

Talk #1 – What is a Crucial Conversation?

Since this retreat is about Crucial Conversations, the first thing we should do is define what a crucial conversation is. A crucial conversation is a discussion between two or more people where:

1. Stakes are high. This is a conversation that matters.
2. Opinions vary.
3. Emotions run strong.

Crucial conversations can transform people and relationships –for the better and for the worse. Here are some examples of crucial conversations that many of us have experience with:

1. Talking over visitation issues with family or friends
2. Resolving a disagreement with a roommate
3. Giving feedback in your prayer and share group

And sometimes when conversations matter the most, we are at our worst. We might have been caught by surprise by the conversation, so we feel emotional or stressed. We might say or do things in the spur of the moment, but later on, we regret how we handled the situation.

In the Gospel of Mark, Chapter 14, verses 66-72, we read about a conversation between Peter and a servant girl after Jesus was arrested.

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him. “You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus,” she said.

But he denied it. “I don’t know or understand what you’re talking about,” he said, and went out into the entryway. When the servant girl saw him there, she said again to those standing around, “This fellow is one of them.” Again he denied it.

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After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, “Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.” He began to call down curses, and he swore to them, “I don’t know this man you’re talking about.” Immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: “Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

Do you think this conversation fit the description of a crucial conversation for Peter? **Pause for a few moments for reflection.** I think it does. This was a conversation that mattered. Opinions vary. And emotions were strong. Peter handled this crucial conversation in a way we all do sometimes. He was caught by surprise by the conversation, he was stressed, and he said things in the spur of the moment, but later on, he regretted how he handled the situation.

Speaker Testimony *(please keep your comments to 5 minutes or less)*

1. Personal experience of a specific conversation in which you regretted how you responded and you did not get the results you wanted.

Group Discussion

1. Can you describe a recent crucial conversation you had?
2. Were you happy with the results?