

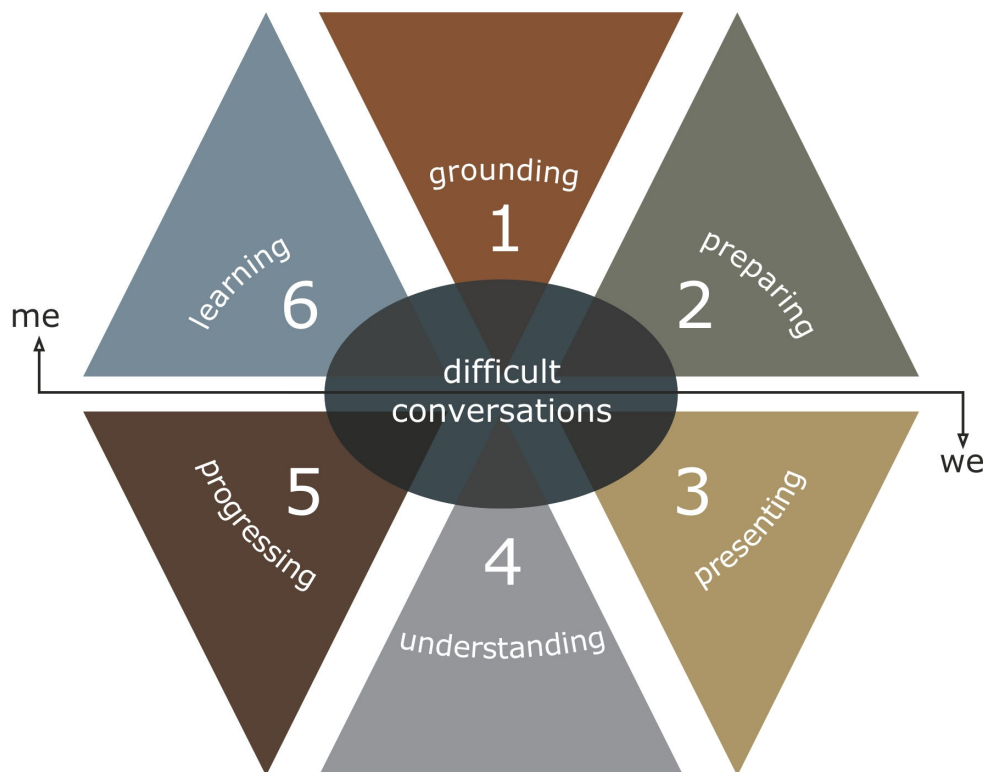
# Difficult Conversations

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# Difficult Conversations

Your choice to apply the Difficult Conversations model relies on the presence of one or two key factors: 1) you want a constructive outcome on the issue, and/or 2) you care enough about the relationship. If those factor(s) are present, this is the recommended process.



Source: Andre Mamprin & Ross Gilchrist

## 1. Grounding

Grounding is a deliberate choice not to react from raw emotion. It is stepping back, taking time, relieving pressure, getting rid of anger. It is applying whatever tactics will help: breathing, music, walking, seeking feedback from a trusted third party. It is checking in with yourself and acknowledging your contribution to what's happened. It is time out.

## 2. Preparing

Preparing is a choice to come to the conversation ready. It is gathering your facts, verifying what happened, reviewing the chronology, building your case. It is assessing possible outcomes and getting clear about the consequences. It is scripting the approach, as well as choosing time and place. It is moving from the gut to the head, thinking it through.

## 3. Presenting

Presenting is sharing your story and making your case. It is being clear, concise, and direct about the issue and the effect of that issue. It is maximizing the golden opportunity to be heard. It is resisting blame or assumption. It is "I" statements of feeling, moving from head to heart, sharing the truth. When you ..., I feel ... , because ... .

## 4. Understanding

Understanding is seeking the other's view, being curious about the other's experience. It is asking what and why, clarifying, checking assumptions. It is suspending judgment and staying focused, opening the mind and keeping the ego in check. It is active listening – taking notes, paraphrasing for clarity, staying present.

## 5. Progressing

Progressing is moving forward together. It is negotiation, action planning, and commitment. It is deciding what's next in the event of an impasse. It is owning one's part, making the apology if that's called for, and accepting amends offered. It is choosing not to carry the resentment forward – by letting go and moving on.

## 6. Learning

Learning is recognizing and assimilating what happened. It is bringing experience forward through reflective practice. It is scanning for patterns, noting familiar elements in the situation, and acting to avert repetition. It is defining the "do differently" for next time. It is the continuous development of self-mastery.