

peacemaking

IN POLARIZED TIMES

tools & training to love our neighbors, families, and co-workers

participant workbook

NAME: _____

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENTS

GOAL: To have a “brave” space for everyone participating.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Be respectful.
- Be present and engaged.
- Presume and extend welcome.
- Rather than language *policing*, everyone strive to be sensitive.
- Keep an open mind with humble curiosity.
- Listen to learn.
- Grant the gift of a positive intention.
- Avoid making your experience normative for everyone.
- Avoid fixing, correcting, or setting others straight.
- Maintain confidentiality with what is shared.
- Expect some discomfort and take care of yourself.
- No guilt, no shame and no blame.
- Today is about dialogue (begins with a question) rather than debate (begins with an answer).

Signature: _____

TRAINING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

THE STATE OF POLARIZATION &
THE WAY OF JESUS

STEP 1

SELF-AWARENESS

STEP 2

REFRAME GOALS

STEP 3

LISTEN

STEP 4

EMOTIONAL
INTELLIGENCE

STEP 5

DIALOGUE

BONUS

PEACEMAKING IN AN
ELECTION YEAR

FINAL THOUGHTS

RESOURCES &
COMMISSIONING

THE STATE OF POLARIZATION

DEFINITION OF POLARIZATION:

A state in which the opinions, beliefs, or interests of a group or society no longer range along a continuum but become concentrated at opposing extremes.

“Across 10 measures that Pew Research Center has tracked on the same surveys since 1994, the average partisan gap has increased from 15 percentage points to 36 points.”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2017

“Affective polarization in the US has increased more dramatically since the late 1970s than in the eight other countries they examined — the U.K., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, and Sweden.”

NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH 2020

“55% Americans reported having no one in their immediate social circle who had opposing political views.”

**AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE'S
SURVEY CENTER ON AMERICAN LIFE 2020**

Polarization is much larger and more powerful than any one of us. Regardless of what positions we may have and what sides we may take - polarization is a force we are *all* up against.

It is causing chasms through families, distrust between neighbors, and an inability to function in our teams at work.

**SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US AS
FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?**

THE STATE OF POLARIZATION

PSYCHOLOGICAL DRIVERS OF POLARIZATION**

- Defaulting to dualism
- Predispositions we develop in childhood & throughout our lives
- Our brains are wired to divide into groups - originally for safety in the wilderness during “hunting and gathering”
- Deep differences in “moral priorities”
- Neural differences
- Diversity of voices in society coupled with a fear of difference

5 FOUNDATIONS OF MORAL FORMATION*

- Care/harm
- Fairness/cheating
- Loyalty/betrayal
- Authority/subversion
- Sanctity/degradation

**DEPENDING ON THE ORDER
OF IMPORTANCE. MORAL
DECISION- MAKING WILL DIFFER
GREATLY...**

GENETICS + LIFE EXPERIENCES = SUBCONSCIOUS PATTERNS TO HOW WE RESPOND TO STIMULI*

EXAMPLE:

- People who lean “conservative” are more excited by threat & thus are motivated by protectiveness and safety.
- People who lean “liberal” are more excited by variety and newness of experience and thus are motivated towards progress.

*Neither are inherently negative until
taken to the extreme*

STRUCTURAL DRIVERS OF POLARIZATION**

- Changing demographics
- Closed media ecosystems
- Social media and digital tribalism
- Confirmation bias online and with media intake
- Rising income inequality
- Declining trust in institutions
- Moving to live in more ideologically homogeneous communities
- Deeper polarization of the two-party system in U.S. politics

**The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics
and Religion by Jonathan Haidt*

***Nathan Stock - International Peacebuilding Consultant*

THE WAY OF JESUS

DEFINITION OF PEACE:

Hebrew word “shalom” - not the absence of war, stress or anxiety (that would be escapism). Shalom is wholeness, completeness, fulfillment, inner rest, living without deficiency or lack.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

MATTHEW 5:9

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.”

MATTHEW 5:43-45

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock”.

MATTHEW 7:24-25

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.

MATTHEW 22:37-38

OUR DISTINCT WHY

- We are people empowered to live The Way of Jesus & we are led by the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:8, Romans 8:14)
- We believe all humans are made in the image of God. (Genesis 1:27)
- God created humanity with differences and in that diversity we see more of the breadth of the image of God. (1 Corinthians 12; Revelation 7:9)
- We represent Jesus to those around us. As Jesus said, “whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 25:40)

JESUS IS SAYING, I DON'T WANT YOU TO JUST DESIRE PEACE FOR YOURSELVES. I WANT YOU TO “MAKE” PEACE!

STEP 1: SELF-AWARENESS

RECOGNIZING MY INNER POLARIZER SELF-ASSESSMENT

**Use the following questions to think about your inner polarizer.
Don't worry, most of us think and feel some of these things.**

1. How often do I find myself thinking about "those people" on the other side of an issue without much regard for the variation among them? (Even though we're usually aware of great variation within our own group.)

