Story:

- What am I pretending not to notice about my role in the problem?
- Why would a reasonable, rational, and decent person do this?
- What should I do right now to move toward what I really want?

Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.

**“There is always a way to be honest without being brutal”
–Arthur Dobrin**

Problem:

**During crucial conversations, we say things in
exactly the wrong way**

Solution:

**Learn 5 skills for saying risky things in a way that
minimizes defensiveness**



Play Fair

Share your facts

Tell your story

Ask for others' paths

Talk tentatively

Encourage testing

“WHAT” SKILLS

“HOW” SKILLS



Share everything.

Share your facts

Differentiate FACTS v. OPINIONS

Rely on what YOU see and hear

Examples

“I’ve noticed that..”

“When we talked about this on Monday...”

“I had written down from our conversation that...”





Share everything.

Tell your story

**Share your story so the person knows why the
FACTS are a concern**

Check yourself for one of the 3 stories

Examples

“I’m wondering if...”

“It leads me to think...”



Play fair.

Ask for Others' Paths

**Help get ALL info into the shared POOL
Challenge yourself to let others challenge you!**

Examples

“How did you see it play out?”

“Help me to better understand.”

“What are you thinking about this situation?”

Don't hit people.

Talk Tentatively

- Remember your story is a **STORY**, not **FACT**
- Allow others to share
- Avoid absolutes

Too Harsh

- “The fact of the matter is...”
- “That’s idea will never work...”

Better

- “What I was thinking...”
- “What about if we try...”

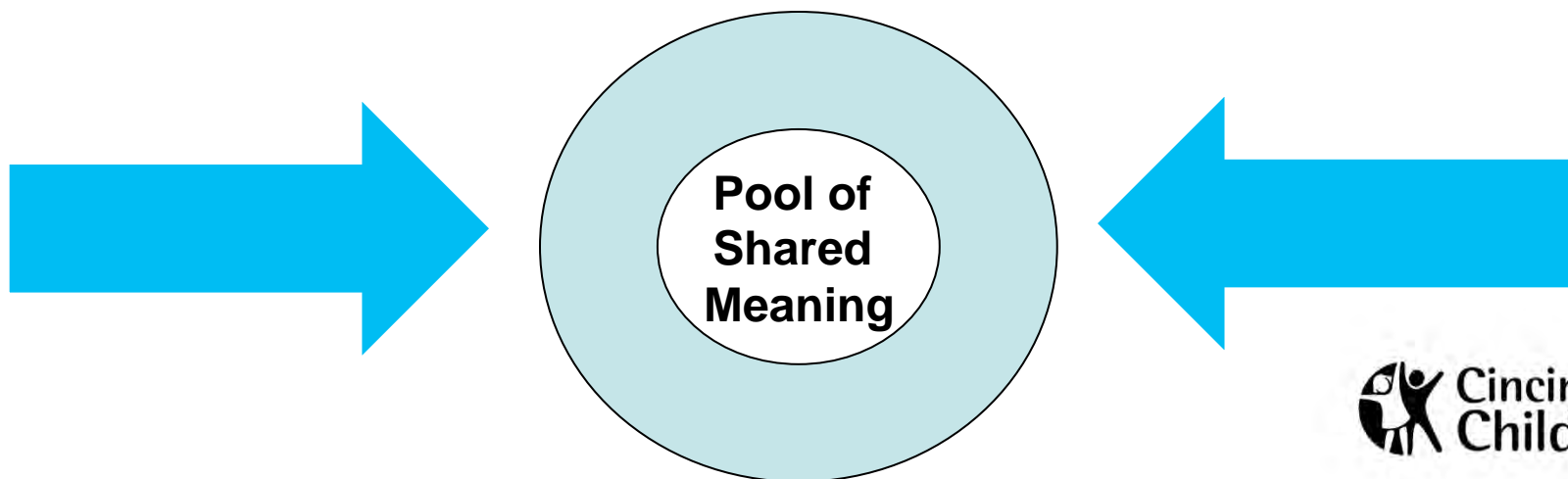
Play Fair.

