



ELDERS AS SPIRITUAL GUIDES

- Transactional?
- Directive?
- Counselors?
- Presence?



Introduction to Story Listening

Based upon the research and
teaching of Rev. Dr. John Savage
in *LISTENING AND CARING SKILLS*

A man with a shaved head and tattoos is sitting on a rooftop ledge, stretching his leg. He is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and light-colored pants. The background shows a modern city building with many windows and balconies. The scene is lit with soft, natural light, suggesting early morning or late afternoon. The overall mood is calm and focused.

Three Essential Gifts We Bring

- Lived faith in God
- Willingness to be present
- Capacity to Listen without judgement

**Better to stretch for understanding
before rushing to judgement**

What we *do not* bring . . .



- Judgement
- Solutions
- Acts of comfort that might cause confusion

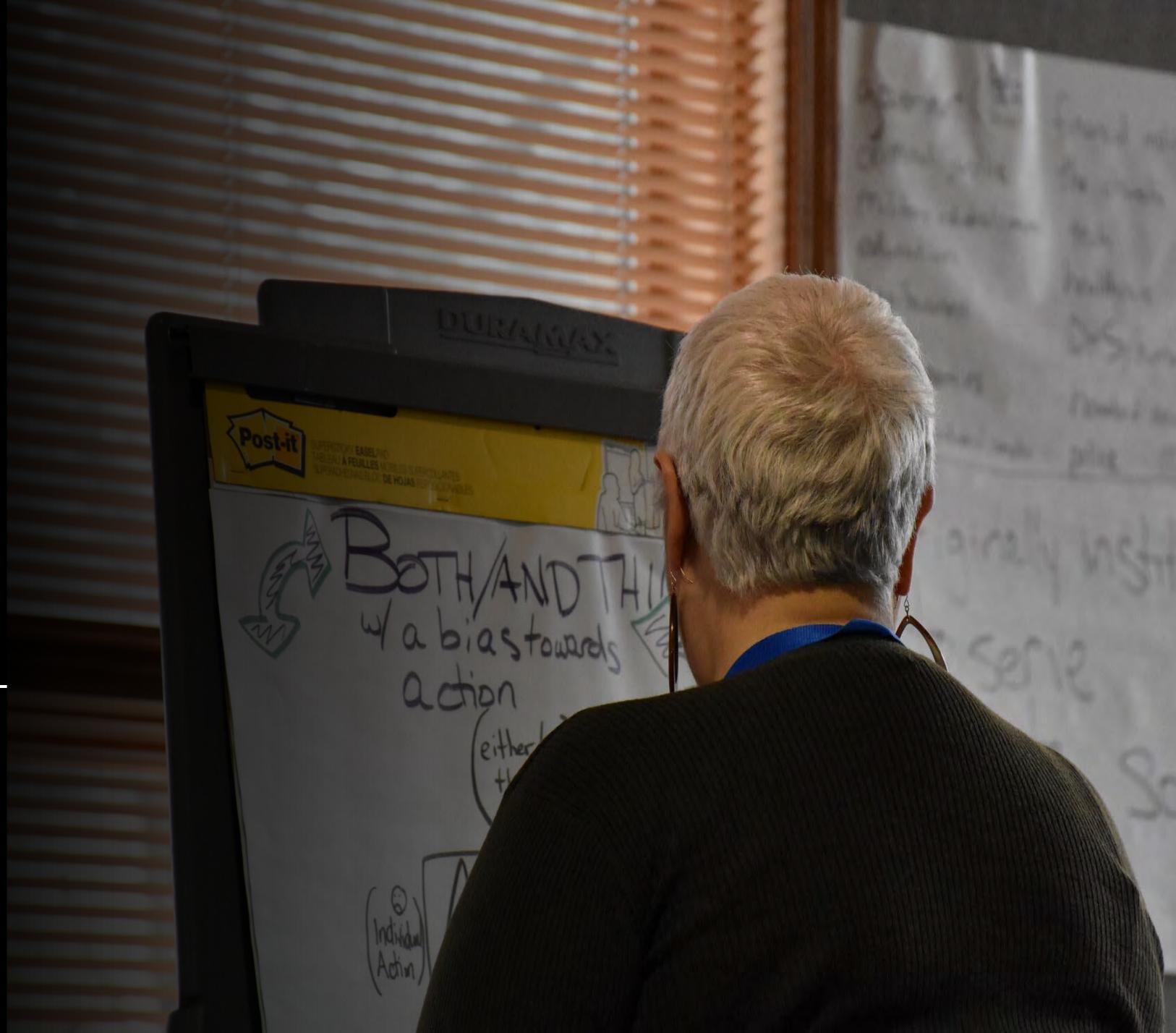
Exercise



- Think of a time when someone made time to listen without judgement to you.
- What did the listener do to help you open up?

