The Art of Conversation

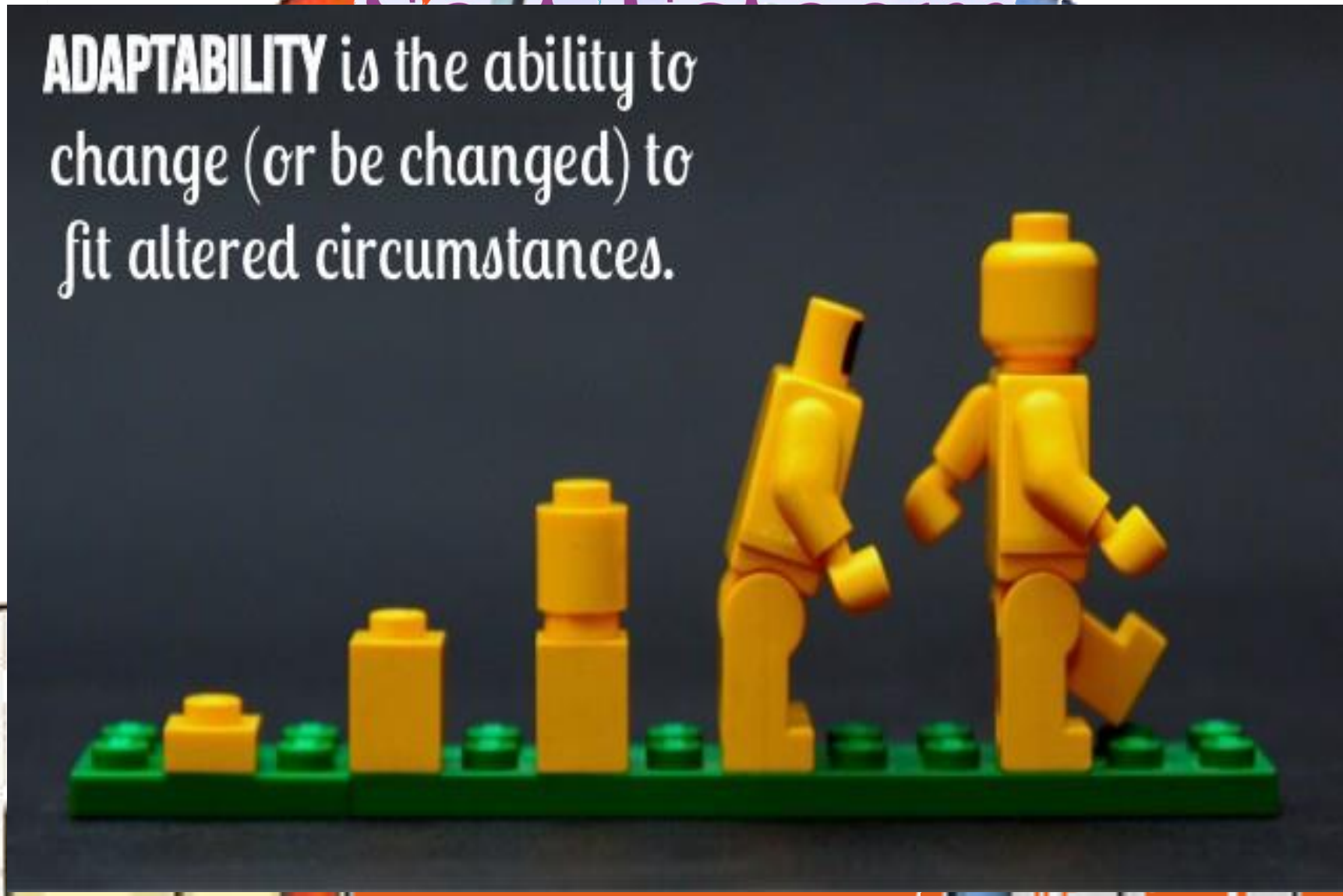
Building and Utilizing Your Deck

Seinfeld - Signal to get out of a bad Conversation
Play (k)
0:00 / 2:42

What are the signals that you are in a bad conversation?

Self awareness during difficult conversations.

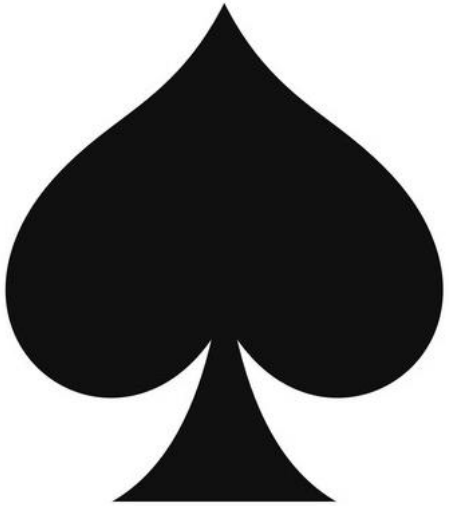
- Beliefs and values
- Self-disclosure
- Mindfulness
- Self-esteem
- Confidence
- Receptive to feedback
- Adaptability



What's in

your

Skills Deck



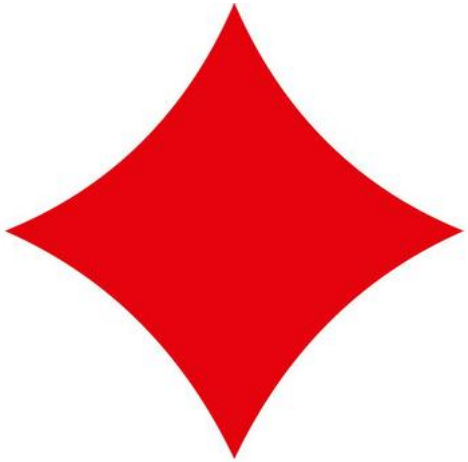
Your skills deck has several suits

Suit of Personal Attributes

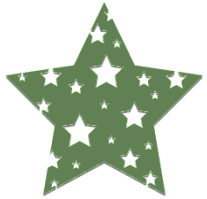
Suit of Communications

Suit of Facilitation and Mediation

Suit of Diplomacy



Take notes on the back of your each card in your deck



Draw a star on those cards where you feel like you have strong skills.

