Courageous Conversations

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The **Maryland Healthcare Education Institute (MHEI)** has been providing leadership and quality programs to health care providers for more than 50 years working alongside members through the constantly changing healthcare landscape. It is through this programming that MHEI **members gain tools and skills they can implement immediately to enhance the performance of their organizations**.

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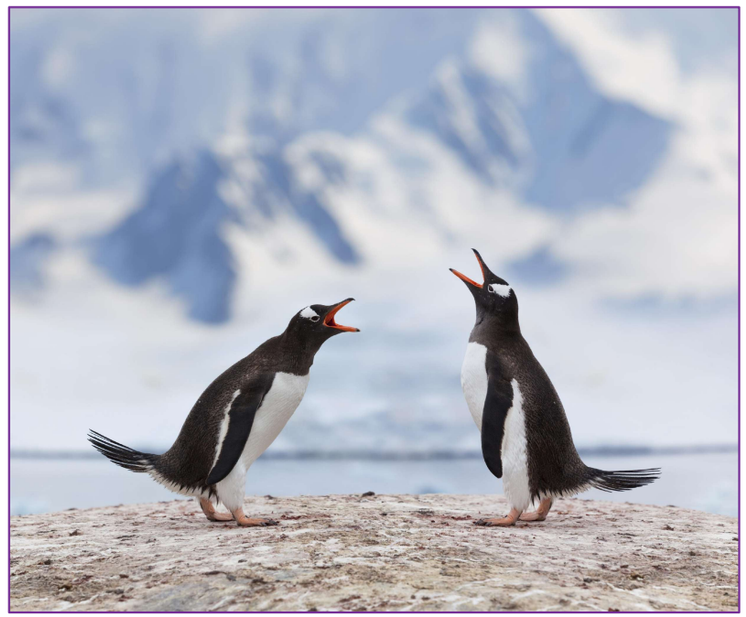
Objectives

1. Identify when a conversation becomes courageous
2. Recognize potential barriers to holding courageous conversations
3. Identify strategies to overcome barriers
4. Analyze the five-step framework in effectively initiating courageous conversations
5. Practice having courageous conversations

WHAT IS A COURAGEOUS CONVERSATION?

1. Stakes are high
2. Opinions vary
3. Emotions run strong



What specific examples have you experienced? What are your top 2 or 3 courageous conversations?

EXAMPLES

- Give feedback
- Performance – i.e. documentation, quality, detail
- Lack of follow through
- Disrespect
- Communication – lack of communication
- Dress code
- Hygiene

7 HEALTHCARE CONVERSATIONS

- Study conducted by VitalSmarts and the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
- 7 conversations healthcare professionals **consistently fail to hold**

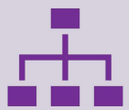
7 HEALTHCARE CONVERSATIONS

- **Poor Teamwork**: form cliques, gossip, try to look good at another's expense
- **Disrespect:** condescending, insulting, rude
- **Mistakes:** trouble following directions, poor clinical judgment, errors
- **Broken Rules**: short-cuts, hand washing, abbreviations, identifiers, PPE

