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This six-step checklist will help guide you in holding powerful and purposeful conversations. Use it before and during the conversation to help keep your purpose clear, the conversation safe, and your preferred outcome in sight.

Six-Step Checklist for Holding Powerful Conversations

The following checklist will help guide you in holding powerful and purposeful conversations. Use it before and during the conversation to help keep your purpose clear, the conversation safe, and your preferred outcome in sight.

1. **Center:** How will I remind myself to center before the conversation and to re-center periodically?
2. **Purpose:** What is my purpose? Is it a useful purpose?
3. **Inquiry:** What are some honest, open-ended questions I might ask my partner? What do I need to learn about how s/he sees this situation?
4. **Acknowledgment:** What feelings might surface that I can acknowledge? How will I remember to summarize?
5. **Advocacy:** What is my primary message? How will I tell my story while maintaining a respectful and non-judgmental stance?
6. **Move to Action/Build Agreement:** What are possible scenarios my partner might offer? What will I suggest? What is my preferred outcome?

Possible Openings

- I have something I'd like to discuss with you that I think will help us work together better.
- I'd like to talk about _____ with you, but first I'd like to get your point of view.
- I need your help with what just happened. Do you have a few minutes to talk?
- I need your help with _____. Can we talk about it (soon)? If they say, "Sure, let me get back to you," follow up with them.

- (Third Story) I think we have different perceptions about _____. I'd like to hear your thinking on this.
- I've noticed a recurring argument (conflict, disagreement, problem) we seem to have. I'd like to talk about why that happens.
- I'd like to see if we can reach a better understanding about _____. I really want to hear your feelings about this and share my perspective as well.

Tell me: What will you use as an opening?

Download a pdf version of [Six-Step Checklist for Holding Powerful Conversations](#)

About the Author

Judy Ringer is a conflict and communication skills trainer, black belt in Aikido, and founder of [Power & Presence Training](#) and [Portsmouth Aikido](#). Would you like free tips and articles every month? [Subscribe to Ki Moments!](#)

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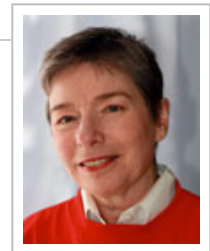
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ABOUT ME

The title of my book, *Turn Enemies Into Allies: The Art of Peace in the Workplace*, says it all. Through interactive presentations and individual coaching, I'll help you transform conflict by changing your relationship to it. Aikido is the metaphor we'll use to become more intentional and less reactive, to communicate directly and respectfully, and to create your life and work on purpose.

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ABOUT KI

Ki (pronounced "key") is Japanese for universal energy or life force; it's the central syllable in Aikido and the symbol you see in my logo.

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