I'VE GOT THIS!

Draw an arrow on those cards where you feel like you need practice.

I'M WORKING ON IT!

Draw a circle on these cards that are quite a struggle.

THIS IS HARD FOR ME!

work in
progress
0%

What's Your
Growing Edge?

Personal Attributes Suit

FLEXIBILITY

Be flexible in the way the conversation happens and the direction the conversation takes

PERSON-CENTERED

Think and speak in a person-centered way

GENUINE

Be genuine and make sure the person knows you care

RAPPORT

Develop a relationship of trust and understanding

FOLLOW THROUGH

Do what you say you are going to do when you say you are going to do it

KNOWLEDGEABLE

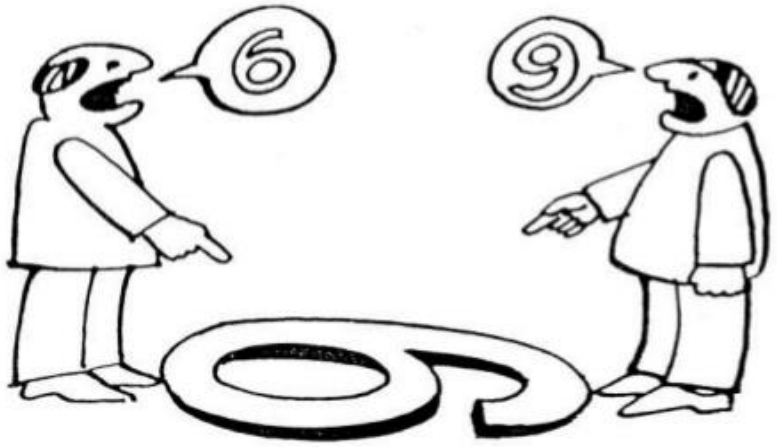
Have a solid understanding

Experience and Expertise

TRAUMA INFORMED

Be aware of potential traumas and how they may influence communication

We live in the same world, but we see it in different ways.



PERSPECTIVE TAKING

Try to see the situation from others' point of view

SELF AWARENESS

Be aware of what you are bringing .