7 HEALTHCARE CONVERSATIONS

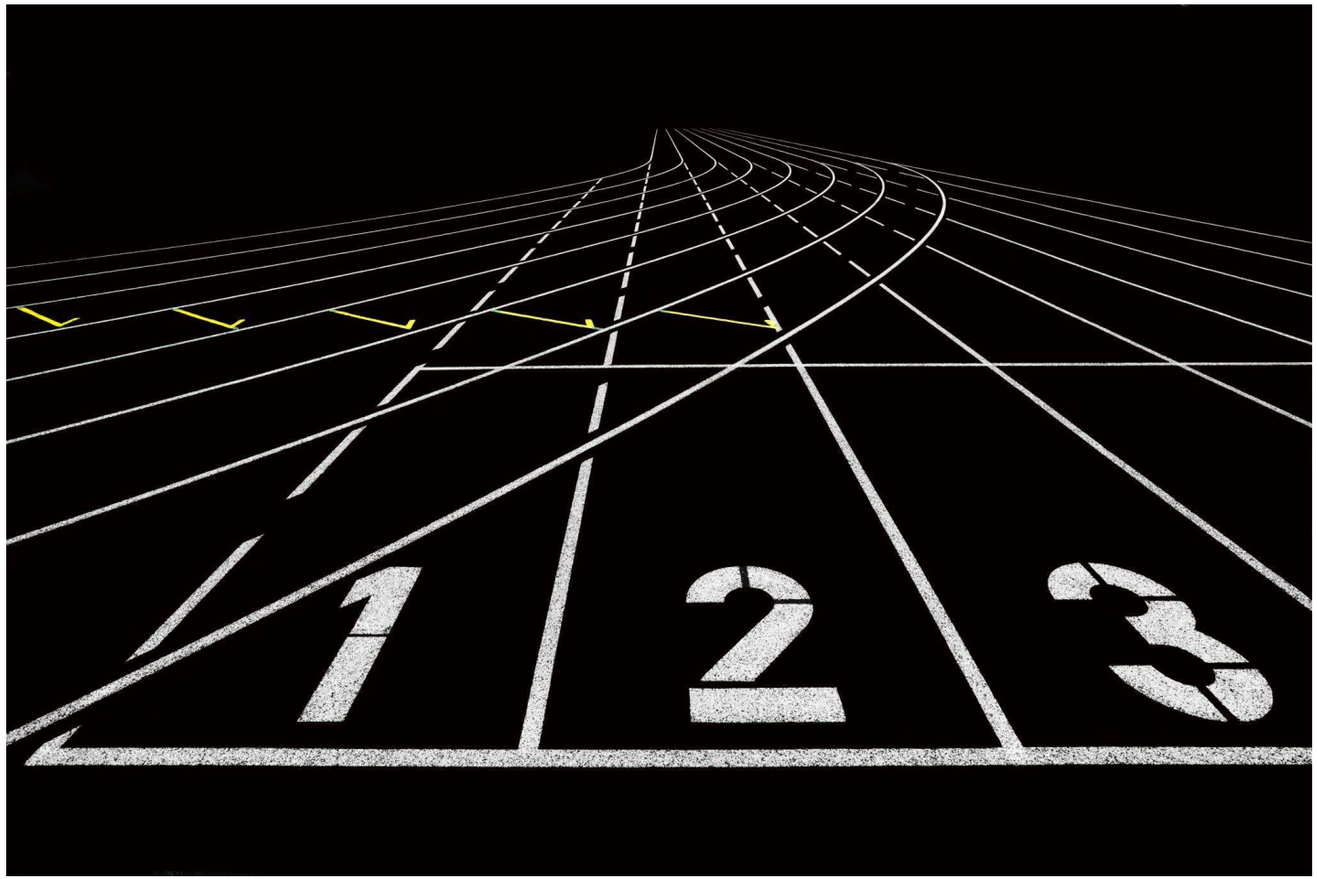
Lack of Support: complain when asked to help, impatient, refuse to answer questions

Incompetence: competence and skill level



Micromanagement: abuse of authority, abuse, pull rank, force their point of view

THREE OPTIONS



RISK OF AVOIDING

Remember:

"What you Permit, You Promote"


BARRIERS
What are your barriers to initiating courageous conversations?

