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I asked our community about some of the fears that stand in the way of having difficult conversations. Sometimes we don't want to hurt someone's feelings, or maybe we think we'll lose a relationship. In other instances, some people aren't approachable, or we think our feelings will be invalidated. Let's look into that more.

You know you're in a difficult conversation when you realize three things:

- Something *matters* or is at *stake*.
- You have *strong emotions* around the issue.
- The sides *may not see it* in the same way.

Now, what goes wrong:

- We try to *win* an argument instead of trying to *understand* one another.
 - There is *risk* of invalidation, judgment, criticism, all which lead to unplugging
- So, what can we do to have that difficult conversation go well?

Be Warm. Remember that although confrontations can be uncomfortable, this does not mean you need to be angry, detached, or distant from the other person. As much as you are able, be warm and available to them.

Be in a Conversation, Not a Lecture. Being present also means allowing the other person to respond. You have a side to present, and so do they. Be there with their feelings as well as your own.

Connect Even with Differences. Staying present means being “there” not only when you agree with each other, but also when you disagree, when there is tension, and when you are confronting.

Discomfort Versus Injury. We need to be willing to suffer discomfort – to a point. The limit here is the limit of injury. If you get in a bad situation with a person who can truly injure you because of where you are emotionally, or because of how powerful and influential she currently is with you, you will need to guard your heart to avoid having wounds. At the same time, if the talk is more discomforting than injurious, you may want to press on towards a reconciliation.

Observe Yourself. Be aware of how present or absent you are in the talk. Monitor what makes you shut down and what makes you open up. When you are aware of yourself, you have more choices and options available.

I want to help guide you through conversations like this and invite you to join my private boundaries group! If you need guidance or would like extra support, [join me here](#).