



CESA₆

SMART THINKING.



Ted Neitzke



Buffalo
Leadership





Book



**Everything
Ted**



Podcast



**"AN UNSPOKEN
EXPECTATION CAN
NEVER BE MET!"**



A COUPLE OF DISCLOSURES

- ▶ I was born caffeinated
- ▶ I am an “obnoxious optimist”
- ▶ I am out of the business of rehabilitating pessimists
- ▶ I will always step into the storms of others – even when not invited.
- ▶ “Sometimes Teddy, you’re a little too honest.”
- ▶ I’m not a hugger.

1. Strategic
2. Futuristic
3. Activator
4. Positivity
5. Learner
6. Belief
7. Individualization
8. Woo
9. Communication
10. Ideation

I'm not supposed to be here

Ted Neitzke

Son, brother, husband, dad uncle

30 plus years in public education

Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Principal, Teacher, Coach, and grounds crew

Mayor of Port Washington

Marian University Trustee

HERC Board

4X Gallup Global Workplace

Podcaster – Smart Thinking Podcast

Author

Faculty Regis & Georgetown

CEO CESA 6



**A Behavior Ignored,
Is A Behavior Reinforced!**



Key Take Away

73% & 100%



Two Things Can Be True At The Same Time

- You can lead:
- A leader is anyone with influence over another person.
- You can follow:
- A follower is anyone who demonstrates CARE:
 - Collaboration
 - Accountability
 - Resilience
 - Engagement





Buffalo Leadership



Cow Mindset

BUFFALO LEADERSHIP

- ▶ **Optimism**
- ▶ **Perseverance**
- ▶ **Tenacity**
- ▶ **Empathy**
- ▶ **Reflection**



**An optimist is
someone who
bet's that they'll
win.**



- **Use your strengths to support and coach others so that they can be:**
 - **Empathetic**
 - **Increase background knowledge**
 - **Model vulnerability**
 - **Create predictability**
 - **Support risk**
 - **Step into their strengths**



Reflect together & change gears

Before you take the risk of exposing a need or challenge – we must support reflection in other ways - -a warm up!

The empty nest strategy from Summer Megan



Confidence comes
from believing in
yourself the same way
I believe in you! Love
Dad

There is only one
way each day.
Forward!

Love
Dad

These cards were designed for you to:

- Spark reflection and support others
- As coaches
- As colleagues
- As leaders
- As people



**Having needed
conversations**

Conversations

- Too often we find ourselves planning for what might happen in a conversation and focusing on a bunch of worst-case scenarios of our own creation.
- Instead, we should prepare for a conversation by doing the exercises around the goals of the conversation and your envisioned outcome.



GOALS IN A CONVERSATION

WHAT I REALLY WANT/NEED

WHAT DO I REALLY WANT/NEED
FOR MYSELF?

**I would like Fritz to
understand the impact
of his behavior on
others**

WHAT DO I REALLY WANT/NEED
FOR HIM/HER/THEM?

**I would like Fritz to
leave understanding the
significance of his
behaviors on our
culture.**



**I would like our
relationship to be
stronger as a result of
the candor**

WHAT DO I REALLY WANT/NEED
FOR THE RELATIONSHIP?

