

Difficult Conversation Preparation Sheet

Enter the Conversation Clear, Calm, and Grounded

How to Use This Tool

Use this worksheet before a conversation that feels:

- Heavy
- Tense
- Important
- Emotionally risky

Preparation reduces reactivity. The goal isn't to control the outcome. The goal is to show up aligned. Take 5 - 10 minutes to complete this before speaking.

Part 1: Clarify the Core Issue

1. What is this conversation actually about?

(State it in one sentence. Avoid storytelling.)

2. Why does this matter to me?

3. What emotion is most present right now?

- Hurt
- Frustration
- Anxiety
- Disappointment
- Anger
- Fear
- Other: _____

Rate intensity (1 - 10): _____

If above 7, consider pausing before initiating.

Part 2: Define Alignment (Not Ideal Outcome)

4. What outcome would feel aligned, even if it's not perfect?

Examples of aligned outcomes:

- I said what was true for me.
- I set a clear boundary.
- I stayed calm.
- I didn't over-explain.
- I listened without collapsing.

5. What am I willing to accept?

6. What am I not willing to accept?

Part 3: Clean Message Draft

7. Complete this structure:

“When _____ happened, I felt _____.
What I'd like going forward is _____.”

Write your version:

Now reduce it to 1 - 3 clear sentences:

Remove:

- Blame
- Character attacks
- Over-justifying
- Emotional escalation

Keep:

- Ownership
 - Clarity
 - Specific requests
-
-
-

Part 4: Reaction Readiness

8. Plan your steadiness in advance:

If they respond with:

- **Defensiveness** → I will: _____
- **Silence** → I will: _____
- **Dismissal** → I will: _____
- **Emotion** → I will: _____

Part 5: Final Alignment Check

9. Before you initiate, ask yourself:

- Am I speaking to resolve, not to win?
- Am I prepared to hear something uncomfortable?
- Can I stay respectful even if I feel triggered?
- Will I respect myself afterward?

Closing Reminder

Difficult conversations are not a sign of failure in a relationship. They are a sign that something matters. Clarity may feel uncomfortable in the moment, but avoidance compounds over time. Speak from steadiness, not urgency.