

# Crucial Conversations

## Moving from Conflict to Construct(ive)

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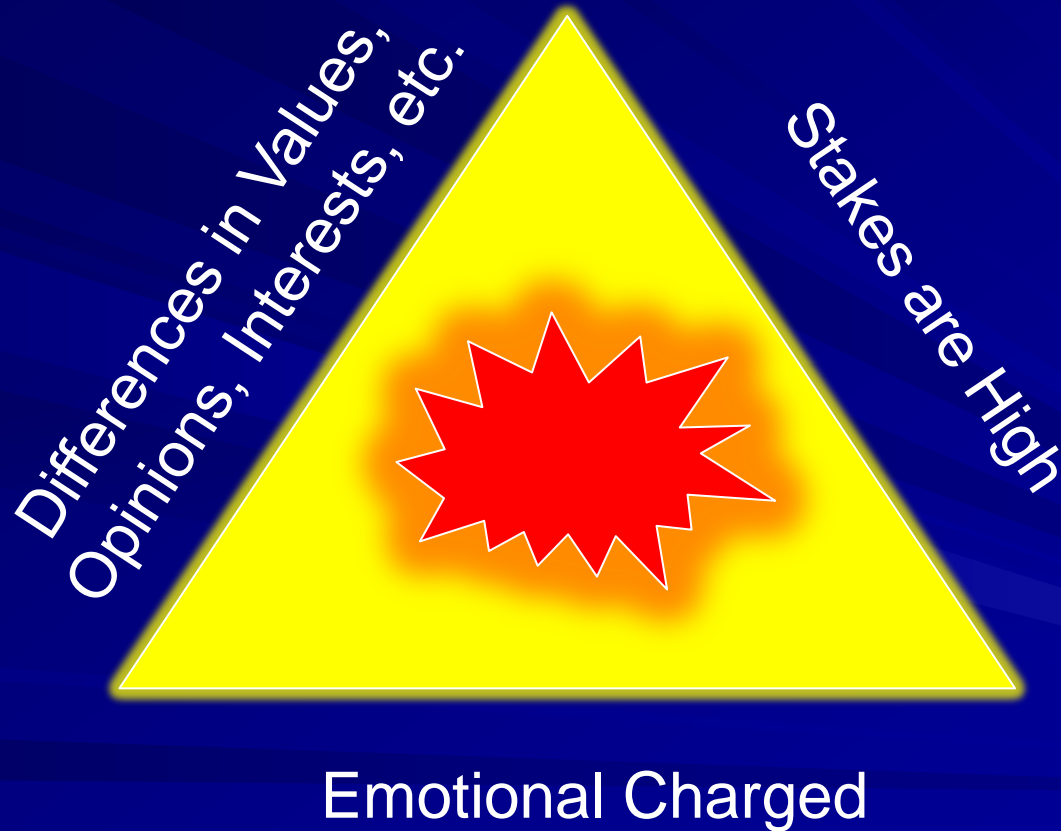
# Goals for this session

- Reflect on key tenets of crucial conversations
- Practice implementing conversation strategies with peers
- Discuss the role of non-verbal communication in crucial conversations

