

3, 2, 1 Protocol, A Conversation Guideline

When people are in conflict/disagreement/negotiating something they usually start the conflict with the Content. We are going to call the Content number 3. When you realize you are in conflict, reflect on your Process. Let's call the Process number 1. When addressing the Process, you are referring back to your Mission Statement. If you don't have a Mission Statement to refer to, consider developing one. If you do have a Mission Statement, you can point to it to see where you are off your mark in Being On the Same Side of the Fence. Even if you don't have a Mission Statement, you can aspire to Be on the Same Side of the Fence; this means knowing you are in this together, that you are trying to figure out something together: you are fundamentally allies, friends, comrades; *you are on the same team*. I often suggest folks use "Be Present, Love One Another" if they need a working Mission Statement. Once you have rooted yourselves in number 1, look at number 2; number 2 is Whose Turn Is It? When you know Whose Turn It Is, you have two brains thinking about one person's perspective, one person's issue(s), one person's feelings, thoughts, good thinking, distress patterns, needs. When it is time for the other person to get attention, do so intentionally; this allows the person who have been getting attention to shift gears from thinking about themselves to switch to the other person. Now we have two brains thinking about *the other* person's stand point. How do you decide which person to start with? The person who is the most activated usually needs the attention first. If this becomes a pattern over time that is burdensome to the person who usually listens first, use the 3, 2, 1 Protocol to discuss it. When one person is activated (person A), it is recommended for the less activated person (person B) to do whatever they can to help that person become regulated. Person B should "put on their own air mask first." It is absolutely ok—necessary even—for person B to inform person A that they are not available to give attention in that moment. If both people are activated, take a break from one another, hopefully with an agreed upon time frame, until at least one person can give attention. Another option is to sit quietly in the discomfort with out trying to move the agenda forward in any way, but just to breathe together and notice until the 3, 2, 1 Protocol can be used, or until a break is called.

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