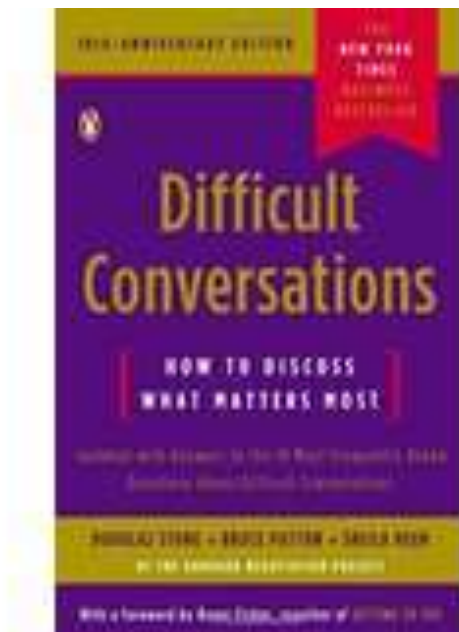




CIVILITY CENTER BOOK SUMMARY



Difficult Conversations How to Discuss What Matters Most

https://www.amazon.com/Difficult-Conversations-Discuss-What-Matters/dp/0143118447/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1480125290&sr=8-1&keywords=Difficult+conversations

We picked this book up because it offered so much promise. As first glance one might expect it to be a quick read. But as it turns out, it is a deceptively small book. It has thin pages, so there are 234 pages of reading before the appendixes begin. But it is so packed with information that it deserves much more than the quick read we expected.

Another reason we picked up this book is what we found on the back cover. Well known management consultant Tom Peters is quoted on the back cover saying: "I'm on my third reading. Half the pages are dog eared. This is a mind-bogglingly powerful book. For Life."

All three authors are members of the Harvard Negotiation Project – the organization that brought us the mega bestseller *Getting to Yes*. This book is about getting past any kind of difficult conversation you may have. It is full of tidbits of insights into the human psyche that all people should become aware of. It's not just for business leaders, it's not just for political leaders, it's not just for psychologist, it's not just for mediators, and it's not just for psychiatrists or pastors. It's for everyone who has ever had a difficult conversation.

This book provides ways to cut to the chase when you have a difficult encounter with a boss, a spouse, a friend, a child or grandchild or one's clients. You name the situation, and chances are very good you will find a similar one in this book.

What the book does is provide a frame to use when one has difficulty with another. That frame is one which will involve both parties. It doesn't promise that it will help all the time, because we can't control that other individual with whom we are having difficulties. But it does provide some hints of possible action items that one can do to try to open the conversation up and to perhaps arrive at a new goal or outcome.

One thing that can be learned from this book is this: If you venture into a difficult conversation with another who is as committed as you are about resolving an issue, chances are you will both find yourselves reaching a totally different place than the one either of you would have expected. You might find it enriching to think of new possibilities for some difficult situations and people that you deal with!

Yes, civility is hard work. It's not easy venturing out into a new framework! Yet that's what our Institute is calling all of us to do - to reach out and seek new ways to do things together.

About the Author: Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton and Sheila Heen are members of the Harvard Negotiation Project. Stone and Heen are Lecturers on Law at Harvard Law School and partners at Triad Consulting Group. Patton is Deputy Director of the Harvard Negotiation Project, which he co-founded.

Difficult Conversations is published by the Penguin Group, New York, New York, 1999.