# Conflict and Communication



# What is a Crucial Conversation?



# What *Often* Happens

- Avoidance
- Emotional override

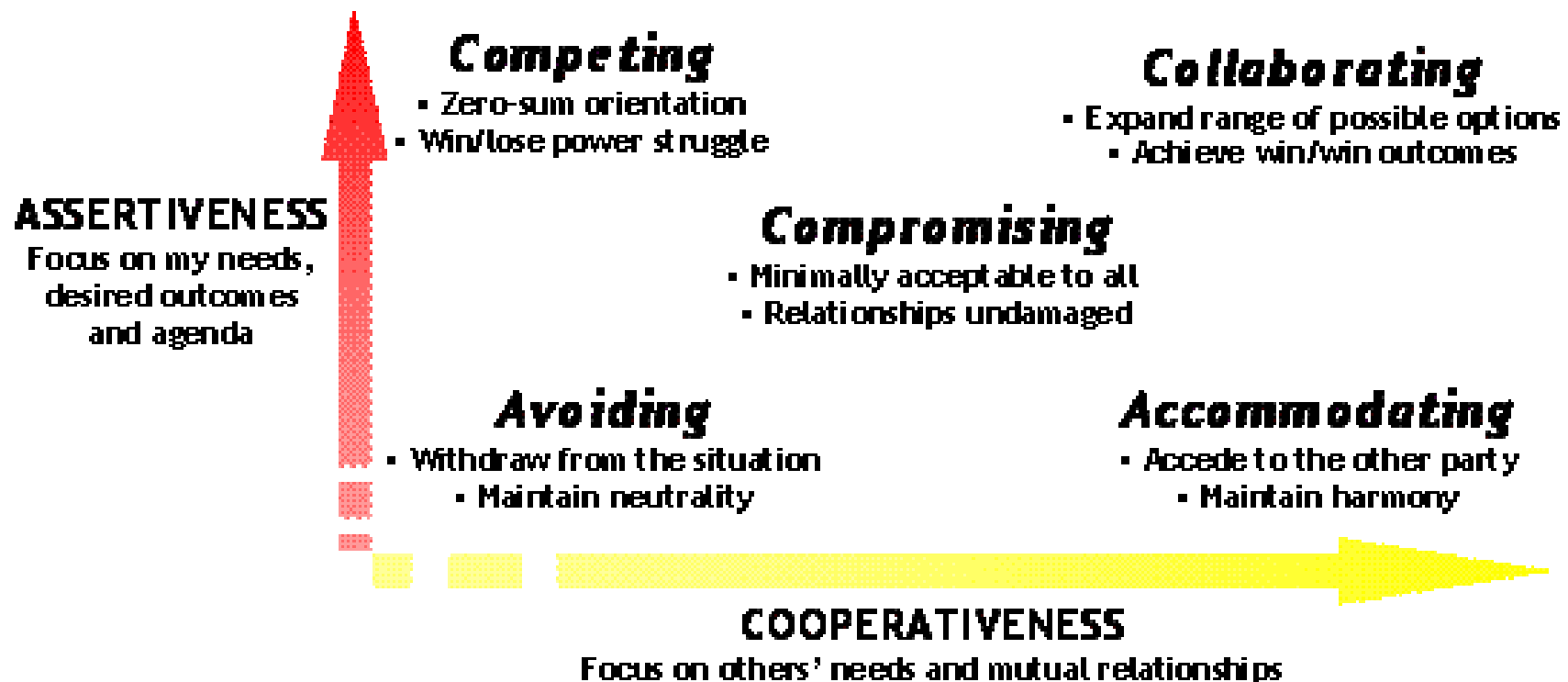
# What *Could* Happen

- Mutual respect, improved safety and communication
- Shared purpose and direction
- Innovative Solutions
- Empowerment and team satisfaction

# Key Steps

- Create situational safety
- Check in with yourself
  - “What result do I most want from this conversation?”
  - “What am I feeling in this situation?”
  - “What am I afraid may happen? “What are the threats and barriers to achieving constructive collaboration?”

# Thomas Kilmann Conflict Styles





# Key Steps

- Active Listening

- 4 Powerful listening tools

- Ask, establish safety in sharing opinions and thoughts
- Mirror/acknowledge
- Paraphrase
- Prime

- As you share your views, remember:

- Agree where you can
- Build
- Compare

# The “One Thing” for Conflict Resolution

- Moving from Conflict to Constructive Dialogue requires shared meaning between 2 or more people
  - Fill the pool of shared meaning and understanding
  - Find common ground and higher shared values
  - Act on common goals

# *Rapid Sequence De-escalation*

- Model the behaviors you want to see
- Maintain awareness and vigilance
- Find a higher shared principle or commonality
- Validate the good
- Empathize with people, but do not condone problematic behaviors
- Ask how you can help- *listen, act, follow up*
- Offer an alternative or hybrid option
- Follow up

**Time to Practice!**

# As you discuss the scenarios, please think about....

- What would you do to prepare for the conversation?
- What are some initial barriers you envision?  
How could you address them?
- Are there shared goals?
- What non-verbal elements should be considered?

More than words...

# Take some time beforehand

- Be prepared
- What is your default “administrative” reaction?
- What is your default “emotional” reaction?
- Consider talking to someone else first
  - Role playing is not just for OSCE
- What is your goal for the discussion
  - Win-Win
  - BATNA



# First communication

- Verbal vs. non-verbal
- Explain why you'd like to meet
- Avoid the temptation to just resolve over email
- Be aware of their schedule





# The three most important things...

- Identify a place in advance
- Quiet
- Private
- Convenient
- Make sure room is reserved for enough time

# Timing

- Avoid on-call or post-call times
- Pagers may distract conversations
  - Hand them off
  - Turn them off
- Ask people when they would like to meet
  - Offer options



# Non-verbal communication

(your own and others')

- Eyes
- Facial expression
- Voice (“it’s not what you say, it’s how you say it”)
- Posture & body movements
- Touch
- Gestures
- Space

# Sample behaviors

## ■ Positive:

- pausing to give them your attention
- making eye contact
- calm tone of voice
- concerned facial expression

## ■ Negative:

- rolling your eyes
- not making eye contact
- interrupting their sentence
- sarcastic or sharp tone of voice
- folding your arms
- facial expressions of disinterest or distraction

# Key points

- Crucial conversations can be stressful, but preparation can ameliorate this
  - Active listening
  - Sharing your views
  - Finding common ground
- Practice helps
- Non-verbal elements are just as important

# References

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- Grenny, J, Patterson K, McMillan R, Crucial Conversations; Tools for Talking When Stakes are High McGraw Hill, 2012
- Welch J, Jimenez H, Allen S., Teamwork & Conflict Management Workshop MedEDPORTAL publications No. 9605, 2013