

# Communicating with Caregivers

Parenting with ABA Members CE Event

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3 attributes of a crucial conversation:

1. Opinions vary
2. Stakes are high
3. Emotions run strong

The Shared Pool analogy:

Steps needed to manage crucial conversations (from the Crucial Conversations book)

1. Approaching a crucial conversation - Start with yourself
2. Notice when safety is at risk
3. Make it safe to share
4. Master your stories - dealing with strong emotions
5. Speak honestly without offending
6. Explore others' paths
7. Turning crucial conversations into actions

3 signs you're having the wrong conversation



How to Listen- Ask questions to get things rolling

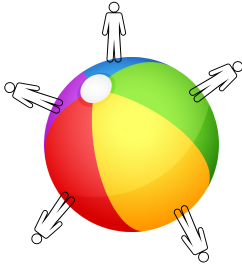
*"What's going on?"*

*"I'd really like to hear your opinion on this."*

*"Please let me know if you see it differently."*

*"Don't worry about hurting my feelings. I really want to hear your thoughts."*

Beach ball analogy:



Safety

1. You care about their concerns (Mutual Purpose)

2. You care about them (Mutual Respect)

-Crucial Conversations book

Safety- free of impending harm while behaving in a context with minimal aversive stimulation, as indicated by no or minimal engagement in avoidance or escape of that context

-Rajaraman et al, 2022

Ways to build safety

Share your good intent

Apologize when appropriate

Contrast to fix misunderstandings

Write it twice

←.....→  
Fierce Conversations Principles from the Fierce Conversations book

1. Master the courage to interrogate reality
2. Come out from behind yourself into the conversation and make it real
3. Be here, prepared to be nowhere else
4. Tackle your toughest challenge today
5. Obey your instincts
6. Take responsibility for your emotional wake
7. Let silence do the heavy lifting

←.....→  
Self- monitoring. Listen for yourself doing:

1. avoiding a topic
2. changing the subject
3. holding back
4. telling little lies
5. being imprecise in your language
6. being uninteresting
7. being too firm
8. being too soft

-Fierce Conversations book

←.....→  
De-brief

Ask yourself after:  
Was I genuinely curious about this person and his or her reality?  
Did I slow the conversation down and really probe?  
What did most of the talking? "Me" is the wrong answer.

-Fierce Conversations book

# Resources (with hyperlinks)

Grenny, J., Patterson, K., McMillan, R., Switzler, A., & Gregory, E. (2022). Crucial conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high. McGraw-Hill Education.

Rajaraman, A., Austin, J. L., Gover, H. C., Cammilleri, A. P., Donnelly, D. R., & Hanley, G. P. (2022). Toward trauma-informed applications of behavior analysis. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 55(1), 40–61.

Scott, S. (2004). Fierce Conversations (Revised and Updated): Achieving Success at Work and in Life One Conversation at a Time. Penguin.

Taylor, B. A., LeBlanc, L. A., & Nosik, M. R. (2019). Compassionate care in behavior analytic treatment: Can outcomes be enhanced by attending to relationships with caregivers?. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*, 12(3), 654–666.

<https://brocku.ca/vp-academic/wp-content/uploads/sites/65/Crucial-Conversations-Resources.pdf>

# Is this a good fit for your family?

## Time

- I feel this is doable in the time I have.
- I need help finding the time.
- There's no way I can find time for this.

## Comfort/ Confidence

- I understand the plan and feel good trying it on my own.
- The training was a little unclear. I'm not sure what to do.
- That made no sense to me. We need something else.

## Troubleshooting

- I feel good applying this to new things that may pop up.
- I can try to use these behavior tools on my own.
- Not going to work for new issues that may come up.

## Whole Family

- This feels too hard on my child.
- This feels too hard on the rest of my family.
- This feels too hard on me.

## Is it worth it?

- The effort is totally worth it.
- The payoff of improvement in my family seems really far off.
- The effort does not seem like it's going to get us anywhere.

## Community

- The people in our world will be understanding of this.
- No one will understand and I'll feel uncomfortable.

# Compassionate Care in Behavior Analysis

From Table 5 in Taylor, LeBlanc, & Nosik, 2019

## DEMONSTRATES COLLABORATION

- Seeks the parent's ideas when developing treatment
- Provides explanations and rationale for the treatment proposal
- Asks the parent if the treatment recommendation is acceptable
- Asks the parent what obstacles may prevent treatment
- Acknowledges the parent's statements of concerns or obstacles and paraphrases the concerns
- Compromises with the parent when determining the treatment plan
- Models flexibility.
- Engages the parent in reiteration of the treatment plan
- Acknowledges his or her own mistakes when appropriate
- Apologizes when appropriate
- Inquires about parent satisfaction
- Identifies and adjusts treatment goals based on the family's culture, religion, or lifestyle

## Reflective Listening Statements

"So..."

"So, you're saying..."

"I'm hearing..."

