

HEALING & RECONCILIATION CONVERSATION MAP

4-Part Conversation Structure for When There is Emotional Hurt in a Conflict

Part 1: “Receiver” expresses, and “Actor” listens empathically

- Within the container of this conversation, the person who takes the role of “Receiver” expresses (e.g. their hurt, anger, pain, etc.) to the one who takes the role of “Actor,” who listens empathically until Receiver is finished expressing.
- Actor reflects back empathic understanding out loud if Receiver wants this.
- Actor continues to ask if Receiver feels heard and understood as they would like and if there is more Receiver wants to say/be heard about.

Part 2: Actor expresses “Mourning” (if Receiver wants this)

- Actor asks Receiver if they would like to hear how Actor feels hearing Receiver’s experience and the impact on Receiver. This would be an opportunity for Actor to express any sincere, authentic sadness, regret, etc. and take ownership for actions and impact, even if unintended. Receiver can also ask Actor if they’re willing to do this. [If Receiver doesn’t want this, then see about going to step 4.]
- If Receiver does want this, there are different levels of mourning for Actor:
 - E.g. “I feel sadness hearing your hurt.”
 - E.g. “I feel sadness seeing how my actions led to you feeling this way.”
 - E.g. “I feel sadness because what happened didn’t meet my own needs/values.”
- At the end of each expression of mourning, Actor asks Receiver how they feel hearing what was said. Actor listens empathically to Receiver’s response.
- If Receiver gets triggered, then go back to Step 1.

Part 3: Actor expresses needs they were trying to meet (if Receiver wants this)

- Actor asks Receiver if Receiver would like to hear what needs motivated Actor to do what led to the hurt. Receiver can also ask Actor if they’re willing to share this. [If Receiver doesn’t want this, then see about going to step 4.]
- If Receiver does want this, Actor shares the needs they believe they were trying to meet, coupled with again mourning how their “strategies” led to hurt.
- At the end of each expression of mourning, Actor asks Receiver how they feel hearing what was said. Actor listens empathically to Receiver’s response.
- If Receiver gets triggered, then go back to Steps 1 and 2.

Part 4: Healing/Restorative Actions and New Strategies to Meet Needs

- Are there requests of Actor for actions that would support further healing?
- Are there requests of Actor for new ways of meeting their needs that would work for both of them going forward?

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