mood , history, experience, knowledge, bias

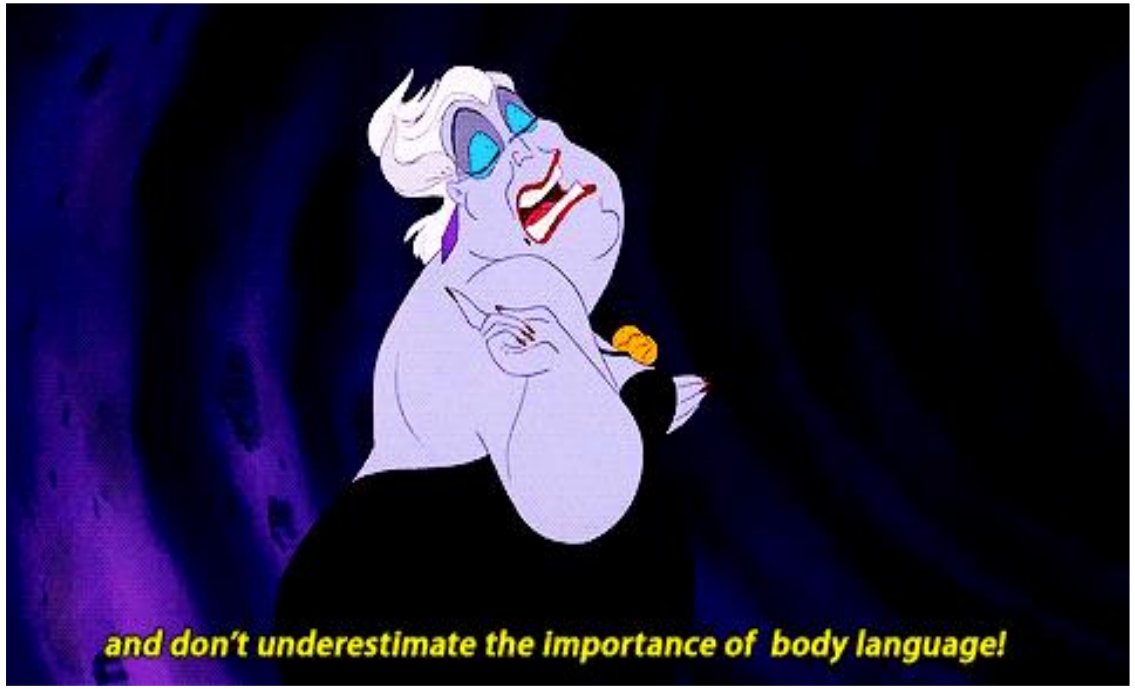
Communication Suit

AFFECT

Your verbal and non-verbal displays of emotion

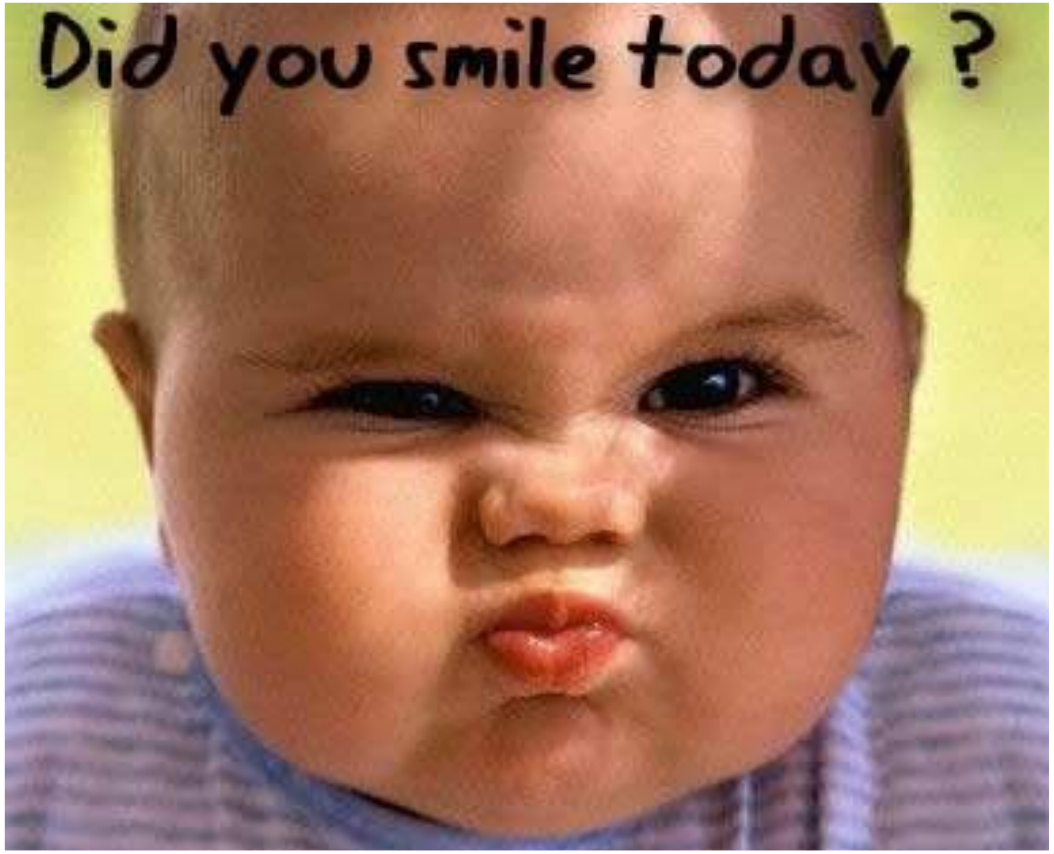
TONE

The volume/pitch/quality/strength of your voice



BODY LANGUAGE

Be aware of what you are communicating with your body both consciously and unconsciously.



FACIAL EXPRESSION

What is your appearance communicating?

NON-VERBAL CUES

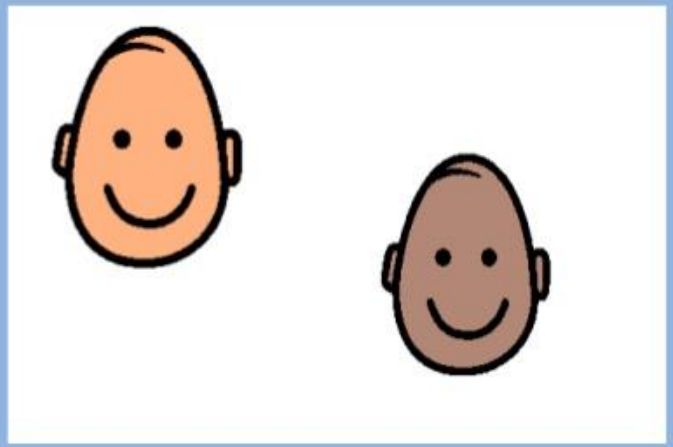
Be aware of mood, facial expressions, body movement and orientation

AVOID ALPHABET SOUP

Avoid using acronyms and jargon

Facilitation & Mediation Skills Suit

It feels good to take turns



TAKE TURNS

Be careful not to dominate the conversation

ARCHITECT

Reframe loaded language

NAVIGATOR

Identify the position someone is sharing and bring them back to the goal of the conversation.

