

Make it Safe

- Make it safe to talk about almost anything
- Awareness: Are you ignoring or noticing the safety level of the participants in the dialogue.
- Awareness: Are you watering down the content to make it safe? (This strategy avoids the real problem)
- No pretending, sugarcoating, or faking

Make it Safe: Stepping Out of the Content to Ensure Safety

EXAMPLE: “Can we change gears for a minute? It would be good if we could both share what’s working and what isn’t working in this situation. My goal isn’t to make you feel guilty, and I certainly don’t want to become defensive. What I’d really like is for us to come up with a solution that makes us both satisfied”

Mutual Purpose and Respect

- Mutual Purpose
 - The Entrance Condition
 - *“You know that I care about your goals.”*
- Mutual Respect
 - The Continuance Condition
 - *“You know that I care about you.”*

Make it Safe

*When purpose is at risk,
the conversation evolves into a debate*

- **MUTUAL PURPOSE** means that others perceive that we are working toward a common outcome in the conversation
- **MUTUAL PURPOSE** means that we care about their goals, interests, and values (vice versa)
- **MUTUAL PURPOSE** is the entry condition of dialogue

Make it Safe: Mutual Purpose

- MUTUAL PURPOSE:
 - Do you trust the other person's purpose so you are willing to listen to tough feedback?
 - Crucial conversations often go awry not because of the content of the conversation, but because others believe that the painful and pointed content means that you have a malicious intent.
 - How can a person feel safe when they believe you're out to do them harm?

Make it Safe: Mutual Purpose

- Watch for signs that Mutual Purpose is at risk.
 - When others start focusing their opinions into the pool of meaning (I must win)
 - Defensiveness, hidden agendas, accusations, circling back to the same topic
 - *Do others believe I care about their goals in this conversations?*
 - *Do they trust my motives?*

Make it Safe: Mutual Purpose

- Remember the Mutual in Mutual Purpose
 - The purpose has to be truly mutual.
 - If the goal is to get our way or manipulate others, safety will be destroyed.
 - *What do I want for me?*
 - *What do I want for others?*
 - *What do I want for the relationship?*

Make it Safe: Mutual Purpose

- Look for the Mutuality
- Example: Let's say you've got a boss who frequently fails to keep commitments. How could you tell the boss you don't trust him?
- If the boss's behavior is causing you to miss deadlines he cares about, or incur costs he frets over, or lose productivity that he worries about, then you're onto a possible Mutual Purpose.

Make it Safe: Mutual Purpose

- Try to see the other person's point of view, you can often find a way to draw the other person willingly into even very sensitive conversations.

Make it Safe: Mutual Respect

- Disrespect: The instant people perceive disrespect in a conversation, the interaction is no longer about the original purpose– it is now about defending dignity.
 - Rolling eyes
 - sarcasm

Make it Safe: Mutual Respect

- Telltale signs
 - Emotions turn from fear to anger
 - Pouting
 - Name-calling
 - Yelling
 - Threats
- *Do others believe I respect them?*

Make it Safe: Mutual Respect

- Can you respect people you don't respect?
 - Honor and regard another person's basic humanity
 - Look for ways that we are similar
 - Respect doesn't mean acceptance or agreement with other's behavior.

Make it Safe: Mutual Respect and Mutual Purpose

- When either is at risk, what do I do?
 - DON'T IGNORE IT
- Apologize
 - Focus on what you really want
 - When you have made a mistake that has negatively effected others
 - This means giving up saving face, being right, or winning

Make it Safe: Mutual Respect and Mutual Purpose

- When either is at risk, what do I do?
 - DON'T IGNORE IT
- Contrast (Need a don't/do statement)
 - Addresses others' concerns that you don't respect them or that you have a malicious purpose (don't part)
 - *I don't want to suggest that this...*
 - Confirms your respect or clarifies your real purpose (do part)
 - *I do want to be able to talk...*

Make it Safe: Mutual Respect and Mutual Purpose

- When either is at risk, what do I do?
 - DON'T IGNORE IT
- Commit to Seek Mutual Purpose
 - *Verbally agree to arriving at a solution that is mutually acceptable*
- Recognize the Purpose Behind the Strategy
 - *What is the real purpose, we tend to confuse what we're asking for (strategy) with what we want (purpose)*
- Inv_ent a mutual purpose
 - *If you can't agree on a mutual purpose, invent one*
- Brainstorm new strategies

Master My Stories

- Do you know how to stay in dialogue when you're angry, scared, or hurt?
- Master them or fall hostage to them
- “How am I suppose to remember to do all this stuff—especially when my emotions are raging?”

“She made me mad!”