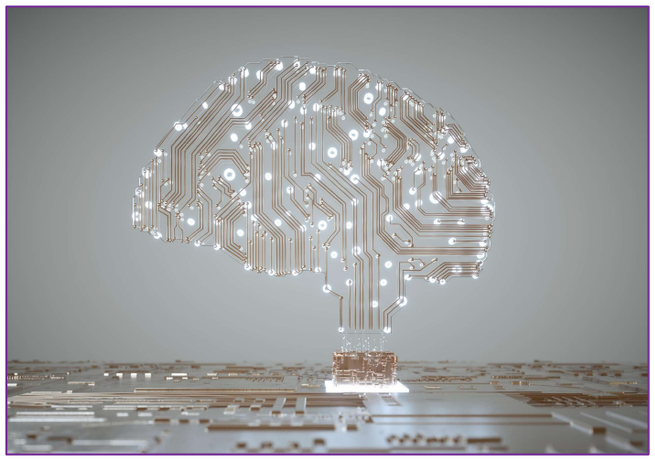
POTENTIAL BARRIERS

- Generational differences – younger workforce
- Mode of communication
- Personality or behavioral style differences
  - Intimidated by other person

    i.e. title, experience, style
- Imposture syndrome

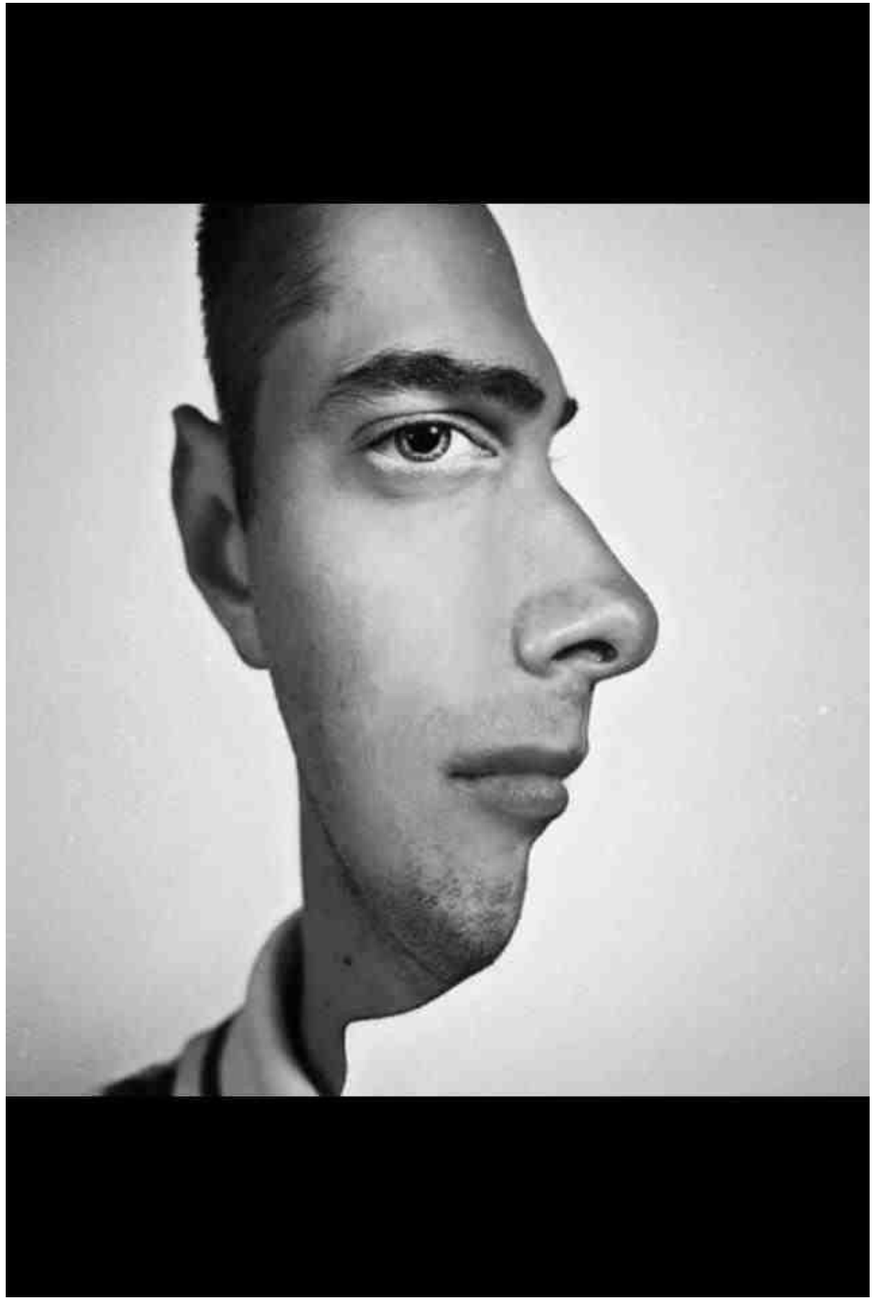
POTENTIAL BARRIERS

- We are designed wrong
- We are under pressure
- We act in self-defeating ways and make things worse!



Strategies to overcome barriers

