



Instructor Guide

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Additional Resources for Instructors:

These documents, which are accessible from your Instructor Dashboard, are also available to help you to structure lessons around the Perspectives content.

- **Lesson Manuals:** Searchable guides for each Perspectives lesson
- **Glossary:** Definitions of key terms introduced in each Perspectives lesson
- **References:** A complete list of sources for each Perspectives lesson
- **Perspectives Library:** Videos, essays, books, and podcasts that complement each Perspectives lesson
- **Peer-to-Peer Conversation Guidance:** Advice for pairing students and troubleshooting this (optional) program feature

Curriculum Overview

Perspectives consists of **8 Lessons & 4 (optional) Peer-to-Peer Conversations**.

Students will complete each **Lesson** individually. Each lesson takes approximately 30 minutes to complete.

- We recommend assigning 2 lessons per week for 4 weeks.



If you opt in to **Peer-to-Peer Conversations**, students will meet in *pairs* after every 2 lessons for a 45-minute discussion.

- This helps students stay accountable, build social connection, and practice applying their skills.
- Advice for administering these conversations (including how to pair students and communicate who their partners are) can be found under "Peer-to-Peer Conversation Guidance" in your Instructor Resources.



Students will receive **emails** after each lesson, to remind them to continue moving forward with the program.

- These emails will also include a summary of the key concepts from each lesson, as well as the goal students have set for themselves in order to implement the concepts within your course.









You can **check on students' quiz scores and progress** through the program at any time in your Instructor Dashboard.

Lastly, students will complete a few short **questionnaires** that allow Perspectives to:

- customize the examples within the lessons to each student
- measure the effectiveness of our program and identify areas for improvement
- We encourage you to **treat the Follow-Up Questionnaire** (emailed to students 4 weeks after completing the program) **as a required part of the assignment**, as it helps us understand whether your students are experiencing lasting benefits from Perspectives.

Here are all the components of the program, from start-to-finish:

Program components are displayed in our suggested 4-week schedule.
See "Integrating Perspectives into your Course Design" for more details on scheduling options.

	Questionnaires (5-10min each)	Lessons (30min each)	[optional] Peer-to-Peer Conversations (45min each)
Week 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-program questionnaire	 <p>Lesson 1. Explore the inner workings of the mind</p>  <p>Lesson 2. Uncover the roots of our differences</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> P2P Conversation 1
Week 2		 <p>Lesson 3. Cultivate intellectual humility</p>  <p>Lesson 4. Welcome diverse perspectives</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> P2P Conversation 2
Week 3		 <p>Lesson 5. Explore other worldviews</p>  <p>Lesson 6. Challenge the culture of contempt</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> P2P Conversation 3
Week 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Post-program questionnaire	 <p>Lesson 7. Manage emotions in difficult conversations</p>  <p>Lesson 8. Master difficult conversations</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> P2P Conversation 4
4 weeks later	<input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up questionnaire		

Integrating Perspectives into your Course Design

Perspectives can be integrated into a variety of course formats to accommodate your broader goals as an instructor.

Perspectives can be...

...a stand-alone component of your course

(to be completed separately from the rest of your course content)

- **To offer maximal flexibility to students**, allow students to go through the program at their own pace over a set time period.
- **To keep students accountable**, you might want to set (or strongly recommend) a schedule students should follow in order to complete the program in a timely manner.

...a launching point for activities & discussions during course sessions

- If you plan to adopt our **recommended 4-week schedule**, here's one way of establishing a routine for each component of the program across the 4 weeks:

WEEK 1			WEEK 2		
MON	WED	FRI	MON	WED	FRI
Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Peer-to-Peer	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Peer-to-Peer
WEEK 3			WEEK 4		
MON	WED	FRI	MON	WED	FRI
Lesson 5	Lesson 6	Peer-to-Peer	Lesson 7	Lesson 8	Peer-to-Peer

If the 4-week sequence doesn't work for your course structure, that's no problem! You can stretch or compress the program to fit into your course in accordance with your needs.

Setting Lesson Release Dates



By default, students can access lessons as soon as they've completed previous lessons.

