Undiscussables

What is this?

**Definition**
Undiscussables are issues, thoughts, and feelings that stay below the surface of conversations and don’t get talked about, except perhaps with those we trust.

**Summary**
Have you ever wondered why so often at work, the real conversation happens in the meeting after the meeting?

We all have conversations where we keep ideas, critical information and feelings to ourselves. Or we play it safe by smoothing over difficulties. Sometimes we map out ahead of time how we will keep particular thoughts and feelings from being discussed. Other times, we avoid topics without even knowing it.

Rarely do undiscussables get raised in business meetings. When we do talk about them, it’s usually to vent our frustrations with one or two people we know we can trust - maybe over coffee, in the washroom or in the parking lot. In most cases we avoid topics that might embarrass us or anyone else. We don’t say things we think may be career limiting. By staying safe we risk misunderstanding, stifle learning and stop ourselves from exploring options.

Fortunately, we can learn to raise undiscussables in ways that increase understanding and produce better decisions.