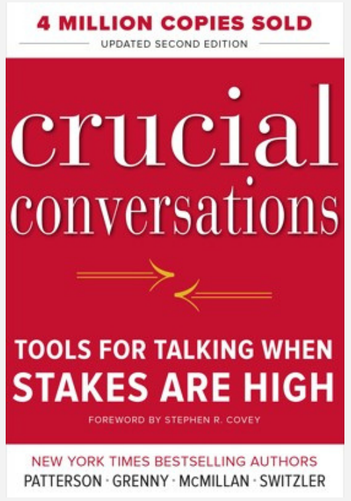
# Transparent & Intentional Communication:

## Grounded in Crucial Conversations





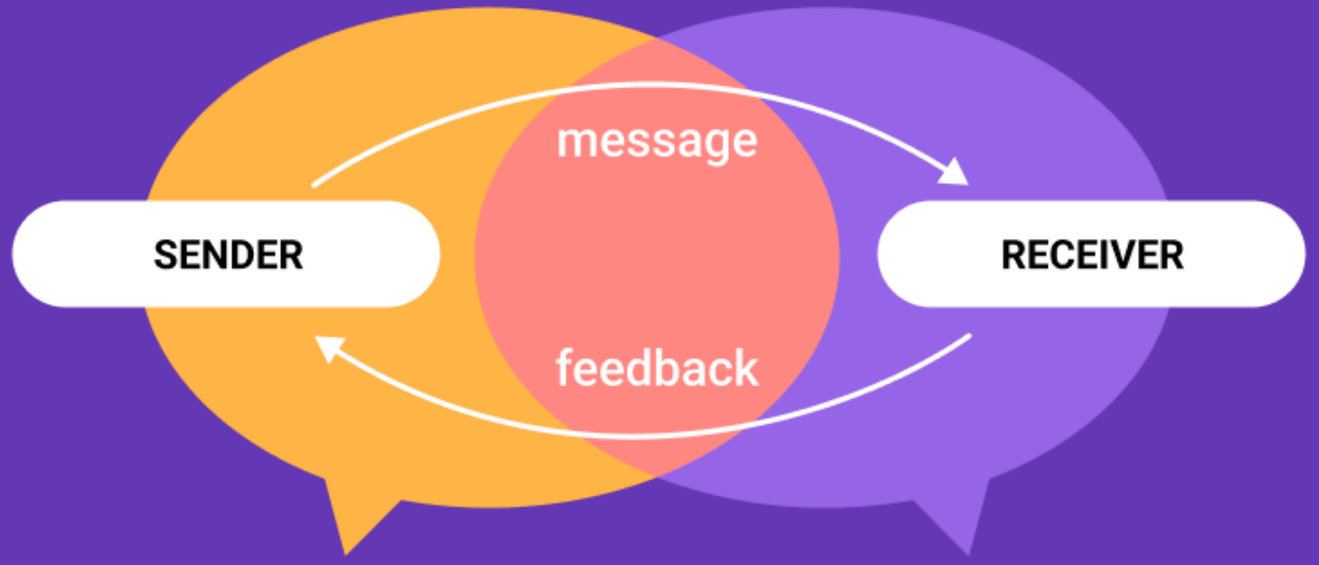



# Objectives

1. Introduce frameworks from the book *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High* to have productive difficult conversations.

2. Practice using the Crucial Conversations model and STATE conversational framework in small group scenarios.

- **Interactive**
  Communication model




Crucial Conversations Summary & Review (ANIMATED)
Successful By Design
CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS
Trace path to action.
WHAT IS YOUR STORY?
Use the "priming" technique
Watch on YouTube