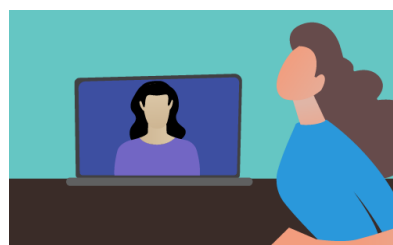
If you'd like more control over when your learners can access each lesson, you can set a pace by specifying release dates for each lesson.

- To do so, go to "Set lesson release dates" under "Manage access codes" on your dashboard.

Using Perspectives in Distance Learning

Perspectives works just as well for distance learning as it does for hybrid or in-person instruction!

- Lessons are all completed online on an individual basis.
- Peer-to-Peer Conversations require students to enter information into our program on their individual computers. Students can converse with each other in-person or via video chat.



If you plan to use a launching point for activities & discussions during course sessions, **here are some tips for using Perspectives in different distance learning methods:**

- **For synchronous teaching,** make sure that students have completed the relevant lessons before you reinforce the Perspectives content during course sessions
 - Once your students are familiar with principles for productive dialogue, you can refer back to them to mediate chat-, audio-, or video-based discussions
- **For asynchronous teaching,** encourage students to complete the relevant lessons before they access pre-recorded lectures or other instructional materials that reinforce the Perspectives content
 - Principles for productive dialogue can be also applied to communications among students on discussion boards, collaborative documents, and so on!

Incorporating Perspectives into your Assignment Structure



You can treat Perspectives as a **pass/fail assignment**:

- students can earn credit for each lesson they complete, or earn credit upon completing the full program.

Alternatively, you can **assign students a grade**:

- Feel free to develop your own assessment(s) to measure comprehension and/or transfer of Perspectives concepts to new scenarios.
- You can also calculate each students' grade on the basis of their **quiz scores** within the 8 lessons.
 - **Each lesson contains 5 graded quiz questions**, to check students' comprehension and reinforce key concepts
 - Students' quiz scores are visible on your Instructor Dashboard



Implementing Perspectives in your Course

Here are our tips for putting Perspectives principles into practice in your course sessions, to keep conversations open, curious, and inclusive – even when disagreements emerge.

Norm-Setting

It's highly valuable to **be proactive** about establishing expectations for how conversations in your course ought to proceed.

Once you have discussed these norms with your students, you can refer back to them in order to remind students of the learning environment you're all working together to maintain.

Here are some basic ground rules you can set early in your course or in advance of particular discussions, to set the tone for productive disagreement:

- "We will treat each other with dignity and respect, showing that we care about each other's feelings and perspectives even when we don't fully understand or agree."
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- "This course will be a space for collaborative inquiry. We will work together to help each other grow, instead of striving for dominance over other learners."
- "We will work together to cultivate intellectual humility, a willingness to acknowledge the limits of our knowledge and the possibility of being wrong."
- "We will welcome clumsy conversations and be forgiving of mistakes."
- We will manage our emotions during disagreements, and take a moment to cool off when we start to get heated."
- "We will not resort to shouting, insults, or ad hominem attacks. We will criticize ideas, not people."

Troubleshooting

Imagine the moments when:

- your students stop listening to one another
- a question leads to knee-jerk divisiveness
- students are stating their emotional or intuitive response as the whole truth, or letting their elephant go on a rampage
- students have gone silent because speaking feels too risky



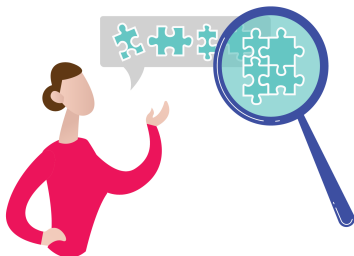
You can turn these into "**Perspectives Moments**": **opportunities to lean into the skills learned from the Perspectives program**. This is where the learning continues, grows, and is put to use as it is most needed.

Here are techniques you can use to create Perspectives Moments in your course:

- **Think, write, pair, share**

If your students are stuck in their thinking, become silent, or start rejecting each other's ideas automatically, *slow things down*.

Ask an expanding, open-ended question that invites an opportunity to think carefully and deliberately. Set a timer for 2-3 minutes and ask your students to free-write until the timer goes off. Then, have them get into pairs and ask them to share their thoughts (for ~2 minutes each). When students are done, come back to the group and ask for insights, discoveries, or dilemmas.



