

Facilitating 'good trouble' discussions

Psychological unsafety

- Defensive behaviour
- Silence or withdrawal
- Escalation and conflict

Emotional triggers

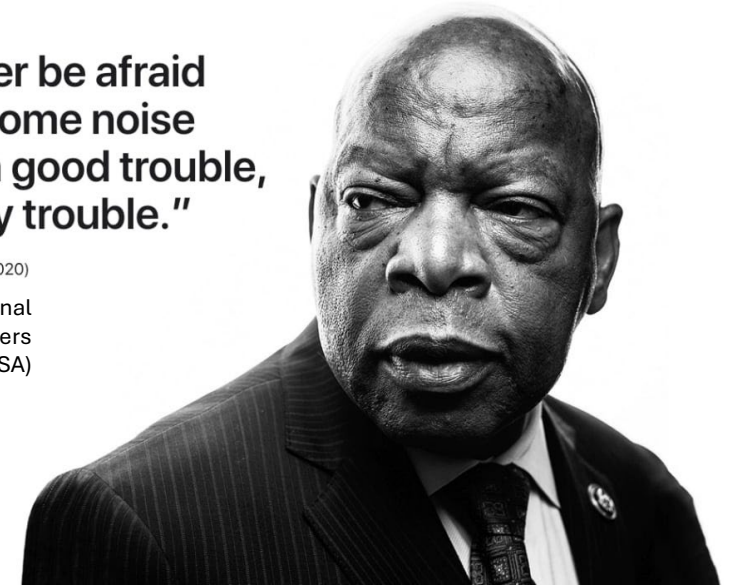
- Lived experience of discrimination and trauma
- Fear of being misunderstood or judged
- Powerlessness or lack of agency

Role of identity and values

**"Never, ever be afraid
to make some noise
and get in good trouble,
necessary trouble."**

Rep. John Lewis (1940-2020)

Image from the National
Association of Social Workers
(Michigan, USA)



Austin, L-A. (2025, Oct. 22). *Navigating polarizing conversations in educational settings*. [Guest Lecture]. EDUC 5990 Ethical Issues in Educational Leadership. Thompson Rivers University, Kamloops, CA.

Bridging divides for inclusive & dialogic conversations

- Destructive vs. constructive conflict
- Power dynamics
- The third ear
- Conflict style awareness: avoiding, accommodating, competing, compromising, collaborating
- Dialogic communication = trust, respect, empathy, decency, integrity, credibility, humility, and reciprocity.
- Avoid the curse of knowledge – start where the other person is and move forward together.

Skills for dialogic communication

- Relational humility
- Active listening
- Paraphrase/reflect
- Clarifying questions
- No interruptions
- Empathy
- Validate feelings
- Suspend judgement
- Reframing
- Positions to interests
- Neutral language
- Agreeing to disagree

