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HOW DO I HAVE A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION WITH SOMEBODY THAT I HAVE AN ISSUE WITH?

When we get into these situations, often we go to ego and get defensive, nervous, angry. Often we react rather than respond and say things we did not think through and perhaps delivering an icy, condescending or even hostile tone to others. Then, we may go into a cycle of beating ourselves up over what has happened or getting into blaming the other person creating an inward or outward directed vicious cycle.

If one can identify the feelings before the actions, then one can respond rather than react. This is called the 'pause'. When we catch ourselves, take a pause, and make a conscious choice about how to respond, many positive things can happen. We can choose not to respond, respond with a request to talk later, respond with a request for space, or respond with quick but considered thought. What could that thought look like? Ask yourself that you want from this situation, how this can be a win-win, own your own feelings, release the need to be right or correct, and resolve to clarify assumptions. Then, readdress the person, state your intention, talk about your perceptions and feelings, ask for their perceptions and feelings, and try to come to solution together. When a positive intention is set, it is easier to proceed with the rest of the conversation.

Quite often these things that are left not dealt with or that are dealt with poorly, end up lingering with us until we can perhaps take the above approach so why not start with it?

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