



A Six-Step Checklist for Holding Powerful Conversations

The following checklist will help guide you in holding powerful and purposeful conversations. Use it before and during the conversation to help keep your purpose clear, the conversation safe, and your preferred outcome in sight.

- 1. Center :** How will I remind myself to center before the conversation and to re-center periodically?

- 2. Purpose :** What is my purpose? Is it a useful purpose?

- 3. Inquiry :** What are some honest, open-ended questions I might ask my partner? What do I need to learn about how s/he sees this situation?

4. Acknowledgment: What feelings might surface that I can acknowledge? How will I remember to summarize?

5. Advocacy: What is my primary message? How will I tell my story while maintaining a respectful and non-judgmental stance?

6. Move to Action/Build Agreement: What are possible scenarios my partner might offer? What will I suggest? What is my preferred outcome?

Possible openings

- ◆ I have something I'd like to discuss with you that I think will help us work together better.
- ◆ I'd like to talk about _____ with you, but first I'd like to get your point of view.
- ◆ I need your help with what just happened. Do you have a few minutes to talk?
- ◆ I need your help with _____. Can we talk about it (soon)? If they say, "Sure, let me get back to you," follow up with them.
- ◆ **(Third Story)** I think we have different perceptions about _____. I'd like to hear your thinking on this.
- ◆ I've noticed a recurring argument (conflict, disagreement, problem) we seem to have. I'd like to talk about why that happens.
- ◆ I'd like to see if we can reach a better understanding about _____. I really want to hear your feelings about this and share my perspective as well.
- ◆ **Write your opening here:**
