

SSBA 2026 Trustee Academy

A brief look at...

CHOOSING 'HATS'

(How A Trustee Supports...)

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Objectives

- Reflecting on our Choices when Supporting Others with Concerns or in managing Conflicts
- Refreshing Communication Skills to Effectively Choose 'Hats' and our Responses



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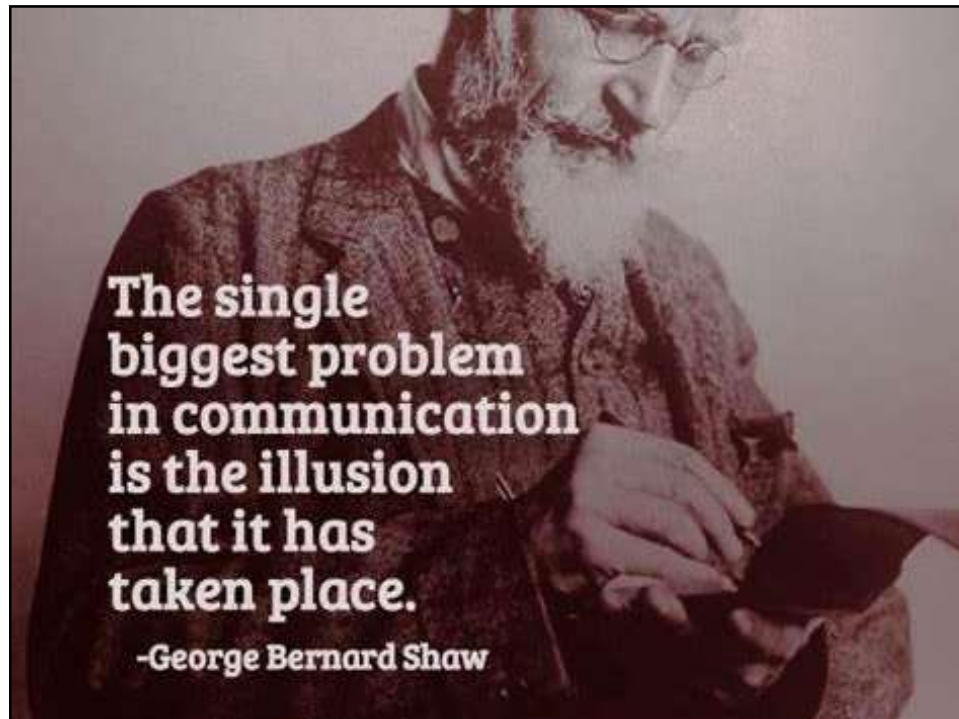
Our
Communication Choices

Reflecting on our Communication Habits...

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The Purpose of Communications

- <https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=video+submarine+lighthouse&mid=56B43E63F69DB1724DCC56B43E63F69DB1724DCC&FORM=VIRE>

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The Purposes of Communications

- **A means to Gather and Share Information – to Realize Outcomes – to Facilitate Change**
 - **How we communicate individually impacts the Speaker and the Listener**
 - **How we communicate impacts the Relationship between the Speaker and the Listener**
 - **How we communicate moves the Listener(s) and the Speaker(s) AWAY from or TOWARDS Common Goals**

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Non-Verbal



7% Words



38% Tone of Voice



55% Body Language/Context

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Words Only Example

Woman without
her man is nothing.

