

# **PRACTICING SKILLS FOR THE WAY OUT: GET CURIOUS**



In the face of complex challenges, one of our best tools is the ability to ask good questions. But asking good questions is an art and a skill. We therefore need to continuously practice asking genuinely curious, reflective, and challenging questions—of ourselves, of each other, of our organizations, and of our communities.

So, I encourage you to practice by starting small, and starting close to home.

When you find yourself in a particularly tense situation or relationship, especially if it is related to a difference in political views and values, below are a set of sample questions you can begin exploring:

**What is most important to you in this conflict? Why does the conflict feel important to you? How does your background shape what is important to you?**

**What do you think is most important to your counterpart in this conflict? Why do you think the conflict might feel important to your counterpart? How might your counterpart's background have shaped what is important to them?**

**What assumptions are you making about your counterpart or their views? Are there things you are assuming about them that you might want to clarify?**

**What is the story you tell yourself in your own mind about what the conflict is about? What story do you think your counterpart might be telling themselves about this conflict?**

**When you find yourself getting sucked into this conflict or situation, what are your expectations for how it will go? How do you think your expectations might impact how interactions actually unfold?**

**What emotions or feelings are rising in you as you face this conflict? How do these emotions impact how you engage?**