NAVIGATING MEANINGFUL PARENT TEACHER COMMUNICATION

PRESENTED BY: JEAN BARRETT, STACEY LAVANGIE, KRISTA MACARI, REBECCA STEVENSON, AND LEAH THIBODEAU
Difficult Conversations

How to Discuss What Matters Most

Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, Sheila Heen

The NEW YORK TIMES Business Bestseller

Your Boss • Your Spouse • Your Friends • Your Kids • Your Clients

With a foreword by Roger Fisher, coauthor of Getting to Yes
Managing our feelings during a conversation can be very challenging (especially when dealing with children!) and can make it difficult to communicate.

Sometimes it can be hard to express strong emotions and sometimes it can be hard not to.

Sometimes our feelings make it difficult to truly listen to what someone else is saying.
HOLDING ON TO MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

- Each of us sees the world differently and each of us has different information and experiences.
- Even when we have the same exact information, we can interpret it in completely different ways based on our past experiences and values.
- Arguing blocks us from understanding the other person’s story and experience.

You don’t have to agree with me, but it’s quicker.
We make an attribution about the other person’s intentions based on the impact on us. But, intentions are invisible.

We tend to assume the worst and these assumptions are often wrong.

Intentions are very important because they strongly influence our judgement of others. We might attribute bad intentions to bad character.

But, good intentions don’t sanitize bad impacts.
PLACING BLAME AND DECIDING WHO IS RIGHT

- No one wants to be blamed so trying to determine blame raises everyone’s anxiety.
- Focusing on blame also stands in the way of trying to learn what is really causing the problem and to do anything meaningful to correct it.
- Difficult conversations are almost never about getting the facts right. They are not about what is true, they are about what is important.
Sometimes, despite our best efforts, things don’t go well or go very poorly.

We often want things to go perfectly, but this is not realistic.

Moving ahead takes courage, openness and a willingness to try again (sometimes the hardest part).

Difficult conversations are ongoing and evolving. Things almost never resolve in one sitting when the stakes are high.

Trust evolves over time.
TRY NOT TO TAKE YOURSELF TOO SERIOUSLY!

- Maintaining a sense of humor and having some moments of levity help us keep perspective and remember we are all human!
Personal experiences and challenges?
Question, comments, other thoughts?