



## **Application: Interpersonal Context**

Think about a conversation that's important to you, that involves a person that you care about – either professionally or personally... and that you consider to be a challenging, difficult or sensitive conversation. Any conversation that you have been thinking about, knowing that you want to have... and have avoided is a likely candidate here.

Write your responses to the following questions.

1. What is the desired Result you are seeking by having this conversation? Allow yourself to think broadly here... quantitative and qualitative Results. Short-term and long-term Results.
2. What are the concerns you have – right now – about this person, their future, their public identity, what may be at stake?
3. What concerns do you have about this conversation, how it may unfold?
4. What concerns do you have about your relationship with this person?
5. If you have avoided this conversation, what have you been concerned about that has had you take the Action of avoiding it?

**Take a look at what you have written above, and think about your responses.**

**Remember the benefits of a context of carefrontation.**

**Declare yourself a beginner in the domain of purposeful context-creation.**

**Center yourself by giving yourself 2-3 minutes to sit quietly, breathing deep down low in your stomach (vs. high in the chest).**

**Be focused on being fully present and fully authentic... and fully open to both learning something yourself, as well as supporting the other person, in the upcoming conversation.**

**Should you so choose, invite the other person into a conversation in which you begin by:**

1. Asking for permission to share your perspective
2. Apologize for having avoided the conversation (if this is the case)
3. Speaking into your concerns (see above)
4. Acknowledging your beginner-hood in having this type of conversation, and
5. Acknowledging that the other person may have very valid points and perspectives which you have not thought of and which you are not aware of.

As Julio Olalla says, "We know where conversations start... but we do not know where they may take us!"

One of the best pieces of advice I ever got – which seems especially relevant in situations like the ones we're covering here – is this: *What are the Actions you can take in these types of situations that, no matter what the ultimate outcome, will leave you with the fewest regrets?*

I invite you to be fully present and fully authentic – **speaking into your concerns** – in all of your most important and challenging conversations.

Try this for a month and see what happens.