

## Finding Shared Facts – The Process

### Step 1 – Prepare for success

- Make sure YOU and THEY are open to sharing facts as resources.
- Make sure facts are the problem.
- Have an initial conversation about the issue to:
  - Get comfortable.
  - Make the goal and process explicit.
  - Test the water – Present one of your own facts as resources and see how you each respond.

### Step 2 – Find some sources of the disagreement

- Understand how your perspectives differ.
- Identify facts that are at the core of the disagreement.
  - Try to narrow them down to **2** or **3**.
- Look for things that are:
  - Outside of your “shared facts”
  - Inside “shared facts” but interpreted differently.
    - Seen as not important or valid.
    - Viewed in different contexts.
    - As telling parts of different “stories”
- Dig down to specific facts that might lead you to be curious.

### Step 3 – Go on a fact-finding mission

- Review the results of step 2:
  - The 2 or 3 facts you are looking for.
  - The questions you are hoping to answer.
- Agree to be as unbiased as possible:
  - Look for information that supports your facts.
  - Look for information that disprove your facts.
- Know what the types of evidence or proof to collect:
  - What does proof look like?
- Research. You’ll be asking: How true is this thing I thought was true?
  - Did it happen?
  - Did it happen this way?
  - What part of the story might I have been missing?
  - What do we really know?
- Document – keep track of so you can share.
  - Where you found it



- How you see it relating to the quest

#### Step 4 – Review your findings.

Review facts together to see whether...

- You both accept the facts you found.
- You trust the sources.
- You agree they provide a bigger-picture view.

#### Step 5 – Summarize and give thanks.

Talk through the experience.

- What did you learn?
- How have your views changed?
- How has your understanding of the other's views changed?
- Did you enjoy the experience?
- Did you feel it was successful?

Thank your conversation partner.

**Remember: Same facts ≠ same conclusion**

## Presenting Facts as Shared Resources

- Presentation matters because:

Your limbic system is primed to see danger.

People expect you to be trying to make them wrong.

- Make it very clear that you are:

Hoping to explore together.

Open to your information being wrong or incomplete.

Clear that your focus on this/these fact(s) is most likely influenced by your operating system: biases, preferences, beliefs, personal experiences.

Hoping to work together, searching online, sharing screens, not argue or debate.

### Prompts

- What I've been hearing/seeing is ->
- What have you seen/heard about this?
- I think my views hinge on what I've seen/heard about \_\_\_\_\_
- I am starting to believe what I've heard/seen about x is at the core of my views
- I know I only have some of the facts. What have you been hearing/seeing?
- You may have different sources. What do you know that I don't?
- What am I missing?
- If it is true that...<from my frame> is impacted by <??>, might you look at it all differently?

## Prompts for Finding the Core Facts

- “What do you think might I am missing?”
- “What have I said that doesn’t sound true to you?”
- “Would you accept that the issue isn’t so black and white if it turned out that...?”
- “Would my argument make sense to you if you believed that...?”
- “Do you agree that learning more about <these facts> would impact how we both see the issue?”
- “What facts might lead you to be me more curious about <the issue>?”

## Suggestions for Search Strings

What’s wrong with <topic>

Arguments against <topic>

Did X (say, do, happen)

Did Y happen at X

Who really did X

Economic impacts of <topic>

How is harmed by <topic>

Benefits of <topic>

## Additional Resources

- Quiz: How well can you tell factual from opinion statements? --  
<https://www.pewresearch.org/quiz/news-statements-quiz/>
- How To Argue With Someone Who Won't Listen --  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EVF0ojfhSrE>  
(As you watch this video, think about yourself and when you have experienced it.)
- How To Win An Argument Without Making Enemies --  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgXqaS08ZqM>  
(This is framed as winning an argument but applies to finding Shared Facts.)
- The Blur Between Facts and Opinions in the Media --  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BcuLq002GP8>
- Distinguishing Between Factual and Opinion Statements in the News --  
<https://www.journalism.org/2018/06/18/distinguishing-between-factual-and-opinion-statements-in-the-news/>