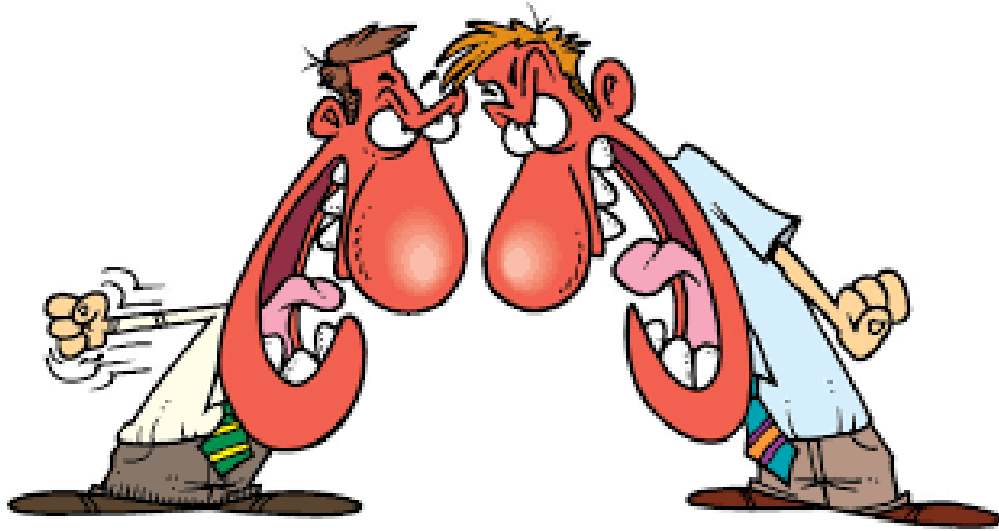




Talk Climate, Practice Peace

Jes Stoltzfus Buller
Peace Education Consultant
Mennonite Central Committee

Landscape: Polarization and Climate



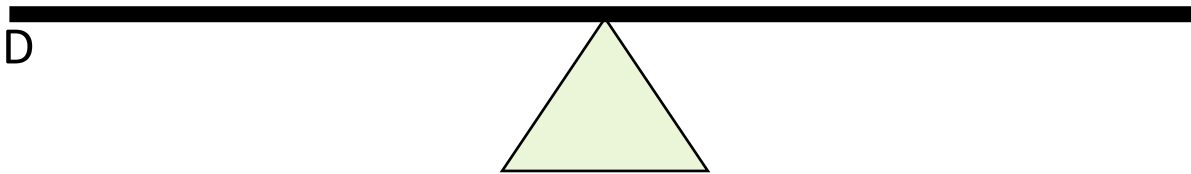
“If people have built their identity on rejecting a certain set of facts, then arguing over those facts is a personal attack. It causes them to dig in deeper, and it builds a trench rather than building a bridge.”

– Katherine Hayhoe

Healthy Conflict



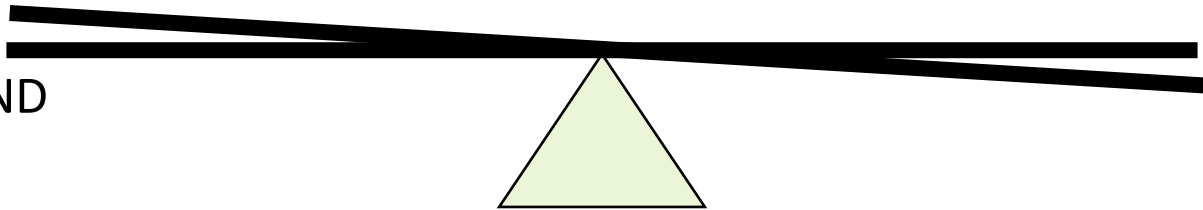
ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
ACCURATELY AND UNDERSTAND



CONFLICT INTENSITY AND
EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT



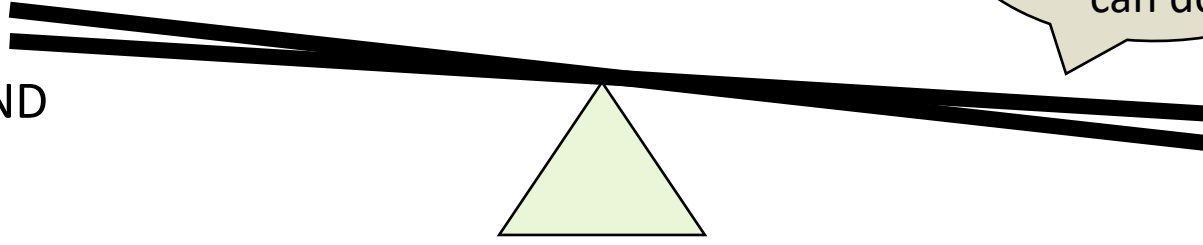
ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
ACCURATELY AND UNDERSTAND