Often - Sometimes - Rarely
2. How often do I find myself assigning mainly self-serving or negative motives to other groups - and mainly positive motives to the people who share my views?

Often - Sometimes - Rarely
3. How often do I find myself focusing on the most extreme or outrageous ideas of the other side, thereby making it hard to see how a reasonable person could remain in that group?

Often - Sometimes - Rarely
4. How often do I find myself comparing the worst ideas on the other side of an issue with the best ideas on my side of the issue?

Often - Sometimes - Rarely
5. How often do I feel a "rush" of pleasure with friends when we hear of mistakes or embarrassing actions about the other side?

Often - Sometimes - Rarely
6. How often do I find myself assuming that Christians who hold views opposite of mine are not true Christians?

Often - Sometimes - Rarely
7. How often do consider those on the other side of my perspective my enemy rather than my neighbor?

Often - Sometimes - Rarely
8. Which of the following is closest to my overall emotional attitude towards the majority of people who support the other side's perspectives?

Fear: The other group is destroying our community.

Disdain: They are ignorant and should know better.

Pity: They are well meaning but duped.

Basic respect: They make contributions even if they are mostly off base.

Respect and appreciation: They make unique and necessary contributions.

STEP 1: SELF-AWARENESS

CONFRONT THE 4 AGENTS OF POLARIZATION WITHIN YOURSELF:

Stereotyping - a generalized belief about a group of people. It is the expectation that all members of a given group will act the same way or have similar traits.

Dismissing - to decide that something or someone is not important and not worth considering.

Ridiculing - to laugh at someone in an unkind way; unkind words or actions that make someone or something look stupid.

Contempt - a strong feeling of disliking and having no respect for someone or something.

Notes:

GOING DEEPER RESOURCE:

Braver Angels

This is not a faith-based organization, but their focus is to develop tools and resources for civic depolarization.

STEP 1: SELF-AWARENESS

AWARENESS OF OUR MEDIA INTAKE



Notes:

STEP 1: SELF-AWARENESS

MEDIA INTAKE

Which platforms do you use to get news?

- Social media
- TV news channels
- Online news websites
- Print newspapers or magazines
- Other _____

How aware are you of the concept of echo chambers or filter bubbles (where you mostly encounter opinions and information that reinforce your own beliefs when online)?

- Very aware
- Somewhat aware
- Not aware

Do you actively seek out news from diverse sources (different perspectives, international news, etc.)?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

Have you noticed yourself primarily consuming news and information that aligns with your existing beliefs or viewpoints?

- Yes, often
- Sometimes
- No, I actively seek out diverse perspectives

How would you rate the diversity of perspectives in the sources you regularly consume?

- Very diverse
- Somewhat diverse
- Not diverse at all

Do the people in your life follow the same media outlets as you?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

How often do you fact-check the news you consume before believing or sharing it?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Rarely

How does consuming news and/or social media typically make you feel?

- Informed and empowered
- Anxious or stressed
- Indifferent
- Angry or frustrated
- Other _____

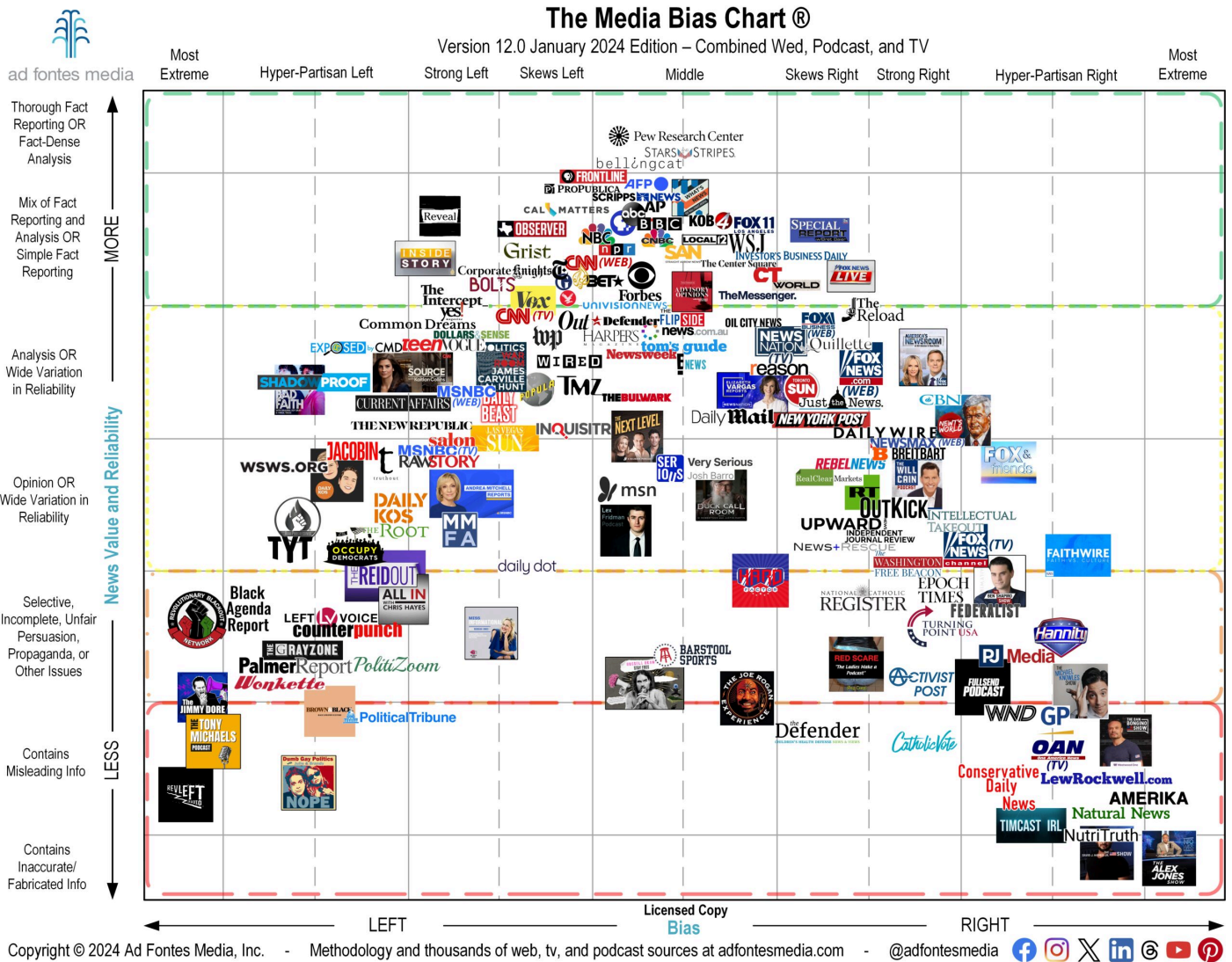
As a person of faith, which of the following guide your consumption and sharing of news?

