Strategies for Positive Engagement in Difficult Conversations

- Be on time
- Be respectful to your communication partner(s)
- Set a private space to have your conversation
- Be honest, open and sincere
- Be fully present, stay focused
- Intend to have a constructive conversation
- Take responsibility for your underlying intentions and issues
- Maintain appropriate eye contact
- Be conscious to verbal and non-verbal communication as well as intentions
- Take your time to talk and connect
- When listening, fully listen
- Summarize what you just heard to verify you have received the message
- Ask questions to ensure clarity
- After speaking, verify you have delivered your message
- One conversation at the time (don’t interrupt your communication partner!)
- After explaining your perspective, be sensitive to your communication partner’s feelings
- Respect appropriate privacy or confidentiality
- Take responsibility for your overall communication
- If you need more time, set another date to continue the conversation