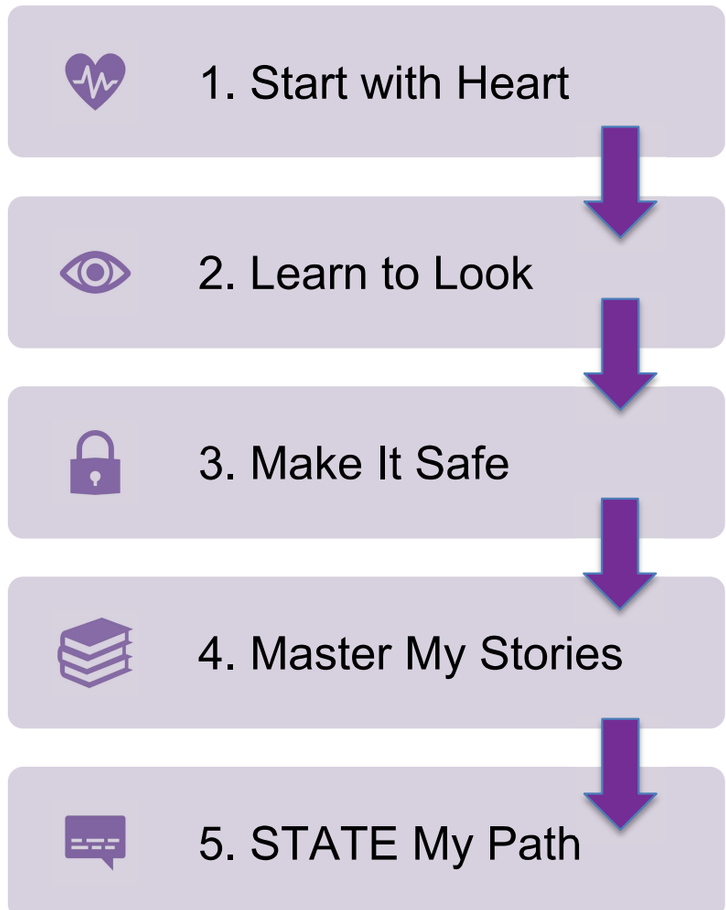
Text vs Talk



1ST KEY TAKEAWAY

- Understand we each bring our own perspective
- We may not agree with other person's perspective

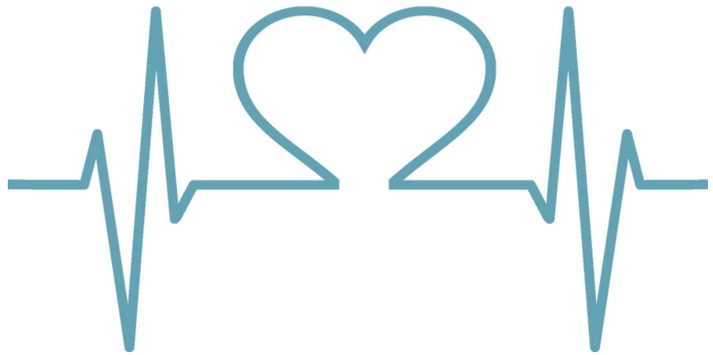
5 STEPS


1. Start with Heart
2. Learn to Look
3. Make It Safe
4. Master My Stories
5. STATE My Path

1. START WITH HEART

What do I really want for

- myself?
- the other person?
- the relationship?
- the organization?