Climate
change
isn't real

CONFLICT INTENSITY AND
EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT

ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
ACCURATELY AND UNDERSTAND

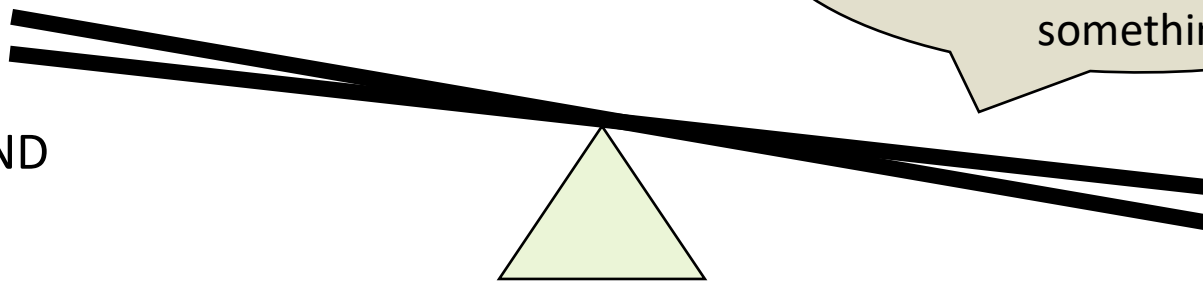


It's hopeless,
there's
nothing we
can do

CONFLICT INTENSITY AND
EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT



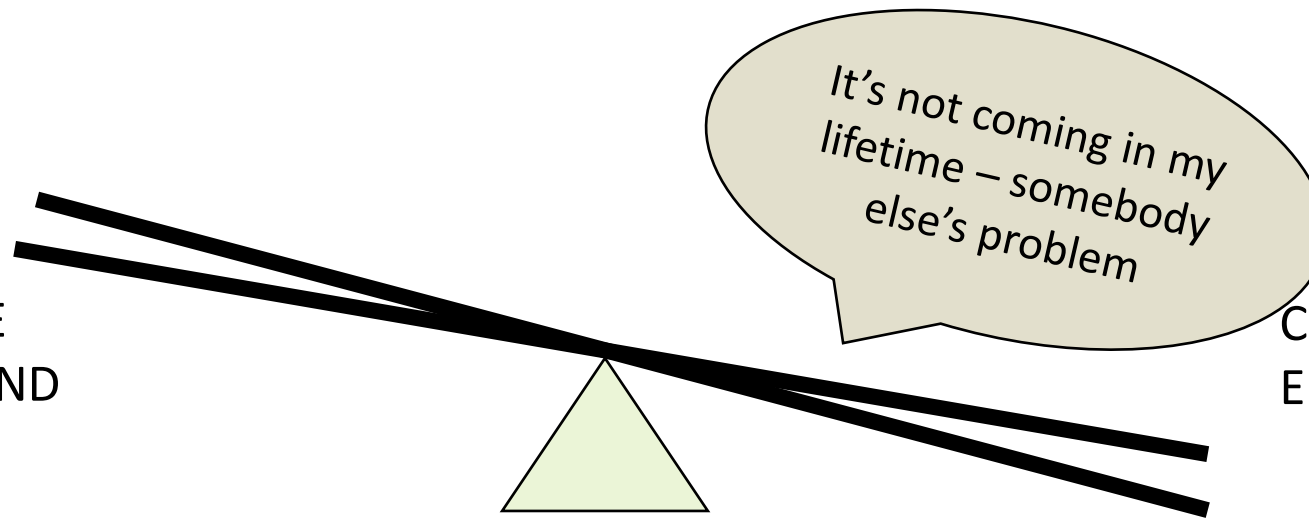
ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
ACCURATELY AND UNDERSTAND



I know that we need to do something, but it's out of my hands. I hope that people in power will do something

