

MAKE WINNING EASY · MAKE LOSING FUN

The CARE Conversation

Make the other person feel understood.

Use this formula in your next real conversation. You can run it quietly on your own, or share it with the other person beforehand so you're both working from the same playbook.

Pick a topic. Either a real challenge you want to talk through, or something light to get used to the style first. To get started, you might ask: "What's been on your mind lately?" / "What's something you're looking forward to?" Once done, you can invite the other person to switch roles with you.

C

Conscious Observation

Watch as much as you listen. Catch the cue that doesn't match the words.

Notice: tight voice, a shrug, eyes filling, a forced "I'm fine."

Try saying: "Tell me what's going on." / "I want to understand this. Take your time."

A

Active Reflection

Say back what you heard. Then keep asking for more.

Try saying: "So what I'm hearing is..." / "It sounds like ___ mattered to you." / "Is there more?" / "Tell me more about that."

Keep going until they say "No, that's it."

R

Respect & Validation

Name the feeling underneath, in one or two words.

Feelings, not thoughts: hurt, scared, exhausted, relieved, lonely, angry.

Try saying: "That sounds exhausting." / "It seems like you're feeling ___. Is that right?"

E

Enroll in a Shared Vision

Only now, and only if they're open to it, look for a way forward together.

Try saying: "Would it help to think through what's next, or did you just need me to hear this?" / "What would a good outcome look like for you?"

You don't win a conversation by being right. You win it when both parties feel heard.