VALIDATION

Let them know that you hear what they are communicating

SHARE THE LOAD

Collaboration and teamwork

Everyone is working toward the common goal

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Ask questions that promote discussion rather than yes-no answers

HUMOR

Don’t be afraid to laugh

Lighthearted moments are good for everyone

ON THE SAME PAGE

Clarify any agreements to be sure there is common understanding

GOAL DIGGER

Keep the conversation focused on the agreed upon outcome

REFLECTIVE RESPONSES

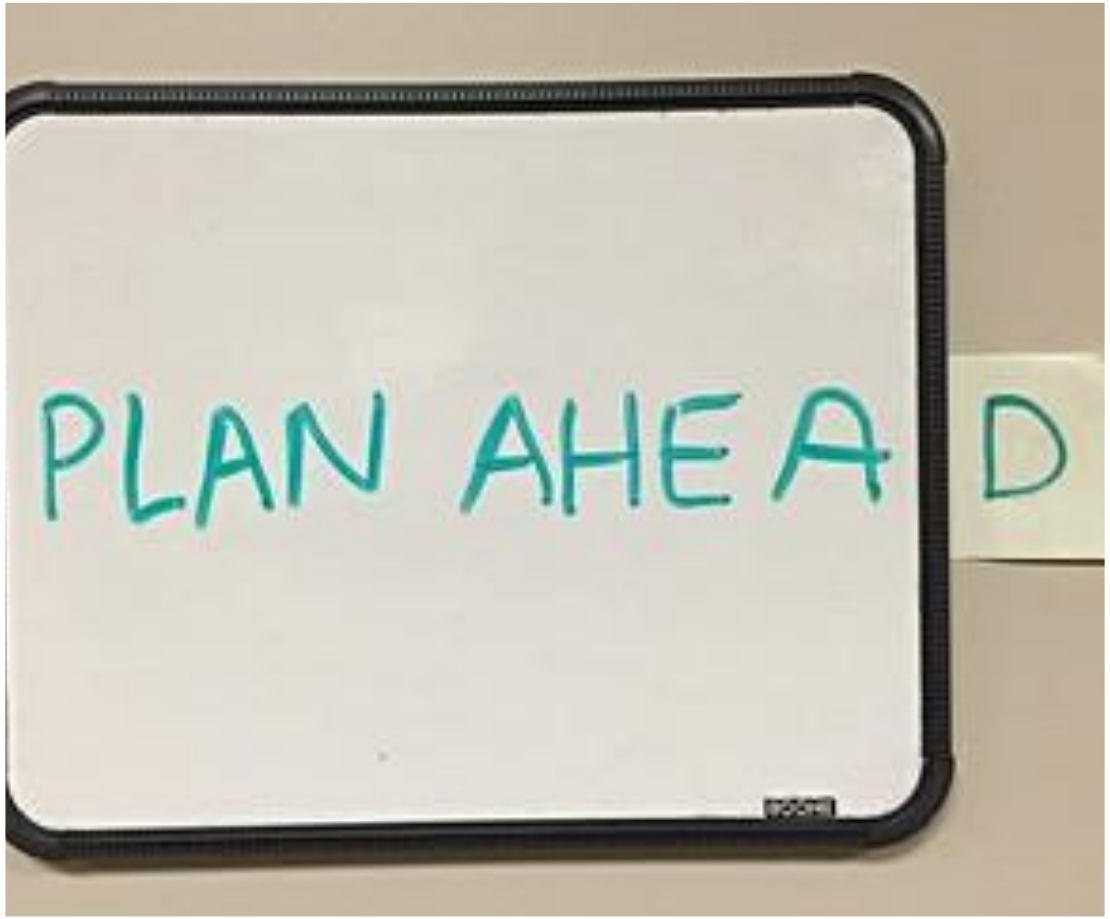
Interact in a way that demonstrates engagement, understanding, and validation