- **Identifying your foundations**

When the class is stuck, have students take out a piece of paper and make a list of the moral foundations that are most present in their belief: *How are the foundations connected to each other? Which one is most important to them? Why is it so important?*

Then, consider asking students to converse with a classmate whose beliefs about the topic at hand rely on different moral foundations.

- **Nothing but questions**

When people are making accusations, assumptions, declarations, provocations, and judgements—declare a Perspectives Moment called “nothing but questions.”

During this time, people cannot tell others that they are wrong or challenge a statement. They must only ask truly curious, honestly offered, and open-ended questions of one another. People can answer the question, but then they have to ask a truly curious, honestly offered, and open-ended question of someone else (and so on).

- **Take a walk**

Nothing opens the mind like a good walk. Classrooms can sometimes feel confining, stuffy, crowded, and sedentary. All of that can impact people’s thinking and ability to listen.

If your circumstances allow it, tell students to go for a walk—either on their own first and then in pairs, or just in pairs. Have them talk about what they notice about the conversation: what is working and what is not. Or, ask them to come back with one thing they really wish they understood.

- **What is the question?**

The most important thing to do when the conversation gets stuck – staying curious – is also the most difficult thing to do. Staying curious requires slowing down, engaging your desire to remain open, and cultivating a stance of wanting to know more about viewpoints that are different from yours.

If people are stuck in silence or certainty, ask them to stop and write down three questions:



1. *What genuine question can I ask the other person that would help me understand what they believe and why they believe it?*

2. *What question do I wish someone would ask me to help me feel more deeply understood?*

3. *What question could we ask in the class right now that would open the conversation?*

- **Minding the gap**

Conversations get stuck when they contain assumptions about other people and what they believe. In a disagreement, it's easy to jump to conclusions. In the heat of it, our own feelings of being misunderstood are real and painful. People end up saying things that may have been meant one way, but landed in a very different way.

In those moments it is important to bring attention to the gap between intention and impact – and there is almost always a gap.

Ask students to clarify what they meant to say, and what they understood someone to say. For example: “When you said... I heard you saying... Is that what you meant?” Or, “I meant to say... What did you hear me say?”

Summary of Perspectives Content

This section provides a summary of the ideas, vocabulary, and techniques presented in each Perspectives lesson and peer-to-peer discussion.

- As a reminder, students will receive these lesson summaries via email 24 hours after they complete the lesson.

Lesson 1. Explore the inner workings of the mind



Key concepts covered:

- Two types of thinking (Dual process theory)
- Metaphor of the elephant (automatic, intuitive thinking) and the rider (controlled, conscious reasoning)
- Cognitive biases
- Confirmation bias

Summary:

- Our minds are divided into two parts that sometimes conflict: the **elephant** represents our automatic, intuitive thinking; the **rider** represents our controlled, deliberate reasoning.
- Our automatic thinking leads us to **cognitive biases**: consistent and predictable mistakes in our judgment and decision-making that stem from our brains mental shortcuts. In a way, cognitive biases are like visual illusions in our thinking – when they happen, we are often totally unaware of it!
- Because of the two systems in our mind, our elephant makes a snap moral judgment, and our rider works to justify it. (This process might have led you to justify your response to the thought experiment about buying a car previously owned by a serial killer.)
- Another common cognitive bias is called **confirmation bias**: the tendency to seek or interpret information in a way that confirms what we already believe or want to believe.
- It's important to remember that our brain is playing these tricks on us, and on other people. This helps explain why it can be so difficult to convince other people to change their minds, especially on moral issues.
- But the good news is we learned a technique to help put our riders back in control – Taking the Reins. You can start practicing this today! Here's the technique:

Taking the Reins: *Detect, Pause, Correct*

Step 1. Detect when your elephant is taking charge

*Here are some signs this might be happening:
(continued on p. 9)*

You feel:

Flashes of deep emotion
Your heart starts to beat faster
Your body starts to tense up

You think extreme things like:

"This is obviously right (or obviously wrong)"
"Everyone agrees that..."
"There's only one possible way to think about this"

Step 2. Pause to slow down

Take some deep breaths.

This calms down your elephant, so your rider can regain control.

Step 3. Correct your elephant's missteps

You can do this by asking yourself questions like:

"What's another way to look at this?"
"Could there be an exception to my conclusion?"
"If I was forced to poke a hole in my belief, what would I say?"

