Women Leading Locally



NAVIGATING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

PRESENTER: **ANNE-MARIE CADE** Organisation Name: BE HAPPIER TOGETHER

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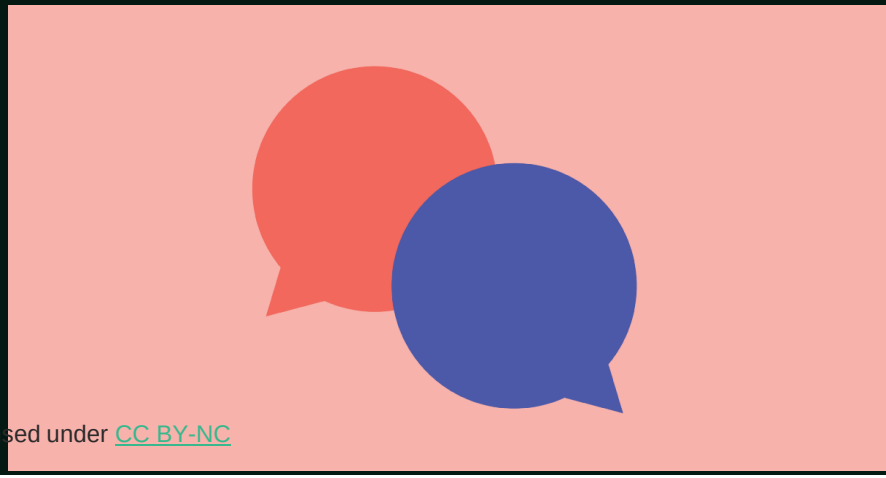
WOMEN FOR ELECTION

VICTORIA State Government

THE BIGGEST PROBLEM WITH COMMUNICATION IS THE ILLUSION THAT IT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED

-GEORGE BERNARD SHAW



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CONSEQUENCES OF NOT HAVING A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION:

- feelings of anger
- we become more sure that we are right
  and that the other person is wrong
- we get entrenched in our own positions

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Ted X Talk - video

The Secret To Getting Along is Easier Than You Think | Gabrielle Hartley

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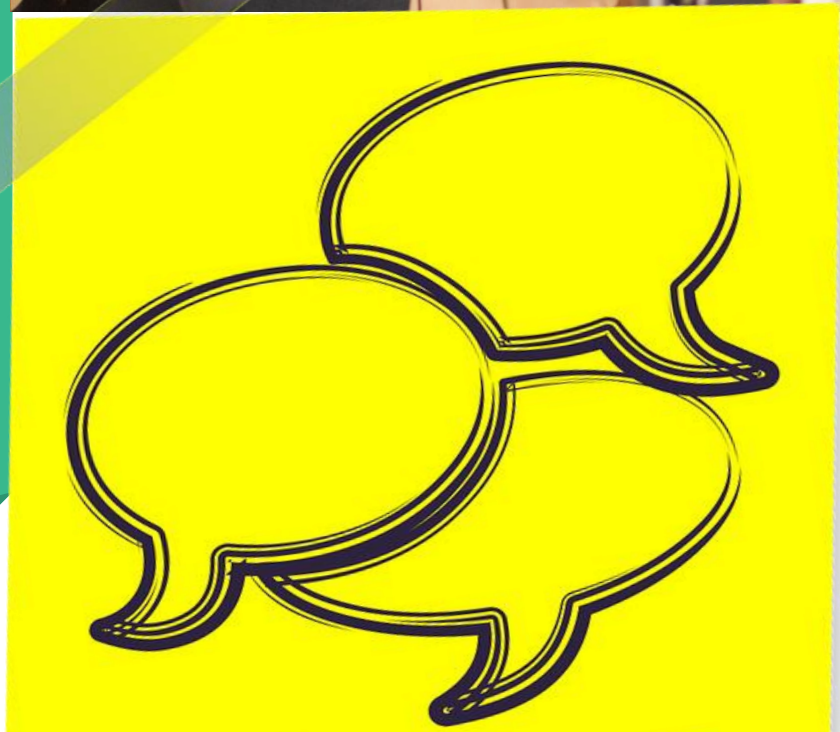
EXAMPLES OF DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS:

- saying no
- discussing an issue that is challenging
- confronting disrespectful behaviour
- dealing with problematic behaviour
- making an apology

Why do we find it hard to have these conversations:

- we feel vulnerable
- our self esteem is affected
- the outcome is uncertain
- there are issues at stake
- fear of consequences





Humans make internal representations about an event.