- Encouraging dialogue across diverse viewpoints
- Seeking truth and accuracy
- Avoiding spreading misinformation
- Finding news that aligns with my views
- Other _____

GOING DEEPER RESOURCE:
Faith & Fake News: A Guide to Consuming Information Wisely
book by Rachel Wightman

STEP 1: SELF-AWARENESS

BIAS CHART BASED ON ONLINE MEDIA FROM THESE ORGANIZATIONS:



HEADS UP: The purpose of this chart is not to debate if each news source is in the correct column. Rather, the purpose is to help you gauge how you might need to be intentional to diversify your news sources.

What next steps might you take to intentionally diversify your media intake?

STEP 1: SELF-AWARENESS

MEDIA INTAKE

LIFE IN THE
AGE OF Algorithms



Platforms seek patterns in data to try to predict and influence behavior

and personalize news and advertising, based on guesses about individual preferences

creating the potential for us to experience different realities

Our lives are increasingly influenced by decision-making systems that build on correlations

using "artificial intelligence" software that relies on incomplete data to make generalizations

and amplifies existing biases at large scale

Information systems we depend on are shaped by a tech culture marked by narrow perspectives and overconfidence

that rely on mining users' data and manipulating their behavior

in ways that undermine our trust in news, politics, and each other.

jessica yurkofsky (2019)

The Project Information Literacy (PIL) "Life in the Age of Algorithms" for the Information Literacy in the Age of Algorithms Report has a Creative Commons (CC) license of CC BY-NC SA.



What ways can you become more intentional about your news intake in order to overcome media bias and personalized algorithms?

STEP 1: “WE”-AWARENESS

- Americans are actually less ideologically polarized than we think we are.
- However our politicians *are* much more ideologically polarized than the general population - and more polarized than anytime in the last 50 years.
- Even though we are not as ideologically polarized as we believe ourselves to be, we are *emotionally* polarized (known as “affective polarization”). In other words, we do not like those who have different opinions.
- This is called a “perception gap”—affective polarization causes us to *feel* like the divide is wider than it is.

PEACEMAKER TIP:

Affective polarization refers to the phenomenon where individuals' feelings and emotions towards members of their own political party or group become more positive, while their feelings towards members of the opposing party or group become more negative.

Polarization, Democracy, and Political Violence in the United States: What the Research Says - Rachel Kleinfeld

STEP 2: REFRAME GOALS

We often approach others with a goal to change their mind or win an argument. Statistically, this goal is near impossible.

What other goals might we have for depolarizing conversations and relationships across difference of opinion?

WHAT BETTER GOALS MIGHT WE HAVE?

Humanize - Be reminded that those who have an opposing opinion are humans loved by God & made in God's image. Remind others that you are also human! (Ephesians 2:10 NIV)

Empathize - Be able to understand the other person's viewpoint even though it's highly unlikely either person is going to change their opinion - empathy deepens understanding and reduces unnecessary conflict. How might you imagine being in this person's shoes?

Relate with Love - Loving our neighbors is dependent on staying in relationship even if that relationship has boundaries. The healthiest relationships are not those where both agree, but rather those that have a deepened understanding of the other.

