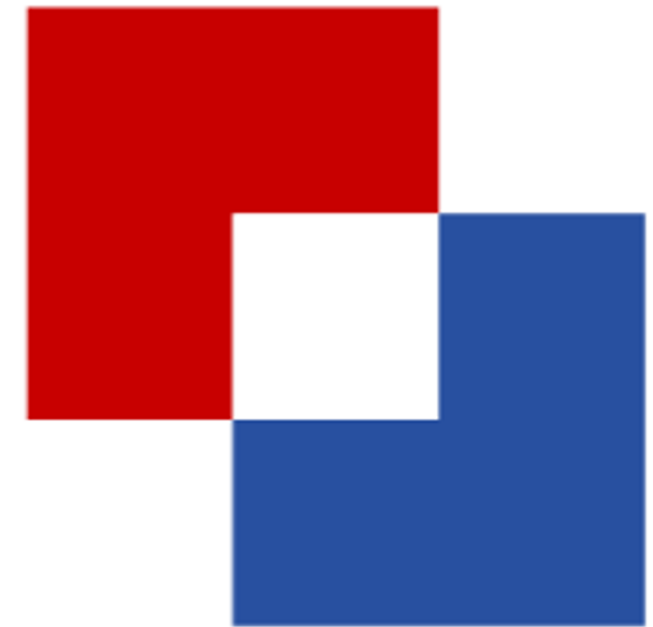


Becoming Braver Angels



New Skills for Managing Difficult Conversations



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INCIVILITY

