Facilitating Difficult Conversations

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Objectives

- Determine what makes some conversations difficult and why we must have them
- Identify how to manage their own feelings and others involved
- Develop approaches to facilitate difficult conversations
Can you think of a conversation that….
– You have avoided?
– Didn’t go as planned?
– Wished you could re-do?
In the chat box........

What was the conversation about?

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Examples of Difficult Conversations

- Performance or Attitude
- Addressing micro-aggressions/stereotypes
- Accountability
- Pattern of problematic behavior
- Disrespect
- Seeking assistance
- Apologizing

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Difficult conversations are about something important, and feelings are at their core. Otherwise, they would not be difficult!
Communication Process: A Model

Sender

Idea
Past Experience
Language
Beliefs
Attitudes
Feelings
Knowledge

Message
Feedback

Environment

Receiver

Idea
Past Experience
Language
Beliefs
Attitudes
Feelings
Knowledge

Mohamed Issa, PhD (2020)
Prepare…..

- Name your feelings
- What happened?
- Avoid “right” and “wrong”
- Focus on importance

- Don’t assume
- Identify your part
- Risks/consequences
- Be open
- Plan your approach
Use “I” statements

- I wanted to talk with you about ____________ because__(why is it important)__
- Describe observable behavior “I saw, noticed, heard…."
- Name feelings / states of mind “I was confused, surprised, uncertain”
- Share your thoughts as a hypothesis. And I wondered if ____________
During…. 

- Don’t take anything personally
- Refocus
- Recenter
- Respect

- Remain calm
- Observe
- Be sincere
- Plan
IN THE CHAT BOX ........

What are phrases you can use to help resolve the conflict/issue?
Examples....

- I didn’t realize this was going on, so tell me more.
- I want to listen to your point of view, but I can’t do it when you are yelling at me.
- I understand your point of view, but I see it differently.
- I will incorporate your thoughts going forward.
- Both of us need to put more effort into this if it’s going to work out.
- Why don’t you agree with me?
- Since we can’t seem to agree, can we continue talking about it another day so we can think of more solutions?
- Let’s see what we can do to make sure it doesn’t happen again.
- What can I do to improve communication, so this does not happen again?
- What can I do next time to make this less difficult for you?
Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters.
THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!