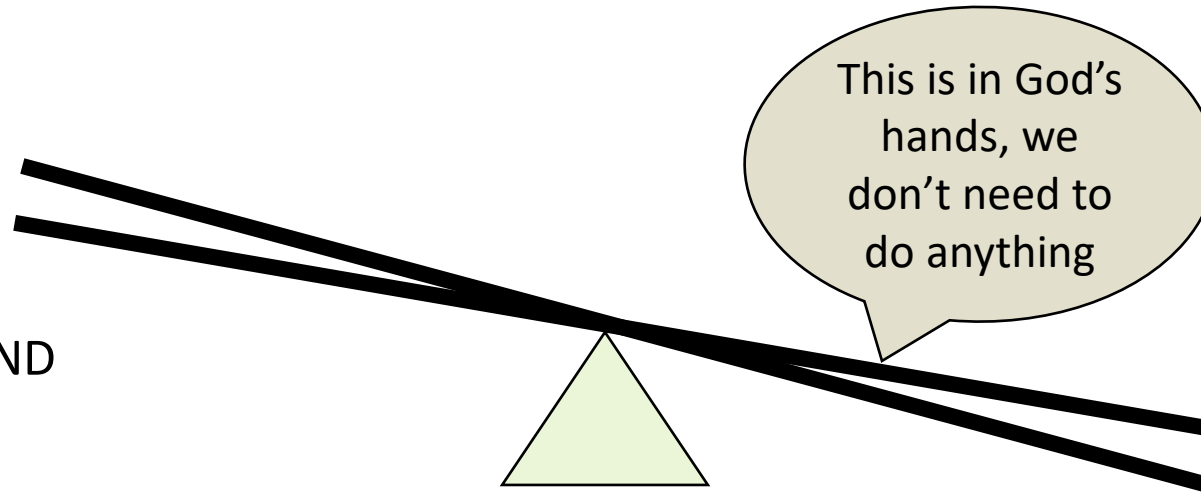
CONFLICT INTENSITY AND
EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT

ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
ACCURATELY AND UNDERSTAND



CONFLICT INTENSITY AND
EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT

ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
ACCURATELY AND UNDERSTAND



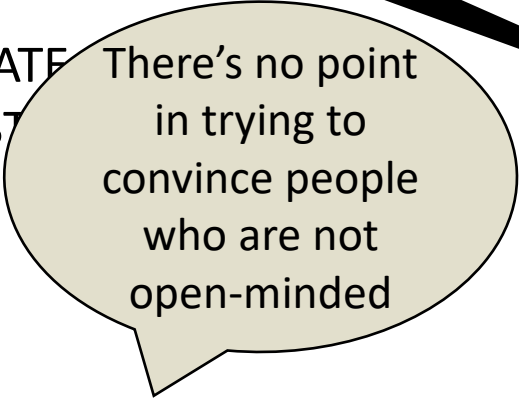
CONFLICT INTENSITY AND
EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT

ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
ACCURATELY AND UNDERSTAND

I usually don't
talk because I get
so judgmental
and sound
"better than you"

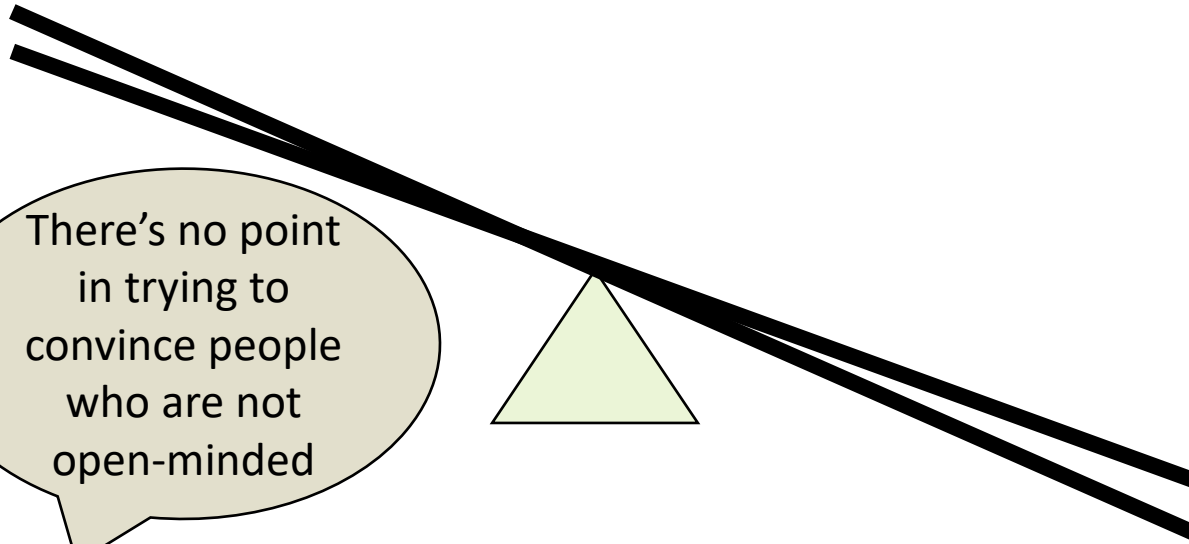
CONFLICT INTENSITY AND
EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT

ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
ACCURATELY AND UNDERST



There's no point
in trying to
convince people
who are not
open-minded

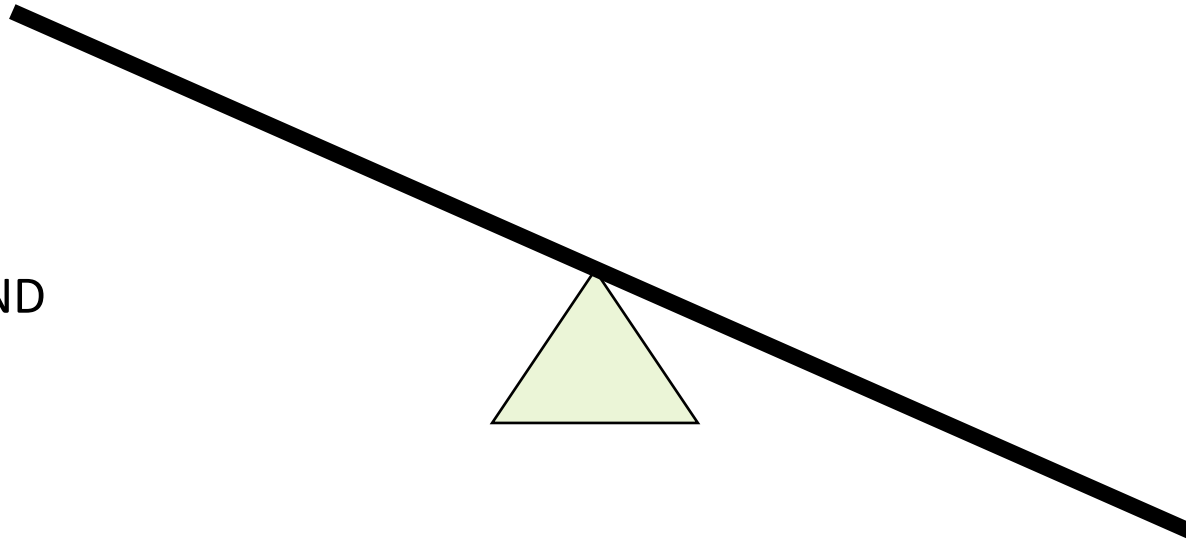
CONFLICT INTENSITY AND
EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT





NO

ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
ACCURATELY AND UNDERSTAND



TONS

CONFLICT INTENSITY AND
EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT



What is your landscape?

Write freely about a situation or conversation that causes you anxiety around climate. What are your triggers? What do you come up against in conversations about climate?

How to leverage skills and manage emotional intensity?

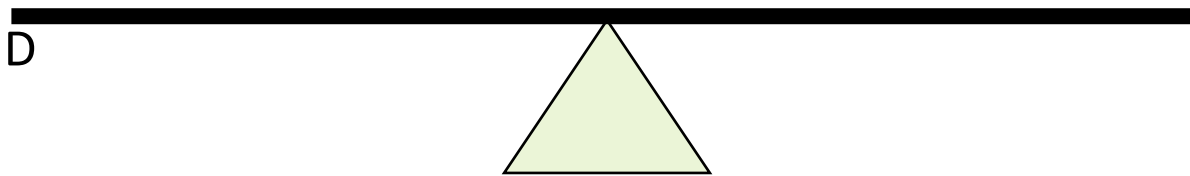


Skill Up

and

Settle Down

ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
ACCURATELY AND UNDERSTAND



CONFLICT INTENSITY AND
EMOTIONAL INVESTMENT

High Conflict → **Good Conflict**



The goal is not to get rid of conflict. The goal is to make conflict useful. That requires moving away from the trap of high conflict into the realm of good conflict.

