

Unlocking Interpersonal Conflict: Pitfalls & Possibilities

Assembly of Osteopathic Graduate Medical Educators
Webinar Series

November 8, 2023

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Outline of Session

Part 1

Sources and Consequences of Interpersonal Conflict



Part 2

Five Pillars of Conflict Resolution



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“the perception by the parties involved of differences, discrepancies and incompatible wishes”


Boulding, K.E. (1963) Conflict and defense: A general theory. New York, NY: Harper & Row

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*We started off pure gold.
Then people began
polluting us when we were
too young to fight back.*

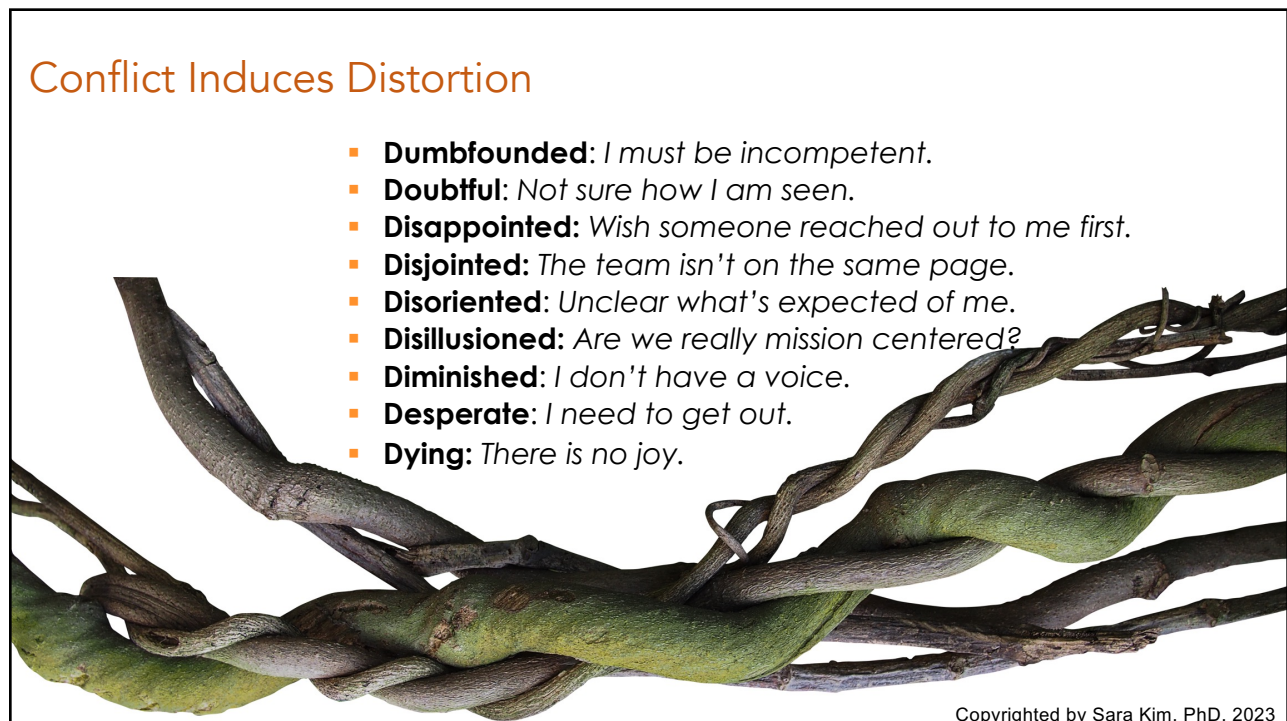
*From We started off pure gold,
Rumi, 13th Persian Poet (1207-1273)*