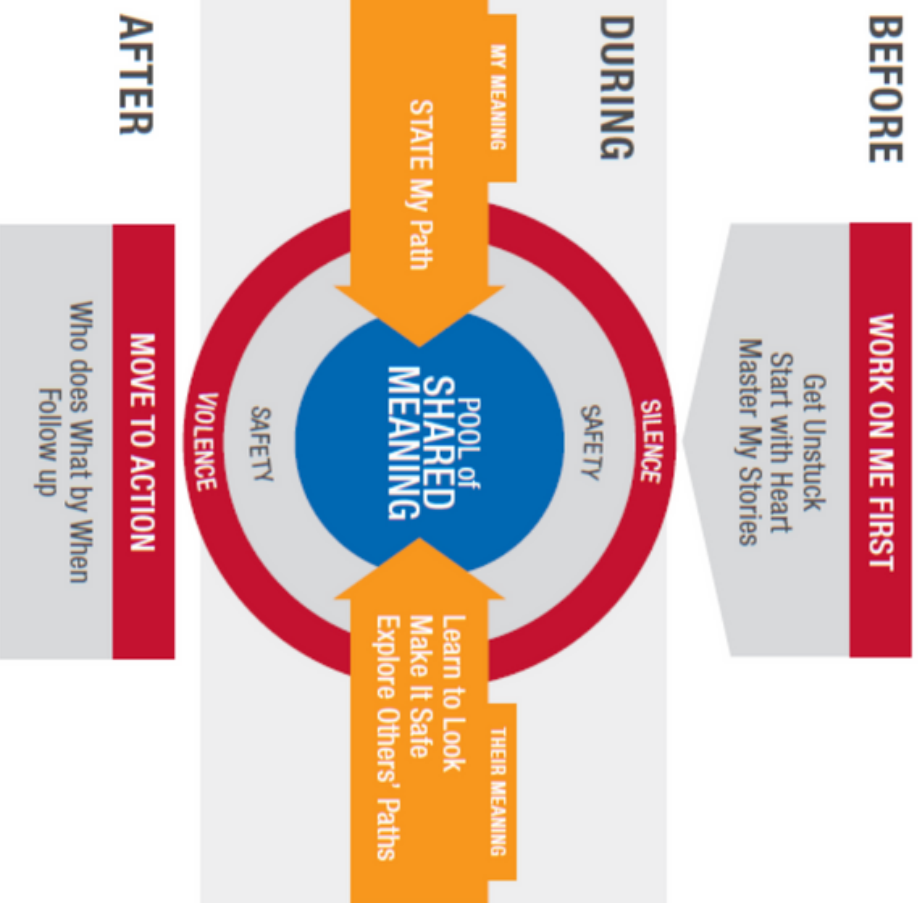
"I see...."

"I hear you saying..."

"It sounds like you're saying...Is that correct?"

# THE LAW OF CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS

*Anytime you find yourself stuck, there's a crucial conversation you're either not holding or not holding well.*



SITUATION	PRINCIPLES & SKILLS
<b>1</b> Results and Relationships are suffering.	You need to hold a <b>Crucial Conversation</b> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify where you are stuck</li> <li>Unbundle with CPR.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b> You need to initiate a <b>Crucial Conversation</b> , or one is evolving.	<b>Start with Heart</b> Focus on What You Really Want for: you, them, the relationship, and the organization (your long-term results).
<b>3</b> If you are getting emotional or telling clever stories.	<b>Master Your "Clever" Stories—Tell the Rest of the Story</b> Victim Story: "What am I pretending not to notice about my role in the problem?" William Story: "Why would a reasonable, rational, decent person do this?" Helpless Story: "What should I do right now to move toward what I really want?"
<b>4</b> If you have a tough message, be honest and maintain safety.	<b>STATE Your Path</b> Share your Facts: "I noticed ... " "Twice you ... " Tell your Story: "I'm beginning to wonder if ... " "It seems to me ... " <b>Ask for Others' Paths:</b> "How do you see it?" "Help me understand ... " <b>Talk Tentatively:</b> Own your story and avoid absolutes. <b>Encourage Testing:</b> "Do you see it differently?"
<b>5</b> Others are already in silence or violence and you missed the early warning signs.	<b>Learn to Look</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the signs that a conversation is turning crucial.</li> <li>For early warning signs of silence and violence.</li> </ul>
<b>6</b> If someone misunderstands your intent regarding Purpose or Respect.	<b>Contrast</b> "I don't think/mean/want _____ (their fear/misunderstanding)." "I do think/mean/want _____ (your actual purpose/meaning)."
<b>7</b> The discussion is going in circles. People are arguing. You're beginning a tough project or discussion.	<b>Create Mutual Purpose</b> Commit to seek Mutual Purpose. "Can we look for something we both agree on?" <b>Recognize the Purpose behind the Strategy.</b> "Why do you want _____?" "This is why I want _____." <b>Invent a Mutual Purpose.</b> "So, if you get _____ and I get _____, we're both happy?" <b>Brainstorm new strategies.</b> "What ideas do you have?" "I was thinking it may help if ... "
<b>8</b> If someone else is going to silence or violence, their full meaning isn't getting into the Pool.	<b>Explore Others' Paths</b> <b>Ask:</b> "I want to know what you think about ... " <b>Mirror:</b> (Silence) "You seem reluctant. Are you sure you're OK with it?" (Violence) "Wow, you seem really upset. What's up?" <b>Paraphrase:</b> "So you're saying _____." <b>Prime:</b> "Do you think that _____?"
<b>9</b> When you're ready to Move to Action.	<b>Move to Action</b> —Determine Who, does What, by When, and how we will Follow up.

# Issue Preparation Form

-from the Fierce Conversations book

## THE ISSUE IS:

*Be concise. One or two sentences only.*

## IT IS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE:

*What is at stake? What is the future impact if the problem is not resolved?*

## MY IDEAL OUTCOME IS:

*What specific results do I/we want? Assuming we get this right, what good things will occur? Who will be affected?*

## RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

*Stick to the facts. Summarize with bulleted points. How/when/why/where.*

## WHAT HAVE I/WE DONE UP TO THIS POINT:

*What steps- successful or unsuccessful- have been taken so far?*

## THE OPTIONS I AM CONSIDERING:

*List the options. What would I choose if I had to decide right now?*

## THE HELP I WANT FROM OTHER(S) IS:

*Tell me what I'm missing. What am I not seeing?*