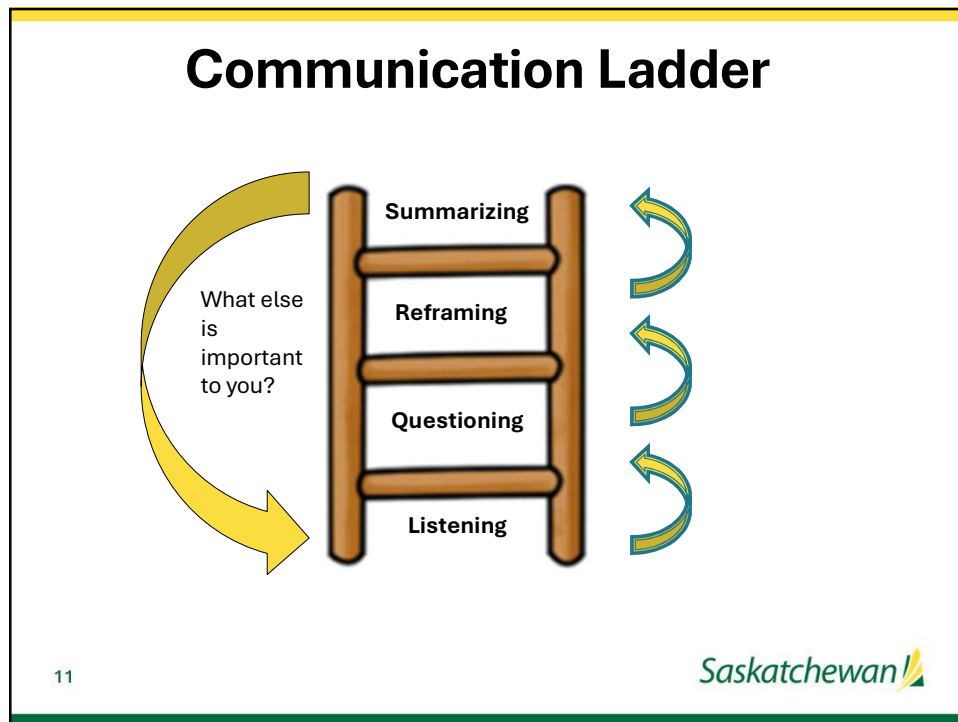
Words Adding Tone Example

Woman, without
her, man is nothing.

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Listening Choices

- Hearing vs. listening
- Listening for vs. listening against
- Listening passively vs. listening actively
- Listening guardedly vs. listening openly
- Listening sympathetically vs. listening empathetically
- Listening for facts vs. listening for facts and feelings
- Listening for commonalities vs. listening for differences
- Listening to words vs. listening for meanings
- Listening for problems vs. listening for solutions
- Listening to understand vs. listening to debate

Listening for Interests

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Understanding Positions & Interests

Position

What I want **as an** outcome or solution.

Interest

Why I want an outcome.

What I want **in an** outcome.

Interest-based communication choices can assist to shift 'my' and 'I' conflicts to → 'our' and 'we' problem solving. And ... assist to shift thinking from one solution to → a variety of solutions.


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The diagram depicts an iceberg floating in a blue sea under a light blue sky with white clouds. The tip of the iceberg, which is above the water line, is labeled with 'Words' and 'Actions'. The much larger, submerged part of the iceberg is labeled with 'Hopes', 'Fears', 'Concerns', 'Values', 'Wants', and 'Needs'. This visual metaphor suggests that what is said and done is only a small fraction of what is truly felt and intended.

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A large, dark green rounded rectangle is centered on the slide. Inside this rectangle, the text 'Demo : Raise Scenario' is written in a white, sans-serif font.

Demo : Raise Scenario

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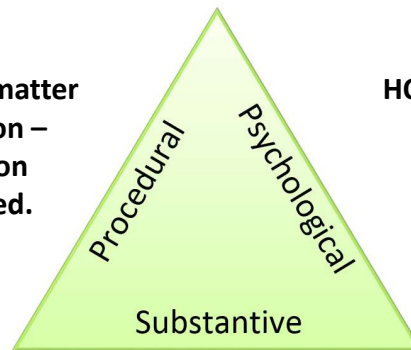
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Satisfaction Triangle

**HOW the matter
– decision –
situation
unfolded.**

**HOW I feel about
the matter –
decision –
situation.**



**The WHAT - the matter –
the decision.**

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Examples of Interests

Procedural:

- Participation
- Representation
- Autonomy
- Transparency
- Trust
- Durability
- Predictability

Psychological:

- Recognition
- Acceptance
- Fairness
- Respect
- Trust
- Acknowledgement

Substantive:

