

CARE Group Train Station August 14, 2016

Crucial Conversations by Patterson, Genny, McMillian, Switzler Timber Lake Christian Church
by Doug Delp

The Purpose

To begin the discussion on formulating CARE Groups for the 2016-17 session. We will make available an Adult Ministry manual, CARE Group & Bible Fellowship Leader Policies & Procedures, Ministry Volunteer Applications, Doctrinal Affirmation Worksheet and CARE Group Development forms. Mostly we will review some training materials for managing those difficult discussions. Please communicate to Doug or Dawn as many details as possible by August 22nd concerning your intention to begin a CARE Group. (Doug - ddelp@timberlakechristian.org or Dawn - tlcc@timberlakechristian.org)

Outline:

What is a "Crucial Conversation"?

Key Words and Acronyms

1. Examine your motives
2. Learn to Listen
3. Safety First
4. Check Your Story
5. STATE Your path
6. Explore Others' Paths
7. Move to Action

A Biblical Foundation:

1. **Satan is subtle and deceptive, intent on creating disunity, bitterness, and hard heartedness toward God and others. He does not want us to cooperate!**

2 Cor. 2:11 "...so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs."

2. **God knows our natural tendency is to treat others as we anticipate they will treat us. The perception of our intentions toward others is important. But ultimately you can only control ourselves, not others. But we will certainly be held accountable for what we can do.**

Rom. 12:17-18 "Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all."

3. **In the battle between God and Satan we are the battlefield and the spoils of war. Historically Satan's most frequent successes have come through planting thoughts in our minds which are in conflict to God, goodness and truth. Arrogance, deception and division mark his path. Christians stopping**

John 13:35 "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

an argument to evaluate carefully every thought, motive, word and action in light of the purpose of Christ is our greatest weapon for winning the battle.

2 Cor. 10:4-5“For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ.”

- 4. Amidst crucial conversations where does your mind “abide”? When conflict arises between brothers false truths are assumed quicker than truth. It is the pursuit of the truth rather than personal preference that frees us to the joys of unity, peace and hope.**

John 8:31-32 “...“If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

- 5. Selfish ambition and vain conceit are the enemies of encouragement, love, sympathy, joy and unity!**

Phil. 2:1-4 “...So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

A Crucial Conversation is... (List as many topics you might experience in CARE Group)

- 1. When opinions vary**

- 2. When stakes are high**

- 3. When emotions run strong**

Three ways to deal with crucial conversations...

- 1. Avoid them (flight = silence) pg. 59**

John 13:35 “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

2. **Crush them (fight = manipulation) pg. 60**

3. **Nurture them (create safe "dialogue")**

Dialogue (a definition) – “The free flow of meaning between two or more people”

Research – 25 years, 100,000 people involved, 20,000 people interviewed, 2,200 projects and program studied

1. **The #1 predictor of success or failure was whether the organization’s people could hold five crucial conversations.**
 - a. If organization’s expectations were too high or too low?
 - b. If there were poor performance issues
 - c. If there were poor leadership issues
 - d. If there were unpredictable setbacks
 - e. If there was low morale
2. **Study of 7,000 doctors and nurses indicated 84% of respondents saw people taking short cuts. The odds of a nurse speaking up was one in twelve! The odds of a doctor speaking up was statistically the same!**
3. **Companies that demonstrated intentional efforts to communicate truthfully, professionally, and honestly in difficult times...**
 - a. Demonstrated \$1,500 in savings and an eight hour workday for every crucial conversation employees held rather than avoid.
 - b. Organizations that were unaware of “crucial conversation” training consistently dealt with employees “backstabbing, gossiping, undermining supervisors and passive aggressive behaviors.
 - c. Organizations that trained employees in the skills of “crucial conversations” were 2/3 more likely to avoid injury and death due to unsafe conditions.

John 13:35 *“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

Understanding Dialogue

1. The “Fool’s Choice”

- a. I must either be honest and loose a “friend” or be less than honest and keep a friend.
- b. If I’m honest I will hurt the relationship!
- c. This is the path of deception, distrust, gossip, unfair battles, untrue conclusions and division.