WEAVER

Make sure all parties are heard and interacting at the table

ENGAGE

Engage the individual in the interaction



PLANFUL YET FLEXIBLE

Have a game plan going in

And be willing to adapt

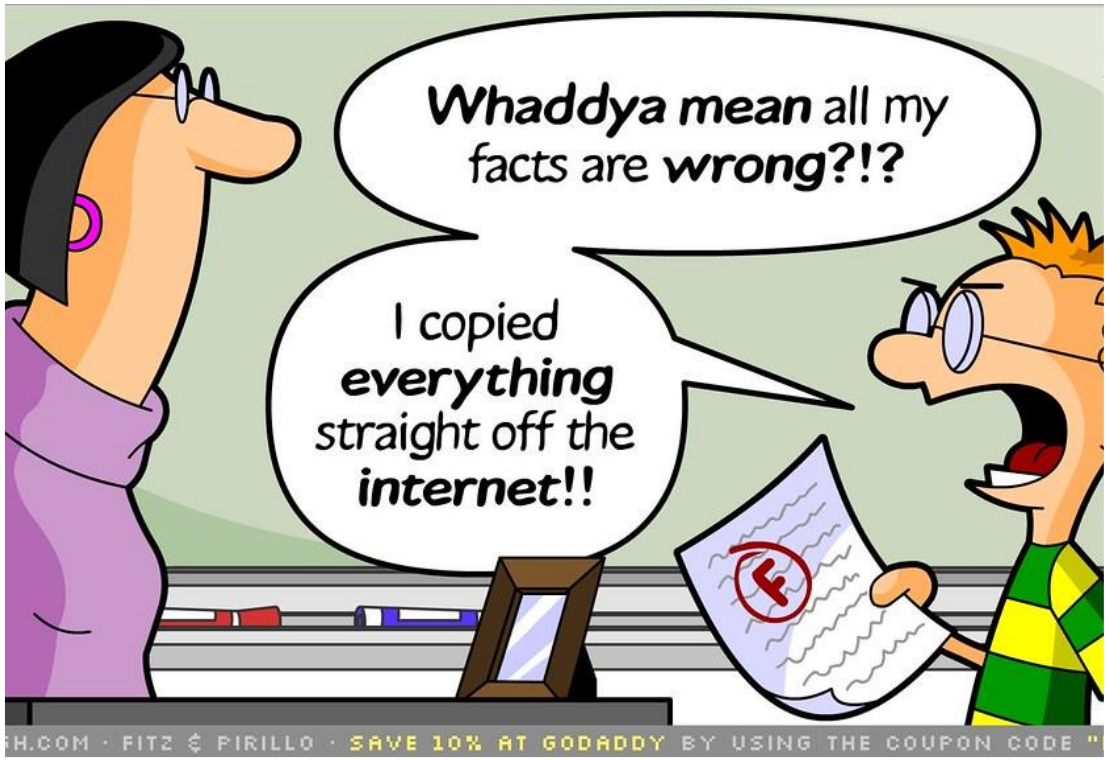
Diplomacy Suit

KNOW THE WHY

Know why you are having the conversation

LISTENING

Listen to understand



OK TO BE WRONG

Speak with knowledge, but be open to the possibility of being wrong

COMPLIMENT

Help people to know

that they are valued

SMALL TALKER

Put people at ease with polite conversation about unimportant and uncontroversial matters

OFFER ALTERNATIVES TO “NO”

If the window doesn’t open

Find the door

RESEARCH

Enter into the conversation having already looked for possible answers

Q-tip

- Quit
- Taking
- It
- Personally

Keep your ears wide open for misunderstanding or miscommunication with others and

Quit **T**aking **I**t **P**ersonally

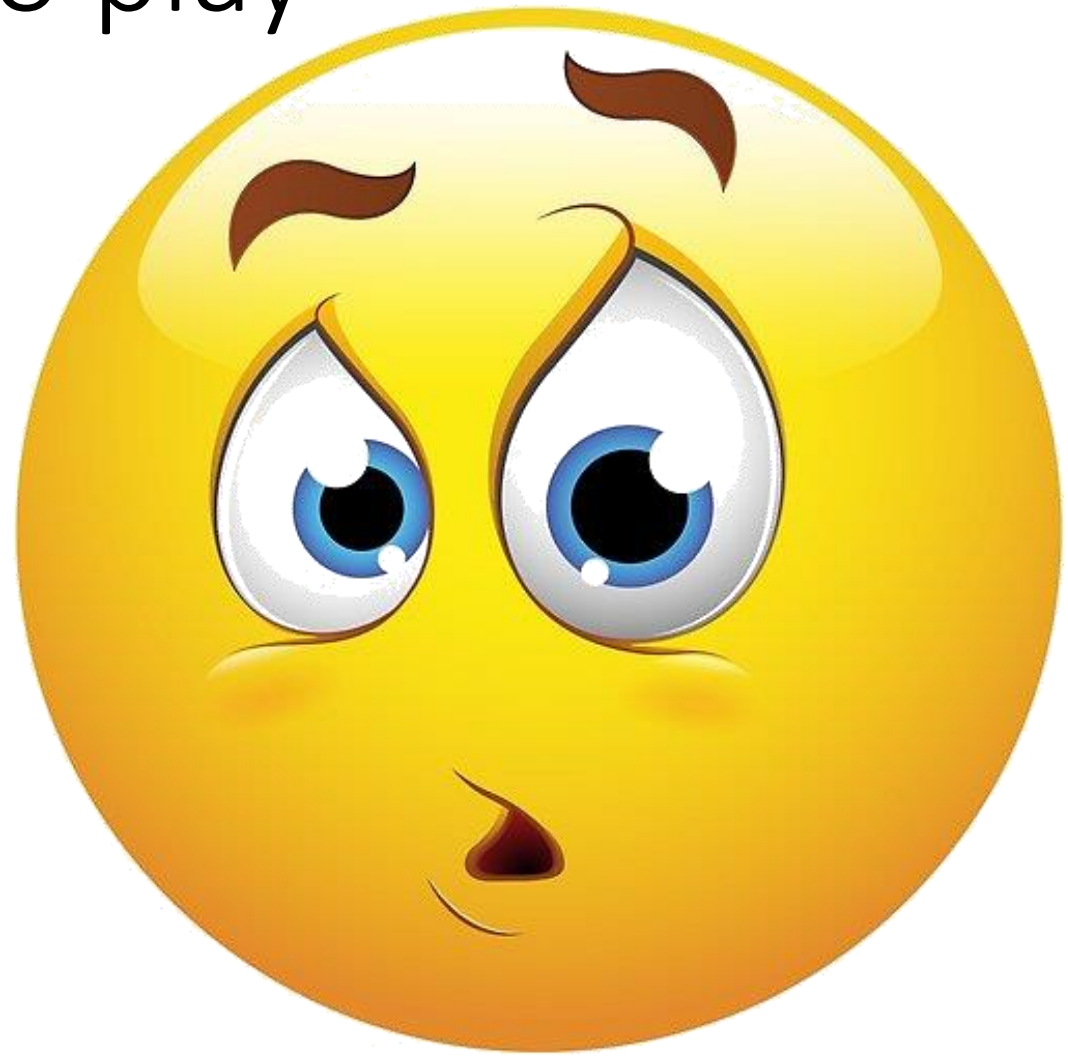
- Managing difficult conversations takes practice.
- You will each be assigned a “role”
- Play the role assigned - drawing on your personal history and experience
- Each group will have a different topic to role play.
- We will give you a few minutes notice to wrap up the conversation.

LAY YOUR CARDS ON THE TABLE

What was the process you used to play your cards?

What were you thinking about when you decided to play that hand?

What was a hard card to play or to hear played?



When was it hard to sit on your hand and not play your card?

Where did you see things go “off the rails” and how did you help to bring it back?

