

FLM Webinar

January 13, 2026

Engaging in Difficult Conversations

aka - Brave Communication



Webinar Objectives

- Conflict - What is it & Why does it occur
- Foxhole Stories - Learning from experiences
- Consider REACT vs. RESPOND
- Gain tips for how to have difficult conversations



Does It Matter?

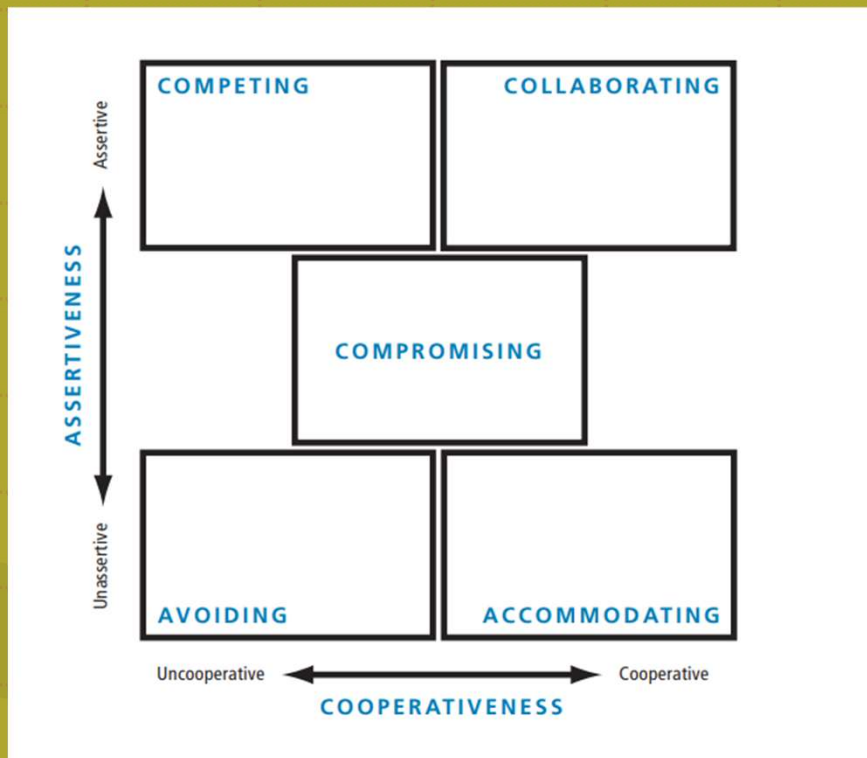




Conflict

Conflict Handling Modes


From the article, *Making Conflict Management a Strategic Advantage* by Kenneth W. Thomas, Ph.D.



Competing	Assertive & Uncooperative
Accommodating	Unassertive & Cooperative
Compromising	Partially Assertive & Partially Cooperative
Avoiding	Unassertive & Uncooperative
Collaborating	Assertive & Cooperative

Breakout #1

- **If you are honest with yourself, where do you fall on the Conflict-Handling Modes discussed on pages 2-3 of the article?** (Competing – Accommodating – Compromising – Avoiding – Collaborating)
- **Is all conflict bad/negative?** Why or Why Not (include examples)
- **What is the cost of mishandling conflict?**



Breakout
Session



JENGA

Swahili – “To Build”