Have Compassion - Jesus chose to suffer because of his love for us. Compassion is the choice to suffer with others. When we listen to others and seek to understand, we can choose to let God break our hearts for what breaks theirs. It is one way we can carry our cross as disciple of Jesus. (Luke 6:36 NLT)

What other goals do you have for depolarizing contentious conversations with people in your life with whom you may disagree?

PEACEMAKER TIP:

In each relationship in your life, define your goals and determine if they are realistic.

STEP 3: LISTEN

NON-LISTENING

- **Defending**
- **“Me too” syndrome**
- **Giving advice/correcting**
- **Judging**

CIRCLE THE ONE
YOU STRUGGLE
WITH THE MOST

FOUR LEVELS OF LISTENING

- 1. Downloading** - Information is entering through the filter of what you already know & your viewpoint.
- 2. Factual** - Noticing something new, something that differs from what you already knew or expected to hear.
- 3. Empathizing** - Listening from the place the other person is speaking from; experiencing/sensing an emotional connection.
- 4. Generative** - Having a mindset shift that produces life in you and in others, even if you don't agree.

NOTES:

“Admitting that we have something to learn doesn't just show humility. It improves relationships. When we acknowledge that we don't know everything, others feel more psychologically safe—and become more effective. Expressing our desire to get better can help others get better.”

-Adam Grant

STEP 3: LISTEN

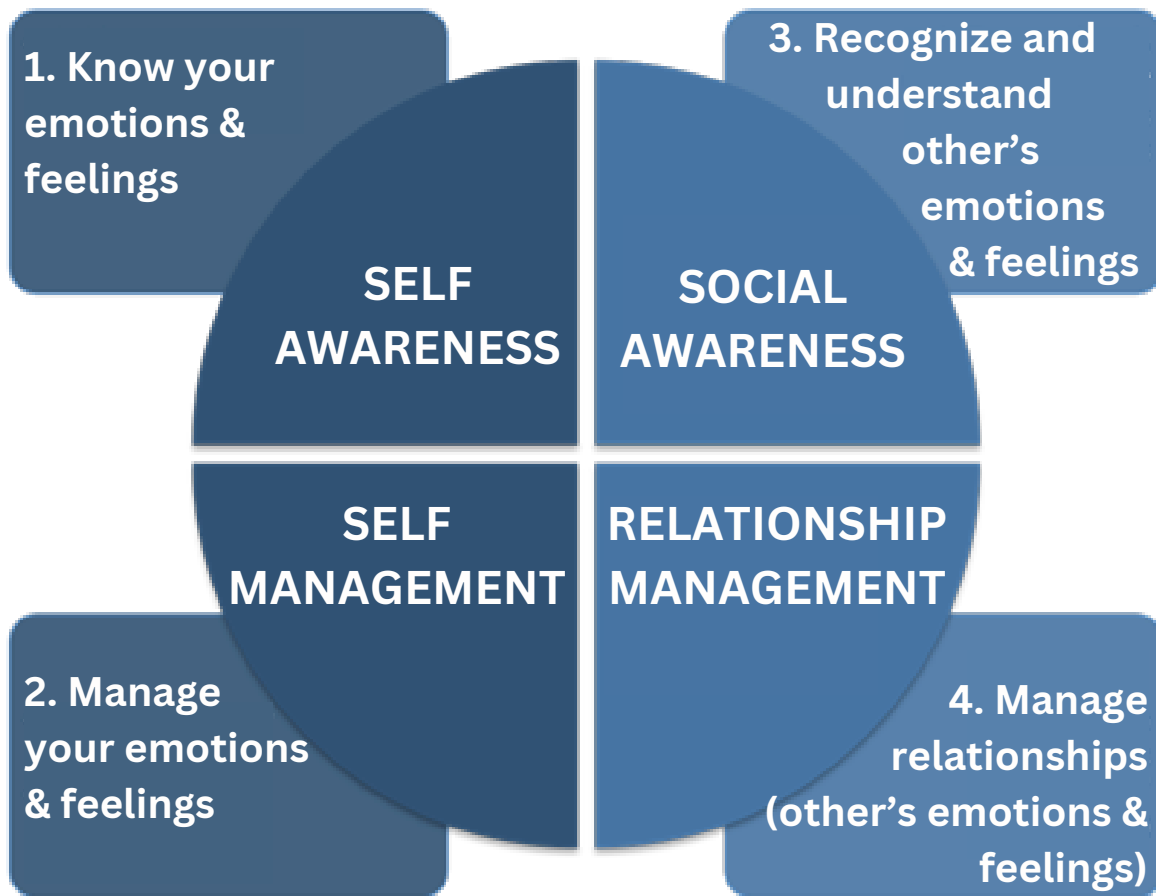
REFLECT ON YOUR LISTENING

- Have you listened to yourself?
 - What do you mean by any words or phrases that may have complex meaning in our context?
 - Do you know why you hold your perspective?
 - What experiences in your life have shaped your perspective?
 - What emotions are connected to your perspective?
- Have you listened to others long & deep enough to understand...
 - What they mean by any words or phrases that may have complex meaning in our context?
 - Why the person holds this perspective?
 - What experiences in their life have shaped their perspective?
 - What emotions are connected to their perspective?
- Listening builds trust. Are you earning trust?

