

Shift the Dial Part 4 – STAY CURIOUS

DEFINITIONS

To be curious means to be INQUISITIVE, EAGER TO LEARN, OPEN, INTERESTED, TEACHABLE ... never assuming you've ARRIVED or already KNOW IT ALL.

Stayin curious is about keeping your heart SOFT, attitude HUMBLE & relationships POSITIVE.

One of the most powerful ways to stay curious is surprisingly simple: Learn to ASK GOOD QUESTIONS.

How would you describe curiosity in your own words? How does staying curious help keep your heart soft, attitude humble and relationships positive?

The PROBLEM is CLUMSY communication.

Can you think of a time when a conversation felt clumsy or defensive? What made it feel that way? How did it impact the relationship or outcome? What might have been different if one or both people had asked good questions instead of making statements?

The BIBLICAL CALL is to POSITIVITY & GRACE (Col 4:6, Prov 15:1-2, Gal 5:22-23).

In what ways can practicing positivity & grace transform the tone of our communication? Which fruit of the Spirit do you find hardest to reflect when communicating, and why?

The KEY INSIGHT: You can almost always make the same point more effectively by ASKING GOOD QUESTIONS than by making DEFINITIVE, DOGMATIC, OPINIONATED STATEMENTS.

Why do you think asking questions is usually more effective than making definitive statements? How does asking good questions help prevent common 'faux pas' in your interactions?

Jesus, the Master Questioner, used questions to ...

- * EXPOSE hard hearts
- * Get people THINKING
- * Root out the REAL question behind the question
- * PROVOKE soul-searching
- * DEFUSE personal attacks
- * Wriggle out of TRAPS, where either answer would be wrong
- * CONNECT with people on a deeper level

Why did Jesus ask so many questions and what did doing so accomplish? Give an example of a memorable Jesus question and note how it positioned the subsequent dialogue.

The Powerful Principle = Seek FIRST to UNDERSTAND.

- * Everything you say & think naturally gets filtered through YOUR frame of reference. A great way to COUNTER that is ASKING QUESTIONS.

Common 'FAUX PAS' we can avoid by asking good questions

- a) Jumping to CONCLUSIONS
- b) Making false ASSUMPTIONS
- c) Failing to appreciate the BIGGER PICTURE
- d) Over-reacting without knowing the FULL facts
- e) Ignoring other people's FEELINGS
- f) Being JUDGMENTAL or GRACE-LESS
- g) Appearing to be font of ALL knowledge, when you're NOT

How prevalent are these faux pas? Are you susceptible to making any of them yourself? Which one irritates you most when you're on the receiving end?

Other BENEFITS to asking good questions

1. Questions are great CONVERSATION STARTERS.
2. Asking questions shows you CARE, you're INTERESTED and it isn't all ABOUT YOU.
3. By asking leading questions, you can make people think it was their OWN IDEA.

Think of a conversation that went well recently. How did curiosity or asking questions shape it? How does asking questions show you care? How do you feel when people fail to ask you anything? How & why is question #3 useful as a leadership tool?

EXAMPLES of more Excellent Questions

1. How can I HELP?
2. What do you think the biggest CHALLENGE is?
3. What am I NOT asking you that I SHOULD be?
4. What would you really LIKE to do but can't because you don't have TIME?
5. If someone with FRESH EYES came in, without any emotional, historical or relational baggage, what would they CHANGE immediately? In which case, why don't we, right now?

Do any of those questions seem to you to be particularly useful or powerful? Are there any others you'd add to the list?