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Conflict Induces Distortion

- **Dumbfounded:** *I must be incompetent.*
- **Doubtful:** *Not sure how I am seen.*
- **Disappointed:** *Wish someone reached out to me first.*
- **Disjointed:** *The team isn't on the same page.*
- **Disoriented:** *Unclear what's expected of me.*
- **Disillusioned:** *Are we really mission centered?*
- **Diminished:** *I don't have a voice.*
- **Desperate:** *I need to get out.*
- **Dying:** *There is no joy.*

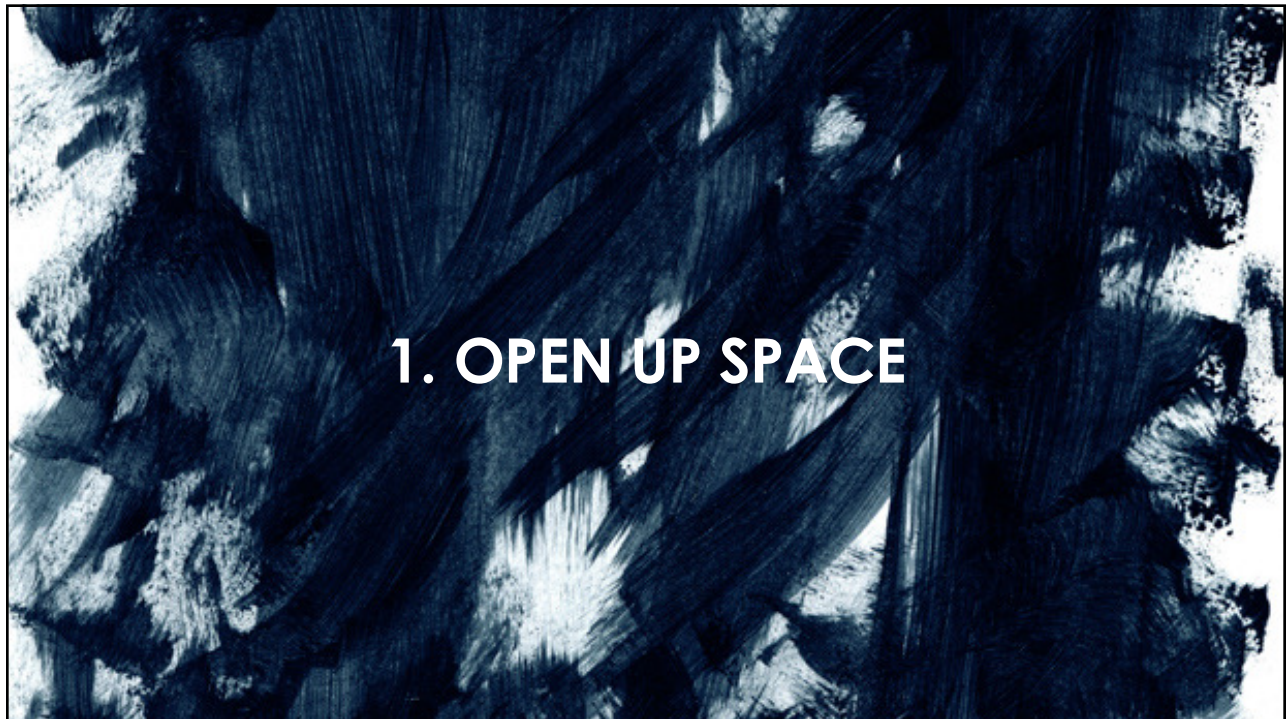


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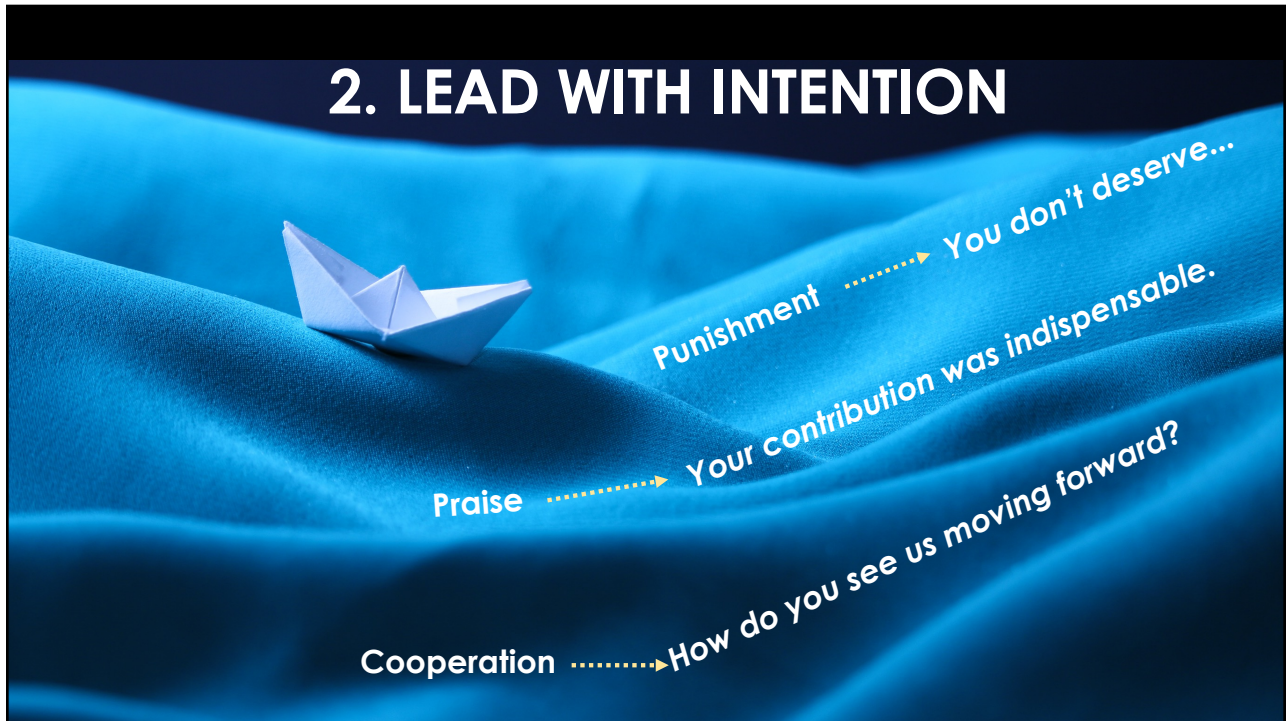
Limitations  **Possibilities**
Shoring Up Power  **Partnering**
Succumbing to Ego  **Humility/Humor**

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It's all about you, isn't it?
What's the point. Nothing changes around here.
"May I borrow your phone charger?" NO!



