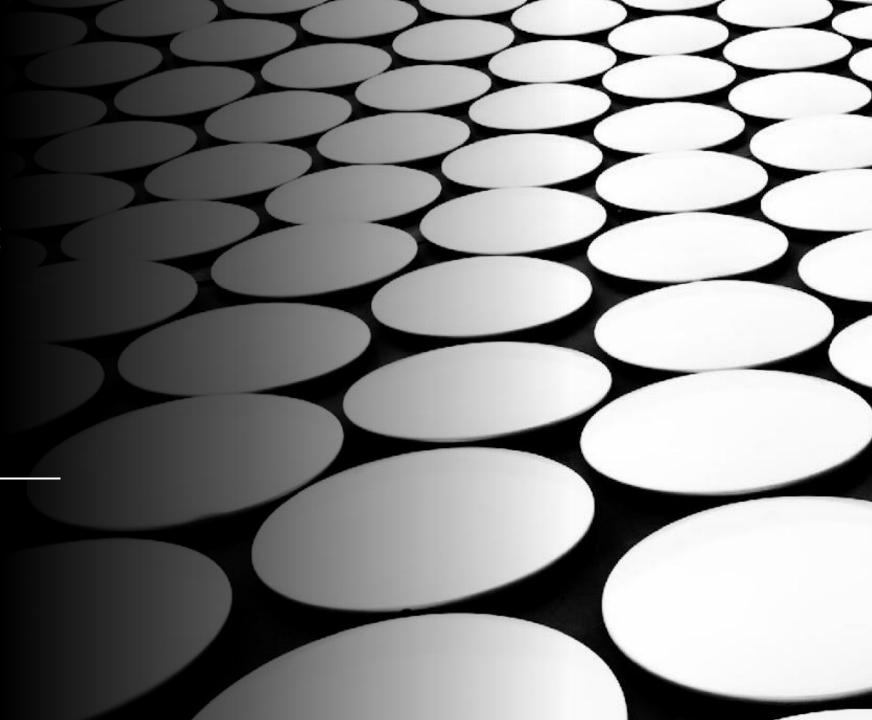
Conflict
Conversations:
Empathetic
Dialogue in
Volatile Times

Kiana Pierre-Louis, Esq.



Introductions

Kiana Pierre-Louis, Esq.

- Assistant Dean, DEI
- Select Board Chair
- DEI facilitator and Consultant
- Corporate and Real Estate Attorney





Barriers to Communication

Environmental

- Time and space
- Organizational and/or team/managerial norms
- Power or status **dynamics**
- Use of jargon
- Over-relying on one form of communication (written vs. spoken)

Personal

- Personal, family and cultural values and beliefs
- Conscious and unconscious biases toward the speaker
- Lack of empathy
- Different **personality** types
- Unacknowledged differences in communication preferences

Definition of Conflict

- "A serious disagreement or argument"
- "To be different, opposed, or contradictory: to fail to be in agreement or accord"





- •The ability to sit in disagreement without:
 - Making it personal
 - Taking the matter out of context
 - Negatively characterizing the person with whom you disagreed with

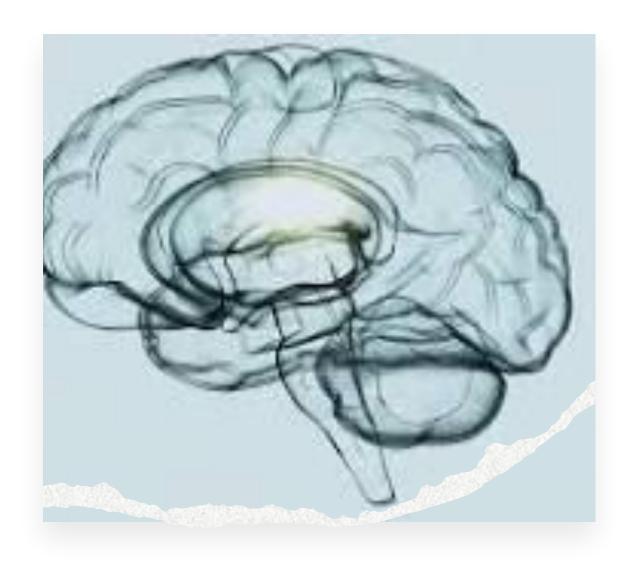
"We don't often hold reverence for what conflict is, and what it is trying to offer us. Conflict gives us the opportunity to clarify boundaries, deepen relationships, and open potential for repair. Conflict is one of the primary ways that we change and change things."