FAA Yearly Investigations

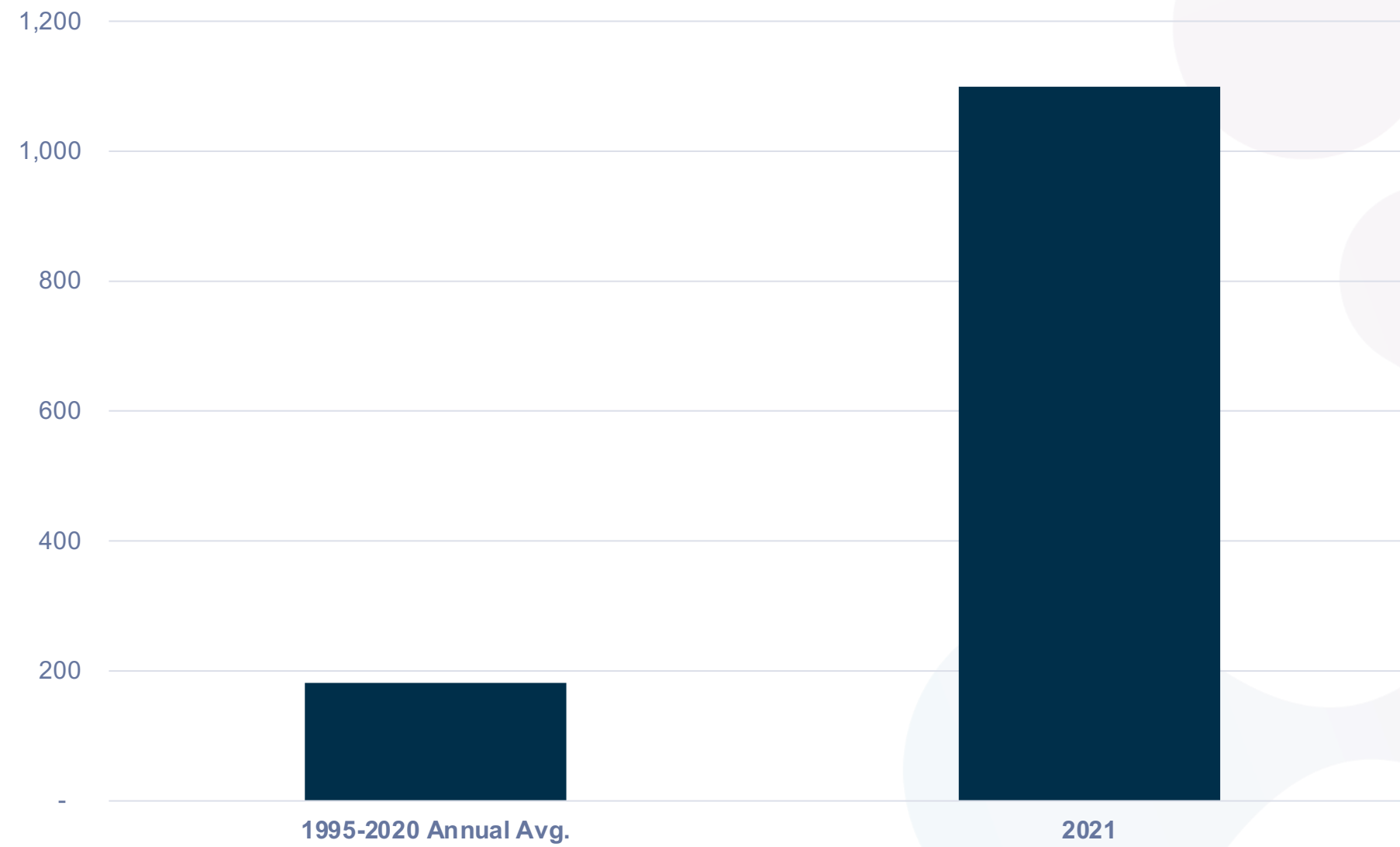


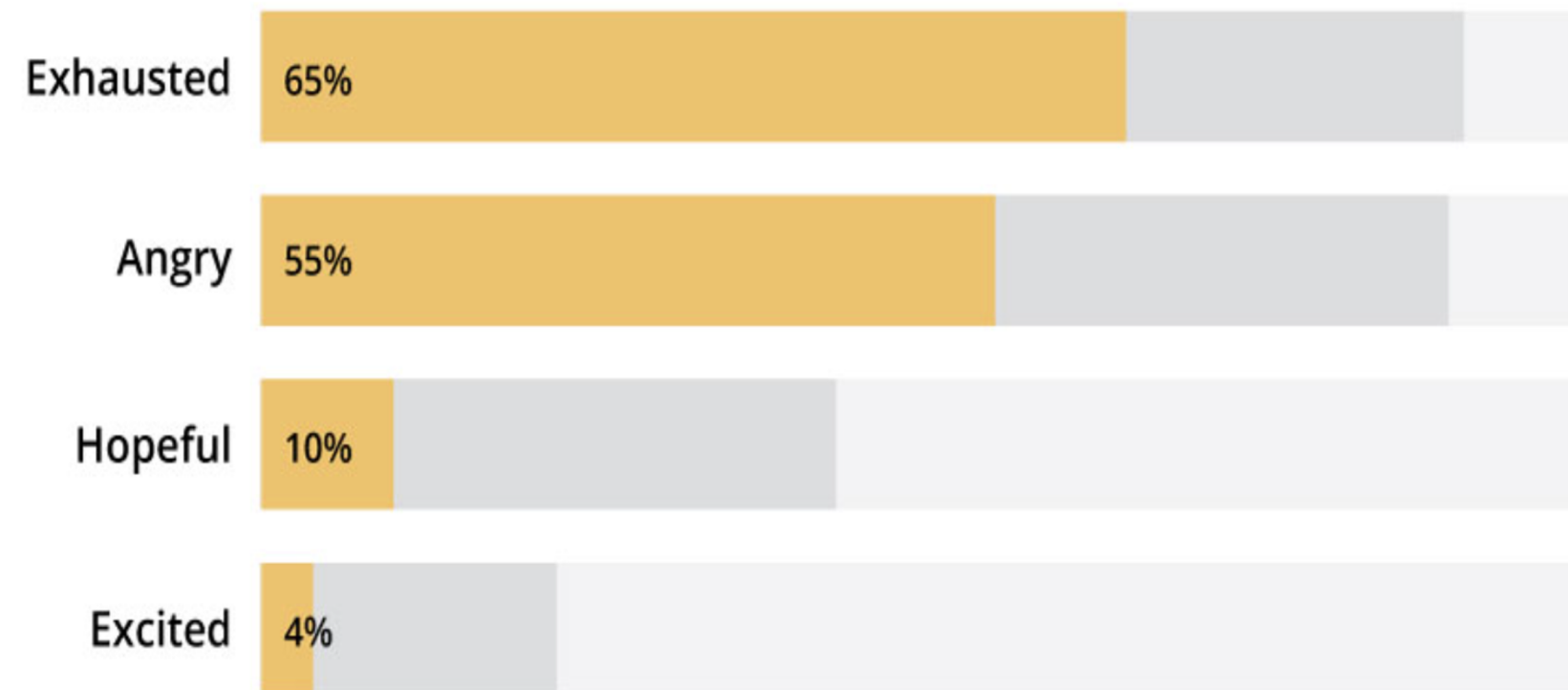
Photo: [Kevin Woblick on Unsplash](#)

