

Preparing for Difficult Conversations About Race

A Letter from Our Director

The best things in life are on the other side of difficult conversations. That is my guiding principle, what I use to guide the American Negotiation Institute, and I think in this situation this truth couldn't be more clear.

We're all having to engage in emotional, personal, and impassioned conversations about race and justice in our society.

For many of us, these conversations are challenging not only because of the painful subject matter, but also because we've all been impacted in one way or another.

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." - Martin Luther King Jr.

We're at a loss for words but desperately need to talk about the situation.

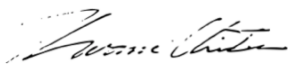
What should we say? How should we say it?

That's where this free guide comes in.

Thank you for taking this step toward creating a more just and inclusive society.

We appreciate you and we're here for you.

Sincerely,



Kwame Christian Esq., M.A.
Director



Step 1: Analyze the Situation

- What is your goal in this conversation? (**Note- venting is a legitimate goal.**)
 - What outcomes do you hope to achieve?
 - What outcomes do they hope to achieve?
 - What problems are you trying to solve?
 - What do you want from them?
 - Behavior change?
 - Perspective change?
 - Commitment to do something?
 - What are your options if you don't get what you want out of the conversation?
- Who is your audience?
 - What do they think about the situation?
 - What evidence do you have to support this (*how do you know this to be true*)?
 - What do they *feel* about the situation?
- What are the barriers to success?

Step 2: Creating and Implementing the Strategy

- What will I do or say if I get offended or upset?
- What is the worst thing they can say and how will I handle that?
- How will I reframe the conversation if the other person gets offended or upset?
- How could I use the Compassionate Curiosity Framework here?

1. Acknowledge and validate emotions

- What emotions am I feeling?
- What emotions are they/might they be feeling?

2. Get curious with compassion

- What are 5 open-ended questions I could ask that could increase my understanding and lead them to see things from my perspective?
 - Examples:
 - What impact do you think this policy has on people of color?
 - How do you think it makes me feel when you?
 - What can we do as a company to achieve...?
 - How can we help the cause as a company?
 - What can we do to be more inclusive?
 - What can you do to help to make this happen?
 - By when do you think you can do that?

3. Joint problem solving

- What can actually be done?
- How are you going to get them to commit to change?
 - Example:
 - My fear is that we have these conversations and nothing happens.
What can we do to make sure that we keep the momentum?



What's Next?

Keep learning.

When it comes to having difficult conversations, there is always more we can learn.

Keep improving.

We know these conversations are difficult and uncomfortable. However, like all things, the more we actively engage and continue to practice with purpose, the easier these conversations will become.

We're here for you and we want to be a resource.

We can help with training and coaching.

Whether you want a [custom training](#) for your company or want to improve your skills with one on one [coaching](#), we can help you to prepare for all of the difficult conversations in your life.

Check out our podcasts.

The [Negotiate Anything Podcast](#) is the top ranked negotiation podcast in the world and it covers a wide range of topics. For example, business negotiations, negotiating with teens, managing conflict with family in a quarantine, how to negotiate your salary, and much more.



The [Ask with Confidence Podcast](#) is all about women in negotiation. It is designed to empower women by helping them develop the skills and confidence they need to better navigate difficult conversations and achieve the highest level of success.

We also have more free guides.

Make sure to check out <https://americannegotiationinstitute.com/guide/> to download 15+ more free guides including topics on salary negotiation, business negotiation, car negotiation, negotiating while introverted and much more!

Lastly, we want to stay connected with you. [I'm very active on LinkedIn and I'd love to connect.](#)

Thanks again for downloading this guide and we're excited to have you in the ANI Community.

Keep making the world a better place, one conversation at a time.

Kwame