-Prentis Hemphill

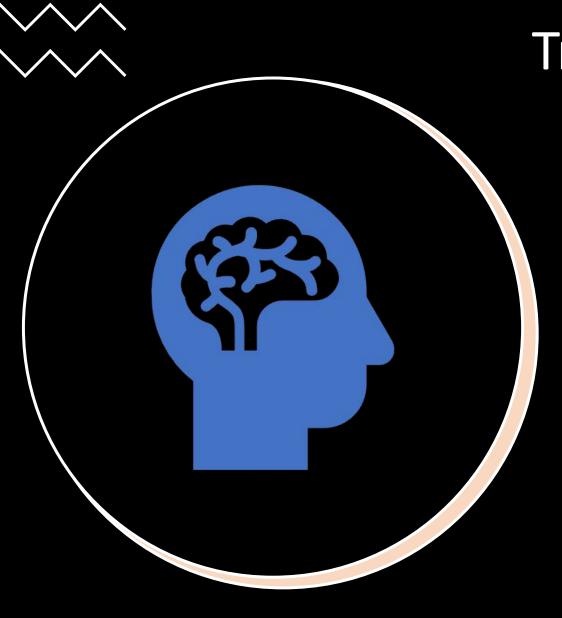


Trauma/Emotions/ Feelings





AJ Calder, AD Lawrence, AW Young, Neuropsychology of fear and loathing. *Nat Rev Neurosci* **2**, 352–363 (2001)



Triggers

- In psychology, a "trigger" is a stimulus that causes a painful memory to resurface. A trigger can be any sensory reminder of the traumatic event: a sound, sight, smell, physical sensation, or even a time of day or season.
- Triggers are anything that remind someone of previous trauma. To be triggered is to have an intense emotional or physical reaction
- Triggers vary widely from person to person and can be internal or external.
- Difference between being triggered and being uncomfortable.



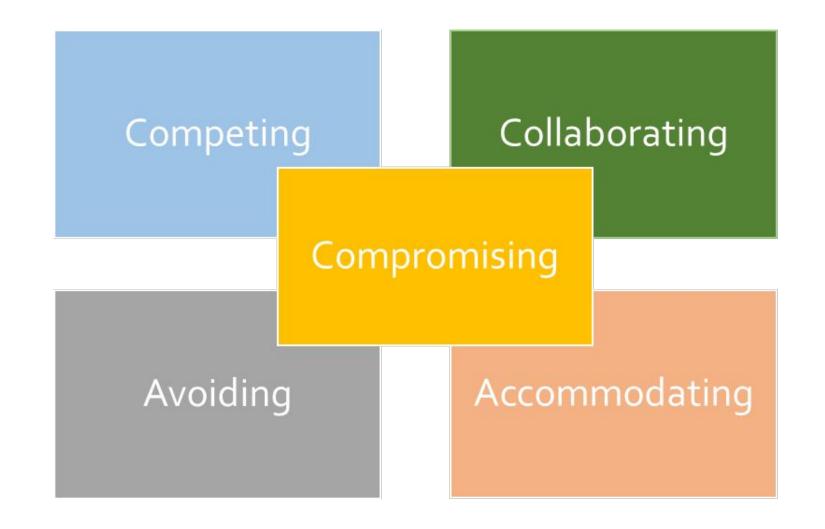
WE NEED TO FIRST DEAL WITH US

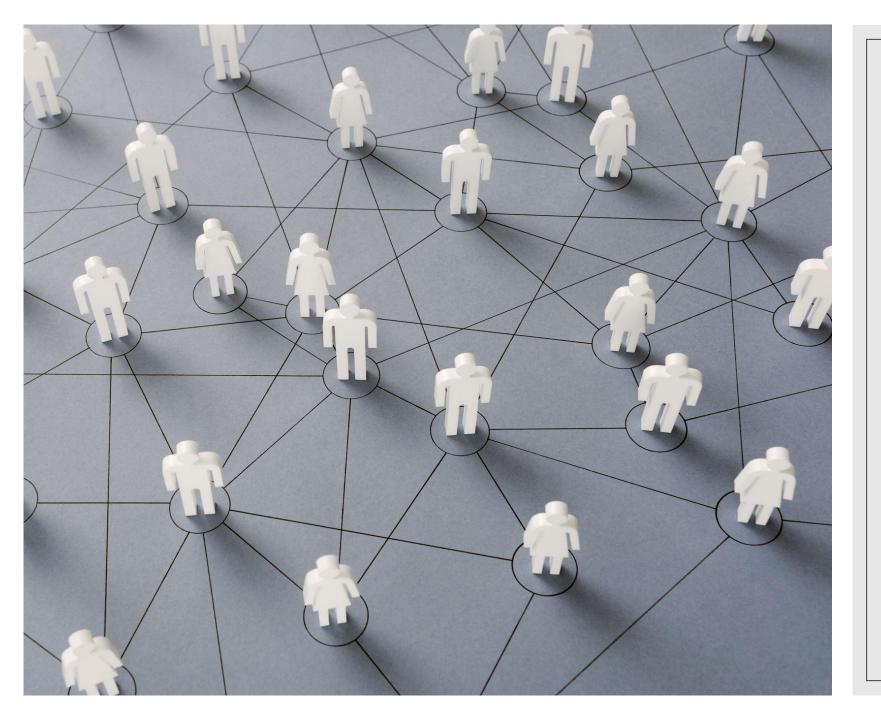
Understanding Self:

What are we feeling?

