

How to handle difficult conversations

Every now and then, we find ourselves facing difficult conversations in our private, professional or social life.

We might need to communicate to others about mistakes, errors, lies, omissions, betrayal, under-performance, unmet expectations, unfulfilled needs, breakups, divorce, illness or even death and they can bring high distress.

A difficult conversation is usually preceded by shame, fear, insecurity, sadness, anger, frustration or disappointment which lead to procrastination and affect our mental wellbeing.

We fear people might feel criticised, become defensive or offensive against us and we worry they might get upset. We also fear that having the conversation may impact on our relationship with them.

The unpleasant conversations become inevitable at some point. To prepare for this, clarify your strategy and what you want to achieve through that conversation then find the courage and do it!

Here's a guide to aid you through that conversation



- State your interest in everyone's benefits, on both short and long term.
- Communicate your intentions in an open, honest and respectful way.
- Describe the facts in chronological order and explain the impact on you and/or others.
- Speak with a low tone and warm voice allowing the emotions to express your concerns.
- Suspend judgement. Listen to the others' feedback and accept it as their own reality.
- Aim to focus on feasible solutions and a constructive outcome for all those involved.
- Praise the other's apology and intention to make changes and improve things.

Difficult conversations provide a great platform for growth and personal development!

They reinstate hope in ourselves and the humanity, relieve distress and suffering and restore our mental wellbeing!

For more resources and counselling support visit www.thesignificantyou.org