*"You cannot
not tell your
story."*

We each have at all times a minimum of two stories within us that would benefit from a respectful hearing

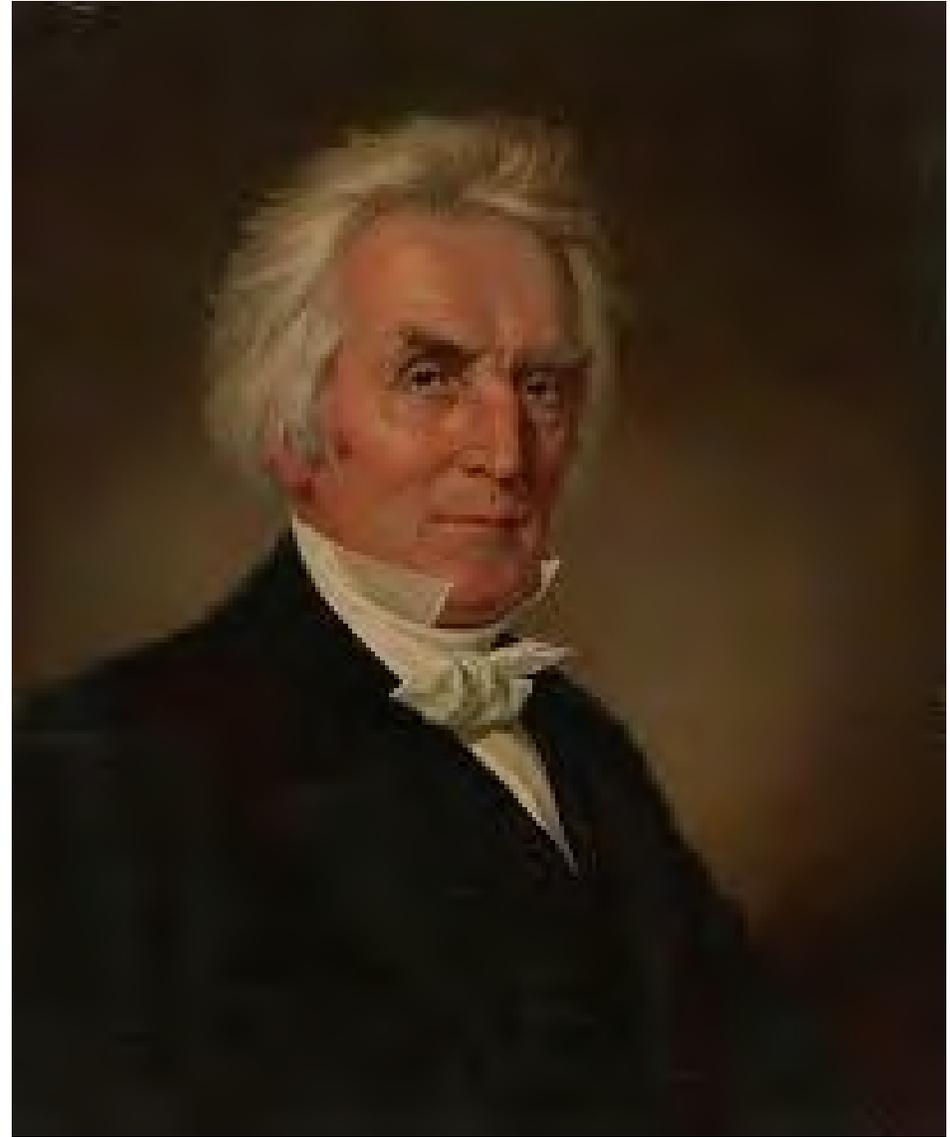


The Nature of our Stories

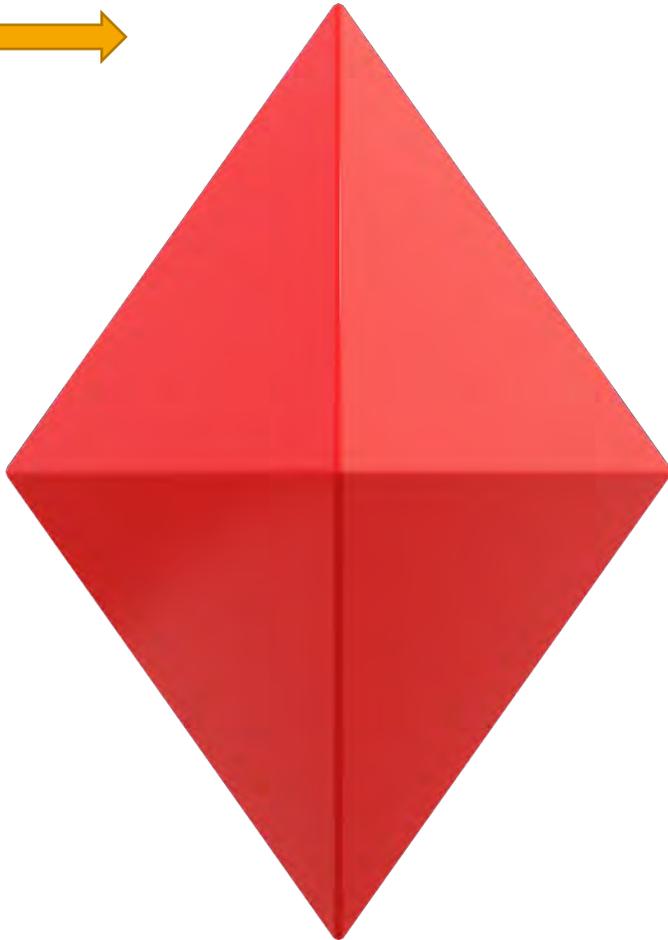
- Often below the level of consciousness
- Sometimes given to us or imprinted on us



Cite an
example of
an Aha story



Types of Stories We Hear



- Data Back Then
- Feelings Back Then
- Feelings Now
- Self-Disclosure/Aha!



DATA BACK THEN

- Data back then
 - *"I remember when . . ."*
 - Puts a distant context to the story I want to tell
 - Smallest level of vulnerability
 - First words may offer clues to the story to be revealed





FEELINGS BACK THEN

- May contain data nuanced with tone or use of feeling words
- *"When I was in high school, I was often bored."*



FEELINGS NOW

- *"I feel great!"*
 - Tone is congruent with statement
 - Body language is consistent



SELF DISCLOSURE

- "I'm not sure what I believe anymore . . ."
- When the speaker's personal insight snaps to consciousness.
- Usually accompanied by laughter or tears