Lesson 2. Uncover the roots of our differences



Key concepts covered:

- Naïve realism
- Moral communities, and their influence on our individual moral worldviews
- The six taste receptors of morality
- Moral Foundations Theory

Summary:

- We don't see the world as it *actually* is. Instead, we each have a unique worldview that is subjective. When we fail to recognize this, we can fall prey to **naïve realism**: when we're certain that we see things as they really are, and we assume that anyone who sees things differently is probably crazy, stupid, or evil.
- Many different **moral communities** exist, each with its own set of shared values, and each convinced that its group alone sees truth as it really is. (You saw a metaphor for this with the optical illusion of the duck/rabbit and the "Yanny/Laurel" audio recording.)
- Our moral communities play a role in shaping our deep intuitions about morality. We can understand where our automatic intuitions come, and why they differ from other people, by remembering this metaphor: *The moral mind is like a tongue with six different taste buds.*
- The six **moral foundations** are: **Care, Fairness, Loyalty, Authority, Sanctity, and Liberty.** We all share these same foundations, but we rely on them in different ways and to different degrees to create our own unique worldview. Our worldview is informed by our culture, our specific upbringings, and our unique life experiences.

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- Many disagreements can be attributed to people having different worldviews that prioritize different moral foundations. When someone disagrees with you, it's probably not because they're evil. It might be because they have constructed a different worldview and they rely on the moral foundations differently than you do. If you want to learn more about your moral foundations, you can take the full Moral Foundations Questionnaire [here](https://www.yourmorals.org/register.php) (<https://www.yourmorals.org/register.php>)!
- In order to become more aware of your own foundations, and to understand why others might have different opinions than you, you can practice Taking the Reins.

Taking the Reins: Detect, Pause, Correct

- Step 1. Detect when your elephant is taking charge
Here are some signs this might be happening:
You feel:
Flashes of deep emotion
Your heart starts to beat faster
Your body starts to tense up
You think extreme things like:
"This is obviously right (or obviously wrong)"
"Everyone agrees that..."
"There's only one possible way to think about this"
- Step 2. Pause to slow down
Take some deep breaths.
This calms down your elephant, so your rider can regain control.
- Step 3. Correct your elephant's missteps
You can do this by asking yourself questions like:
"What moral foundations am I using to decide whether this is right or wrong?"
"What moral foundation is underlying the other person's position?"
"Can I find a way to understand where the other person is coming from, even if I disagree with their position?"
You can ask the other person questions like:
"Can you share any personal experiences that have led you to hold this particular belief?"

Peer-to-Peer Conversation 1

- To build trust and comfort sharing in these conversations, learners will agree that whatever's said in the discussion stays between them and their partner(s).
- **Step 1: Setting expectations**
 - Learners will choose actions to focus on to follow a ground rule of *treating each other with dignity and respect* (continued on next page)

- **Step 2: Getting to know each other**
 - They'll do some quick icebreakers to learn about each other
- **Step 3: Applying the concepts learned in Lessons 1 and 2**
 - They'll each share about their personal values, guided by their answers from a self-reflection exercise in Lesson 2
 - While their partner shares, they'll practice active listening skills (listening with the goal of understanding, taking notes, paraphrasing their partner's view to check for understanding)
 - The pair will identify how their values overlap
- **Step 4: Reflecting on the conversation**
 - Each learner will complete a questionnaire as a personal reflection on how the conversation went



Lesson 3. Cultivate intellectual humility



Key concepts covered:

- Intellectual humility and the value of acknowledging and learning from our mistakes
- Speaking with humility
 - Speak for yourself
 - Own your uncertainty
- Belief updating
- The theory of growth vs. fixed mindset, and how to cultivate a growth mindset
- Shifting from warrior mode to explorer mode

Summary:

