

The Relation Conversation

Where would Batman be without Robin? Where would Ronald be without Nancy? Where would Bonnie be without . . . never mind.

We've all been in a position of feeling unrecognized or undervalued for our efforts and contributions.

It may be that you qualify for a part in a Victim Story: You don't like what is happening (being slighted, lack of recognition or feedback, etc.); you don't see a viable way of influencing it (you aren't speaking up because you aren't sure the subsequent actions would be genuine or matters may get worse); and considering facing the enormous transition costs of leaving the situation is not realistic nor reasonable under the circumstances. This story has led you to choose going to silence.

Here's my best advice: You clearly need to have a "relationship" conversation. The purpose of this conversation is to help the other person understand how their actions for examples, consistently late or a lack of feedback, is affecting your motivation to contribute. The other party may be quite open to have this conversation if you open with mutual purpose. For example, "I've noticed I'm not giving my all anymore. I know some reasons why and would like to discuss them. I think if we can work some things out I would be able to give you 100 percent again. Would that be okay?"

Now, be careful when you open the conversation to be similarly open to feedback. Perhaps the other person thinks he or she is giving you feedback and part of the problem is that you are looking for too much. Perhaps, in the case of a supervisor, he or she isn't thrilled about everything you're doing so the absence of praise is a result of his or her "acting out" rather than "talking out" concerns with you. Who knows? Just be prepared both to give feedback and open to receive it as well.

The worst that can happen is that nothing changes. If so, you've most likely lost nothing. Rather, you've stopped playing a part in a Victim Story. And you'll be more likely to create circumstances that will be more favorable to you.

That you are conscious of how you're acting and concern about your effort or reduced motivation is terrific self-insight and encouraging. Now hold a relationship conversation as the next step to improve the situation.

Good luck

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