



LOUDER



RESOURCES



TWO FACED:

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION ON POLARIZING VIEWS

When we communicate with people whether it be a personal relationship, colleagues at work, or someone you just met it is important to understand how to keep our composure and equanimity when a subject comes up that we may have opposing views on. It is also key to note that speaking to people with opposing views from our own adds value in various ways -- your perspective on a subject may evolve, you may learn something new about the person you are communicating with, and finally, when we respect each other and actively listen, such conversations can be really interesting.

There are so many topics like politics, religion, pandemics, bad restaurants, culture, and other things that we have fear about discussing with people because we are scared that they may have opposing views.

At the end of the day, remember: we are all human! It can be amazing to try on someone else's world view for a moment and see where they are coming from. Humans are allowed to have different views, and sometimes you can learn new things from someone who thinks differently than you -- not to mention get a little insight on things when you step back and look at the situation as a whole.

So where do we begin?

Here are some tips below that I want to share with you so next time you are faced with a situation where opposing views may be present you can handle it with confidence!



1) DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO GO THERE

Decide if this conversation is worth having for you personally. Ask yourself: do you want to learn why they feel the way they do? Do you want to try to persuade their point of view? What are your intentions? Also, think about how this conversation will be received by the other person. It is totally okay to not go there and if that is the case change the subject or just respectfully let the other person know it is not something you wish to discuss.

2) DON'T ASSUME THEY HAVE BAD INTENTIONS

If we just assume that they have bad intentions, we are already putting a negative association in our brain. Like mentioned above, we are all human. Like us, this person has had a lifetime of experiences that has shaped their belief and value system that they hold true. So let's go into these conversations with an open mind and assume that the other person has good intent. It also allows our brain to find parts of their point of view that we may agree with.

3) STAY CALM NO MATTER WHAT

Remember: what you practice in private you will be rewarded for in public. Practice calmness and serenity at home -- I've found meditation extremely beneficial to master this practice but do whatever works for you. Calmly listen to the other person and make sure you are actively listening instead of silently disagreeing with them in your head -- this will come through in your body language.

4) ASK QUESTIONS

When we ask questions it can show interest but it can also help us find a connection in our opposing views. It will also assist us in presenting accurate thought out arguments by understanding where they are coming from. And by arguments, I don't mean a heated discussion -- I simply mean your side of the discussion. When you ask questions it changes the dynamic of the conversation and the other person feels heard.

5) AVOID USING THE WORD "BUT"

When we use the word "but" in a conversation it is known as a subtraction sign in a conversation. It erases what was just said and can come across as defensive to the other person. Instead of using the word "but" you can say "and at the same time" or go ahead and follow up with a question.

Having conversations where we may have opposing views can be infuriating and sometimes even make you question your own values. Just remember, you don't have to try to meet in the middle with the other person, sometimes it's so empowering when you just have a deeper understanding of both sides of an issue. Remain respectful of the other person and enjoy the intellectual exercise of the conversation.

The above tips will be helpful in navigating communication with opposing views but at the end of the day remember: we as individuals must feel empowered to decide if we want to engage in these conversations or not.

Happy Communicating!

XO

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