Source: [Federal Aviation Administration](#)

Fighting Over Politics is Tearing Us Apart

The % of Americans who "Always/Often" feel ____ when thinking about politics these days.

SOURCE: PEW RESEARCH 2023



"I don't trust people on the other side"

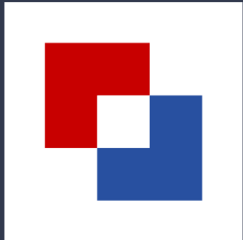
"I feel like my point of view is unwelcome"

"It seems like there is no place for my faith in public"

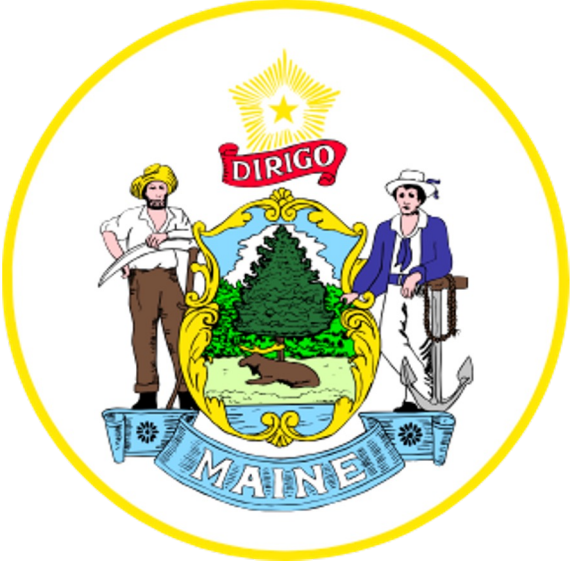
"I have lost closeness I used to have with friends or family"

"I don't feel comfortable sharing my views"

