CONVERSATIONAL DIALS

Often what's hard about hard conversations is knowing when, where, and how to have them. The next time you're wondering about this, consider Mónica Guzmán's dials framework:

Time

Effective conversations need time because the depend on trust, rapport, empathy building, the exploration of knowledge, and curiosity. This doesn't mean every conversation needs to be an hour, but it does mean that you'll want to consider how much time you and the other person have to devote before jumping into a hard conversation.

Attention

The best conversations will be ones in which both people can give their full(est) attention. Half-listening while drafting a text response in your head will only get you so far. Other people can tell if you're not really listening, and it will affect the conversation.

Parity

For the conversation to be meaningful, you need to be on level ground in which all voices matter equally. If you don't share status or power (because of role, identity, etc.), be mindful of at least sharing speaking time.

Containment

Consider the platform in which the conversation is taking place, and how that will matter. For example, are you dialoging to another person on social media for countless others to see? Or are you in person having a private discussion? There is no best platform, but the container in which your conversation exists will impact everyone's experience.

Embodiment

The most human of conversations will happen in person, when you can give and receive the wholeness of human expression—gestures, facial expressions, tone, etc. This isn't to say that virtual conversations are not as well, but embracing embodiment can make for more meaningful connection.

Source: Mónica Guzmán. *I Never Thought Of It That Way: How to Have Fearlessly Curious Conversations in Dangerously Divided Times.*

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