



## Manage your Reactions during Difficult Communication

- Find a “power phrase” that will help you stay in a positive mindset, something along the lines to help remind yourself:
  - It’s not the end of the world when things don’t go well. You will survive this and so will the other person
  - You can handle almost anything
  - To celebrate your skill & professionalism
  - You can do this!
- Smile (on the inside)
- Play a game with the situation. The more emotional or reactive the other person becomes, challenge yourself to become calmer. Give yourself points each time you succeed in responding professionally instead of reacting in a unprofessional or defensiveness behavior
- If you start to react, do a *pattern interrupt* (a physical or mental distracter)
  - Pinch yourself
  - Touch your centering point (something you wear or can visually see that you care about deeply)
  - Take a sip of water
  - Count to 10 or maybe even 100
  - Stand up
  - Breathe – very deep!
- Imagine yourself in total composure - in your mind see yourself completely calm or picture someone you admire that you can imitate
- Take a short break from the discussion so that you both can compose your thoughts
- Have someone who is continuously reactive? Address the reactive **behavior using specifics**.
  - Ex: Bill, every time we discuss your performance you yell. When you yell, I feel \_\_\_\_\_. What are your thoughts about that?
  - Ask the person how you can give feedback in a way that they will allow them to respond in a professional behavior or not use a reactive behavior.