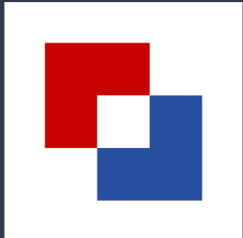
History of Braver Angels



History of this workshop



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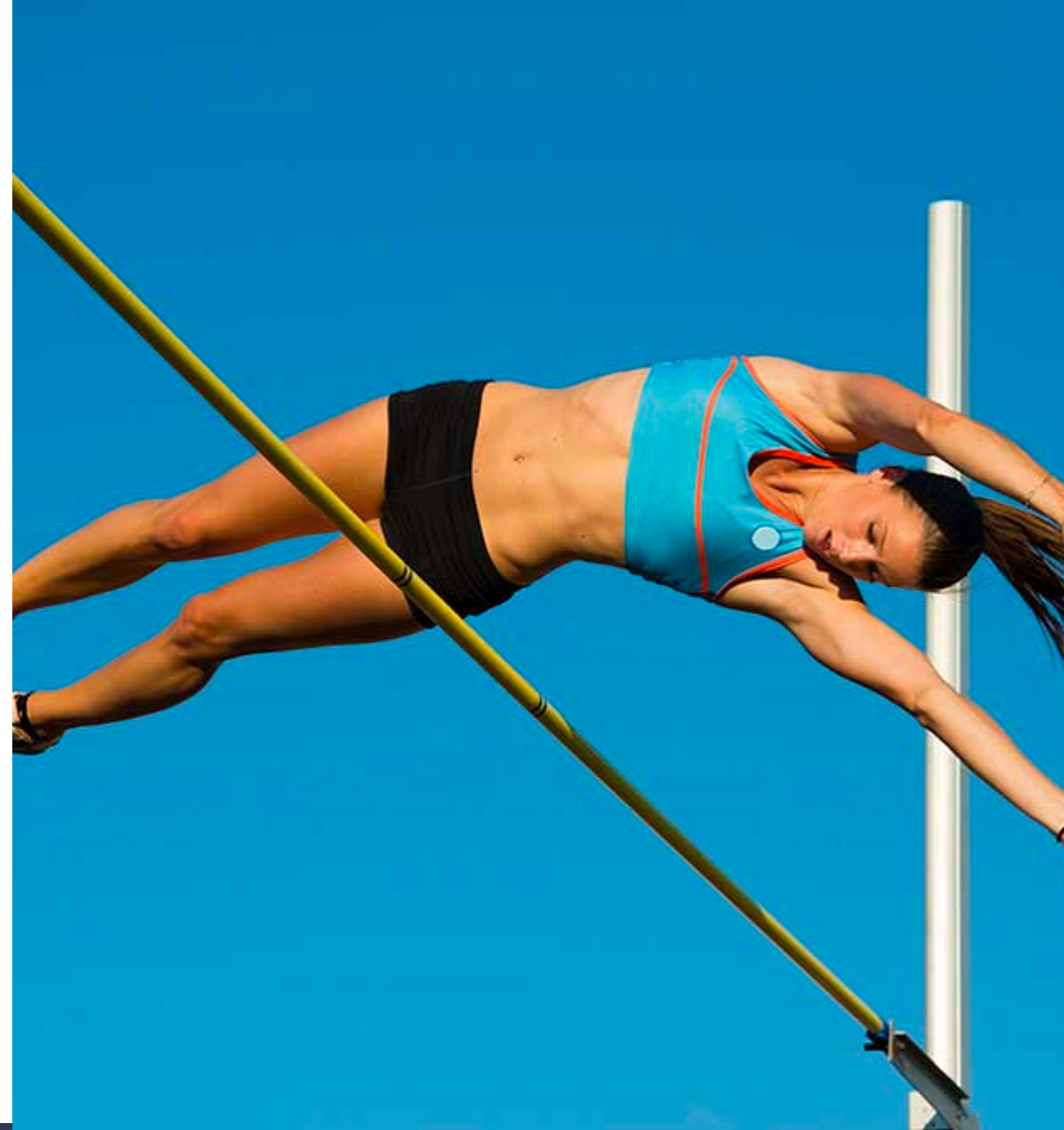


Desired outcomes

Skills to accurately hear colleagues/constituents with whom you may disagree

Skills to express your views in a way colleagues/constituents can hear - even if they disagree

Skills to find areas of agreement or shared interest whenever possible



Agenda

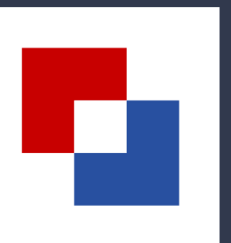
Why this matters

Ground Rules

Principles

Skills and practice

Finishing up



Ground Rules

We are here to talk about skills, not policies.

We are here to help each other work on the skills.



Keep in Mind

No panaceas.

Relationships matter.

Four key principles:

- **Connect first**
- **Accurate disagreement rather than distorted agreement**
- **Focus on policy not motives**
- **Strive to be consistent**

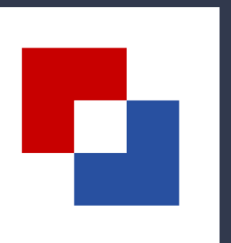


#1

**Connect first, then
share your view.**



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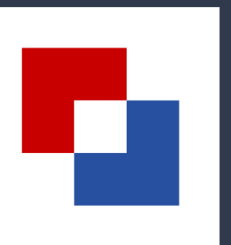


#2

**Aim for “accurate
disagreement, not
“distorted
agreement.”**



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#3

**Focus on policy,
not motives.**

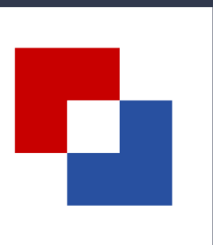


#4

Strive to be consistent.

