

# Respectfully Disagreeing Without Losing Your Mind (or Job)

Turning Tough Talks into Respectful Conversations



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Thrive!...Not Just Survive!

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Let's Connect!





# What Kind of Conflict Chef Are You?

Understanding how we handle tough conversations and situations can help us better navigate future conflicts with more awareness, choice, and compassion. Let's identify your "Conflict Chef Type," reflect on your communication tendencies, and explore how you might grow in conflict settings.

## Step 1: Find Your Conflict Chef Type!

Circle the description that sounds most like you in a tough or heated conversation/situation:

- **The Pressure Cooker** – Holds it in until it explodes.
- **The Microwave** – Heats up fast, cools down fast, often uneven.
- **The Slow Cooker** – Needs time to process, slow but steady.
- **The Frying Pan** – Always sizzling, ready to stir the pot.
- **The Ice Cream Maker** – Goes cold and avoids heat entirely.

## Step 2: Reflect On Your Conflict Chef Type in Tough Situations

1. What specific types of situations tend to bring out conflict in your life?
2. How do others usually respond when you show your conflict chef type?
3. What are the strengths of your conflict type during challenging situations?
4. What are the challenges of your conflict type during challenging situations?

## Step 3: Growth Ingredients in Moments of Conflict

Rate yourself on the following positive conflict communication ingredients from 0 to 10.  
( 0 – Never able to do, 10 - I always use)

Curiosity \_\_\_/10

Listening \_\_\_/10

Clarity \_\_\_/10

Compassion \_\_\_/10

Courage \_\_\_/10

Humor \_\_\_/10

**Conflict isn't always comfortable, but it can create understanding and connection when handled with care. Which ingredient will you bring to the conflict kitchen next time?**



# Growing Through Respectful Disagreement

*Differing views help us think, connect, and grow.*

Navigating respectful disagreements is important for personal growth and human connection. Rather than avoiding tough conversations, embracing them can challenge our thinking, strengthen our relationships, and spark creativity.

## Step 1: The Positive Power of Disagreement

Reflect on the positive side of respectful disagreement:

- It **makes us think**. Hearing different perspectives challenges our assumptions and helps us grow.
  - It **strengthens relationships**. Respectfully engaging in tough conversations builds trust.
  - It **sparks creativity**. Unique viewpoints often lead to better ideas and smarter solutions.
1. How can hearing different perspectives make us better at our jobs?
  2. Why might engaging in respectful debate lead to a more positive work culture?
  3. How can having diverse viewpoints help us do our jobs better?

## Step 2: Your Personal Reflection

Consider a time someone respectfully disagreed with you and it made you better in the end.

- A. What was the situation?
- B. How did the other person express their disagreement?
- C. How did it challenge or shift your thinking?
- D. Did your “Conflict Chef Type” get in the way at all?
- E. What did you learn from the experience?
- F. How might you approach future disagreements differently because of it?

**The goal of respectful disagreement isn't to win; it's to understand.**



# Approaching Tough Conversations

*Approach with palms out, not fingers pointing.*

When we lead with love and humility instead of fear and defensiveness, tough conversations don't have to be destructive. Let's reflect and prepare for meaningful dialogue.

## Step 1: A New Mindset Towards Disagreements

*Read and reflect:*

- Disagreement isn't danger—it's potential.
  - People don't need to agree to connect, but they do need to feel seen.
  - Common ground always exists. Start there.
  - Conflict can be reframed as a learning opportunity.
  - Assume shared humanity before diving into differences.
1. Which of the above statements stands out most to you and why? (Lean on that next time you have a difficult conversation brewing.)

## Step 2: Reflect On a Conversation You're Avoiding

*Describe one tough conversation you've been avoiding.*

1. Who is it with and what makes it difficult?
2. How have you been approaching it (or avoiding it)?
3. What might shift if you approached it with love and curiosity instead of fear?

## Step 3: Creating an Environment for Respectful Disagreement

Depending on our "Conflict Chef Type," we might struggle creating a safe space for tough conversations. Here are three ways to create that environment:

- **Stay curious.** Focus on understanding their perspective instead of trying to "win."
- **Ask open-ended questions.** Encourage dialogue and learning from each other.
- **Listen to understand.** It's obvious when we're waiting for our turn to talk. Really hearing someone makes a difference.

*Reflections:*

1. What does it feel like to be truly heard in a tough conversation?
2. What does it feel like when you know someone is not judging you and simply learning?
3. What are ways we can show others that we are listening and learning (not judging)?



# From Tough Talks To Respectful Conversations

Let's prepare for a difficult conversation with respect, clarity, and compassion so that we can express ourselves fully without spiraling into conflict. The more we practice open, respectful communication, the easier it gets to navigate tough conversations without stress or frustration.

## Part 1: Avoiding Anger, Defensiveness, and Conflict

- Watch your words and avoid phrases that sound like accusations.
- Find common ground first. We are all human and often care about many similar things.
- Validate their feelings. You both are allowed to feel.

## Part 2: Share Your View Without Sounding Confrontational

- Use "I" statements ("*I see it differently because...*") instead of "*You're wrong.*"
- Tell a story. Personal experiences connect better than cold facts.
- Keep it a conversation, not a debate for someone to win.

## Part 3: Build Your Respectful Dialogue Cheat Sheet

Try using these quotes as starting points to keep the conversation going and respectful.

- "*What led you to that belief?*"
- "*I see why that's important to you.*"
- "*I see this differently because...*"
- "*That's an interesting point—can you tell me more?*"
- "*I appreciate your perspective. Here's another way to look at it...*"
- "*Even if we don't agree, I appreciate this conversation.*"
- "*I care about our relationship and would like to work through something together*"
- "*Are you open to a conversation about...?*"

## Part 4: Let's Say That A Different Way!

Try to rewrite these responses to help keep the tough conversation going. Use the quotes above as inspiration, but don't be afraid to go rogue and use your voice.

1. Instead of saying, "*You're wrong,*" I could say:
2. Instead of saying, "*I completely disagree with you,*" I could say:
3. Instead of saying, "*You're insane! That makes no sense and is not factual,*" I could say:
4. Instead of saying, "*I can't believe you did that,*" I could say:

**At the end of the day, we don't have to agree with everyone, but we do have to work with them.**