- Money
- Resources
- Health
- Security
- Time

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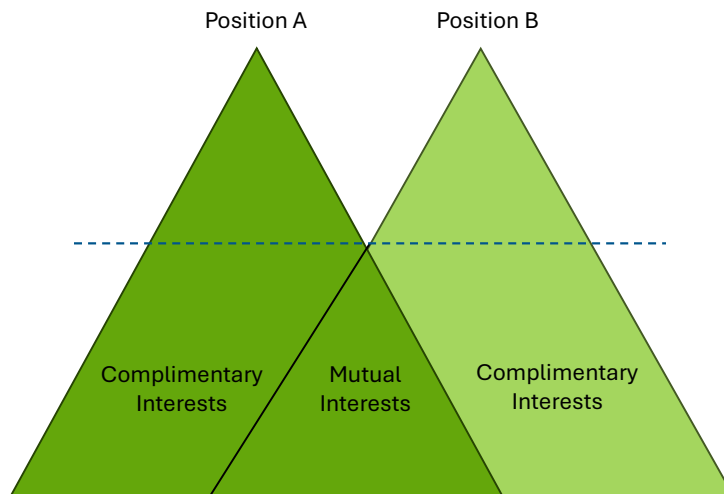
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Key takeaway: Effective leaders seek to understand and understand the interests of those they lead

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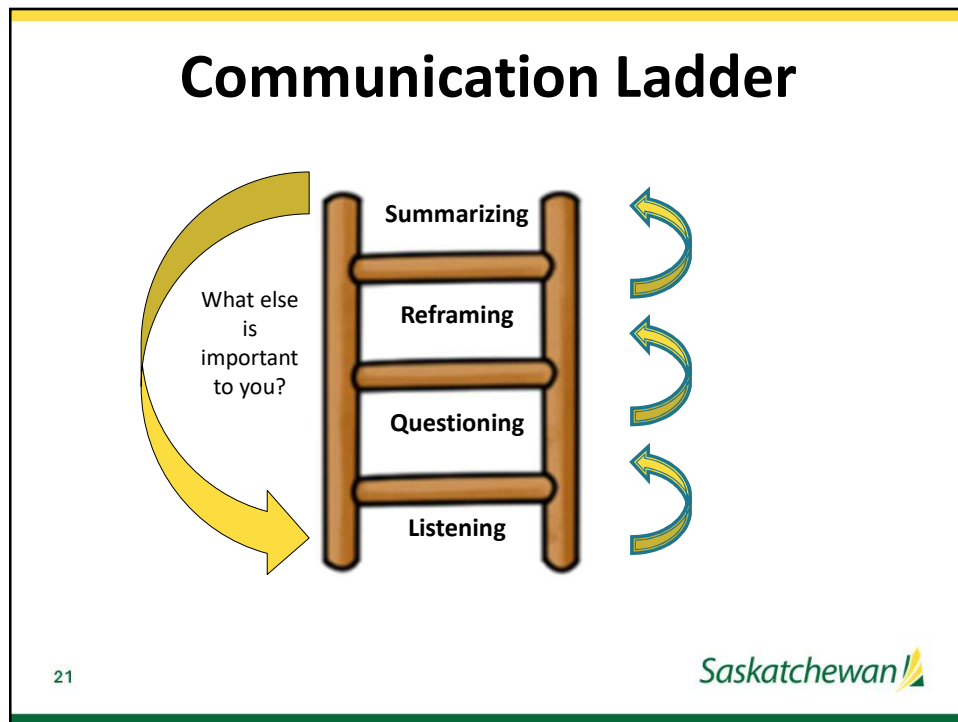
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Questions

-  Form questions from what you hear – an act of ‘listening’ and ‘questioning’
-  Turning judgement to curiosity
-  Use Questions that get to interests rather than solutions
-  Be mindful of when an opinion is more helpful

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Questioning



Be aware of, and intentional about, the use of 'open' vs. 'closed' questions.