HOW TO TACKLE TOUGH CONVERSATIONS

5 STEPS FOR LEADERS

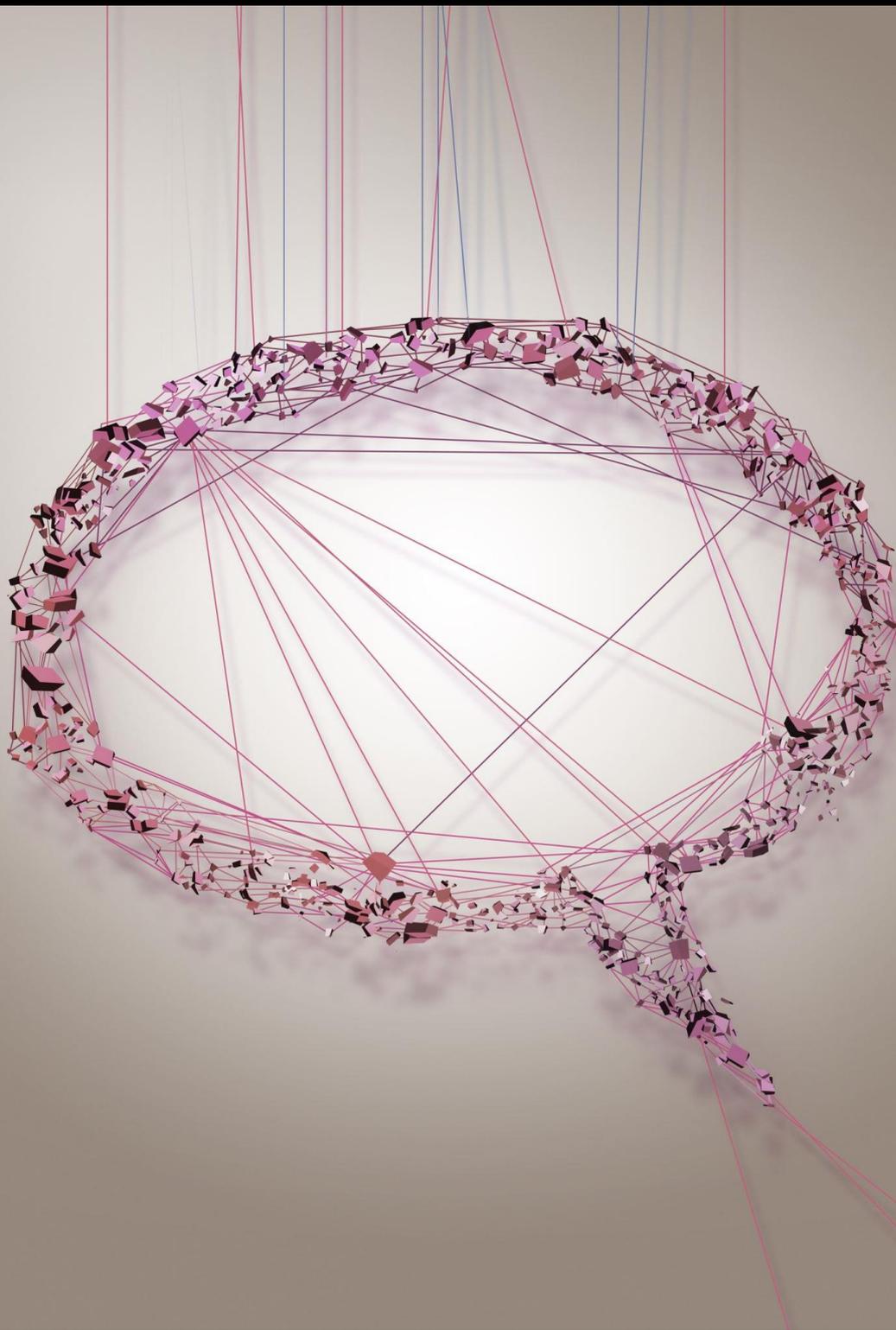


<p>ASK yourself 3 questions.</p>	<p>CHECK yourself and decide whether to raise the issue.</p>	<p>APPROACH from a neutral perspective using "I" stems.</p>	<p>EXPLORE their story and yours by describing the narrative in your head.</p>	<p>PROBLEM-SOLVE to move forward (what do we/I need to do different?)</p>
<p>1. WHAT DO I REALLY WANT/ NEED FOR MYSELF?</p>				
<p>2. WHAT DO I REALLY WANT/ NEED FOR HIM/HER/THEM?</p>				
<p>3. WHAT DO I REALLY WANT/NEED FOR THE RELATIONSHIP?</p>				



Buffalo Leadership

Change: Keys for consideration



- Hierarchies make it weird
- Conversations outside the room and in text make it weird
- Social structures make it weird
- We make it weird
- Narratives in our head make it weird



The Placemat

Whenever there
is a problem, we
need a process

Being authentic is
difficult and a
process is helpful.



