



## ***Teeing up CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS for SUCCESS***

Both in my work and my personal life, I value RECONCILIATION. Reconciliation, typically, is not an easy path to walk. AND, it takes, among other things, other people and CAREFUL COMMUNICATION. You've probably heard me say (or write... or both) on multiple occasions:

***Absent clear COMMUNICATION, we tend to live in a world of ASSUMPTIONS (which are usually wrong). Assumptions lead us to conclusions, which in turn TRIGGER EMOTIONS. THEN, we make DECISIONS based on those emotions, decisions we tend to later REGRET.***

I've seen this happen over and over again both in my work and in my own life. SO, maybe it would be helpful (for you and for me) to write down some pointers on how to approach difficult/crucial conversations... How to communicate in a way that promotes reconciliation. Not sure how you **DEFINE RECONCILIATION**. Here's a stab at it:

***tearing down the walls that separate***

***moving toward connection***

***making ONE out of the TWO.***

With Mark's definition, please allow me to share a few of the pointers I've learned (not always practiced, mind you ☺) along the way:

- Let some time elapse after the triggering event/conversation.
- PAUSE... the space created by "the PAUSE" often brings PERSPECTIVE.
- Ask, *Which is greater? The cost of this conversation, or the cost of NOT having it?*
- Bring a mindset of *We're on the same team. She/he is FOR me.* Attribute positive motives. The other person is not out to "take" or "destroy" me.
- To clarify where the other person is (and maybe where we both are), ask, *Is this a safe person, time, and place?*
- AND, ask, *Do we need a third party?* (To open up space, bring perspective, guide us, and keep us on track.)
- Start positive... state the good things you know to be true about the other person.
- Extend GRACE! (Like I'd like to have it extended to me...)
- Ask questions... make sure they are honest questions and not accusations cloaked as questions. Ask the second and third question. Peel the layers to get to the core.
- LISTEN to UNDERSTAND, NOT to prep my rebuttal.
- Be willing to take the conversation *into a rest area/stop.*
- REMEMBER, different ≠ right/wrong.
- Do we need to explore *childhood wounds* or traumas? (*Where is some of this coming from in me?*)
  - Allow space for that.
- Do NOT weaponize what the other person is sharing.
- Consider, *We'll come back to this...* (The conversation doesn't have to be one and done... If we do need to come back to it, don't let the conversation "hang" forever.)

I hope these are of benefit to you and yours. I know they are to me... IF I PRACTICE them regularly. Regular practice can form new "muscles"; new HABITS. Try one or some... You'll be glad you did!