



NOT THE EASY WAY
Speak. Aspire. Take Action.

NAVIGATING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Difficult conversations involve exploring topics that can be difficult to discuss and require sensitivity (e.g. religion, race, politics, identity, sex & sexuality). Follow our tips to help you manage these important conversations well!



Ask: What is the purpose of the discussion?

Yes to : Understanding, sharing, expanding thinking, tolerating differing views.

No to : Changing someone's mind, proving them wrong, applying negative labels to people based on their views, being deliberately rude or hurtful to each other or about a particular group.

Ask: When should I have this discussion?
How do I invite someone to engage?
How do I accept if they don't want to?

SHOW GENUINE LISTENING

- Prioritise their voice over your own: 'No, you go on'.
- Give them space and time to express their view.
- Before you make your point, summarise and reflect back what you have heard.
- Hear the emotions that are being expressed and label them. 'I can see that this makes you sad because...'
- Ask questions to understand better.
- Find common ground during the discussion.

NAVIGATING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS CONTINUED

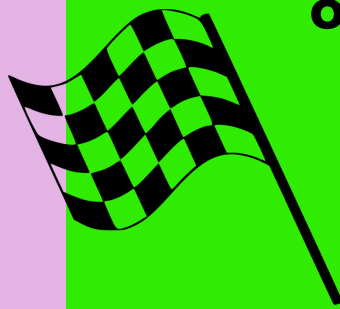
Try to accept the best possible interpretation of what is said.

If they say they want to make the world better, believe them, even if you disagree with their ideas for change.



Judge when it's time to end the conversation: when the conversation gets too heated; when things are being repeated; when it's dominating a social event.

Relationships are important. Do you want to be happy in those relationships or do you want to be right or win?



NB: If at any stage during the conversation, you feel the person is at risk of harming themselves or others, make sure to let them know that you will have to tell someone who can help.

End the conversation well!

- Ask for agreement on ending the conversation.
- Be open about why you think you should end it.
- Say what you have gained from the conversation & thank them for engaging with you and sharing their time.

Visit nottheeasyway.org for a more detailed resource on how to navigate difficult conversations, our podcast, and other aspects of our mission.

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