Authentic Buffalo: A Process to Speed Trust & Increase Authenticity

EXPECTATION: Score the following with true honesty so that you can advocate for yourself and increase your ability to be authentic and courageous with people alongside you.

PERSONALITY

1 **EXTROVERT** Let's get started! **2** **AMBIVERT** Maybe. **3** **INTROVERT** I'll be over here.

RISK

1 **RISK AVERSE** You can jump. **2** **3** **4** **5** **LOVE RISK** Jumping!

CHANGE

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **Change** creates significant frustration for me. **Change** creates significant energy for me.

CONFLICT

1 **FLIGHT** **2** **3** **4** **5** **FIGHT** **FREEZE**

ORGANIZATION

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **I own a label maker.** **Give me a minute... I know it's somewhere.**

PEOPLE PRIORITY

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **You are sometimes accused of being self-centered.** **You often find yourself serving others more than yourself.**

TIME

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **VALUABLE** Please get to the point. **MEH** Have I ever told you about the time...

TRUST

1 **2** **3** **4** **5** **Builds over time for me.** **Hey stranger, here are my car keys.**

MOTIVATORS

-
-
-

VALUES

-
-
-

FRUSTRATIONS

-
-
-

NEEDS

-
-
-

List three energizers for you in a collaborative setting

MOTIVATORS

- **Humor**
- **Supporting others**
- **Honesty**

List three behaviors you value in a collaborative environment.

VALUES

- **Energy**
- **Preparedness**
- **Clear expectations**

List three behaviors that drive you nuts in a collaborative environment

FRUSTRATIONS

- **Silence**
- **Pessimism**
- **People on devices**

List three needs you have in a collaborative environment.

NEEDS

- **Food**
- **Fellowship**
- **Fun**

I AM RESPECTED



I AM HEARD



I AM APPRECIATED



I FEEL LIKE I BELONG



I AM AUTHENTIC



Let's get
real.
I mean
really
real!

10 TIPS FOR WORKING WITH ME



- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1. | I do not care for email and please don't ask me "did you get my email?" |
| 2. | I drink a lot of water and need frequent breaks. |
| 3. | I am protective of family and time commitments beyond work. |
| 4. | I have a lot of energy and need to be engaged. |
| 5. | I get very hyper when I am nervous. |
| 6. | I get quiet when I am frustrated or upset and if you gossip to me, I think you also gossip about me. |
| 7. | I get very defensive when people put others down. |
| 8. | I swear a lot. |
| 9. | I have a complicated relationship with details. |
| 10. | I like the people around me to be happy and I am loyal. |

List two tips someone close to you would tell a new friend about you.

TIPS FROM SOMEONE WHO LOVES ME

Picking on people is his love language and he really wants the people around him to have fun.

His mind never rests and neither does his body.

Women

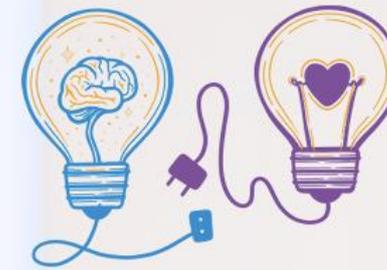
LEADING WISCONSIN

engage | empower | transform

2026

Women Leading Wisconsin Conference

March 9-10, 2026
The American Club,
Kohler, WI



*Bold Minds,
Brave Hearts*



Cara Bookins



Amy Morin

Why Attend?

- **Engage** with a vibrant community of educators, business leaders, and change-makers.
- **Empower** yourself through highly engaging keynote sessions, impactful conversations, and meaningful networking.
- **Transform** your leadership journey with personal and professional development opportunities designed to strengthen your ability to lead your school, organization, or community.

Who Should Attend?

- Women in leadership roles
- Aspiring leaders
- Professionals in education or business who want to expand their influence and impact

Meet Your Keynote Speakers

- Cara Bookins
 - Author of *Unstuck: Resilience and The Science of Motivation*
- Amy Morin
 - Author of *13 Things Mentally Strong Women Don't Do*



events@cesa6.org
cesa6.org/center-events

**Be the change-maker
your community needs.**

Mark your calendar and join us for this inspiring two-day event!



Book



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