Notes:

STEP 4: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Your ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others AND your ability to use this awareness to manage your behavior and relationships.



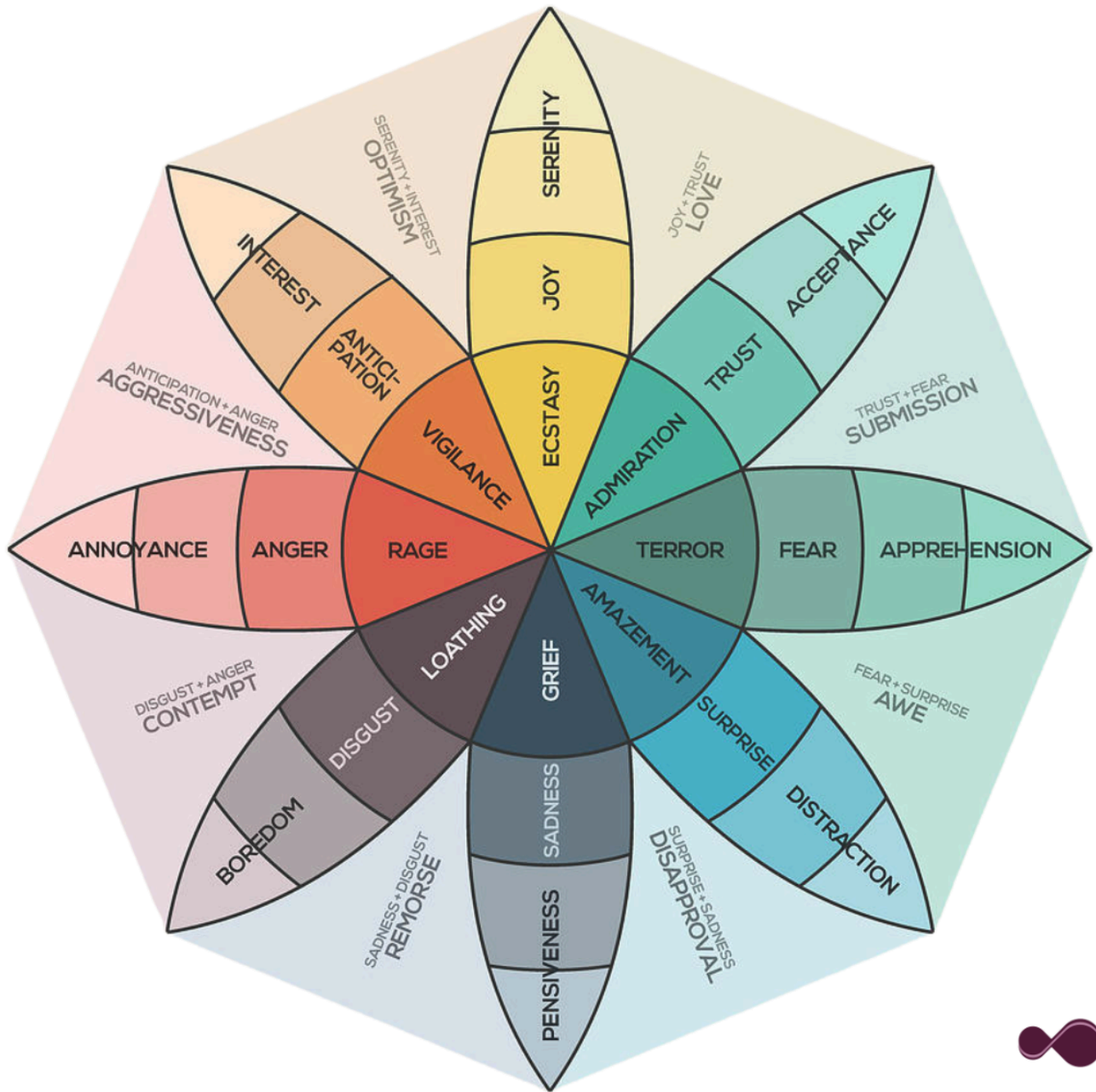
PEACEMAKER TIP:

An additional “intelligence” is cultural intelligence - start with humility and learn how culture influences others when it comes to polarization as well as communication.

GOING DEEPER RESOURCE: Emotional Intelligence Survey

lovingourneighbors.church/peacemakingresources/

PLUTCHIK'S WHEEL OF EMOTIONS



LeadershipYoda.com

PEACEMAKER TIP: When in dialogue with someone, it is often beneficial to mention that you have strong emotions about the topic being discussed. Engaging as though a conversation is primarily intellectual when it is also highly emotional leads to misunderstanding and often verbal harm.

STEP 4: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

DIRTY DOZEN

We all think these things from time to time. And some of these approaches can be helpful. But taken to an extreme, they can interfere with healthy relationships and interactions with others.

Needing Approval - “Everyone I work with must approve of me at all times.”