Where did you see breakdowns?

When did you realize that you weren’t headed toward resolution?

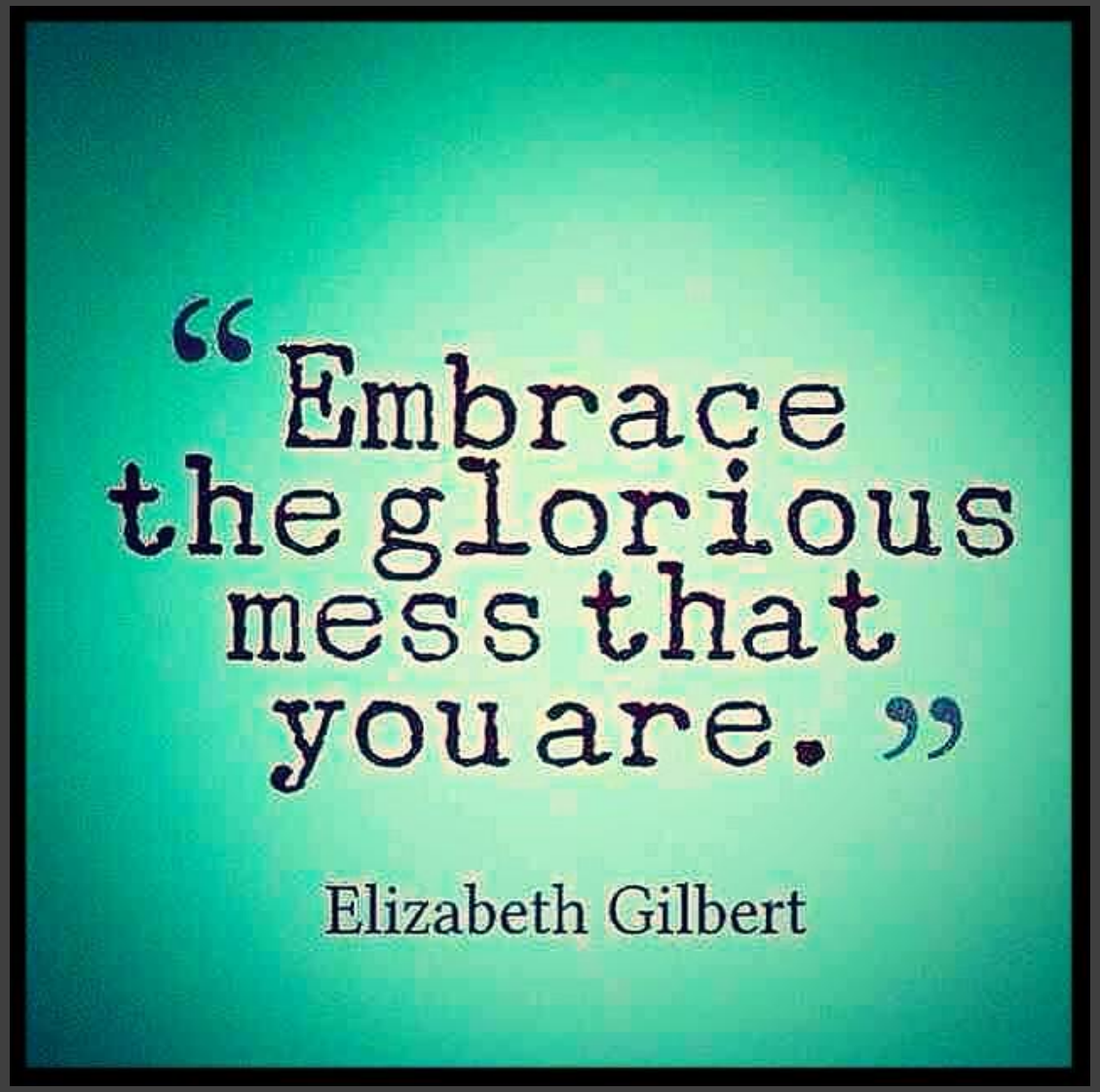
And what did you do about that?

