

TALKING through tense moments

During this busy and often stressful holiday season do you feel ready to navigate tense moments at work and around the holiday dinner table? Here are four ways to help stay in the right mindset, so you enter those conversations with the grace needed for a positive outcome.

Check your assumptions at the door

Before walking in to a meeting or sitting around the dinner table, take a few moments to consider what you are expecting to happen. Is there that one relative who always finds something wrong with the food? Or that co-worker who disagrees with all your ideas? It's important to free your mind of assumptions. Be open to the conversation you are getting ready to have. Ask questions and attempt to understand, not defend. [See 5 ways to challenge your assumptions to overcome workplace conflict for more tips.](#)

Welcome tough conversations.

Tough conversations are difficult, but there is nothing more important to keeping the workplace positive. As author Brene Brown explains, [Clear is Kind. Unclear is Unkind.](#)

Practice gratitude.

Entering into conversations from a place of gratitude will get any conversation started on the right track. You have the power to settle [your intention on something positive](#) and be appreciative of the person and the moment.

Focus on your circle of control.

Your body language and tone are always in your control and are two main reasons why conflicts escalate. Take a deep breath — step away for a few minutes if you must — in order to maintain your composure and get to the heart of the matter rather than getting overheated. Learn more about [de-escalation tactics.](#)

