

Crucial Conversations Assignment

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Crucial Conversations

We read three chapters from “Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High” by authors K. Patterson, J. Grenny, R. McMillan, & A. Switzler. A video titled “Mastering the Art of Crucial Conversation” by J. Grenny was also considered. These two tools can help any leader when it comes to be a collaborator with their peers or employees to succeed.

Nurse Bonnie

In this segment from the aforementioned video, a doctor is leaving when Nurse Bonnie explains him there is a patient waiting to be dismissed. He gets frustrated when she says she thought he would not mind, and she already told the patient he would stop by. The doctor extremely angry says she should not be thinking for him. Before anything else, it is important to acknowledge that this was in fact a ‘crucial conversation’. A crucial conversation is: “A discussion between two or more people where (1) stakes are high, (2) opinions vary, and (3) emotions run strong” (Patterson et al, 2012, p.3).

Personally, I would have responded by telling myself I could not lose my ‘cool.’ I would have apologized for getting him upset and said that I did not know he had an important family commitment. Then, explained that I expected him as a professional to take a few minutes and deliver the good news to the patient, but if he could not make it happen, I would understand and then explain he would be back later.

The Brownie Experiment

In his video, Grenny discusses his son’s social experiment by introducing another segment in which his son used some brownies he made. The goal was to find out if his young friends would tell the truth or risk hurting his feelings by declaring the brownies were not good. I

thought it was remarkably interesting to see we are conditioned or ‘designed wrong’ since young to think of how when we are faced with crucial conversations, we only have two choices. As Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, & Switzler point out, “We believe that we have to choose between telling the truth and keeping a friend. We begin believing in the Fool’s Choice from an early age” (2012, p.22). Many of those kids thought they could hurt or lose their friend with the truth. I think my takeaway from this is that we need to educate our children to master these crucial conversations and instill in them to not make the ‘Fool’s choice.’

Grenny & Patrick

Grenny describes a crucial incident he had with a young friend and mentee: Patrick. He took this friend in and helped him through hard times. Eventually, Patrick stole some valuables from Grenny- which was caught on tape. When alone with him, Grenny showed him the recording and explained he would always care for him. Patrick aware that he would go to jail for what he did, apologized and asked him if he would be there for him -as he had been before- when he came out of jail. Grenny told him he could count on him as long as he was accountable for his acts.

I kept thinking how tough it must have been for both parties. On the one hand, I think Grenny may have been too tough in contacting the authorities, but I understand it had to be done; I was glad to see that Patrick also understood that. I loved the fact that Grenny did not make the Fool’s Choice of deciding between hurting his friend or keeping him. Finally, both persons also considered what they wanted for themselves, for each other and for their relationship in the future. The latter based on what was mentioned on the questions mentioned in the book as well, “What do I really want? What do I really want for others? What do I really want for the relationship?” (Patterson, et al, 2012, pp. 43-44). I think had I been in the same situation, I would

have probably done the same. It was important that Patrick was held accountable for his actions. It was also important that I showed him how much I cared for him and how I would be there for him.

Conclusion

I enjoyed these chapters and the video. It honestly felt eye-opening in so many ways. I can recognize how I was conditioned to think of the 'Fool's Choice' since an early age. I learned a lot and I will mindfully put this newfound knowledge into practice.

References

Grenny, J. (2015). *Mastering the art of crucial conversations* [Video file]. Retrieved from

<https://youtu.be/uc3ARpccRwQ>

Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (2012). *Crucial conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