Foxhole Stories

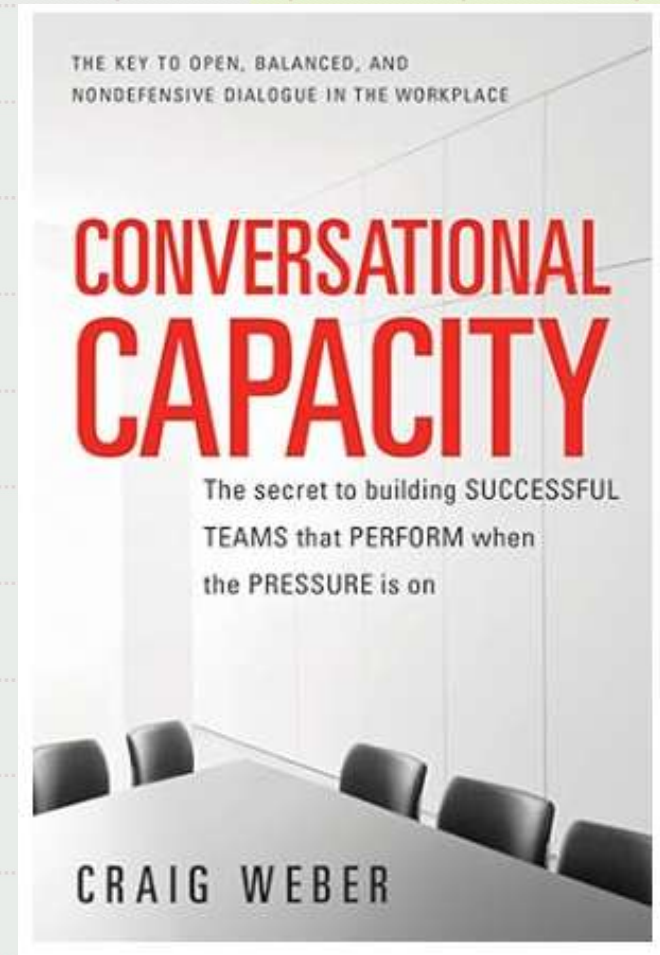
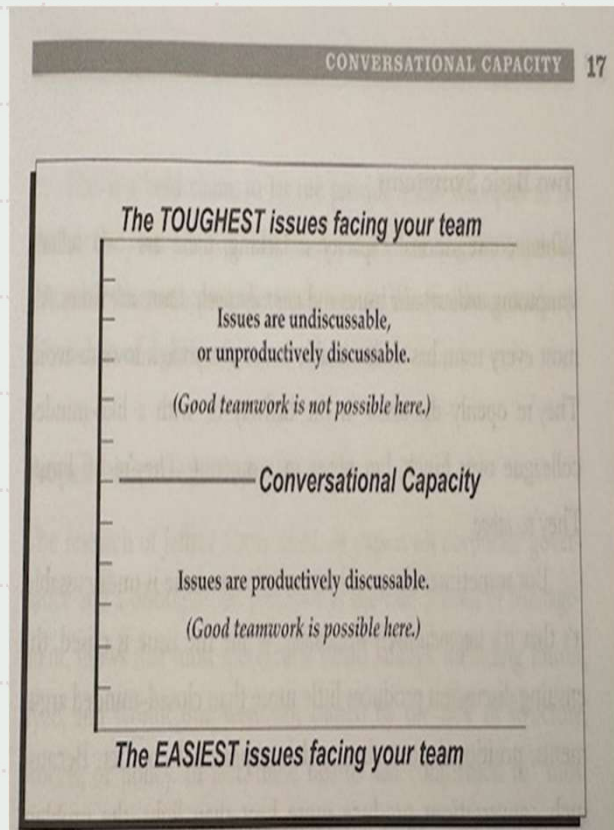


Why “Brave Communication”?

- **BRAVE**
 - *“Possessing or exhibiting courage”*
- **COMMUNICATION**
 - *“Transfer of Information”*

