Reflecting on a difficult conversation

"difficult conversations are almost never about getting the facts right. They are about conflicting perceptions, interpretations, and values."
— **Douglas Stone, Harvard Law School**

Think of a time someone had a difficult conversation with you;

What was the situation about?

What were the emotions for you?

What do you think the emotions were for them?

How well did they communicate the issue with you?

How was the feedback framed?

How was it phrased?

How did the conversation leave you feeling?

What changed because of the conversation?

What has this exercise revealed?

Preparing to have an empowering conversation.

"I always found that if you handle a problem in a benevolent way and a transparent way and involve other people, so it's just not your personal opinion, that people get to the other side of these difficult conversations being more enthusiastic."

Prof David M Kelley, Stanford University

Now think about a situation you would like to broach with someone.

What is the situation about?

What are the emotions for you?

What do you think the emotions will be for the other person?

What is your motivation for communicating the issue with them?

How will you frame the feedback so that the other person is engaged in two-way dialogue?

What phrasing can you use to initiate the conversation well?

How do you want the conversation to leave the other person feeling?

What goal, purpose or standard of behaviour can you relate your feedback to, to enable the other person to feel the feedback is helpful to their work?

"Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret."

Ambrose Bierce, Author