- Most of us have a false impression that we know a lot more than we actually do. But in reality, this is an illusion. We also often go to great lengths to avoid being wrong. These tendencies can limit us in a variety of ways.
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- We can choose a better path by cultivating **intellectual humility**: the willingness to acknowledge the limits of our knowledge and the possibility of being wrong. With intellectual humility, we don't need to fear being wrong. Instead, we can view it as a benefit – we now know something we didn't know before.
- Becoming more intellectually humble is a gradual process, but we can begin by **speaking with humility**: choosing our words carefully to show that we're presenting our subjective perspective, rather than stating irrefutable facts.
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- Two specific techniques we can use are **speaking for ourselves** only (using "I," "me," and "my" statements) and **owning our uncertainty** (indicating that we're moderately certain that we're correct).
- Another trick we learned is called **belief updating**. Rather than thinking about our beliefs as having an on-off switch, we can think of each of our beliefs as having a *dimmer* switch. We can adjust our degree of certainty about each belief to reflect how certain we are. We don't need to think about our beliefs as being all-or-nothing, we can be more nuanced and adjust our degree of certainty over time.
- The theory of growth mindset shows us why accepting the limits of our knowledge can be quite good for us. Those with a **fixed mindset** believe that intelligence and ability are set in stone: This often causes them to prioritize looking smart at all costs, which makes it harder to learn and grow.
- But those with a **growth mindset** believe that intelligence and ability can develop. As a result, they often relish accepting new challenges, which makes it easier for them to learn and grow.
- We can apply these insights to how we behave in disagreements. Rather than approaching a disagreement like a warrior entering into a battle, we can instead approach disagreements like an explorer discovering the unknown (we can adopt an **explorer mindset**). We can be curious, and we can seek to *understand* rather than to win.
- In order to inject more growth into your mindset, you can acknowledge that your abilities are fluid, view each mistake as a learning opportunity, and challenge yourself to do things you haven't already mastered.

Lesson 4. Welcome diverse perspectives



Key concepts covered:

- The benefits of engaging with diverse perspectives
- Groupthink
- Exploring how and when to draw the line on difficult conversations
- Addressing learners' common concerns about engaging with diverse perspectives

Summary:

- Speaking to people we disagree with can lead to a variety of benefits.
- The first benefit is: **It helps you uncover your blindspots and find the truth.** Exposing ourselves to different perspectives often brings our attention to information and ideas that were previously hidden from our view.
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- The second benefit is: **It helps you make new discoveries and unlock creativity.** Taking in new perspectives gives us access to ideas and information we need to come up with innovative solutions to difficult problems.
- The third benefit is: **It helps you make wiser decisions and avoid groupthink.** Simply adding more people to a decision-making process doesn't necessarily lead to good outcomes because groups can fall prey to groupthink. To avoid this pitfall, you need a diversity of perspectives among the members of the group, as well as the right conditions to foster open discussion and dissent.
- The fourth benefit is: **It helps you become a more effective communicator.** Engaging with people who disagree with you is the best way to train yourself to speak persuasively to those who see things differently than you.
- The fifth benefit is: **It helps us build diverse coalitions to solve difficult problems.** By engaging with people who see things differently from us, we can find new partners to work with in order to achieve a common goal.
- Of course, there comes a point where we have to draw a line between ideas we disagree with but are worth discussing, and conversations that just aren't worth having. It's entirely in your power to decide where you want to draw your line. As you make these decisions, you can consider the various pros and cons on a case by case basis.

Peer-to-Peer Conversation 2

- **Step 1: Setting expectations**
 - Learners will select specific actions they will take to work together to cultivate *intellectual humility*
- **Step 2: Getting to know each other**
 - They'll get better acquainted with an icebreaker exercise
- **Step 3: Applying the concepts learned in Lessons 3 and 4**
 - They'll work together to think through various perspectives on a scenario involving a moral dilemma
 - While their partner shares, they'll practice active listening skills
 - They'll work together to consider additional perspectives on the dilemma and fill in their blind spots
- **Step 4: Reflecting on the conversation**
 - Each learner will complete a questionnaire as a personal reflection on how the conversation went



Lesson 5. Explore other worldviews



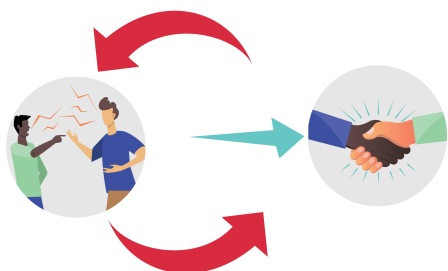
Key concepts covered:

- The “Exhausted Majority”
- Explorer mindset tactics
 - Listen with strength
 - Decode people’s language
 - Dig beneath the surface with the Five W’s
 - Separate goals from strategies
 - Start by crossing short bridges