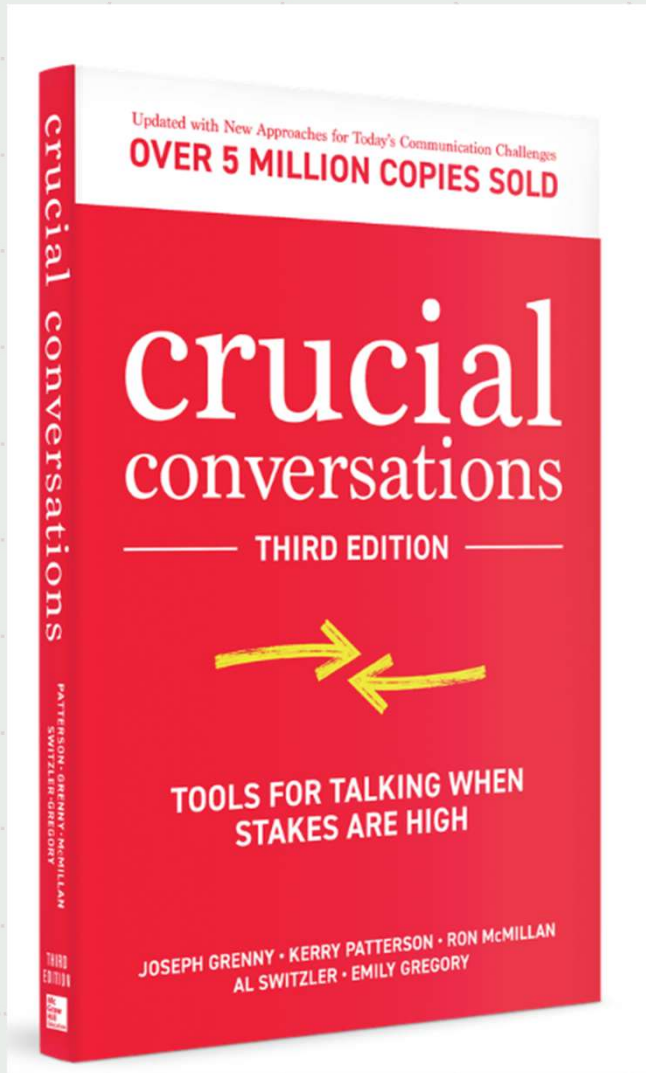


Conversational Capacity



Crucial Conversations

- *A discussion between two or more people where:*
- *(1) stakes are high*
- *(2) opinions vary*
- *(3) emotions run strong*



Insiders Guide to a Reaction

Crucial Conversations
Chapter 6 – *Mastering My Stories*



See & Hear

Stimulus



Tell a Story

Without knowing, creative narrative around intent is created

Judgement Made

Victim Mindset Reigns



Feel

The emotion (adrenaline) rushes in from the narrative that is told

Adrenaline has physical impact on body including the ability to think clearly



Act

Reaction to the narrative told typically where you are the 'good guy' and they are the 'bad'

Behavior 'justified' by the narrative

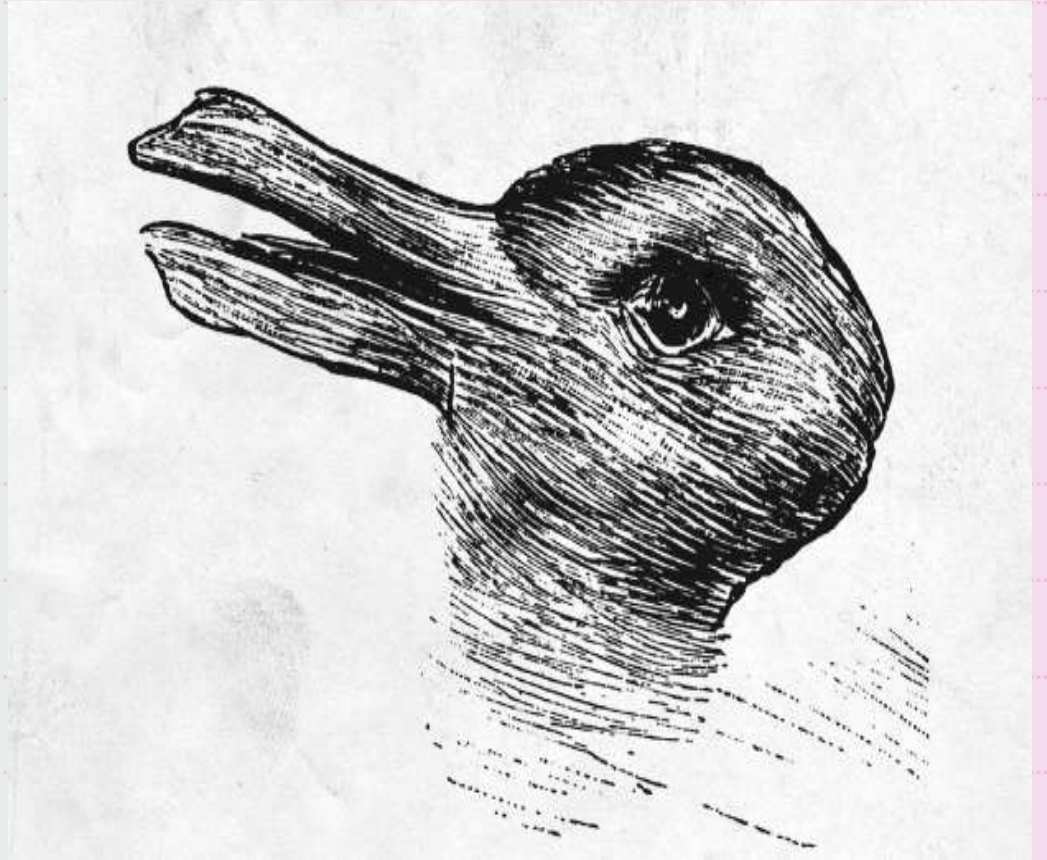
Perceptions

▶ What do you see?



Perceptions

▶ What do you see?