We translate our feelings into:

- 1. Judgments
- 2. Attributions
- 3. Characterizations
- 4. Problem-Solving





Effective Communication

The **process** of transmitting information and creating **shared** meaning between two people

6 KEY ACTIVE

LISTENING SKILLS



1. PAY ATTENTION.



WITHHOLD JUDGEMENT.



3. REFLECT.



4. CLARIFY.

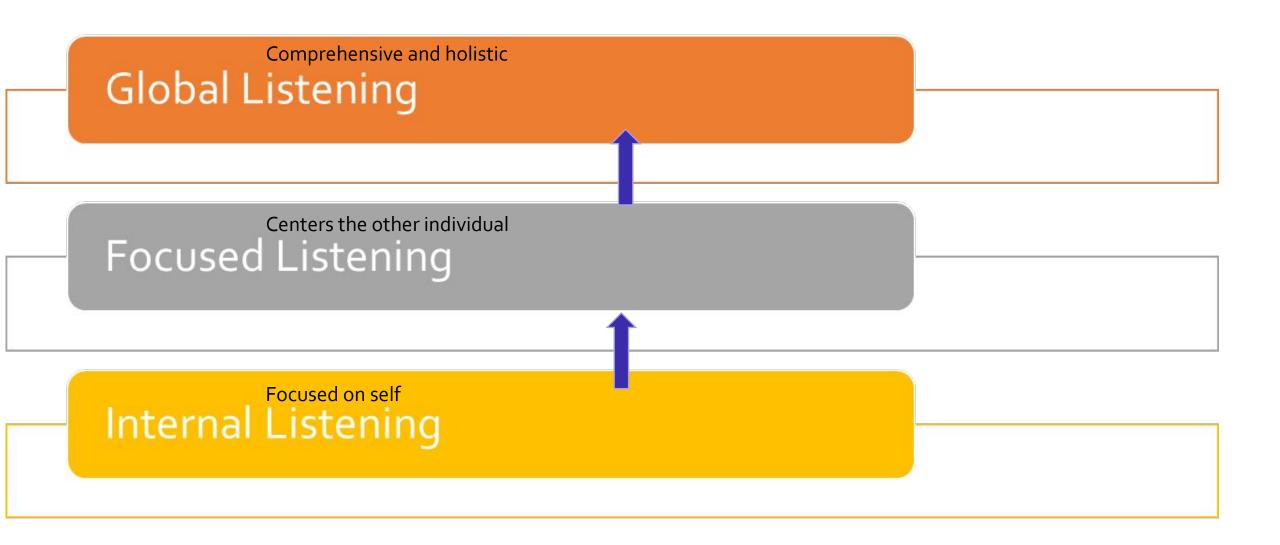


5. SUMMARIZE.



6. SHARE.





CONTACT

Do body language, eye contact and gestures convey respect or disdain?

How close or far apart are you from the person? Does this respect the physical space the other person and you need?

Are your volume and tone of voice appropriate and inviting interaction?

What are you communicating with your body language and gestures?



Do body language, eye contact and gestures support or contradict what you are saying?

Flee, Fight, or Fix: Managing Interpersonal Conflict by Patricia A. Parham and Juliann Spoth

HOW TO ENGAGE IN Asking Listening

- Use "I" statements.
- Be honest about your contribution to the issue.
- Acknowledge where you have agreement.
- Avoid generalizations such as "always" or "everyone thinks".
- Stay in the present, be mindful and share what you are feeling in real time.
- Ask questions and paraphrase your understanding.
- Ask if the other person understands your statement.
- Ask the other person what she wants out of this communication and how she feels.
- Suspend judgement and put yourself in the other person's place.
- Seek out and explore the values, beliefs, and logic of the other person.
- Encourage more disclosure through eye contact, nodding and attentiveness.
- Check your understanding through summarizing feelings and thoughts.

2023

Difficult Conversations

- Uncomfortable feedback conversations
- Often related to working across difference
- Requires active listening, honesty, openness and vulnerability
- Builds trust by making meaning of an experience together
- Happens in real time or during informal and formal conversations



Difficult Conversations

- Active listening
- Assess the situation
- Address Roadblocks
- Assume Positive intent
- Focus on Dialogue
- Be Transparent and willing to make mistakes
- Honor discomfort
- Commit to the Conversation
- Expect and accept the lack of closure