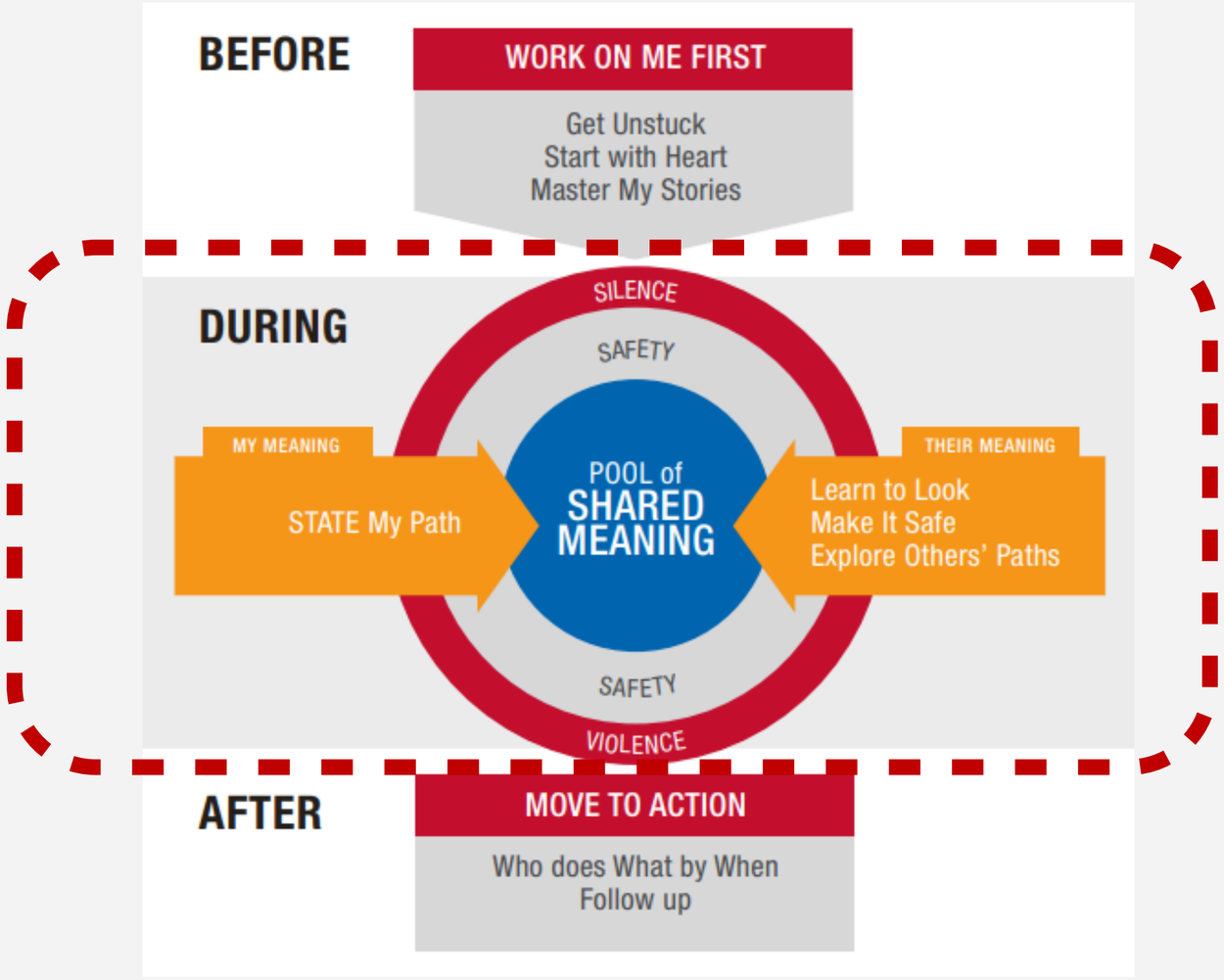


# Reflection

**On a sheet of paper, take 5 minutes to write about a time when you had a difficult conversation. Consider:**

1. How did you **plan** for the conversation?
2. What was **the environment** like?
3. What made the conversation **so difficult**?
4. What was **the outcome** of the conversation?

# Crucial Conversations Model




Source: Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High by Patterson, Grenny, McMillian, Switzler
Poster image retrieved from https://www.vitalsmarts.com/resource/crucial-conversations-book/

# STATE: A Tool to Lead the Conversation

**WHAT**

**S**hare your facts.
(I noticed…)

**T**ell your story.
(It made me think…)

**A**sk for others' path.
(What is your take?…)

**HOW**

**T**alk tentatively.
(Perhaps; In my opinion…)

**E**ncourage testing.
(I would love to hear your thoughts…)

Source: Patterson, Kerry, Grenny, Joseph, McMillan, Ron. *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

# Scenario Practice

- **Groups of 3**
- **You'll have 3 scenarios to choose from, and 15 minutes.**
- **For each scenario, two of you will play a role and one will be the observer. Try to aim to get through 1-2 scenarios so everyone has the opportunity to try an active role if they'd like.**
- **We'll read through the scenarios together first and then shift into groups and get started.**

# Scenario 1

## Conflict Resolution Between Colleagues

**Roles: You, Tom**
**Context:** You and Tom are close friends and work partners on a team project. You and Tom disagree on how to approach the project, and this disagreement is impacting not only your working relationship, but also the team's progress toward critical deadlines on the project. In your last team meeting, Tom was critical of your approach in front of the team, and this left you feeling discouraged. You would like to find common-ground for moving forward.

**Practice using the Crucial Conversation Model and STATE Tool in a conversation with Tom. Consider:**

- What approach might foster understanding, reduce tension, and promote a path toward shared solutions?
- How can you prioritize transparency and mutual respect for your differing perspectives?
- Consider timing, tone, and the dynamics and who else, if anyone, should be present for the conversation.

# Scenario 2

## Email Miscommunication

**Roles: You, Aki**

**Context**: You have a question about a process you're unfamiliar with. You email Aki, who is the OSL Director.  When you receive their response, they answer your question, but their response feels clipped, frustrated, and a little disparaging.  You're worried something you said may have had a different impact than your intent. A few days later, you happen to be in the same space as Aki, and want to take the opportunity to try and clear things up.

**Practice using the Crucial Conversation Model and STATE Tool in a conversation with Aki. Consider:**

- How can you lead this conversation with curiosity and vulnerability?
- How can you have a conversation about intent and impact with Aki that also ensures they have space to share their context and needs?
- How can you establish that mutual respect and care are the foundation of this conversation, rather than shame/blame?

# Scenario 3

## Checking In With a Colleague

**Roles: You, Lisa**
**Context:** You've noticed a decline in a co-worker's performance and are considering how best to offer constructive feedback. Lisa, your teammate, has been struggling to meet deadlines and her recent work has lacked the usual attention to detail. You're unsure what's changed, and want to check in with Lisa.

**Practice having a conversation with Lisa in a way that is thoughtful, respectful, and supportive of her well-being and growth. Consider:**

- How can you approach this conversation in a way that shows care and respect for Lisa as a colleague and a person?
- What environment or tone might help Lisa feel safe, heard, and understood?
- How can you ensure the feedback is clear and constructive while also being empathetic and encouraging?
- Think about timing, tone, and your relationship with Lisa—what will make this conversation most meaningful and helpful for her?

# Practice/Share Out

# Reflect + Share

**Think about the difficult conversation you reflected on at the beginning of this session.**
**If you could redo that difficult conversation:**

1. How would you approach the conversation now?

2. What would be different this time around?

3. Would you change the modality?



# Questions/Comments?





# Thank You!