Making Mistakes - “I must prove thoroughly competent, adequate, and achieving at all times.”

Changing Others - “I have an obligation to change others who act unfairly or obnoxiously.”

Catastrophize - “When I get very frustrated, or am treated unfairly or rejected, I have to view things as awful, terrible, horrible, and catastrophic.”

Others Cause Misery - “My emotional misery comes from external pressures that I have little ability to change.”

Worry, Fret, and Fear - “If something seems dangerous or fearsome, I must preoccupy myself with it and make myself anxious about it.”

Avoidance - “It’s easier to avoid facing difficulties and self-responsibilities than to do something about them.”

The Past - “My past remains all-important, and because something once strongly influenced my life, it has to keep determining my feelings and behavior today.”

Unrealistic Expectations - “People and things should turn out better than they do, and I must fix them.”

Competition - “My worth can be measured by competitive situations.”

Source of Problems - “The people and conditions in my life are the source of my problems.”

Negativity - “Certain occurrences or events are negative by nature.”

ASSIGNMENT: Pick two of these that tend to hijack your conversations, your relationships, and your effectiveness at work or other spaces in your life.

- How will you catch yourself the next time you think these?
- What will you do to turn to a positive focus?

STEP 4: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

HOT BUTTONS

Complete these statements:

- a. It makes me angry when...

- b. I don't like it when people...

- c. I feel offended when...

- d. I think it is rude to...

- e. At work, I wish people would...

- f. It makes me crazy when...

- g. If people would only...

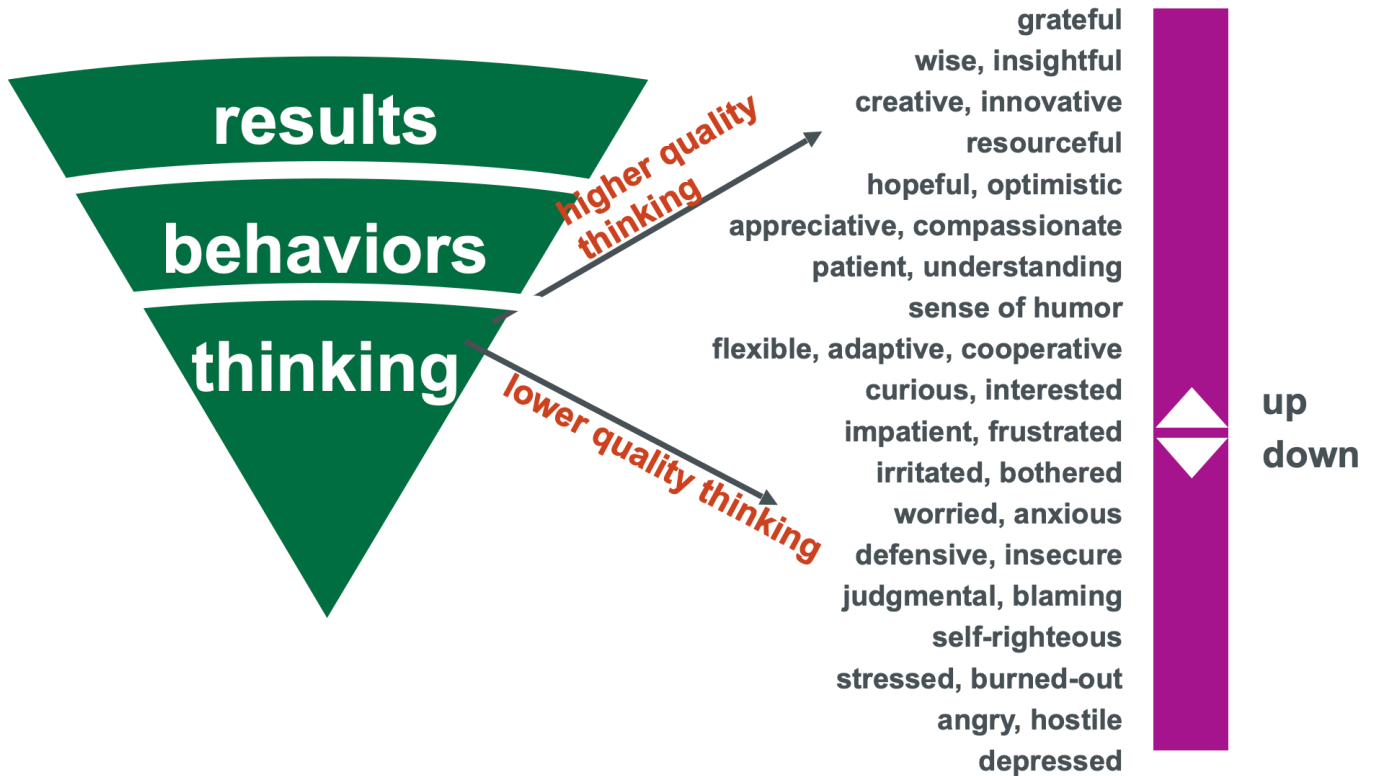
- h. It makes me angry when people say...