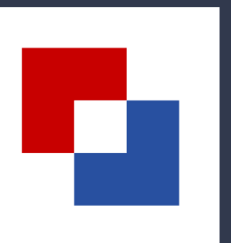


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Skills + Practice

- **Acknowledge**
- **Agree**
- **Perspective**



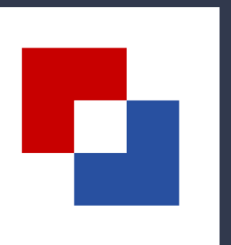
Acknowledge

“For you, this issue is about personal responsibility and not something government should get involved in.”

“If I understand you right, this is a public health and safety issue that the government has a responsibility to regulate. Did I get that right?”



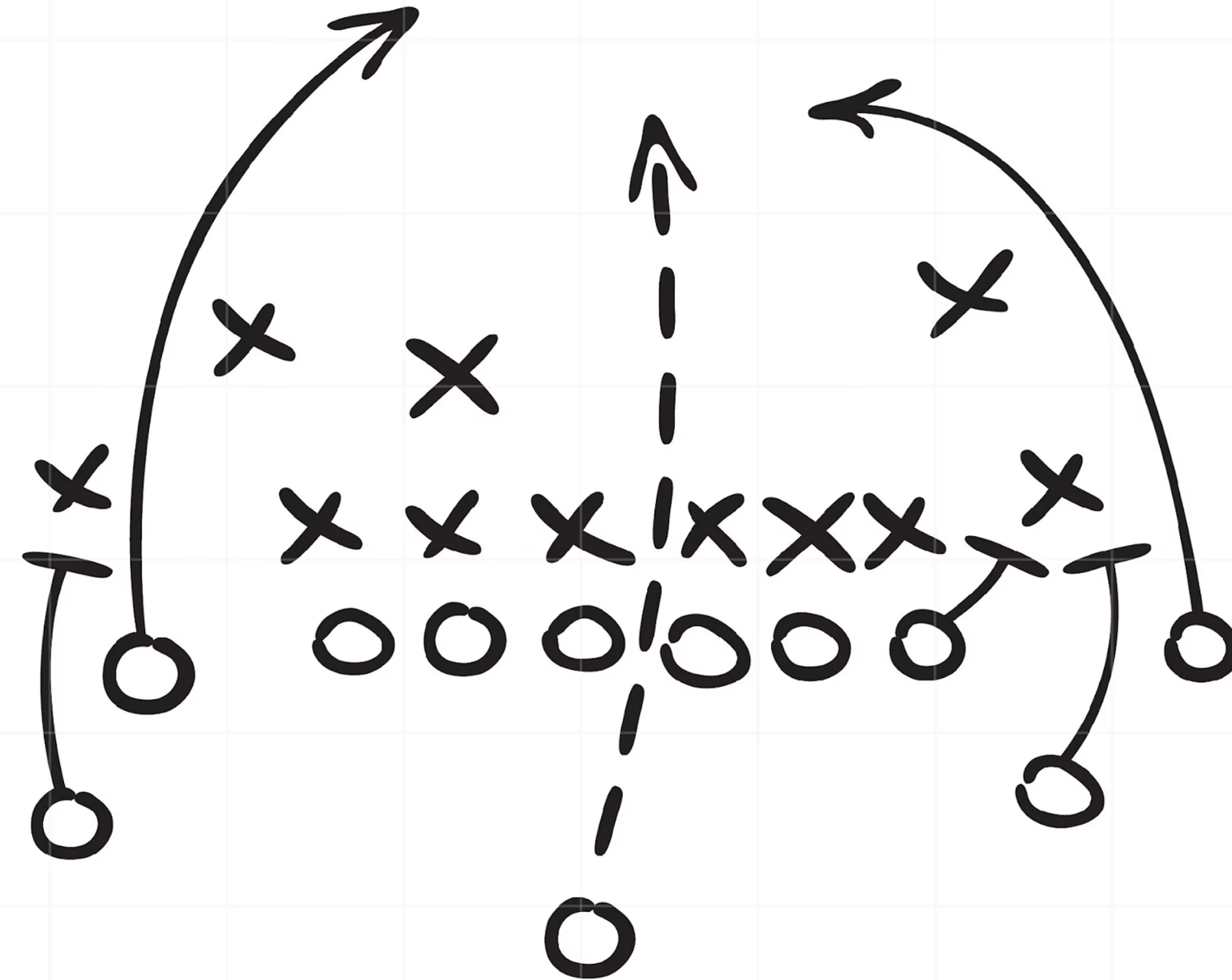
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Acknowledge Practice

