



After

THE CONVERSATION

RIP: REFLECT, INTEGRATE, PRACTICE

Every hard conversation is a learning experience, no matter what happens. That's why it's always a good idea to get some distance from a hard conversation and do some reflection on it after the fact. This way, you can address what worked and what didn't. You can also move on from the conversation while taking the lessons with you.



OUTCOMES & OVERVIEW

This module will give you all the info you need to learn from your hard conversation—and start putting your newfound skills into practice. By reflecting on, integrating, and practicing hard conversations, you will learn to objectively address what worked and what didn't, while fine-tuning your skills in the process.

CHECKLIST

- Read through the module PDF
- Listen to the audio that accompanies the PDF
- Complete the Empowered Takeaways, including: gaining clarity on how well you did with fulfilling the intention you initially set; identifying what worked and what didn't; evaluating how your relationship with the other person changed, if at all; checking in with the other person to see how the experience impacted them; and identifying the biggest lessons you will take forward with you from having the hard conversation

OUTCOMES

By the time you are finished with this module, you will have learned to genuinely embrace the hard conversations in your life, from the most minor to the most challenging. You will feel capable of maintaining openness, connection, curiosity, and compassion for yourself and others—before, during, and after hard conversations. You'll also celebrate your courage and gain invaluable lessons from your experience of walking right into those “can we talk?” moments.



Reflect

Congratulations, you did it!

Having a hard conversation can suck, be a welcome release, or land somewhere in between—that's why they call it "hard"! Now that you've gone through the process, do what you can to ground yourself (maybe take a bath, go out in nature, connect with your body, connect with a trusted friend), then congratulate yourself for a job well done! But, your work isn't over.

Now it's time to reflect.

A lot of us have the tendency to quickly move on after the initial adrenaline rush of completing a hard conversation. Especially as women, we tend to want to make everything OK again, for both ourselves and the other person, even if that means sacrificing our own needs. But one of the most important parts of having a hard conversation is taking the time to reflect afterwards, because it gives you the opportunity to reconnect with yourself.

TIP

Remember to breathe. Shallow breathing can lead to anxiety and can take us out of our experience. Deep breathing, on the other hand, can lead us into a relaxed, aware state. Try gently and slowly breathing in through your nose, mouth closed, for six counts. Then, exhale for six seconds through your mouth, letting your breath leave your body slowly and gently.

EMPOWERED TAKEAWAY

Make sure to fill this out shortly after your hard conversation.

Looking back, did you fulfill the intention you set for yourself before having the hard conversation?



What went well? What could have been improved? How do you feel about it now?



EMPOWERED TAKEAWAY (CONTINUED)

Make sure to fill this out shortly after your hard conversation.

What was one major thing you learned about yourself from having the hard conversation? (Be sure to celebrate your wins in this observation. For example, "I learned that I'm really patient and I give people a lot of room to feel heard," instead of, "I learned that I'm way too nice to people who don't deserve it.")

Integrate

So now that you've had the hard conversation and taken the time to reflect on it, you can integrate everything you've learned.

Integration is about learning about your patterns and how to change them. When you figure out how to deal with conflict, you create new patterns that become your natural response over time. It's all about learning how you want to relate to other people. Having a hard conversation helps you release old patterns and create new ways of connecting to others.

Even though both of you might be tempted to avoid the hard conversation you just had, integration requires checking in with the other person instead of pretending nothing happened. Of course, some hard conversations reveal deeper problems in the relationship, so it might be appropriate to truly never talk to the other person again. But remember, hard conversations are about growth, so ask yourself: *Is the transformation in my relationship obvious? Or did things just go back to the way they've always been? Most importantly, did I go back to my previous behavior and attitudes, or did I also change?*

When we integrate a hard conversation, we realize that there is *always* a lesson in it for us.

Acknowledging this lesson means we don't just go back to shutting our mouths and not expressing our truth. Hard conversations that we voluntarily walk into change us for the better.

TIP

Be compassionate with yourself. Hard conversations are about trial and error. Learn to trust yourself. Give yourself props for being courageous enough to go there!

EMPOWERED TAKEAWAY

Fill this out a few days after your hard conversation.

When you've had some distance from the conversation, reflect on what you remember. What did you learn about yourself and how you interacted with the other person?

Did the conversation help you to notice any negative patterns in your behavior with other people (e.g., constantly apologizing for taking up space, getting overly defensive and reactive, talking over the other person)? If so, what are they? What would you like to do about these patterns?

EMPOWERED TAKEAWAY (CONTINUED)

Fill this out several days after your hard conversation.

What's your relationship like with the other person today? How do you want it to be? Do you need to follow up with them to check in and have more closure?



What's your relationship like with yourself now that you've had the hard conversation?



EMPOWERED TAKEAWAY (CONTINUED)

Fill this out a few weeks after your hard conversation.

Now that you've had more distance from the hard conversation, what can you celebrate? What is the most important lesson you've taken from this experience?





Practice

By now, you probably already know what this section is about. Practice, practice, practice!

We're not going to give you that old cliché about “practice makes perfect.” In hard conversations, or anything in life, there's no such thing as perfect. Let's face it, life is truly messy.

But isn't the messiness where we find our true brilliance?

In having the hard conversations, you won't always come to startling new levels of clarity or resolution. Sometimes, you never get the resolution you are hoping for. Sometimes, the person you talk to will get really pissed off and offended; maybe they'll respond with insults or just ghost you altogether. Other times, you might say or do things you later regret because you were being defensive or sharing more than you truly felt comfortable with.

All of these situations can be painful to face up to, but once you start having more and more hard conversations, you'll reach brand-new levels of understanding, self-respect, and connection. Very likely, you'll be thanked by others. And you might also be the one doing the thanking. You'll get a chance to hear the other side of the story (which might not be anything close to what you'd assumed or expected). You'll also have the opportunity to be really deeply seen and have the privilege of really deeply seeing another.

TIP

Create an affirmation for yourself. Remember, the more you practice the hard conversations, the easier they become. You can create a positive affirmation to help calm and center you every time you dive into a hard conversation. Make it simple but clear (e.g., "I'm brave, honest, and clear—and I've got this!").

When you have the hard conversations, you'll get way more out of them than you even thought was possible.

Having a hard conversation isn't just about addressing the major conflict you're having with people in your life. In truth, it's about walking your talk and being the person you want to be in the world—a woman who is open, honest, empowered, and who puts connection to herself and her truth above all else.

The more you learn to have, and embrace, the hard conversations in your life, the easier every single situation that once felt difficult will be—from the most minor to the most challenging. Because, if there's anything the hard conversations teach you, it's that you are so much stronger, wiser, and braver than you think.



EMPOWERED TAKEAWAY

What intention are you committed to the next time you have a hard conversation?



How can you use hard conversations in your life in a way that will make them easier and smoother?