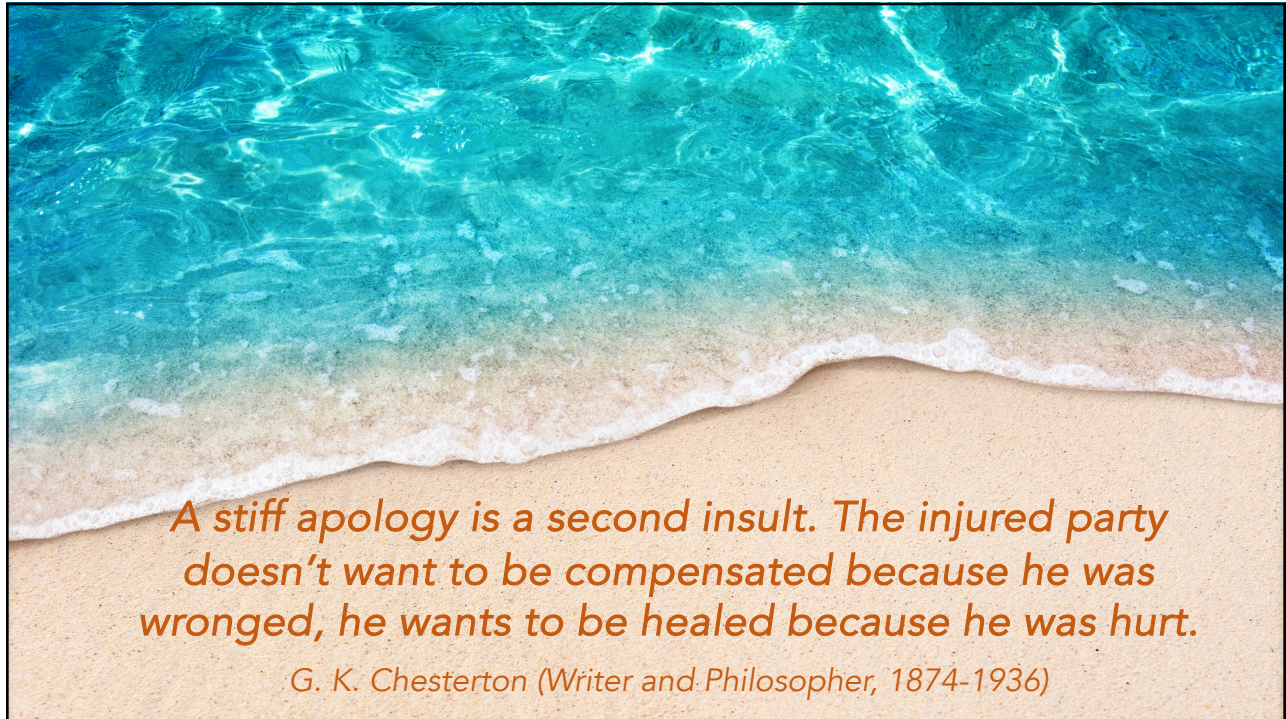
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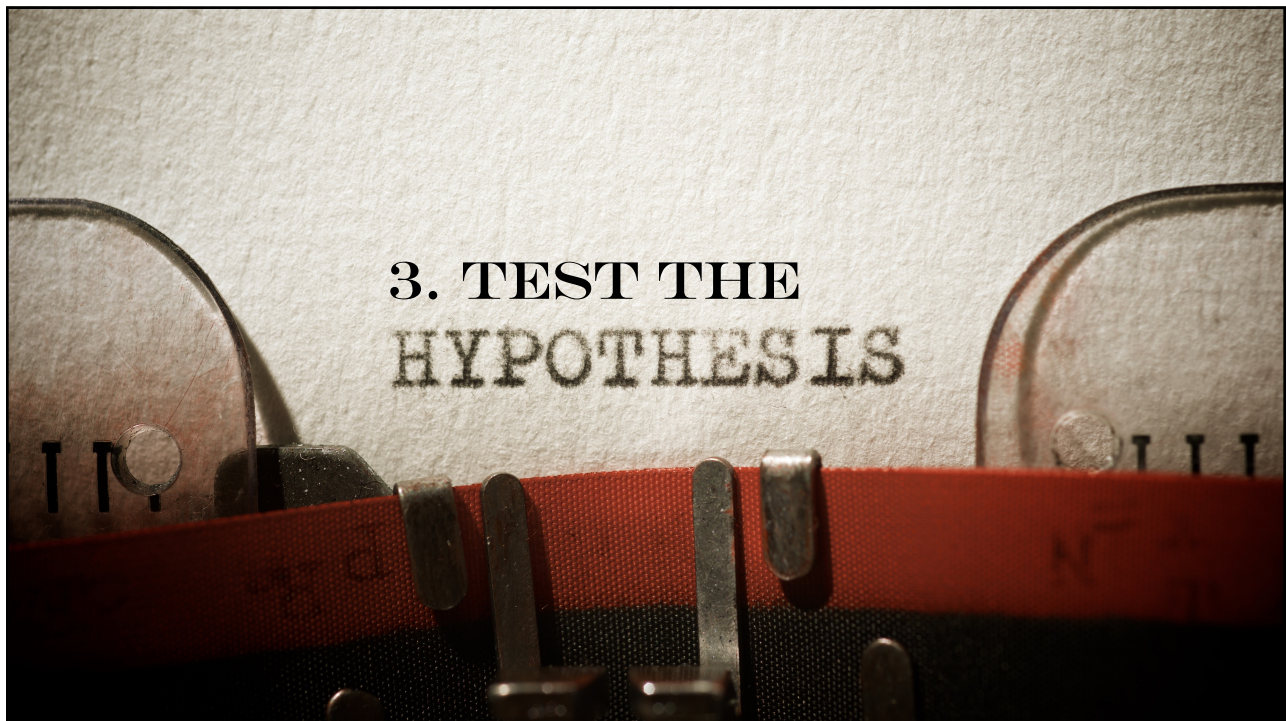
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Collect Data/Information & Ask Questions