Question 'starters' - effective 'W' questions, "How" and focus on different learning styles

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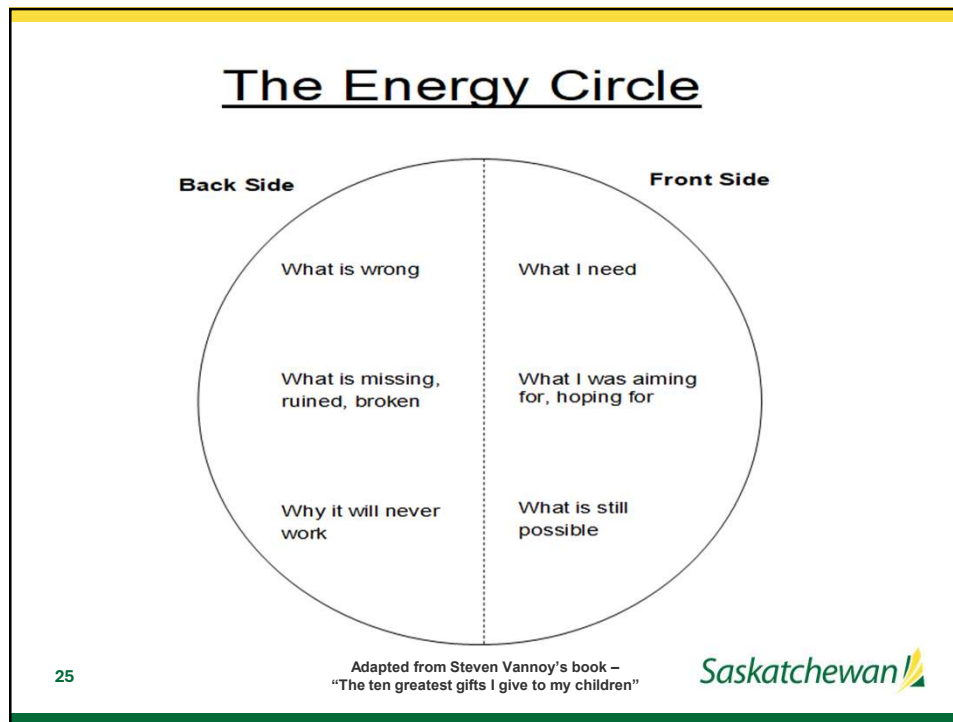
Why Reframe?

- It is not possible to problem solve in the negative.
- Moves people to working toward what they want, not just resisting or defending against their fears.
- Reframing of interests sets up framing of issues in a more forward-thinking way.

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Reframing Steps

- Identify the underlying need (procedural, psychological and substantive)
- Shift from negative to positive or neutral (remember the Energy Circle)
- Remove toxic language
- Ask for confirmation

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How to start a reframe

- You want _____.
- The important thing for you is _____.
- Whatever solution you end up with, you want to make sure that _____.
- So, for you, _____ is the main point.
- You want some assurance that _____.
- It would be a good day for you if _____.
- You would be satisfied if _____.
- It's important to you that _____.
- Your goal is _____.
- You need to see / feel / believe / know that _____.

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Reframing Examples

“Things are always changing around here without any heads up.”

REFRAMED: “You would like some consistency? Or to be included.”

“His badmouthing my service is a really cheap shot!”

REFRAMED: “It sounds like maintaining a good reputation is important to you.”

“Just tell me exactly what to do, I’m tired of everyone having a different answer or having no one around and guessing what is wanted.” **REFRAMED: “You want to know what to expect and what is expected of you, is that fair to say? And having a means to get clearer direction when needed would be helpful”**

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Summarizing

- List the interests you heard
- Check In – Confirm and Clarify what you heard and understood
- Showing understanding is not showing agreement
- Ask .. “is there anything else?”

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Choosing & Refreshing Our Communication Tools and Habits

- **Listening For – Listening Against (Listening)**
- **First Be Curious vs. First Being Certain (Questioning)**
- **Set the stage to Problem Solve Constructively (Reframing)**
- **Summarize – Follow Up – Check In (Summarizing)**

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Our Roles Choices...

At times, when contributing to a 'team or community' we experience 'pinches' between 'team or community members'!

***Do your learning before your choosing.
How we choose to approach things can be as or more important than what we do.***

To move forward be future-focused vs. past-focused.


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“In two to three words what ‘Roles’ do Trustees engage in? What ‘Hats’ do Trustees Wear? “


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“Who are the Stakeholders of a School Board Trustee?”