- delete
- distort
- generalise based on our belief structures



BUT CONFLICT IS A GOOD THING.

DISAGREEMENT IS A GOOD THING

Conflict done well enables rigorous discussion, the birth of new ideas and leads to collaboration.

HIGH CONFLICT



- destructive
- us v them
- our brains behave differently
- make mistakes
- conflict takes on a life of its own
- react rather than respond.

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THE HUMAN BRAIN OPERATES IN 2 MODES - CONSCIOUS AND NON-CONSCIOUS.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION - PRE-FRONTAL CORTEX - RESPONSIBLE FOR HIGH LEVEL THINKING.

LIMBIC SYSTEM - PURPOSE IS TO KEEP US ALIVE

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WHEN BRAIN SENSES A THREAT- FIGHT, FLIGHT& FREEZE.

NOT HELPFUL - WE REACT AND THAT'S WHEN THERE IS CONFLICT.

COMMUNICATION IS –

- 7% words
- 38% tonality
- 55% body language



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TO COMMUNICATE BETTER WE NEED TO BUILD RAPPORT AND CREDIBILITY

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SKILL BUILDING:

-facts don't solve fights
-listening neutralizes the conflict
-pausing the voice in your own head
-avoid invalidating
-validate instead
-ask open ended questions

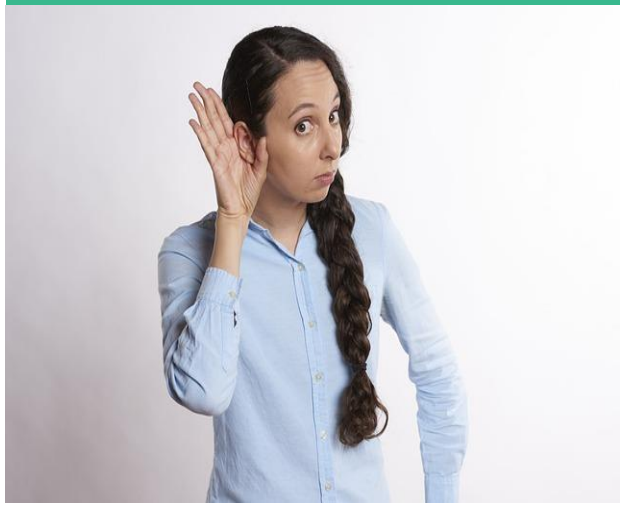
OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS-

- what do you need? where to from here?
- what do we need to figure out?
- what do I need to understand?
- I want to understand how you got here
- tell me more



ACTIVE LISTENING:

- pay attention
- listen with your eyes & heart
- don't think of response
- search for meaning in body language
- loop them



LOOPING: A SPECIAL KIND OF LISTENING

- listen to understand, don't judge,
- reflect back to them in your own words what you heard them say
- check with them if you got it right
- loop again - say tell me more



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PAY ATTENTION TO RED FLAG WORDS THEY USE:

- this signals that there is more to the conversation

- check the understory



ASK QUESTIONS TO GET TO THEIR MOTIVES

- why is this important to you?
- what do you want to understand about the other side?
- how has this conflict affected your life?



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WIDEN THE LENS

- What is dividing us on this issue?
- Where do you feel torn?
- Is there any part of the otherside”s position that makes sense to use?



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REMEMBER

- avoid getting drawn into the fight - go to the balcony or take a break
- role play hard conversations
- set guardrails in place
- magic ratio 3:1



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DEALING WITH CONFLICT ENTREPRENEURS:

- stay in good conflict in your head
- resist the urge to demonize them
- listen to try and understand
- propose a solution
- ask questions with curiosity
- reflect back to them

BEFORE THE CONVERSATION-

- do your preparation
- gather information around their perspective
- build rapport
- show interest in their concerns
- if unsure say you don’t know.



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SOCIAL MEDIA



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