Collect Data

- Let inquiry (vs. bias) lead the way
- Gather data/info
- Put the data to test



Ask Questions

- Avoid "WHY" questions
- Try "WHAT" & "HOW" questions
- Build your own question bank



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Collect Data/Information & Ask Questions: Question Makeover

- 1 Why did you miss the deadline?
- 2 Why do you disagree with every single idea I put down?
- 3 Why are you making a solo decision? We feel shut out.

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Become a Witness to My Emotions



References: Brach T. Radical compassion: Learning to love yourself and your world with the practice of RAIN. Penguin; 2020 Dec 29; Riso DR, Hudson R. The wisdom of the Enneagram: The complete guide to psychological and spiritual growth for the nine personality types. New York: Bantam Books; 1999 Jun 15.

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Become a Witness to My Emotions



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Reflect My Emotion, Other's Emotion

Signal to others you get how they feel

- That sounds frustrating/ disappointing.
- I hear how upset you are.
- I am sorry this is so tough on you.
- It's been a hard day.
- It's clear you are passionate about the issue.



Signal to others how you feel

- You can imagine how surprised I'm to hear that.
- It was disappointing to hear you speak in that manner.
- When you kept interrupting me, I was getting frustrated. In fact, I found myself getting angry.

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4. LEAN INTO BROADER POWER SOURCES

(French, J. R. P., Jr., & Raven, B. (1959). The bases of social power. In D. Cartwright (Ed.), Studies in social power (pp. 150–167). Univ. Michigan. Gabel, S. (2012). Perspective: Physician leaders and their bases of power: Common and disparate elements. Academic Medicine, 87, 221-225.)

← Legitimate

Personal →

Position

Formal, designated position of leadership or authority

Reward/Coercion

Reward: Material or psychological rewards
Coercion: Negative consequences tied to tasks, expectations