- i. I get irritated when I come to work/school/church and...

If we can finish these sentences, we will have a greater ability to be emotionally intelligent when we experience these feelings in various situations.

STEP 4: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

MOOD ELEVATOR



STEP 5: DIALOGUE

START WITH THE SPIRIT!

As Jesus followers, the greatest asset we have is the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that he would send the Spirit to be our advocate, counselor and guide!

“The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

-Jesus (John 14:26-27)

Throughout our conversations with people in our lives, how can we have a conscious dependence on the Holy Spirit to lead us?

DEBATE - Starts with answers on both sides. No one is coming to learn from the other - rather the goal is to win.

DIALOGUE - Starts with questions and curiosity.

PEACEMAKER TIP:

Dialogues don't belong online! Facebook feeds and even text messages & emails result in deep miscommunication and cause us to more easily be unkind and devalue others.

STEP 5: DIALOGUE

L.A.P.P. skills for depolarizing dialogue:

Listen, **A**cknowledge, **P**ivot, **P**erspective

- **L**isten to understand & empathize - Start with a question (not an answer) and engage curiosity.
 - Turn off your “arguing back” mindset and hear what the other person is saying. If you’re preparing your next point, you’re not listening.
 - Listen for the other person’s values and emotions underneath their viewpoint. Strong emotions could mean a deeper story there.
 - Listen for anything you can agree with.
 - Resist the temptation to stop listening because of stereotypes you have about people who differ from you.
- **A**cknowledge what you heard and, if possible, share any way you may agree.
 - “I can tell you have strong feelings about _____.”
 - “That must have been scary for you.” (or other emotion)
 - “So you’re saying _____.” (repeat or paraphrase)
 - “What I hear you saying is... am I hearing you?”
 - “I agree with you on this _____. I see that as a problem, too.”
 - Note: If you don’t understand what the person has said, ask for clarification before acknowledging:
 - “I’m not sure what you mean. Can you explain?”
 - “I’m not sure I understand why you are for/against _____(idea/policy). Could you say more?”
- **P**ivot to signal a shift in the dialogue and wait to see if the person is willing to listen.
 - Offer a context for why you are introducing another perspective into the conversation. Be personal here, and use “I” statements.
 - “I’ve become so worried about our school community’s polarization that I’ve started to try to understand other perspectives better. I’d like to share some of my thoughts with you.”
 - “I’m with you on being very concerned about what’s going on. Can I throw in another perspective?”
 - “I’ve been learning more about how people with other views are thinking about these issues.”

STEP 5: DIALOGUE

L.A.P.P. skills for depolarizing dialogue:

Listen, **A**cknowledge, **P**ivot, **P**erspective

- **Perspective** - Offer a depolarizing viewpoint. Here are five kinds of perspective comments:
 - *Variations in perspective.* Not everyone feels the same way:
 - “I’ve discovered that there are many views on this topic...”
 - “I’ve learned that there’s another perspective on _____.”
(Share that new perspective)
 - “I’ve discovered other people have different views.” (Share view) Example: “I wonder if there are kids who would benefit from practicing handwriting or cursive?”
 - *It’s more complicated:*
 - “I see more complexity in why some people support/oppose that idea. It’s not just because they are uninformed.”
 - “This issue is more complicated than the way we are hearing about it.”
 - *Different backgrounds and experiences:*
 - “People come from different backgrounds and experiences. Sometimes when I hear their stories, I better understand their positions.”
 - “It’s easy for me to judge them for supporting _____, but I’m aware that I’ve not been in their shoes.”
 - *Our side hasn’t been perfect on this matter:*
 - “I don’t agree with them on this, but our side hasn’t solved this problem either.”
 - *It’s not useful to dismiss them:*
 - “People with other views put us down, and we put them down. This keeps us from making consensus-based decisions. I’ve come to the conclusion that we’re going to have to understand and respect each other more if we’re going to solve our community’s challenges.”

PEACEMAKER TIP:

Ideally dialogues will be in person. However, many have found that walking while talking helps conversations go further without becoming contentious.

STEP 5: DIALOGUE

L.A.P.P. skills for depolarizing dialogue:

Listen, **A**cknowledge, **P**ivot, **P**erspective

1. **L**isten to understand & empathize - Start with a question (not an answer) and engage curiosity
2. **A**cknowledge what you heard and, if possible, share any way you may agree
3. **P**ivot to signal a shift in the dialogue and wait to see if the person is willing to listen
4. **P**erspective - Offer a depolarizing viewpoint

POLARIZED PERSON A

People who want to keep kids from learning cursive in school are ridiculous. Don't they care about tradition? Our kids won't even be able to read grandma's handwriting!

Only an idiot would cripple a child so early in their development. It's basically teaching kids to disrespect their elders and reject more refined communication!

What amazes me is how many people get duped by big tech and their goal to discourage kids from even writing full sentences with punctuation.

POLARIZED PERSON B

People who want schools to teach cursive should go back to the stone age where they belong. Kids these days don't need to practice handwriting at all - they have computers in their pockets.