- Write down-word for word.
- Read to your partner.
- Discuss how your statement demonstrated the **SKILL** of acknowledging.

chic



Acknowledge Practice

You and your colleagues are going to spend us into bankruptcy and push our debt to unsustainable levels. We just did a bonding bill two years ago and haven't even completed those projects, and now you want more. We have to live within our means! I know that infrastructure upkeep is important, but when I look at this bill, some of it looks over-the-top expensive. I can't support it and it's going to come back to haunt us if it passes.

Prompt 1

Prompt 2

You and your colleagues keep talking about the quality of life in this community, and then go ahead and oppose every effort to maintain that quality of life. This bonding bill is a sensible, no-frills investment in infrastructure. I don't want to spend a dime more than is needed, but I don't want to watch our infrastructure deteriorate, either. If this passes, I hope you don't try to take credit when people are grateful for the improvements!



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Agree Practice

“I agree there are risks that funds could be misused in this social program.”

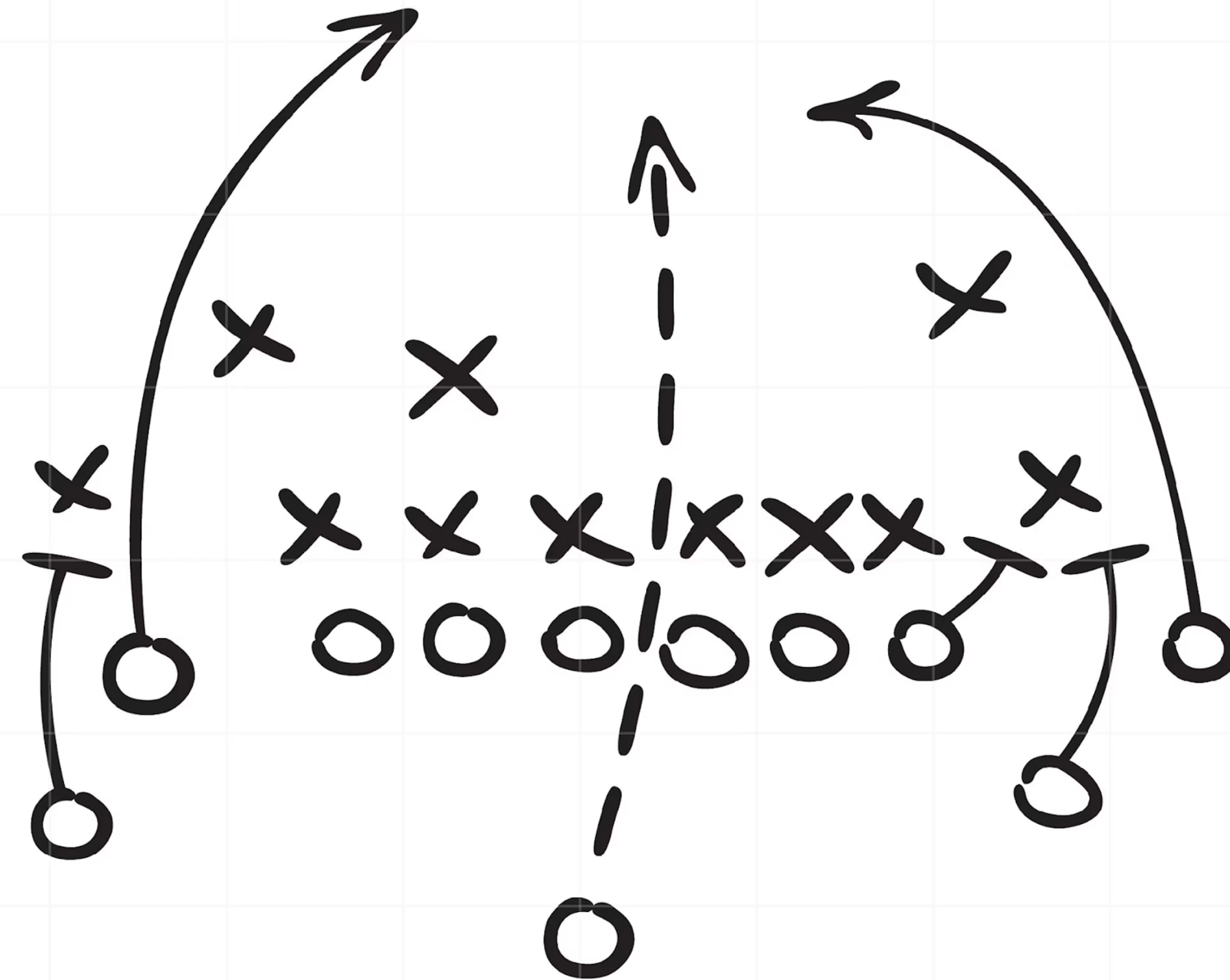
“I’m with you on this being a serious problem that needs to be addressed.”