Expertise

Arbiter of decision making, role model, mentors

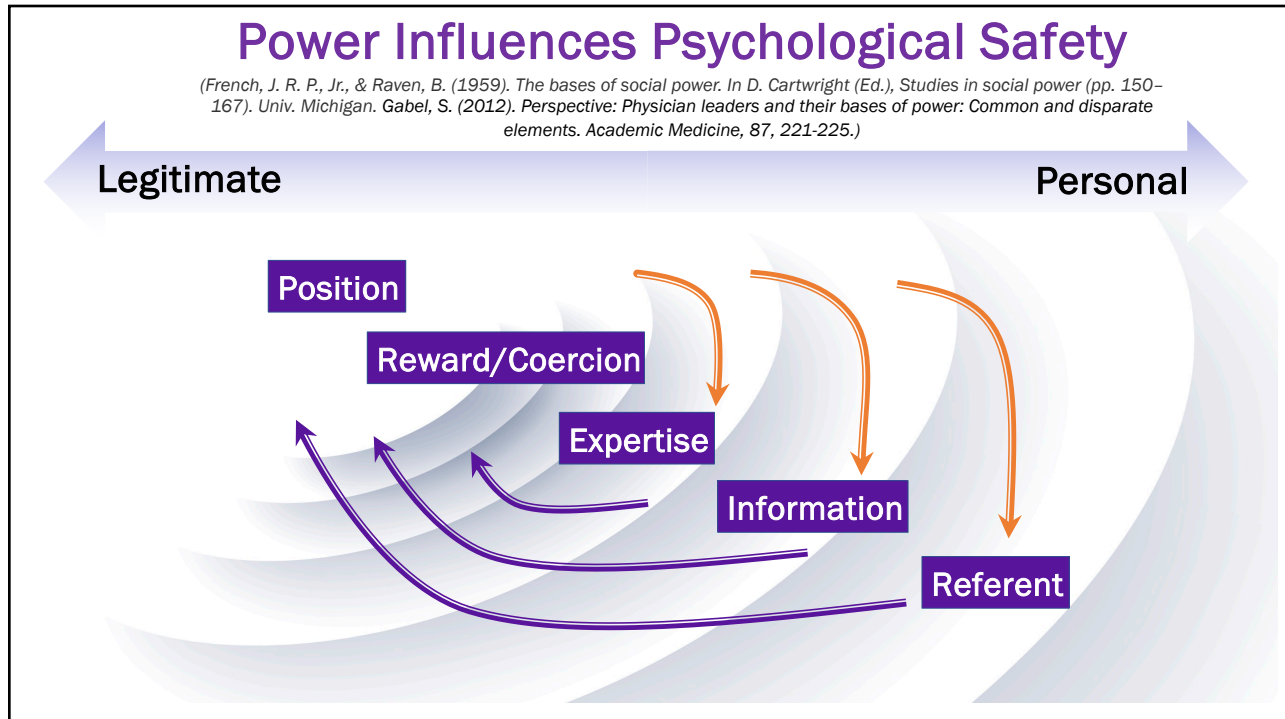
Information

Aid decisions in particular situations.

Referent

Intangible personal characteristics and interpersonal skills in an influencing agent (humility, humor, audacity, kindness, generosity, etc.)

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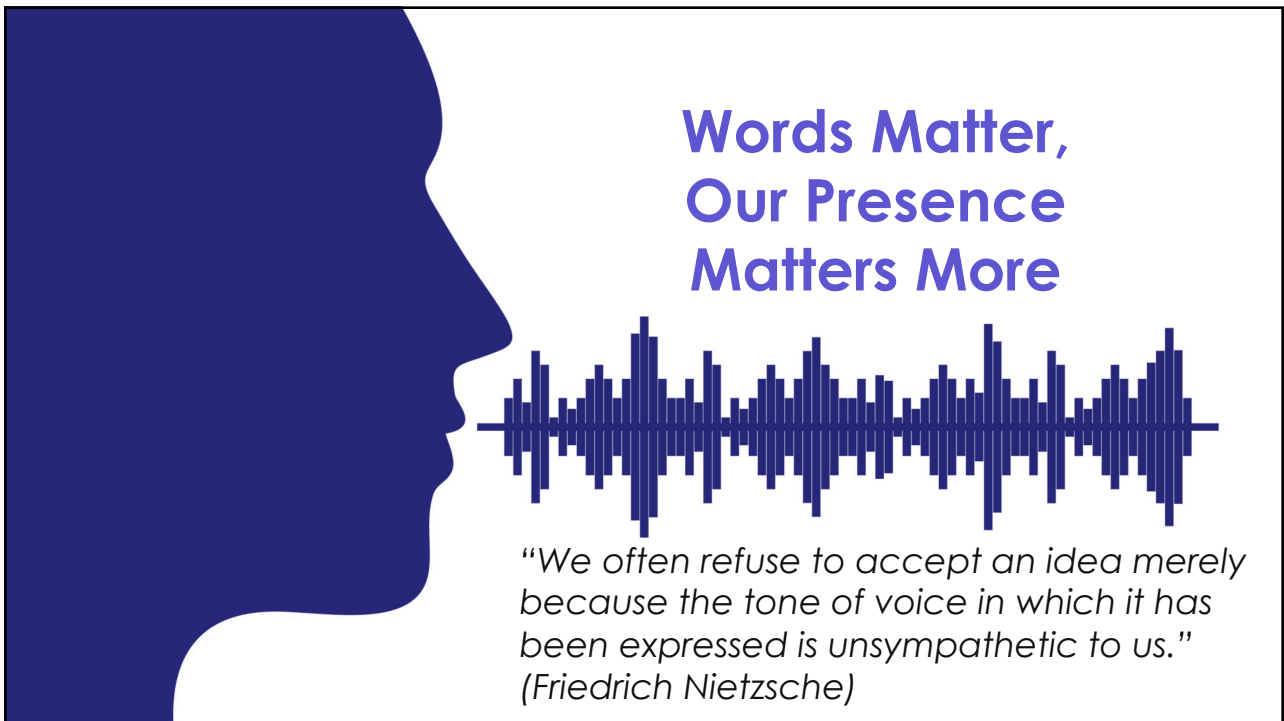