EITHER/OR THINKING

Either we can be honest and attack the other person or we can be kind and withhold the truth

EITHER/OR THINKING

"I wonder how I can achieve _____

AND avoid _____?"

Remove "either/or"

EITHER/OR THINKING

"I wonder how I can *share my perspective*

AND avoid *offending the other person*?"

Remove "either/or"

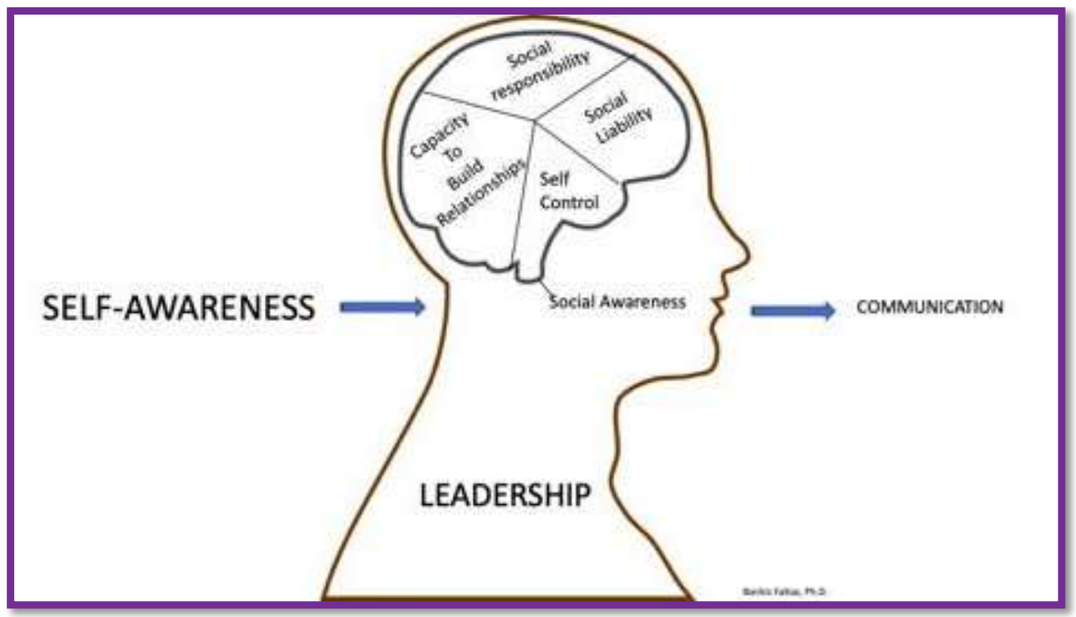
How can we avoid offending the other person?

2. LEARN TO LOOK

- Look for content and conditions of stress
- **Physical signs:** Think about what happens to your body when conversations get tough. Does your stomach get tight? Do your eyes dry out?
- **Emotional signs:** Are you reacting to or suppressing feeling frustrated, hurt, or angry?
- **Behavioral signs:** Raising your voice, pointing your finger or shutting down?

2. LEARN TO LOOK

- Self-awareness
- Know your style under stress



3. MAKE IT SAFE

Mutual Respect

- The other person needs to know you care about them
- Look for ways you are similar (doesn't mean you agree with them)

Mutual Purpose

- Safety, Quality, Teamwork, Goals

3. MAKE IT SAFE

If mutual purpose and/or respect is broken…

1. Apologize
2. Contrast to fix misunderstanding

“I don’t want you to think I’m stepping on your toes…”

“I do want to make sure we’re all on the same page…”

4. MASTER MY STORIES

- “Stories” are our assumptions of why people are doing what they are doing

Why would a reasonable, rational, and decent person do what they are doing?

