



INTEGRATE TO LIVE

Restore Resilience. Cultivate Community. Impact your World

Week 20 Transcript: Curiosity

Today, we continue our skill-building for healthy relationships by learning more about curiosity.

Curiosity in relationships is an essential ingredient to engage another in a heart to heart connection. It's also a necessary skill to have so we can practice empathy and powerful listening.

Our mind is naturally judging. It supports us in making choices and evaluating if something is safe, dangerous or neutral. It helps us label, categorize and encode information. This is an important aspect of survival – having a developed skill of discernment.

Where this falls short is when we decide we already have all the answers. When we are stuck believing we have the whole story. And, when we unconsciously see the world through a particular lens and assume everyone else sees it the way we do.

Curiosity negates judgment. Curiosity assumes a posture of humility. And, curiosity is playful and brings aliveness to conversation.

When we're curious in relationships, we create a space between us and the other person where attunement, resonance, empathy and understanding can happen.

Since we're talking about curiosity in the context of developing greater empathy and cultivating our listening skills, let's take a look at the practical way we engage in curious conversation.

There are two basic ways to ask a question, closed and open. Closed questions can be answered with a yes or no or very short word or phrase. Closed questions are helpful in conversation when gathering facts like "how old are you?" and "have you seen where I placed my keys?", but not very helpful when trying to perspective take or communicate our understanding of the other person's thoughts and feelings.



INTEGRATE TO LIVE

Restore Resilience. Cultivate Community. Impact your World

Week 20 Transcript: Curiosity

Another way we close a question is by stating our opinion and then tagging on “wouldn’t you say?” or “don’t you think?” There isn’t much curiosity in these questions, just a plea for a nod of confirmation that we, indeed, are right.

One of the biggest skills we can practice as we develop more curiosity is asking open-ended questions. Open questions are curious questions and create space for the other person’s thoughts, reflections and feelings.

Beginning a question with “what, why, how or describe”, for example, are simple ways to begin to cultivate this new skill of asking curious questions. Simply put, the difference between a closed question and an open question is asking, “Are you feeling better?” and “How are you feeling?”

Choosing to listen, and be curious, takes the attention off of our speeches, declarations, arguments and all of the knowledge we want to share with the world and offers an invitation. Being curious invites more of the other person to be expressed and known.

Let’s practice being more curious in our conversations this week as we develop empathy and listening to better our relationships. Be sure to download the action guide to support this process and share what you are learning on our group page.