2. The “Wise Choice”

- a. I must find a way to be totally honest AND totally respectful.
- b. Learning how to create conditions in yourself and others that make dialogue the path of least resistance.
 - i. First, find a common purpose
 - ii. Second, .

3. *“When people purposefully withhold “meaning” from one another, individually smart people can do collectively “stupid” things!”*

STEP 1 – EXAMINE YOUR MOTIVES – (Jer. 17:9; Hebrews 4:12)

1. Really, what’s the issue – getting ‘er done, or getting ‘er done your way?
2. Do you want to win the debate or win the relationship?
3. The drive to win subtly takes over with adrenaline pumping, assumptions growing and a quick path to fight or flight.
 - a. Listen to the emotions and watch for “red flags” that the conversation has lost sight of the original purpose and now it’s all about winning the debate.
 - b. Progression – facts, exaggerations, counter accusations, from punishing to hurting the other person. (Rom. 12:17-18)
 - c. Ask what do I really want? What are my reactions saying?
 - d. ACTION #1 - Find a common purpose that we both want.
 - e. ACTION #2 - Clarify what you don’t want.

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- f. Refuse the fool's choice - _____
- g. Choose the wise choice – “How can I be totally _____ and totally _____?”
- h. When crucial conversations hit they are usually a surprise, you usually perceive the threat and react rather than think with purpose and respond.
- i. ACTION #3 Start looking for the “AND” in the discussion. What do you want? What do they want? Is there an “AND” way of doing this?

STEP 2 – LEARN TO LISTEN – (Jam. 1:19)

1. Watch for discussion “content” and “conditions.”

- a. Signs you are in a crucial conversation that is getting dangerous – emotions running high, opinions are coming rapidly, the stakes get high.
- b. Physical signs – the stomach gets tight, eyes get dry or tearful, color changes, temperature changes, flinching or changing of positions, open arms, hands and legs close.

2. When it's safe you can say anything.

- a. Those skilled in “dialogue” _____ train themselves to recognize fear, aggression, humiliation, exaggeration, manipulation.

3. People who don't feel safe tend to make others feel unsafe.

- a. Reactions from unsafe people that tend to cause others to be unsafe – they attack, distract, disrespect, exaggerate or hide behind other issues.
- b. The temptation is to react in kind. See it for what it is... fear from feeling unsafe.
- c. Style Under Stress self analysis – www.crucialconversations.com/exclusive
- d. ACTION #1 Watch for and avoid fight, or flight
- e. ACTION #2 Take a break - recall purpose, reaffirm the common roots of the relationship, rehearse common hopes and intentions.

4. The longer your discussion stays off track into the land of debate rather than dialogue the more damage that is done and the harder it is to get back to dialogue. (Eph. 4:26)

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STEP 3 – MAKE IT SAFE – (2 Cor. 2:11)

1. Crucial conversations tend to come not because of the content of the discussion, but because of the implied intent assumed by others.”

- a. Do others believe I care about their goals? Is there a shared purpose?
- b. ACTION #1 rehearse shared purpose and common goals.
- c. ACTION #2 Identify a “mutual” task, goal, passion to tether your conversation to.
- d. ACTION #3 Describe a mutual respect contrasting unique strengths for which each one is needed.
- e. ACTION #4 If you have made the conversation unsafe.... Apologize, Contrast, and recreate a common purpose statement.
- f. Contrast = “I didn’t intend to _____ (name how you hurt them) but I did intend to _____ (describe how your actions was focused on your common purpose). Contrasting is not apologizing – both are unique and authentically vital when you have hurt someone else. No placating! Contrasting provides context & proportion.
- g. Recreating purpose calls on you to commit to seek mutual purpose, you both must recognize the purpose behind a new strategy, look for a higher purpose, brainstorm new strategies. (Pr. 15:22)

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STEP 4 – TEST YOUR STORIES – (Rom. 12:17-18)