TYPES OF STORIES

- Reinvestment
- Rehearsal
- "I know someone who"
- Anniversary
- Transition

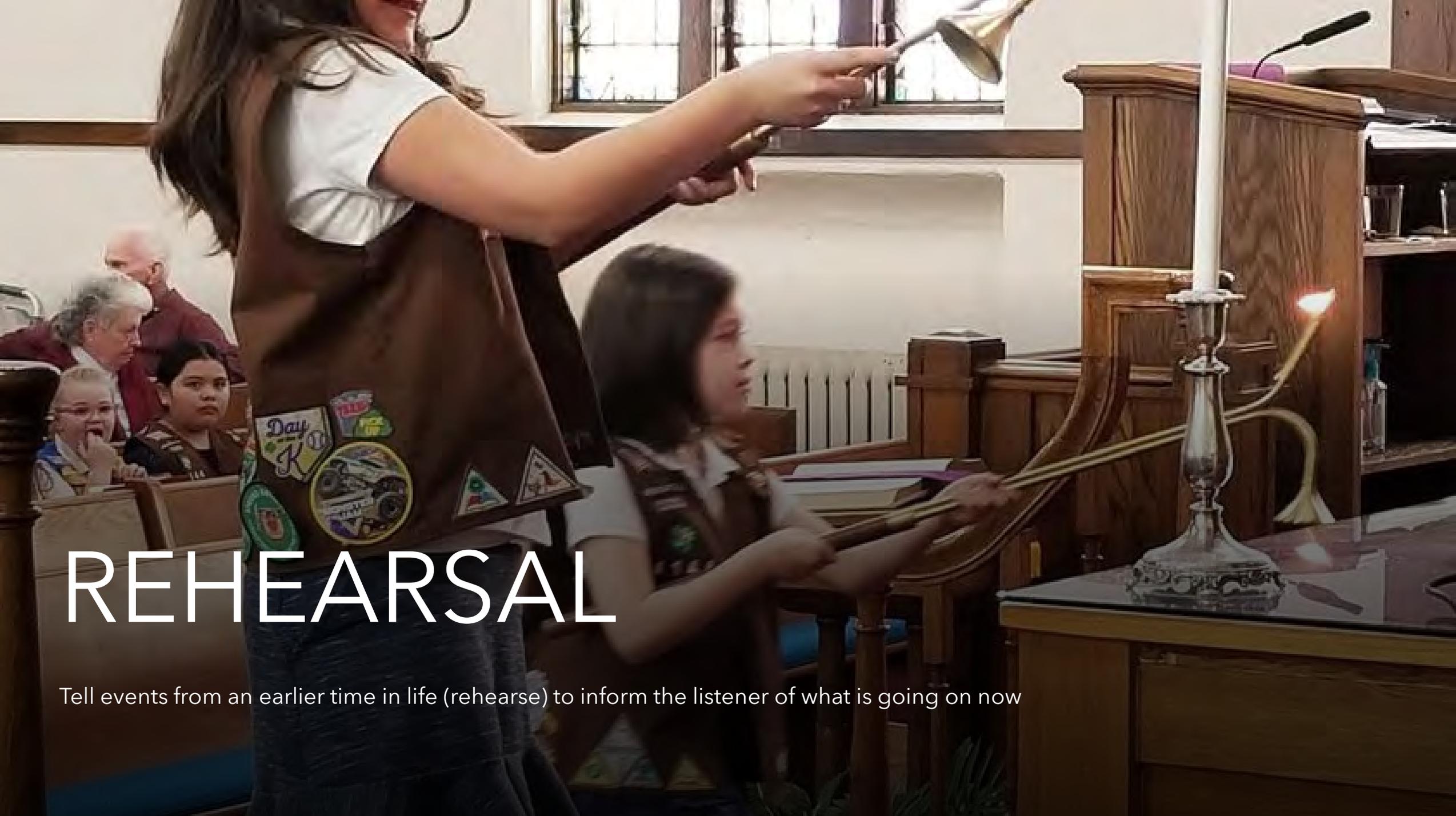
illuminate the Word





REINVESTMENT

Tell of shifting commitments and loyalties



REHEARSAL

Tell events from an earlier time in life (rehearse) to inform the listener of what is going on now

A man and a woman are sitting at a wooden table in a bright, modern office setting. The man, on the right, is wearing a brown button-down shirt and is looking at a smartphone held in his hands. The woman, on the left, is wearing a striped sleeveless top and is smiling as she looks at the phone. In the background, there is a window with a yellow cup on the sill. A solid orange horizontal bar is located in the top left corner of the image.

"I KNOW
SOMEONE
WHO ..."

Projects one's inner
condition onto someone
else



ANNIVERSARY

Rehearsal story told at a particular time of the year to deal with unfinished work from that event





TRANSITION

Beginnings, endings, confusion

COUNTER STORY

- What goes on inside of you as you listen deeply
- Can provide clues
- Risk: stop listening to the other and attend to your story