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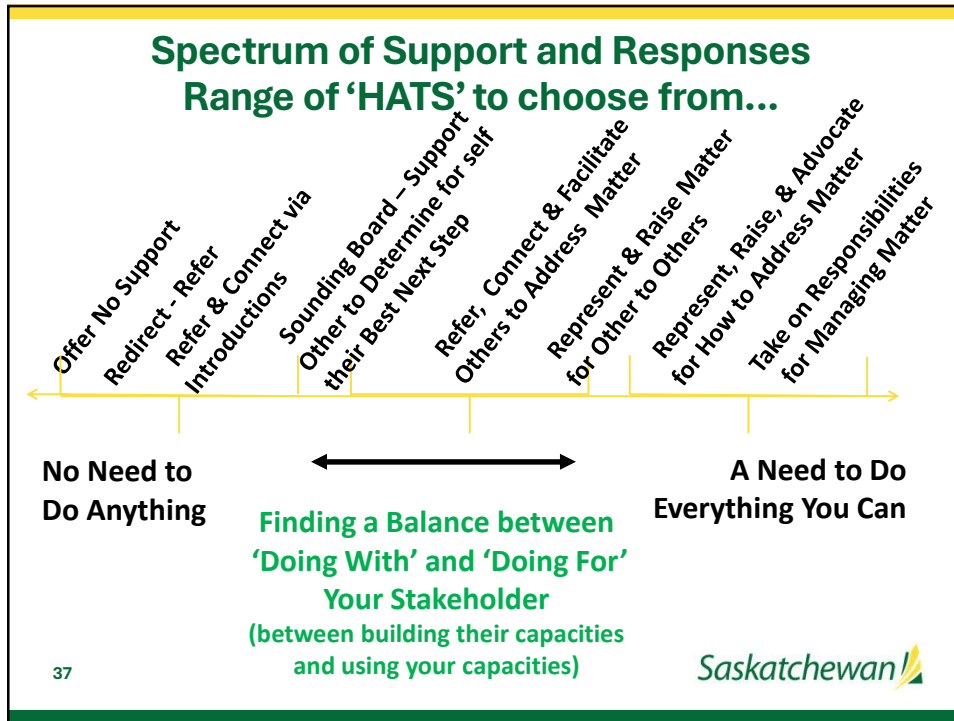
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“Who looks for support from a School Board Trustee?”

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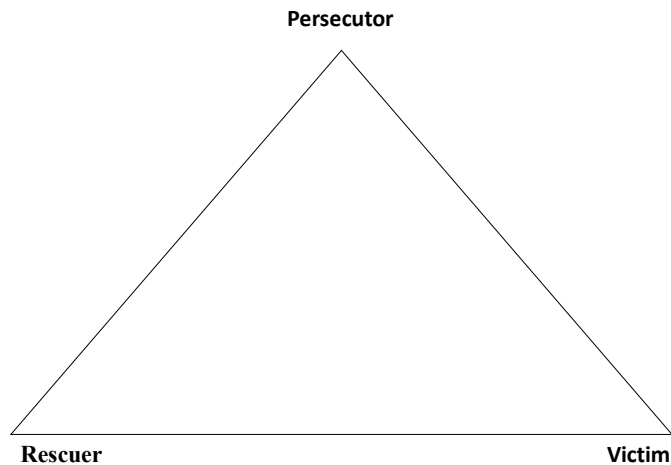
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Demonstration: Tax Scenario

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Karpman Triangle (Rescuer's Dilemma)



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The Consequences of a Pattern of Rescuing

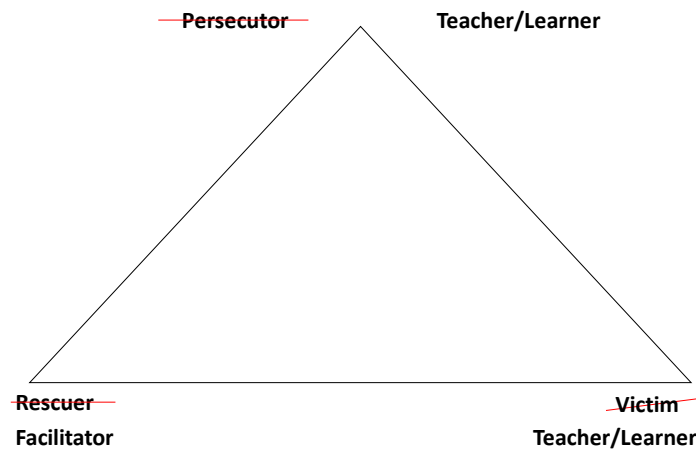
- Stress and burnout for the Rescuer
- Infantilization for the Victim
- Antagonistic dependence between the Rescuer and the Victim