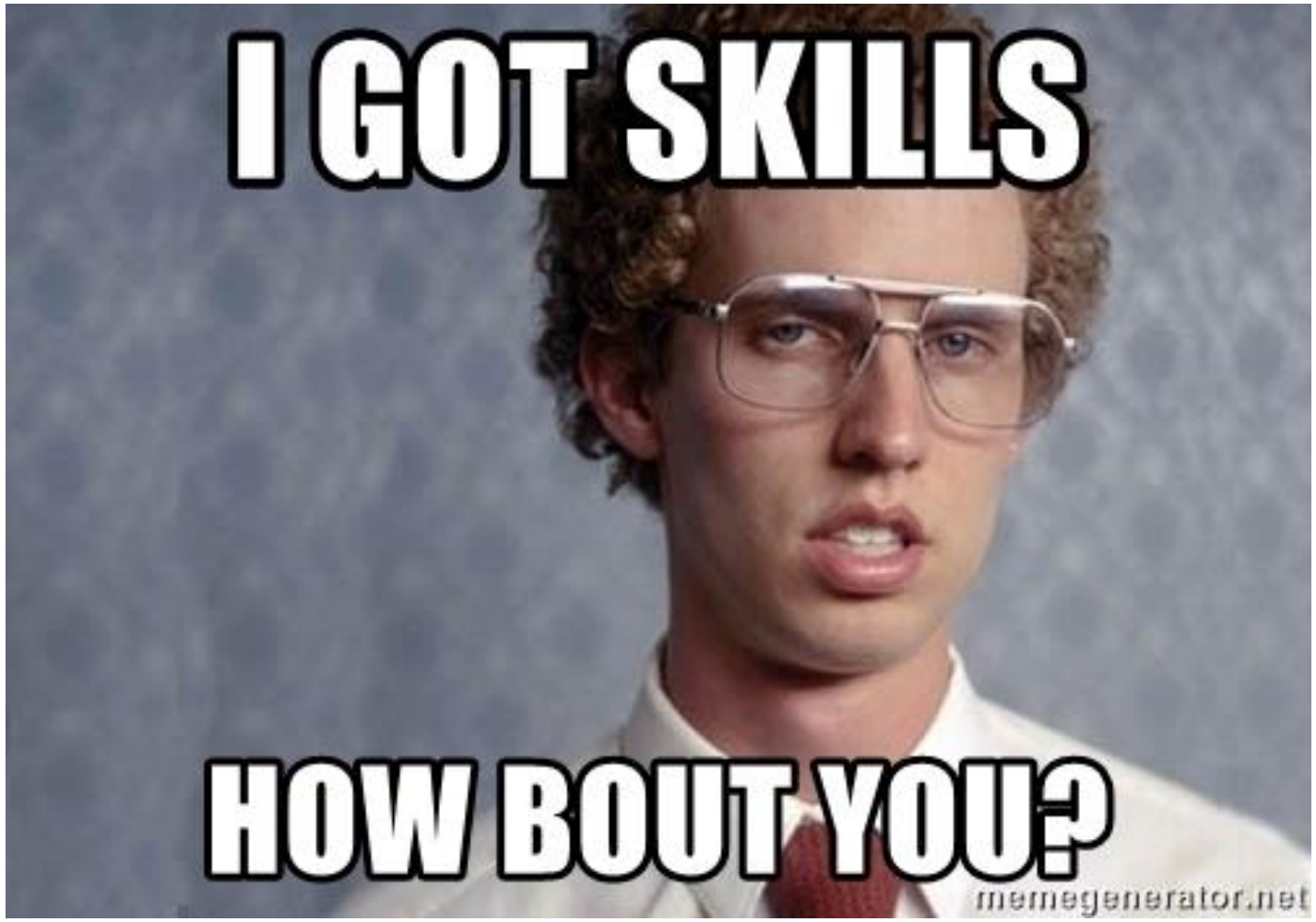
When did you realize that there was going to be resolution?

And what did you do about that?

How to practice the art of conversation for your growing edge cards

Know thyself
and
embrace it.