- 1. Actions of others do not create emotions. Our “stories” we tell ourselves about the actions of others create the emotions.”**
 - a. William Shakespeare – “Nothing in this world is good or bad, but thinking makes it so.”
 - b. Apostle Paul - “I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean.” Rom. 14:14
 - c. ACTION #1 Notice your behavior – are you in “fight” or “flight” mode?
 - d. ACTION #2 Name the emotions you are feeling.
 - e. ACTION #3 Analyze the story that is causing the feeling.
 - f. ACTION #4 Get back to the facts.
 - g. Help others test their stories? Genuinely ask for perspectives even if it hurts.
 - h. Three clever stories – Victim stories, Villain stories, Helpless stories
 - i. ACTION #5 What do we...WE... really want? – Clever stories never support what “WE really want!”

STEP 5 – S.T.A.T.E. YOUR PATH – (Phil. 2:1-4)

1. **S** hare your facts.
2. **T** ell your story.
3. **A** sk for others’ paths. (What do others see/think?)
4. **T** alk tentatively. (It’s your story, not disguised as a fact.)
5. **E** ncourage testing.
6. **ACTION #1 Maintain Safety**
 - a. Confidence - assures you will speak to only the right person. (no gossip or army gathering)
 - b. Humility - those skilled in dialogue realize they have valuable input AND recognize others have valuable input as well.
 - c. Skill - .means you choose words that convey both complete honesty and complete respect.
7. **ACTION #2 “Tentative” wording changes...**
 - a. “The fact is...” to “In my opinion...”
 - b. “Everybody knows that...” to “I’ve spoken to three others that think...”
 - c. “It’s clear to me...” to “I’m beginning to wonder if...”

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8. ACTION #3 The Goldilocks test for wording

- a. Too soft – “This is probably stupid, but...”
- b. Too hard – “How come you ripped us off...”
- c. Just right – “It’s starting to look like you are taking this home for your own use. Is that right?”

9. Words of caution...

- a. The more you care about an issue the less likely you will be on your best behavior.
- b. **ACTION #4** Catch yourself when you begin to “fight” or “flight.”

STEP 6 – EXPLORE OTHER PATHS – (John 8:31-32)

1. **ACTION #1- Examine the motives - LISTEN (yours & theirs)**
2. **ACTION #2 - Encourage other to “retrace their paths” (facts, stories, feelings, perspectives, motives, purpose)**
3. **ACTION #3 - A.M.P.P – (Ask, Mirror, Paraphrase, Prime)**
4. **ACTION #4 - A.B.C. – (Agree, Build, Compare)**

STEP 7 – MOVE TO ACTION – (2 Cor. 10:4-5,)

1. **Decide how to decide – Is there a clear line of authority, (policy, law, chain of command, promises made, etc.)**
2. **Four ways to decide – command, consult, vote, consensus**
3. **Four important questions:**
 - a. Who cares?
 - b. Who knows?
 - c. Who must agree?
 - d. How many people needs to be involved
4. **Four important assignments**
 - a. Who...does what...by when...and how will you follow-up?
cares?

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Our Commitment to Koinonia:

As a member of Timber Lake Christian Church I intend to...

...bring my spiritually surrendered self to worship, learn, and serve others as often as possible

...model the grace God has given us as a united body seeking – His purpose first, our leadership’s vision for ministry second, my lost neighbor’s need third, my brother and sister in Christ’s good fourth, and my personal preferences in the area of non essentials last.

...work with tenacious excellence expressing grace toward other people’s ideas

...refuse to allow perpetual conflict go unaddressed.

...communicate with loving honesty.

...honor and value those I follow and those I lead.

...relentlessly pursue personal purity and integrity.

...be my Christian brothers’ and sisters’ champions.

...work on my knees..

A Test of Love: is a Bible study designed for two individuals or groups that have had misunderstandings enabling them to find their common ground and recommit to resolution.

Go to <http://dougdelp.me/dealing-with-difficult-people> and click on “A Test of Love”

Prove Your Love: is a Bible study process of intervention for a small group of at least two that have been in conflict but are meeting with a mediator. Go to

<http://dougdelp.me/dealing-with-difficult-people> and click on “Prove Your Love”.

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