

## Upcoming Online Seminars

9/1/20 – Challenging  
Negative Thoughts

10/1/20 – Effective  
Communication

11/1/20 – How to  
Survive the Holidays

12/20 – Healthy Living

To watch these online seminars, login to [www.supportlinc.com](http://www.supportlinc.com) and click on the 'Monthly Feature' tile. Scroll to the end of the article to find the featured seminar link.

## Making Difficult Conversations Successful

Whether you need to resolve a conflict or provide critical feedback, engaging in difficult conversations is a challenge.

Steering a hard discussion to a positive outcome is more likely when you employ these four steps:

### 1. Understand All Points of View

Start with the end goal for everyone involved in the conversation to feel heard. Allow each participant to convey their perspective and feelings. Show genuine curiosity and ask necessary questions to clarify facts and concerns. Stay aware of both verbal and non-verbal cues. If you sense defensiveness or frustration, provide reassurance that all voices will have an opportunity to speak.

### 2. Actively Listen

A simple technique called 'active listening' is very helpful in difficult conversations. When someone is

speaking, rather than thinking about a response, focus intently on what is being said. Then, in your own words, repeat back what you've heard. The speaker can affirm your understanding or offer additional insight until they feel acknowledged. Active listening helps keep strong emotions from escalating and conversations moving forward.

### 3. Share Your Goal

Once others' thoughts have been shared, it's your turn. Without diminishing anyone else's, offer your perspective and explain any factors that have not yet been raised. Use phrases such as, "I see where you are coming from, however..." to help avoid introducing additional conflict. Express your desired outcome clearly. If you've listened well, others will be more likely to identify common ground with you and each other.

### 4. Find a Solution

Finally, it's time to work together on determining next steps. Brainstorm ideas and processes to resolve the issue. Engage all parties involved – repeating steps 1, 2 and 3 as needed – to keep the conversation focused on solving the problem, rather than continued rehashing or blame-placing.

Use these steps to help your difficult conversation be more successful and achieve buy-in on needed changes, no matter the topic.

Source:  
[https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/774088.Difficult\\_Conversations](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/774088.Difficult_Conversations)

**For information regarding the supervisory services available through SupportLinc, call 1-888-881-LINC (5462) or visit [www.supportlinc.com](http://www.supportlinc.com)**

## COVID-19 Microsite

COVID-19 has increased mental health concerns in people across the country. This toolkit is updated regularly and provides resources to stay informed as well as take care of your emotional wellbeing.

To view the site, visit <http://coronavirus.eaptoolkit.com> today.

## Staying Composed Under Pressure

The body's natural reaction to challenges is to activate the "fight-or-flight" response. However, during times of uncertainty your team is looking to you for leadership and reassurance. Here are several tips to you can use to stay calm and composed in high pressure situations.

- **Control Your Emotions**

While it is important to be passionate, effective leaders avoid negative emotional outbursts. Even in moments of urgency, pause just a moment and give yourself time to frame your response as positively as possible. Focus on next steps, not assessing or addressing fault in the immediate.

- **Be Decisive and Responsible**

In the midst of a difficult situation, it's important not to second guess yourself when deciding how to move forward. Being confident in your decisions helps convey assurance to those around you. It's also crucial to take responsibility, no matter the outcome. Stepping up and taking the blame if things don't go as hoped demonstrates that you are looking out for your team and are open to growth.

- **Step Back and Listen**

How others react and respond in crisis can be an enormous source of excess stress. Take a compassionate approach in your interactions: ask how individuals are and listen, acknowledge high emotions, offer encouragement and focus on strengths and successes. You will help ease worries and fears, creating a calmer environment for everyone affected.