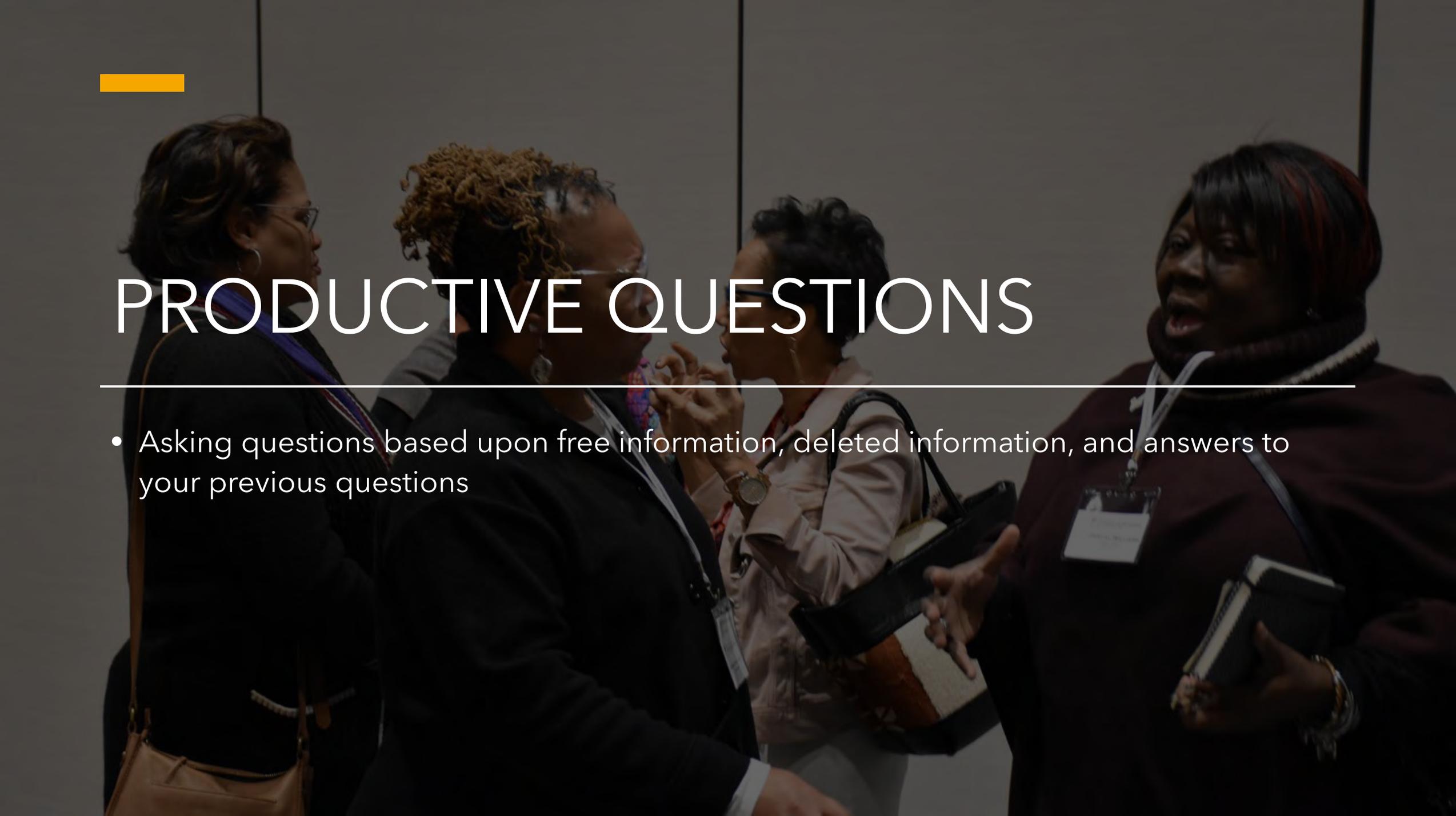
WAYS TO DEMONSTRATE LISTENING

- Paraphrase
- Productive Questions
- Perception Check
- Expressing Feelings and Emotions
- Fogging
- Negative Feedback
- Behavior Description