- “You’re sitting quietly at home watching TV and your mother-in-law walks in. She glances around and then starts picking up the mess you made a few minutes earlier when you whipped up a batch of nachos. This ticks you off. She’s always smugly skulking around the house, thinking you’re a slob.
- A few minutes later when your spouse asks you why you’re so upset, you explain. “It’s your mom again. I was lying here enjoying myself when she gave me that look, and it really got me going. To be honest, I wish she would quit doing that. It’s my only day off, I’m relaxing quietly, and then she walks in and pushes my buttons”

Stories

- Stories are
 - Are interpretations of facts
 - Explain what we see and hear
 - Help use evaluate the situation
 - Tell us what we should do about the situation
 - Once told they take on a life of their own

Mastering My Stories: Retrace my path to action

- Notice your behavior – ask:
 - Am I in some form of silence or violence?
- Get in touch with your feelings – ask:
 - What emotions are encouraging me to act this way?
- Analyze your stories – ask:
 - What story is creating these emotions?
- Get back to the facts – ask:
 - What evidence do I have to support this story?

Master My Stories: Separate fact from story

- Regain emotional control by asking:
 - *Is this the only right emotional response to the situation?*
 - *Questioning our feeling leads to questioning our stories*
- Separate subjective conclusions from objective facts by asking:
 - *Can I see or hear this thing I'm labeling a fact?*
 - *Was it an actual behavior?*
 - *Conclusions explain what you think not what actually happened.*
- Watch for emotionally laden words by asking:
 - *What words carry an undertone of judgment or attributes?*
 - *Less volatile descriptions allow for multiple interpretations.*

Master My Stories

- Watch for 3 clever stories
 - “it’s not my fault”
 - “it’s all your fault”
 - “there’s nothing else I can do”

Master My Stories:

Tell the rest of the story

- Tell the rest of the story
 - What I am pretending not to notice my role in the problem?
 - Why would a reasonable, rational, and decent person do what this person is doing?
 - What do I really want?
 - Am I rational?
 - Am I reasonable?
 - Am I decent?
 - What would I do now if I really wanted to move forward?

STATE My Path

- 3 ingredients for speaking the upspeakable while maintaining respect:
 - Confidence
 - Humility
 - Skill

STATE My Path

- Tools for talking about sensitive topics
 - Share your facts
 - Tell your story
 - Ask for others' paths
 - Talk tentatively
 - Encourage testing

STATE My Path

- Turn your attention from the topic to yourself
- Remember others have something to say, so listen
- Catch yourself before pushing too hard

“Hold to your belief;
merely soften your approach”

Explore Others Paths

- Clam up: refusing to speak our mind
- Blow up: speaking in an abusive or insulting manner
- Get to the source of fear and discomfort is the best way to return to dialogue

Explore Others Paths: Listening Skills

- Ask: Start by simply expressing interest in the other person's views.
 - *“What’s going on?”*
 - *“I’d really like to hear your opinion on this.”*
 - *“Please let me know if you see it differently.”*
 - *Don’t worry about hurting my feelings. I really want to hear your thoughts.”*

Explore Others Paths: Listening Skills

- Mirror: Increase safety by respectfully acknowledging the emotions people appear to be feeling to confirm feelings
 - *“You say you’re okay, but by the tone of your voice, you seem upset.”*
 - *“You seem angry at me.”*
 - *“You look nervous about confronting him. Are you sure you’re willing to do it”*

Explore Others Paths: Listening Skills

- Paraphrase: As other begin to share part of their story, restate what you've heard to show not just that you understand, but also that it's safe for them to share what they're thinking
 - “Let's see if I've got this right...”

Explore Others Paths: Listening Skills

- Prime: If others continue to hold back, prime. Take your best guess at what they may be thinking and feeling.
 - *Say what you think they are most likely thinking*
 - *Use only if the other tools haven't worked*

Explore Others Paths: Listening Skills

- Agree:
 - Agree where you do
 - Disagreement typically is over only 5 – 10% of the facts and stories
- Build:
 - If others leave something out, agree where you do, then build
- Compare
 - When you do differ significantly, don't suggest others are wrong. Compare your two views.

MOVE TO ACTION

- Two Reasons for Failing to Put Ideas into Action
 - Unclear expectations
 - Inaction

“Dialogue is not decision making”

*“Dialogue is a process for sharing meaning
hence everyone is involved”*

*“Because everyone is allowed to share their
meaning...doesn't mean then they are
guaranteed to take part in making all the
decisions”*

*Whoever is in the position of authority
decides which method of decision making will
be used.*

Move to Action

4 Methods to Decision Making

- Command: *decisions made by authority without involvement of others.*
- Consult: *Authority invites others to influence them before making a decision*
- Vote: *Used when selecting from a number of good options*
- Consensus: *Everyone honestly agrees to one decision.*

Move to Action:

4 Questions

- Who cares? *Who wants to be involved, don't involve those who don't care.*
- Who knows? *Who has the expertise you need to make the decision. Don't involve those who contribute no new information*
- Who must agree? *Involve those whose cooperation you might need in the form of authority or influence in any decision you make.*
- How many people is it worth involving? *Involve the fewest number of people that will still make for a quality decision.*

Move to Action:

4 Element for Action

- Who? Assign a name to every responsibility
- Does What? Define the exact deliverable.
- By When? Set deadlines
- How will you follow-up? Set up an accountability process.

*When someone fails to deliver on a promise,
it's time for dialogue.*