Agree Practice

- Write down-word for word.
- Read to your partner.
- Discuss how your statement demonstrated the **SKILL** of agreeing.

chic



Agree Practice

You and your colleagues are going to spend us into bankruptcy and push our debt to unsustainable levels. We just did a bonding bill two years ago and haven't even completed those projects, and now you want more. We have to live within our means! I know that infrastructure upkeep is important, but when I look at this bill, some of it looks over-the-top expensive. I can't support it and it's going to come back to haunt us if it passes.

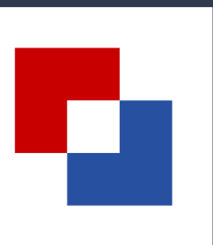
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Prompt 2

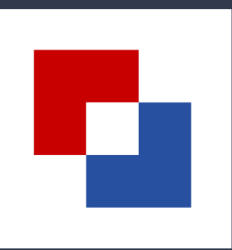
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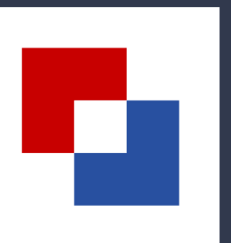


Perspective Practice



“I” Statements

Element	Examples
I Statements rather than Truth Statements	<p>“This is how I see it” “This is why I see it this way.” As opposed to “This is how it absolutely is!”</p>
Name your sources	<p>“I’m basing this on the Attorney General’s report on the current crime rate statewide. I understand that you’re seeing something different in your district.” “I’ve been meeting with school board members, and this is what they are telling me.”</p>
Try to mention a value or concern the other person probably shares.	<p>“I hear you on taking action for community safety, and I think my bill can help us get there because....” “We both want parents to have a say in their children’s education. I just think that this proposal is not the best way to involve parents.”</p>
Avoid negative labels	<p>“That’s a racist/socialist policy.”</p>
Avoid “You Democrats/ Republicans” language	<p>Focus on the people in this conversation rather than lumping them in with a larger group.</p>



Perspective Practice

Prompt 2

You and your colleagues are going to spend us into bankruptcy and push our debt to unsustainable levels. We just did a bonding bill two years ago and haven't even completed those projects, and now you want more. We have to live within our means! I know that infrastructure upkeep is important, but when I look at this bill, some of it looks over-the-top expensive. I can't support it and it's going to come back to haunt us if it passes.