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Karpman Triangle (Rescuer's Dilemma)



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The Role of Sounding Board

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Conflict Escalation



- Mutual Self-Destruction
- Hurt Before Being Hurt
- Depersonalize and Stereotype
- Become Moralistic
- Beliefs Feed Observations
- Group Think
- Rely on Assumptions
- Attribute Motives
- Get Defensive
- Assume Deliberate Actions
- Competition
- Cooperation

Look for Support – Go to 'Sounding Board(s)'

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Demo : Sounding Board Choices

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Sounding Board

- When others are coming to you with a problem.
- Could be a client, a coworker, a friend or family member.
- Helps to stay out of the rescuing role and become the facilitator. As the goal is to help them come up with their own solution, rather than you telling them what to do.

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Sounding Board

1. Validation

- Acknowledge the impact - Feelings / emotions
- Needs and interests
- Understand Point of view / Perspective

*Listen to
understand,
not to agree*

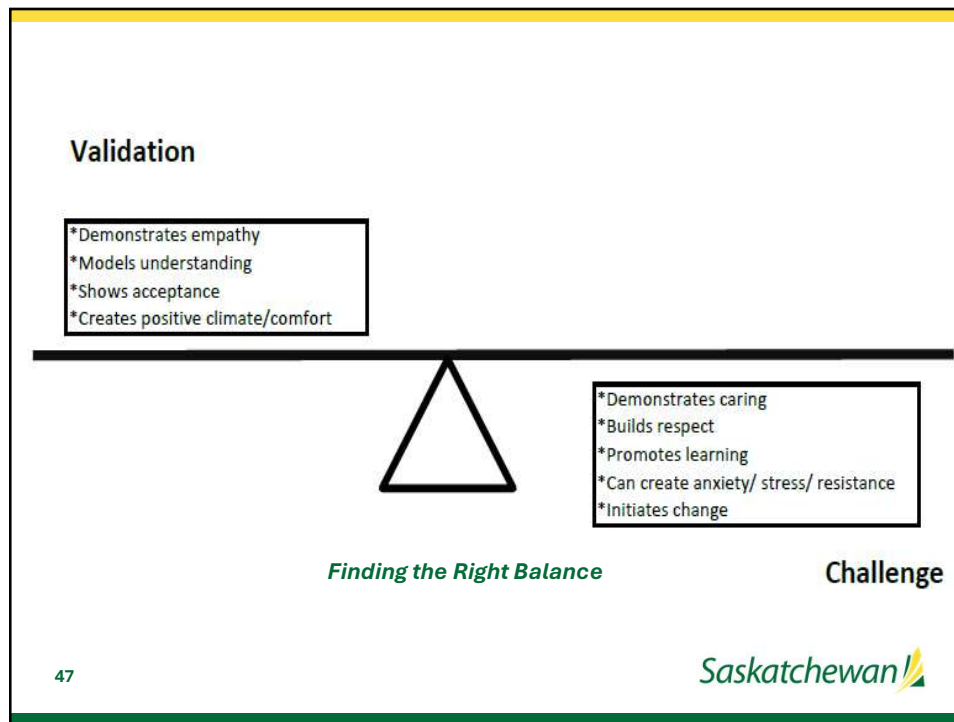
2. Challenge

- Other points of view
- Their part
- Process options: Challenge to take positive first steps to resolve

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Search for the Truth – *Choosing Our Approach*

- Facts are what we agree on, ‘truths’ may vary
- Be honest to yourself about your motives and choices
- Being honest is more than waiting for the other person to ask the right question.
- Be clear about process when searching for the truth(s) – times to investigate and times to collaborate

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Further Training

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