Viktor E. Frankl

- *"Between stimulus and response there is a space...in that space is our power to choose our response. In our response, lies our growth & freedom."*



Auschwitz
"Work Sets You Free"



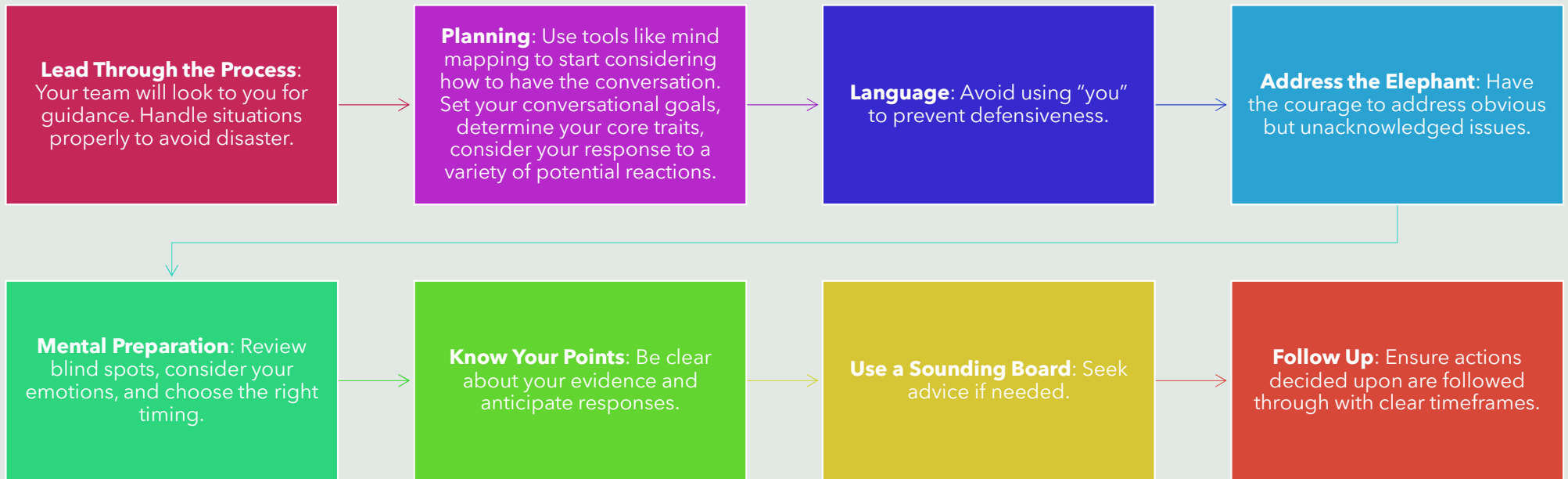


Breakout Session

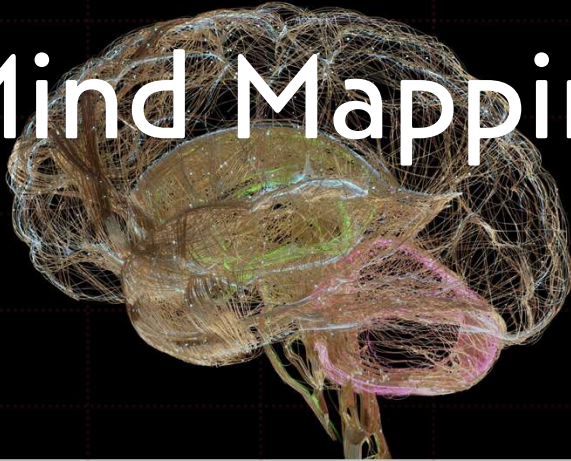
Breakout #2

- **Who do you know that is amazing at handling conflicts?** What actions/attitudes/behaviors do they exhibit?
- **Since conflict is inevitable, what are proactive steps to do to improve?**

How to prepare for Brave Communication



Mind Mapping



What Traits do I want to exhibit?

- Respect
- Integrity
- Willing to Listen
- Empathy
- Courage

Remember to:

- Acknowledge convo goal
- Maintain open mind
- Choose to Respond
- Don't be hijacked by emotion
- Own my part

Together, develop a path forward.



Defined Goal

What if they get frustrated/angry/upset?

- Ask what they heard me say - clarify as needed
- If continues, land convo and consider another time to meet.

What if they are humble & own their part?

- Listen
- Thank them
- Determine next steps

How to prepare for Brave Communication