4. MASTER MY STORIES

Notice your behavior

Get in touch with your feelings

Analyze your stories

Get back to the facts

Tell the rest of the story

PREPARING FOR THE CONVERSATION

- Covered steps 1 □ 4….
- Choose the venue – sometimes you have no choice
- Listen first
- Be respectful and flexible
- Remember your goal
- Work on a resolution you can live with

5. STATE YOUR PATH

- **S**hare your facts
- **T**ell your story
- **A**sk for others' paths
- **T**alk tentatively
- **E**ncourage a way forward

HELPFUL PHRASES

- “Help me understand.”
- “What do you mean?”
- “I’d like to hear your concerns.”
- “What’s going on?”
- “Tell me more”
- “How do you see it differently?”

HELPFUL PHRASES

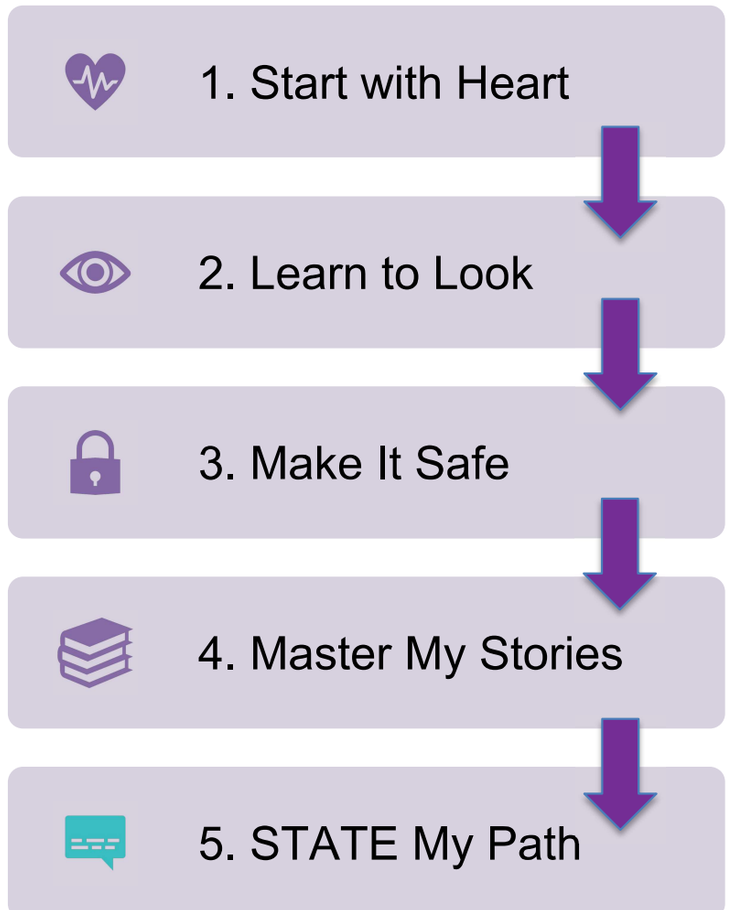
- “Although this was probably not your intention, I felt uncomfortable/upset/confused when I heard/saw you say/do _____”
- Contrasting statements:
  - “I don’t want…”
  - “I do want…”

5 STEPS

Planning

Self-Reflection

Practice



ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS…

Pick and choose battles

“But”

Be sincere in achieving a resolution

HANDLING PUSHBACK

What if the other person points fingers and doesn't accept responsibility?

- Bring them back to the point of your conversation
- Provide specific, clear examples
- Call them out if attitude/behavior occurs during the conversation
- Communicate (re-communicate) roles, responsibilities, etc.

Questions?

Today’s Evaluation

THANK YOU!

For sharing your time,

your feedback,

your ideas,

your experience.

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GET IN TOUCH

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