Contempt → **Anger**

Closed → **Open**

Superiority → **Curiosity**

Disgust → **Sadness**

Simplicity → **Complexity**

Predictability → **Surprise**

Settle Down

- How do you manage what is going on inside of you?

Share ideas in the chat of ways you settle yourself and your emotions in the midst of high conflict.



Peaceful Practices

Settle Down

- Name emotions!

Contempt → Anger

Disgust → Sadness



Peaceful Practices



Peaceful Practices

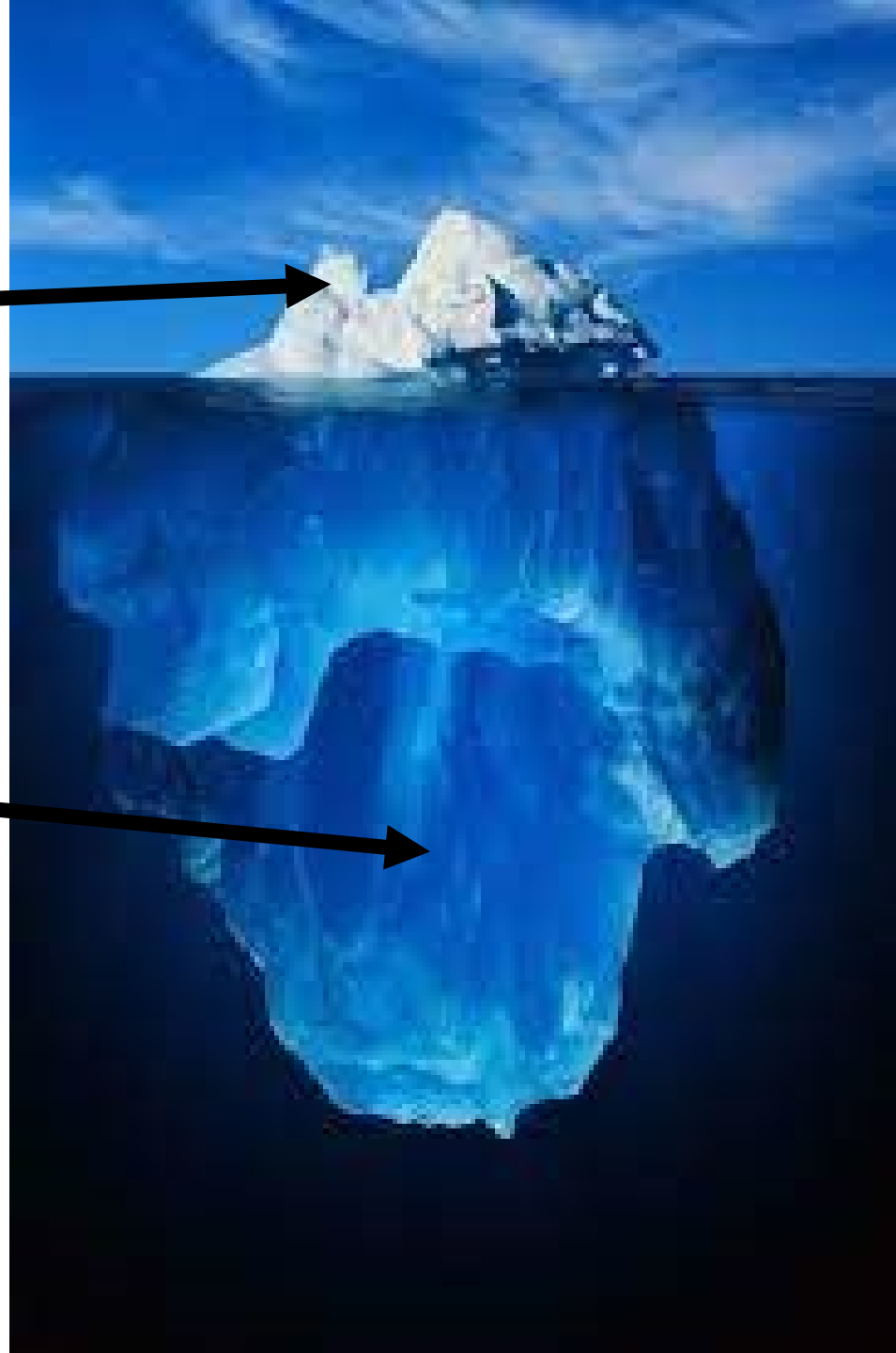
