

BEFORE A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION...

What am I actually hoping to get out of this conversation?

Most goals fall into 3 categories:  Emotional  Practical  Relational



1. EMOTIONAL GOALS

When you want:

- Support
- Validation
- Understanding
- Comfort

2 HELPFUL STRATEGIES

1 State what you need

"I just want you to listen and be supportive right now."



2 Focus on your feelings

"I felt hurt and discouraged today."



REMEMBER:

The goal isn't solving the problem.
The goal is feeling understood.



2. PRACTICAL GOALS

When you want:

- Help solving a problem
- Advice
- A decision
- A change

ACHIEVE BY:



Clearly explain the situation



Directly ask for what you need

EXAMPLE:

"I'm thinking about changing jobs and I'm worried about finances. Can we talk through it together?"



★ REMEMBER:

The goal isn't comfort.
The goal is finding a solution.



3. RELATIONAL GOALS

When you want:

- More closeness
- More connection
- Less distance
- A stronger relationship

ACHIEVE BY:

- 1 FIRST, NOTICE
Is a lack of closeness part of the picture?

YES → Communicate your goal of being closer / getting along better.



! It's usually not helpful to explain why you think you're not close (it can come off as blaming). Share this only if you're willing to also put the focus of change on yourself.

STRATEGY: 3 PARTS

- 1 Description of feelings
"I've been missing quiet time together and sad we haven't had much of it."
- 2 Clarification of your goal
"I would like to get closer."
- 3 Clear statement asking to work on finding a solution together
"I'd like us to try X – can we set time aside this week?"

NO → Relational and practical goals achieve more closeness in the long run.



WHY THIS MATTERS

Many conflicts happen because:



One person wants
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT



While the other
offers PRACTICAL
SOLUTIONS

OR



One person wants
RELATIONAL CONNECTION



While the other focuses
on FIXING THE ISSUE

★ Different goals = Different needs
= Misunderstanding

A SIMPLE QUESTION

Before your next difficult conversation, ask yourself:

Do I want emotional support,
practical help, or greater connection?"



EMOTIONAL
I need support,
validation, or
understanding.



PRACTICAL
I need help
solving a problem
or making a plan.



RELATIONAL
I want to feel
closer and improve
our connection.



Knowing your goal makes it easier for
your partner to respond in a way that
actually helps.