Summary:

- We began by exploring how common it is for us to develop misperceptions about what other people believe and why they believe it. We learned that we are, in fact, less divided than we tend to think.
- In reality, two-thirds of Americans fall into a group called the **“Exhausted Majority.”** The majority of people are frustrated by our bitter divides and believe that we can find common ground.
- The best way for us to understand who people truly are and what they believe is by entering into “explorer mindset.”
- The five explorer tactics we can use to search for common ground with other people are:
 1. **Listen with strength:** We’ll learn more effectively if we can process what we hear without immediately judging or reacting to what we’ve heard.
 2. **Decode people’s language:** We can discover the moral foundations underlying people’s positions if we listen carefully and analyze the words they use.
 3. **Dig beneath the surface with the Five Ws:** We can reveal the reasons why people believe what they believe by asking them questions about their values and experiences. As a reminder, the Five Ws are:
 - **“Who** in your life had the most impact on the way you think about this issue?”
 - **“What** life experiences might have led you to develop this view?”
 - **“Where** do you see this issue playing out in your life?”
 - **“When** do you think your view applies? Are there any exceptions?”
 - **“Why** is this issue so important to you?”
 4. **Separate goals from strategies:** We can uncover a common goal with someone, even if we favor different strategies to accomplish that goal.
 5. **Start by crossing short bridges:** We can work up to crossing a long bridge by practicing crossing short bridges first.

Lesson 6. Challenge the culture of contempt



Key concepts covered:

- Culture of contempt
- Embracing clumsy conversations:
 - Forgiving mistakes
 - Listening with strength
 - Allowing people to express themselves before rushing to judgment
- Navigating online conversations

Summary:

- Our **culture of contempt** is harming us as individuals and as a society. As the science showed us, shaming people we disagree with is less persuasive, and has long-term consequences for our health and the health of others.
- The good news is, we don't have to be addicted to contempt. We can break this negative cycle by choosing to treat people with dignity and respect, even when we strongly disagree with them. By treating people with respect and nonjudgmentalism, we're more likely to open up people's hearts and minds, and make progress on the issues we care about.
- Instead of *perpetuating* the cycle of contempt, there are specific actions that we can take to *break* this cycle. Both in-person and online, we can choose to embrace **clumsy conversations**, where we're *forgiving of mistakes*, we *listen with strength*, and we allow people to express themselves before leaping to immediate judgment.
- By taking this approach, people will be far more likely to enter into difficult conversations with us with a willingness to be open, honest, and vulnerable. These types of conversations are essential for us to make progress on crucial social issues.
- We can also approach our online conversations differently, by moving difficult conversations away to one-on-one conversations. In private conversations, people no longer feel the need to *perform* in front of an *audience* so the conversation is much more likely to be productive.
- Our culture of contempt is deeply embedded in our society, but by changing the way we approach our conversations in our classrooms, workplaces, neighborhoods and places of worship, we can slowly build a more compassionate culture.

Peer-to-Peer Conversation 3

- **Step 1: Setting expectations**
 - Learners will select actions they will take to practice
allowing for clumsy conversations and forgiving mistakes
- **Step 2: Getting to know each other**
 - They'll learn ever more about each other through icebreaker questions
- **Step 3: Applying the concepts learned in Lessons 5 and 6**
 - Each learner will share their view on a particular issue that was influenced by their life experiences
 - Learners will practice digging deeper to understand why their partner believes what they believe
 - While their partner shares, they'll practice active listening skills
 - They'll work together to decode the moral foundations underlying each learner's viewpoint on the scenario
- **Step 4: Reflecting on the conversation**
 - Each learner will complete a questionnaire to reflect on the conversation



Lesson 7. Manage emotions in difficult conversations



Key concepts covered:

- Thoughts, feelings, action, cycle
- Identifying and reframing automatic thoughts
- Mental traps (cognitive distortions):
 - Jumping to conclusions
 - All-or-nothing thinking
 - Labeling

Summary:

- **The way we interpret events, rather than the events themselves, determines how we feel.**
- We tend to think that our emotions are dictated by the things that happen to us. But there's actually a hidden intermediate step between what happens to us and how we feel about it. Our brain creates an interpretation of what happened, where we tell ourselves a story to make sense of what we're experiencing.
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- This interpretation sets a cycle in motion, known as the **thoughts, feelings, actions cycle**. When we experience an event in the world, we generate *automatic thoughts* about the event. These thoughts, in turn, lead us to particular *feelings* about the event. Our feelings then inform our *actions*. Then our actions cause new experiences, which prompt new *automatic thoughts*.
- What this tells us is that we can *change how we feel and how we act by changing our interpretations!* This empowers us to take control over our emotions – including during difficult conversations.
- We learned how strong emotions can lead us into **mental traps** (also known as *cognitive distortions*): flaws in our automatic thinking. These automatic thoughts are usually *exaggerated* and *negative*. We can apply these thoughts to both ourselves and to others.
- The specific mental traps you learned were:
 - **Jumping to conclusions:** skipping ahead to a particular conclusion, without enough evidence.
 - **All-or-nothing thinking:** when we think of things in terms of extremes, without being able to acknowledge nuance.
 - **Labeling:** when we assign a judgmental label to something or someone, based on only one of its traits or limited evidence.
- We learned how we can apply the Taking the Reins method to detect these traps, pull ourselves out of them, and reframe our thinking:
 - Step 1. **Detect** when your elephant might be leading you into a trap. Pay attention to physical signs that you're starting to feel strong emotions.
 - Step 2. **Pause** to identify the traps you've fallen into. Evaluate your automatic thoughts to determine if there are any mental traps in your thinking.
 - Step 3. **Correct** your elephant's missteps by reframing your thinking. You can reframe your thinking by applying the Three Es: check for evidence, eliminate exaggeration, and consider alternative explanations.

Lesson 8. Master difficult conversations



Key Concepts Covered:

- Skills for constructive disagreement
 - Setting conversational goals
 - Listening to the other person's elephant
 - Speaking to the other person's elephant
- Troubleshooting difficult conversations

Summary:

- In difficult conversations, our elephant can get the better of us. It can lead us to behave in ways that feel good in the moment, but actually hinder our own goals. But we have the power to put our riders in charge, to make *strategic and intentional* choices about how we act during disagreements.
- Our rider can adopt a powerful strategy: *focus on winning over the other person's elephant*. This means we'll set the tone for a productive and respectful conversation, and prepare ourselves to speak and act in ways that will land well with the other person's intuitive, emotional side.
- Three steps for effective communication are:
 - Step 1. **Establish a goal for the conversation:**
This involves taking a moment to clarify what you really want to accomplish. If things get messy in a disagreement, you can always think back to this goal to refocus on what really matters to you.
 - Step 2. **Listen to understand the other person's elephant:**
This will help you learn about the other person so you can craft your message to reach them successfully. To listen actively, try *asking nonjudgmental follow-up questions, paraphrasing their view, and identifying their moral foundations*.
 - Step 3. **Speak to the other person's elephant:** This is where you'll craft your message to reach the other person's emotional and intuitive side. Specific techniques you can use are *speaking with humility, using language that resonates with their elephant, acknowledging their point of view, and focusing on common ground* between the two of you.
- If things start to go awry, there are a couple methods of troubleshooting the conversation:
 - If neither person wants to change their mind, you can **name your differences** and agree to disagree.
 - If one or both of you is starting to get emotional, you can **press pause** and take a break to cool off before resuming the conversation.
 - If someone resorts to shouting or insults, you can **take the high road** and show them a better way by acknowledging their point of view and inviting them to continue a respectful discussion.

Peer-to-Peer Conversation 4

- **Step 1: Setting expectations**
 - Learners will select specific actions they will take to *manage their emotions* during the discussion
- **Step 2: Getting to know each other**
 - They'll take a moment to share what they've learned about each other in the past discussions, or what they appreciate and admire about each other
- **Step 3: Applying the concepts learned in Lessons 7 and 8**
 - Learners will work together to choose a topic to discuss where they hold opposing viewpoints
 - They'll dig deeper into each other's views using nonjudgmental questions and active listening, before proceeding with an open-ended conversation
 - They'll work together to identify what difference in values might underpin their difference in opinions
- **Step 4: Reflecting on the conversation**
 - Each learner will complete a questionnaire to reflect on the conversation

