

Difficult Conversations Checklist

- Your calm, clear, and confident guide to courageous conversations -

BEFORE the Conversation

- ✓ Clarify **your intention** — what's the real purpose?
- ✓ Identify the **facts** vs. your interpretations
- ✓ Check your **emotions** — what are you feeling and why?
- ✓ Consider their **perspective** — what might they be feeling or needing?
- ✓ Define your **ideal outcome** — what do you hope will change?
- ✓ Prepare your **impact statement** (When X happened, the impact was Y, and I felt Z)
- ✓ Rehearse your **opening sentence** to reduce anxiety
- ✓ Choose a **calm time & private space** for the talk
- ✓ Ground yourself — deep breath, clear head, calm body

DURING the Conversation

- ✓ Start with **respect and clarity**
- ✓ Share your **impact statement**, not blame
- ✓ Stay focused on **behaviour**, not personality
- ✓ **Pause and listen** — let them respond fully
- ✓ Ask **open questions** (What's your view? How do you see it?)
- ✓ Notice **defensiveness** — yours and theirs
- ✓ Stay calm even if emotions rise
- ✓ Focus on **problem-solving**, not "being right"
- ✓ Acknowledge **their feelings** even if you disagree
- ✓ **Agree on next steps** or follow-up

AFTER the Conversation

- ✓ Reflect: What went well? What could be better next time?
- ✓ Follow up: Any actions, check-ins, or clarifications needed?
- ✓ Celebrate: You did something courageous and intentional

"Clarity is kindness. Calm is power. Listening is leadership."