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5. MOBILIZE WORDS ++

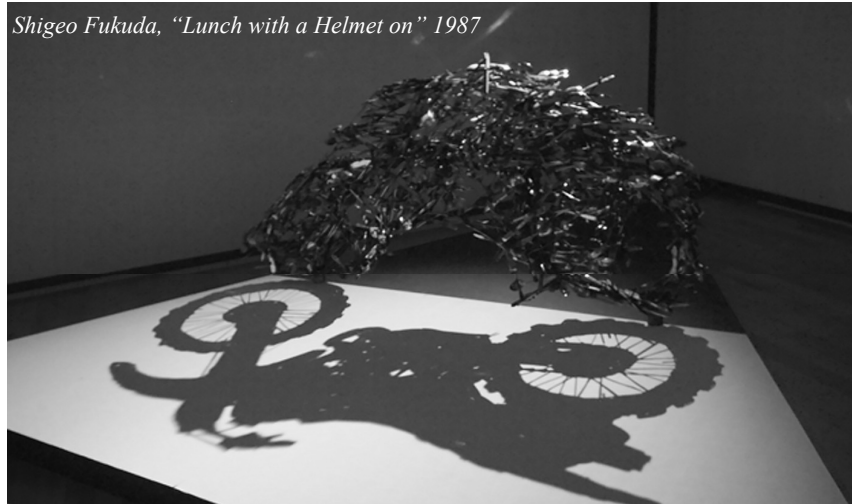
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**Words Matter,
Our Presence
Matters More**

*“We often refuse to accept an idea merely because the tone of voice in which it has been expressed is unsympathetic to us.”
(Friedrich Nietzsche)*

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QUESTIONS

ULTIMATE WISDOM: What is the secret to getting to "agreeing to disagree" in the heat of an argument?
Krista Tippett's Quote: *I can disagree with your opinion but I can't disagree with your experience.*

OPEN UP SPACE

- Given the fragility of our social dynamics, how can we balance between what we are expected to say vs. what we really want to say?
- How does cultural humility intersect with facilitators and barriers to resolving conflict within people of diverse backgrounds?
- Can you please address gender differences and cultural expectations.

TEST THE HYPOTHESIS

- I would like help dealing with reactive personality types in the workplace gracefully and how to facilitate conversations.
- How should we work with people who are not meeting expectations and are not held accountable?

POWER SOURCES

- For those who feel anxious speaking up or defending/advocating for themselves, how can they overcome that?
- How can professional students initiate conversations with faculty and administrators in terms of challenging/difficulty topics?
- Are there any adjustments needed to be made when there is a significant power differential between the two parties in conflict?

GEM

- I feel like I am the intermediary between two colleagues in conflict. Help!

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I am happy to discuss any of the questions that weren't addressed. Please feel free to contact me.

Thank you

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