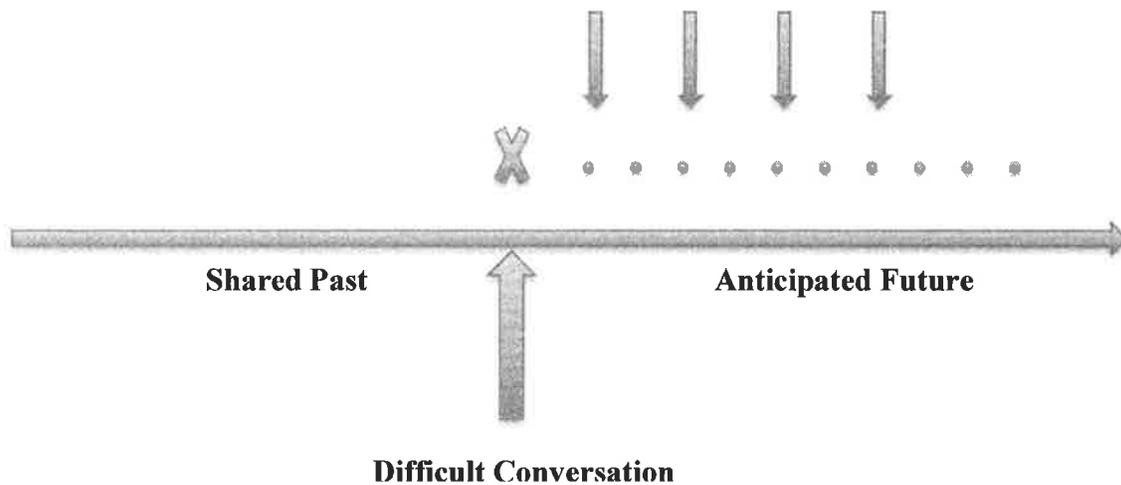


Understanding Difficult Conversations



Principles of Difficult Conversations

- Difficult conversations are called difficult because they are difficult. There is no way to make them happy events, but we can minimize defensiveness and unnecessary resistance.
- All difficult conversations occur on a relational timeline, with a shared past and an anticipated future. Most often we think of these conversations as single events, but your success depends on the interactions that happen before and after.
- Successful difficult conversations require attention to specific concepts and ideas that enable us to communicate effectively.
- The quality of the relationship (i.e., its history) will have a significant impact on how the message in a difficult conversation is received.
- Future interactions after a difficult conversation are just as important, if not more important, than the conversation itself. Those are the moments that show you are still supportive of the other person.

