

Check, Clarify, Connect



A Tool for Navigating Difficult Friction

When conversations feel heated, misinformation spreads, or needs collide, this tool helps slow down the moment and turn tension into an opportunity for understanding.

1. Check (Pause & Notice)

- Pause and ground yourself before reacting.
- Notice feelings: Am I anxious, defensive, confused?
- Notice context: What might be fueling this friction?

Example: “I’m noticing I feel unsettled by what was just said. I need a moment to think about it.”

2. Clarify (Seek Understanding)

- Move from assumption to curiosity.
- Ask open questions: Can you tell me more?
- Restate what you heard to confirm understanding.

Example: “I want to make sure I understand—are you saying X, or something different?”

3. Connect (Build the Bridge)

- Share your perspective and needs.
- Invite collaboration: How could we work on this together?

Example: “Hearing that claim worries me because it feels stigmatizing. What helps me is focusing on facts and supporting people directly affected. Could we explore that?”

Why It Works?

- Check prevents escalation.
- Clarify shifts the dynamic from debate to curiosity.
- Connect transforms friction into trust and shared direction.

Do now, Do Differently Notes