PARAPHRASE

Saying back to the speaker what you heard in your own words



PRODUCTIVE QUESTIONS

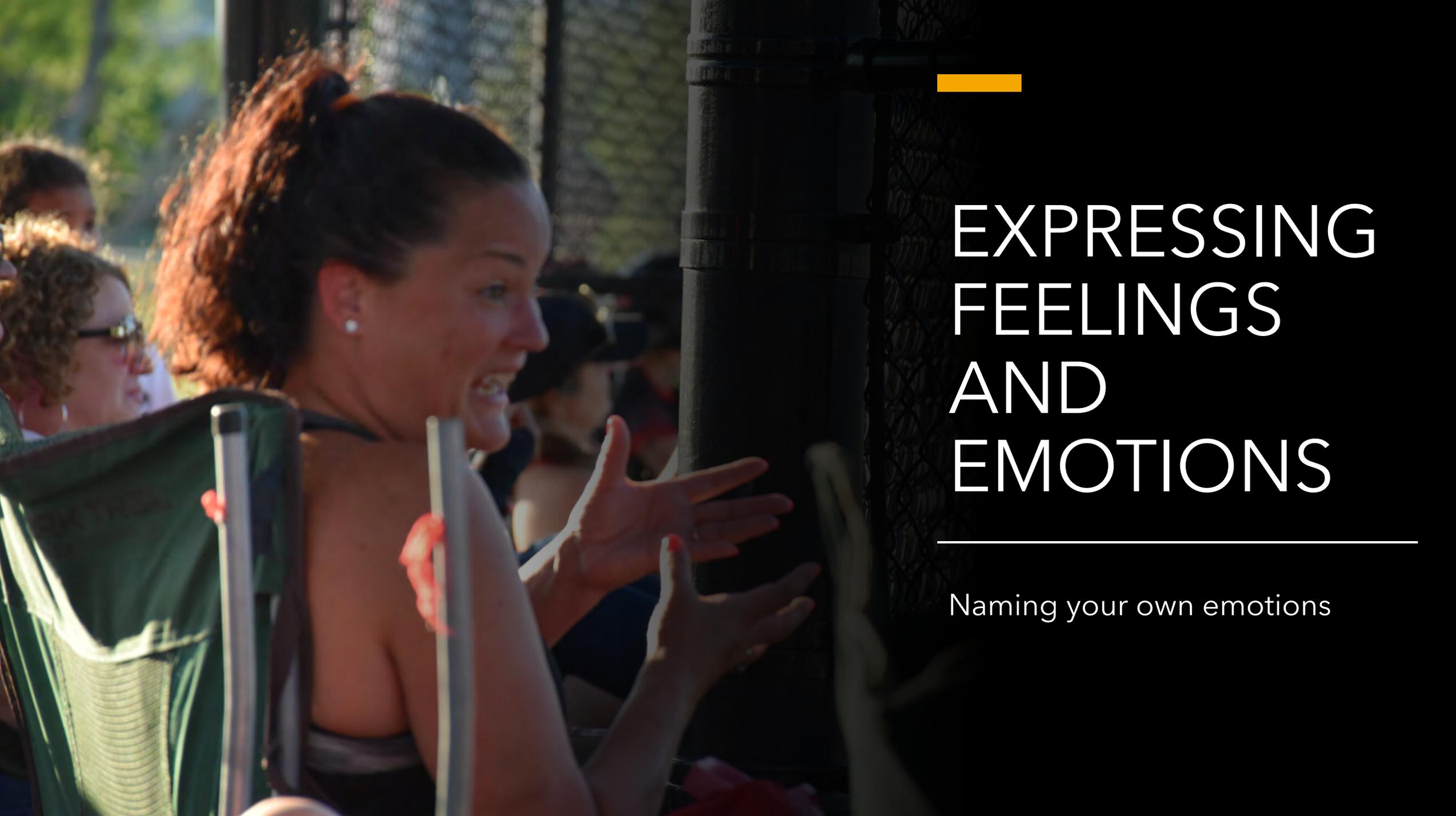
- Asking questions based upon free information, deleted information, and answers to your previous questions



PERCEPTION CHECK

- Checking your perception of another's emotional state





EXPRESSING FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

Naming your own emotions



FOGGING

Naming the truth in another's
critical feedback

A photograph showing a woman with curly brown hair and glasses on the left, looking towards a man on the right. The man has short grey hair, wears glasses, and a blue button-down shirt. They appear to be in a meeting or office setting. A semi-transparent grey box with a yellow vertical bar on the left contains the text 'NEGATIVE INQUIRY' and a sub-header. The background is a wood-paneled wall.

NEGATIVE INQUIRY

Coaching the other
to criticize in
specifics rather than
generalities

A close-up photograph of a man with dark hair and glasses smiling warmly as he hugs a woman. The woman has brown hair and sunglasses perched on her head. In the background, an older man with a white beard and glasses is looking towards the camera, and a woman with blonde hair is partially visible on the right. The overall atmosphere is positive and supportive.

DESCRIBING BEHAVIOR

Describing observed behavior
without judgement