Only an idiot would waste precious time during a child's education on pointless and stupid exercises. Not to mention wasting paper and destroying the environment!

What amazes me is how many people blindly accept tradition and are so delusional that they think we can go back in time.

Underline the parts of these statements that are polarizing.

Practice with your partner!

- One person choose to be Person A and one be Person B.
- Your partner reads their assigned polarized statement out loud.
- **L**isten, then respond with
 - **A**cknowledge
 - **P**ivot
 - **P**erspective

STEP 5: DIALOGUE

CONVERSATION OFF RAMP:

If you've repeated LAPP skills a couple of times, and the other person pushes back with no softening, it's often best to exit the conversation gracefully, or change the topic.

This may be necessary when:

- You or your conversation partner are becoming so flooded with emotions that you are too low on the “mood elevator”.
- If your conversation partner expresses directly or indirectly that they want to have a debate rather than a dialogue.
- If your conversation partner expresses directly or indirectly that they don't want to hear your perspective or they want to monologue.
- If your conversation partner is being unkind to you.

Some statements to help exit the conversation could be:

- “I'm just giving you some idea of where I'm coming from. We don't have to agree. Maybe we should just move on.”
- “These are tough issues. I'm going to take a break and get a cup of coffee.”
- “I'd rather not debate any further. Perhaps we can talk again sometime with the goal of deeper understanding.”
- “I'd like to pause our conversation at this point. My hope is we can treat each other with kindness and respect even through we disagree.”

10 DISCIPLINES

We urge believers to embrace these Christian Civic Disciplines, preparing our hearts and minds for the challenges and opportunities ahead during the 2024 election.

1 SEE PEOPLE, NOT POLITICAL ABSTRACTIONS

Christian Value:
Human Dignity
JAMES 3:9-10

We must understand a person is more than whom they voted for.

2 BE AWARE OF THE FLAWS ON YOUR SIDE

Christian Value:
Self-Examination
PSALM 139:23-24

We must understand that our tribes are not perfect and be willing to challenge our side when it is out of step with our faith.

3 IDENTIFY THE VIRTUE ON THE OTHER SIDE

Christian Value:
Charity & Common Grace
ACTS 17:26-27

We must remember that our political tribe of choice is not perfect and reject the false notion that people on the other side of the political spectrum – or somewhere in between – are pure evil.

4 PRACTICE PUBLIC GRACE & COURTESY

Christian Values:
Kindness & Self-Control
MATTHEW 5:46-48

We must even treat strangers with civility, including when they are at odds with us politically, simply because we know that they are humans just like us.

5 EXERCISE MEDIA HYGIENE

Christian Values:
Wisdom & Understanding
JAMES 1:19

Before speaking publicly or engaging in a debate, we must learn about the issue from several credible media sources that approach the topic from various political and ideological points of view.

6 HAVE AN AFFIRMATIVE POSTURE

Christian Values:
Fruitfulness & Light
MICAH 6:8

We must ensure the posture of our biblical faith is not reactionary, but proactive. That fact should extend to our civic and political lives.

7 DISCERN PARTISAN TALKING POINTS

Christian Value:
Discernment
PROVERBS 14:15

We must not embrace or repeat the messages coming from political parties without close, prayerful examination of veracity and intent of their claims.

8 PRAY FOR YOUR POLITICAL OPPONENTS

Christian Value:
Pray for your enemies
MATTHEW 5:43-44

Nothing will break down the walls of vitriol in our own hearts and in our culture like following Christ's command to pray for our (political) enemies.

9 GET INVOLVED

Christian Values:
Self Sacrifice, Love, Stewardship
JAMES 1:22

Find a church, community organization, or political organization in your local community that is working on an issue that aligns with your values and get practically engaged.

10 COMMIT TO MOVE FORWARD CONSTRUCTIVELY

Christian Value:
Perseverance & Peacemaking
1 CORINTHIANS 15:58

We must reject political violence. Sign the pledge to become an Advocate Against Political Violence.

By The And (&) Campaign // andcampaign.org

NEXT STEPS & RESOURCES

- Polarization is not going to disappear. *This is a lifelong pursuit.*
- Your peacemaking influence in your relationships and social circles will *grow over time*. If you are able to be consistent and remain emotionally intelligent you can build trust!
- A good ally is able to see all perspectives even as they hold their own positions.
- Choose a *next step* of growth as a peacemaker, that is why we have curated these resources:

LovingOurNeighbors.church/peacemakingresources

- Resources for loving neighbors
- Curated peacemaking & depolarization resources

COMMISSIONING

“Lord, make me an instrument of Thy Peace.”

Teach me how to order my days that with sure touch I may say the right word at the right time and in the right way—lest I betray the spirit of peace.

Let me not be deceived by my own insecurity and weakness which would make me hurt another as I try desperately to help myself. Keep watch with me, O my Father, over the days of my life, that with abiding enthusiasm I may be in such possession of myself that each day I may offer to Thee the full, unhampered use of me in all my parts as “an instrument of Thy Peace.”
Amen.

DR. HOWARD THURMAN, 1961