Encourage testing

Be sincere and invite differing opinions

Make it safe for others to react

Get more info into the Pool of Meaning



Learn to Look.

Skill: Learning to look for when a conversation turns crucial

Take time to identify your own

- Emotions
- Physical responses
- Behaviors





Flush.

When you see or feel silence or violence, step out of content and restore safety

Silence or violence = based on one's own "stories" rather than content of the conversation

Put things back where you found them.

Tools for Rebuilding Safety

	Clear Problem	Misunderstanding
Mutual Respect	Apologize	Contrast
Mutual Purpose	Create Mutual Purpose	Contrast



Put things back where you found them.

Contrasting is not apologizing

**It's clarifying to make sure what you have said
does not hurt more than it should**

**Not a time to water down your feedback-
put it into a context instead**

Put things back where you found them.

Formulate a contrasting statement

1) I don't want _____

How might others mistake my purpose?

How might the other person feel disrespected?

2) I do want _____

What is my real motivation?

How do I really feel about the other person?





Play Fair.

**Those worst at dialogue ignore conflicts or
steamroll people with their opinions**

To avoid these traps



**Use CRIB strategy to create Mutual Purpose
(compromise)**

When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.

CRIB strategy

Commit to seek mutual purpose

- Make a statement: “It seems like we are both trying to force our own option. What if we think about something that will work for both of us.”

Recognize the purpose behind the strategy

- Ask: “What do you want from _____?” or “Help me understand your thinking on this.”



When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.

CRIB Strategy

Invent a mutual purpose

- Can you both combine your purposes?
- May need to move longer-term, larger-scale goals to come up with something you both agree upon

Brainstorm new strategies

- Create alternate ideas/suggestions that may meet one or both person's needs



Don't take things that aren't yours.

“We are trying to understand the other person’s point of view, not necessarily agree with it” (Crucial Conversations, p. 167).

Help other person trace their path to action



Don't take things that aren't yours.

AMPP Strategy

- **Ask**
- **Mirror**
- **Paraphrase**
- **Prime**





Don't take things that aren't yours.

Ask to get things rolling...

- **Invite others to share thoughts and feelings**
- **Show genuine interest**

- **“What is going on for you right now?”**
- **“I’m wondering how you are feeling right now.”**
- **“What have you been thinking about in terms of _____?”**



Don't take things that aren't yours.

Mirror to confirm feelings...

- Making a statement to confirm feelings allows the other person to know you are interested in them.
 - “I can see you really care about this project.”
- When people say one thing, but their nonverbal communication is inconsistent
 - “I hear you saying X, but your tone of voice seem to be saying Y.”



Don't take things that aren't yours.

Paraphrase to acknowledge the story...

- **Do not simply re-state, but put into your own words**
- **Make a statement about your summary**
 - **“Let me see if I am understanding this correctly...”**

When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together

Primetime when you're getting nowhere...

- Be sincere**
- Offer up a statement to allow the other person to feel even MORE safe**
 - “Is there something I've done to upset you?”**
 - “I am very interested to hear how you are really feeling.”**

Don't hit people.

Key Points:

- **If you are inviting others' honest responses, check yourself for defensiveness**
- **We don't want to punish their honesty by appearing punitive or unwilling to hear difficult emotions**



**Take a nap every afternoon
(seems contradicting, doesn't it?!)**

Document, document, document!

Who



Does What



By When



How will WE follow up

All YOU really need to know you learned in Kindergarten

There's never only one right way to do something

**“Conversations” comes from Latin:
to live in a place or to dwell with (Browning, 2011).**



All YOU really need to know you learned in Kindergarten

- **Do not think you have to be perfect at this every time!**
- **Prepare a little**
- **Practice a little**
- **A little progress will go a long way in a crucial conversation**

“The best predictor of your ability to get to dialogue is the amount of curiosity you bring to the conversation.”
– Joseph Grenny

“Be more interested than afraid.”
– Elizabeth Rider

**Respect is like air.
You don't really notice
until it's not there—
Then, it's all you notice.**