

DESCRIPTION

This protocol was designed to support individuals and teams with a framework to utilize when engaging in challenging conversations. RIR stands for Recognize, Interrupt and Repair. These three stages create the ability to build connection, understanding and communities of belonging. The RIR protocol can be used on the Interpersonal, Intrapersonal and the Organizational level.

The RIR protocol helps us approach conflict through a lens of compassion, and provides a structured approach to help us stay productively engaged in conversation, hear other perspectives and co-create safe spaces where all parties can learn and grow through building relationships and connections that acknowledge and honor our differences and similarities.

SUGGESTED USES

Identify an intrapersonal, interpersonal or organizational issue that is unresolved. Use the worksheet to walk through the three steps of the protocol to create an action plan to engage and begin to repair the issue. Challenge yourself to move beyond *contemplating* this process to actually engaging in the dialogue necessarily to resolve the situation.

GO DEEPER WITH EPOCH

If you are interested in support using the RIR Protocol, we would recommend our Compassionate Dialogue training and/or our online course. These provide opportunities for individuals and teams to practice engaging in challenging conversations. Organizations will deepen their knowledge around the needs for connecting with others, building relationships, exploring ways to Recognize, Interrupt and Repair institutional inequities. It will also build awareness, empathy and understanding, while changing outcomes for marginalized groups.

For more information, please explore our [online education portal](#) or visit [Tools of the Trade](#) on our [website](#) for this and other free resources.

RIR Protocol



Recognize It

The objective is to recognize what we think, feel and believe about statements and actions that perpetuate separation, exclusion and deficit thinking. Answering these questions helps us pause in order to thoughtfully respond instead of reacting. Ask yourself:

1. What is my physical response? (ex. stomach clenching, throat tightening)
2. How do I feel? What emotion does this evoke?
3. What is my initial belief or story about this?



Interrupt It

The objective is to engage in a way that that creates open, honest dialogue around difficult issues. For example, what can I ask to understand the person's intent? How can I be empathetic as well as share how this impacts me?

1. Ask to clarify meaning
2. Ask to understand intent
3. Address the deed instead of condemning the doer
4. Address the impact
5. Offer another perspective/share why it's important to you
6. Acknowledge the speaker and connect with empathy
7. Seek to include in ongoing dialogue

Sample "Interruptions" might include:

- "Tell me more about that, I want to understand."
- "What does that mean to you?"
- "What has been your experience with _____?"
- "I've had a different experience with _____."
- "I have a different perspective on _____."
- "I think your intention was positive, but what you said felt _____ to me. Can we talk about it more?"
- "I hear your frustration. That was challenging for me as well..."
- "How do you think we can address that?"



Repair It

The objective is to come up with actionable steps that invite connection and inclusion, keep the issue on the table until it is resolved, and create sustainable change.

Observe: Seek solutions that expand your understanding of the issue - attend community events or groups, films, music, etc.

Engage: Continuously interact with different people and perspectives - seek or be an ally, model respectful engagement, follow-up on difficult interactions, take responsibility for your actions.

Study: Deepen your knowledge and ability to discuss the issue - Research the issue, take a course or book study, offer to learn together, bring the issue to a larger group or staff meeting.



RECOGNIZE IT

Personal: _____

Professional: _____



INTERRUPT IT

Personal: _____

Professional: _____



REPAIR IT

Personal: _____

Professional: _____

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