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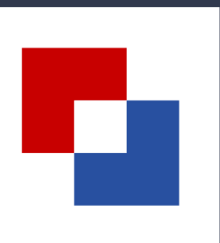
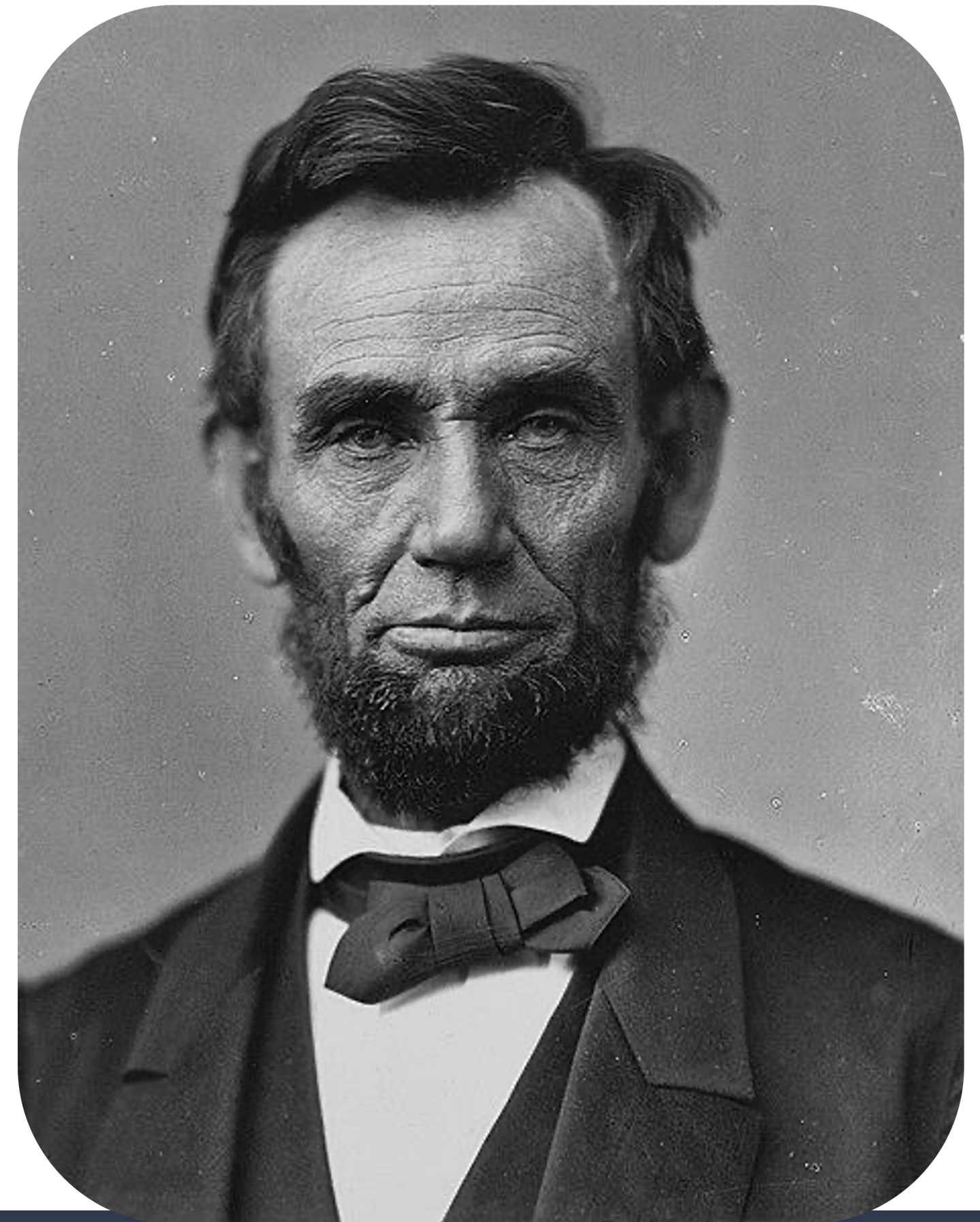


Acknowledge the other person's view and/or the strength of their feelings about it.

Agree with them on some portion of their view, even if it's just a value that you hear them expressing and that you happen to share.

Share your **Perspective** using an "I" statement.

**“I do not like
that man. I
must get to
know him
better.”**

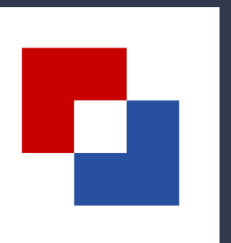




Help Make a Difference!

- [Braverangels.org](https://braverangels.org)
- Text BA to 66866
- dfish@braverangels.org

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Tips!**



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DEPOLARIZING THE UNITED STATES