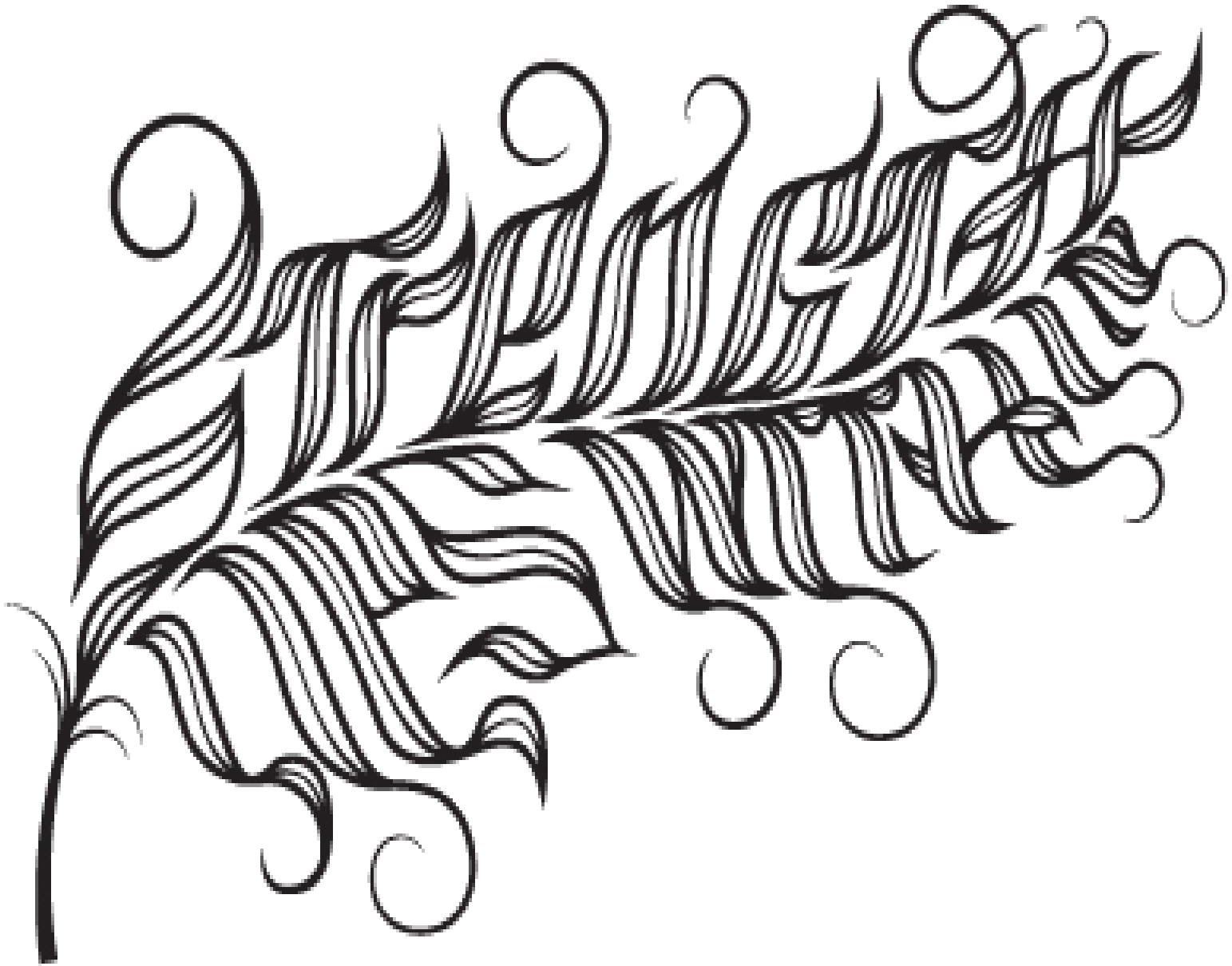




Identify people you know with skills different from yours and utilize their expertise.

Some things aren’t your style and that’s okay!

Make your weaknesses your strengths

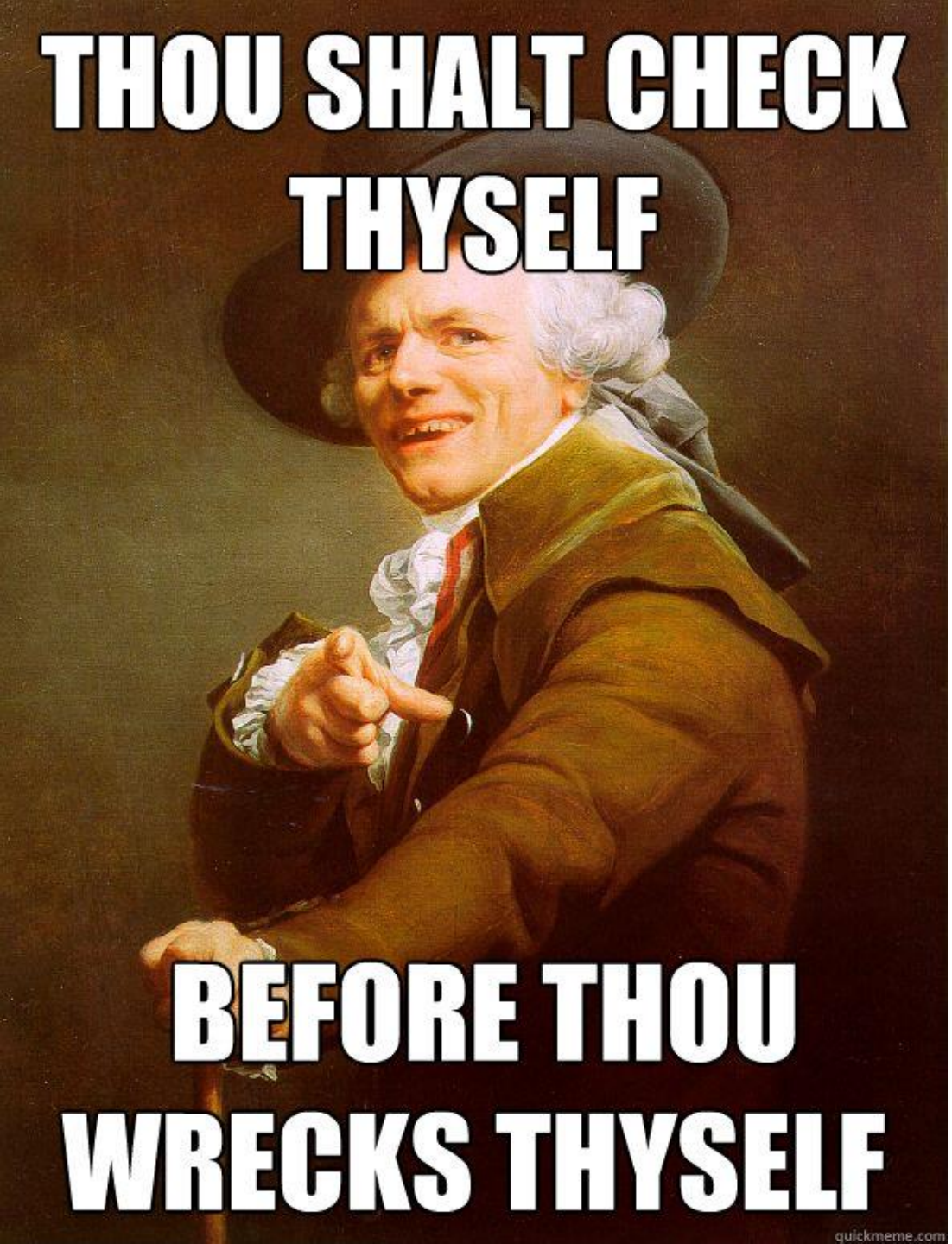


Be self-aware and honest about your growing edges.

Practice during your team meetings.

Vent when safe and appropriate

and then …



Ask your safe co-workers to "check-you" beforehand.

Prepare yourself emotionally before the conversation.

We would love to hear from you

Myles Maxey
<Myles.Maxey@dhsoha.state.or.us>

Rose Herrera
<Rose.K.HERRERA@state.or.us>

Kirsten Collins
Kirsten.G.Collins@state.or.us