Skill Up



Positions



Feelings,
Needs,
Experiences,
Perceptions,
etc



Positions

Positions

Values

Perceptions

Perceptions

Needs

Values

Experiences

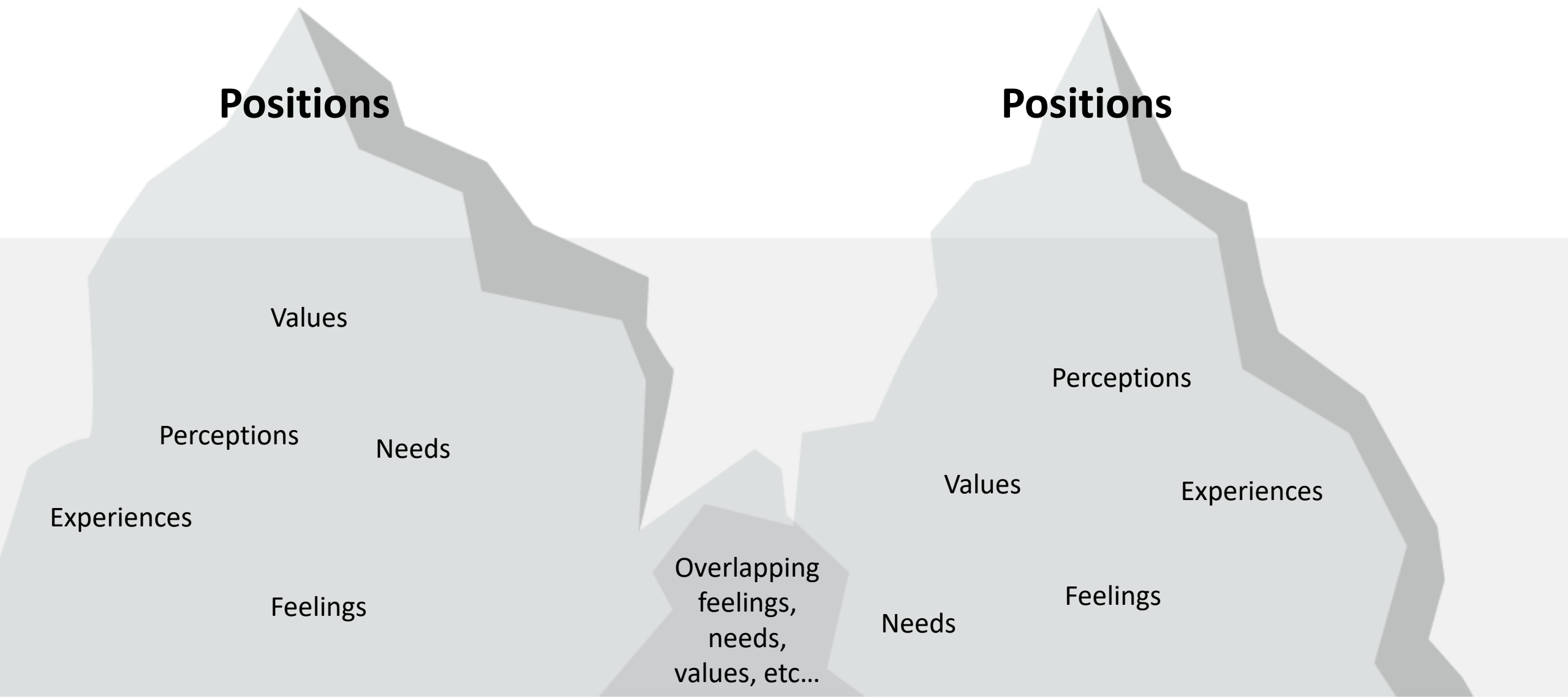
Experiences

Feelings

Overlapping
feelings,
needs,
values, etc...

Needs

Feelings



Your landscape: map out your conflict





Curiosity: Be curious, inviting diversity of ideas and opinions

Curiosity



Curiosity



Peaceful Practices

HEAL

identity

storytelling

question

CURIOSITY

look beyond

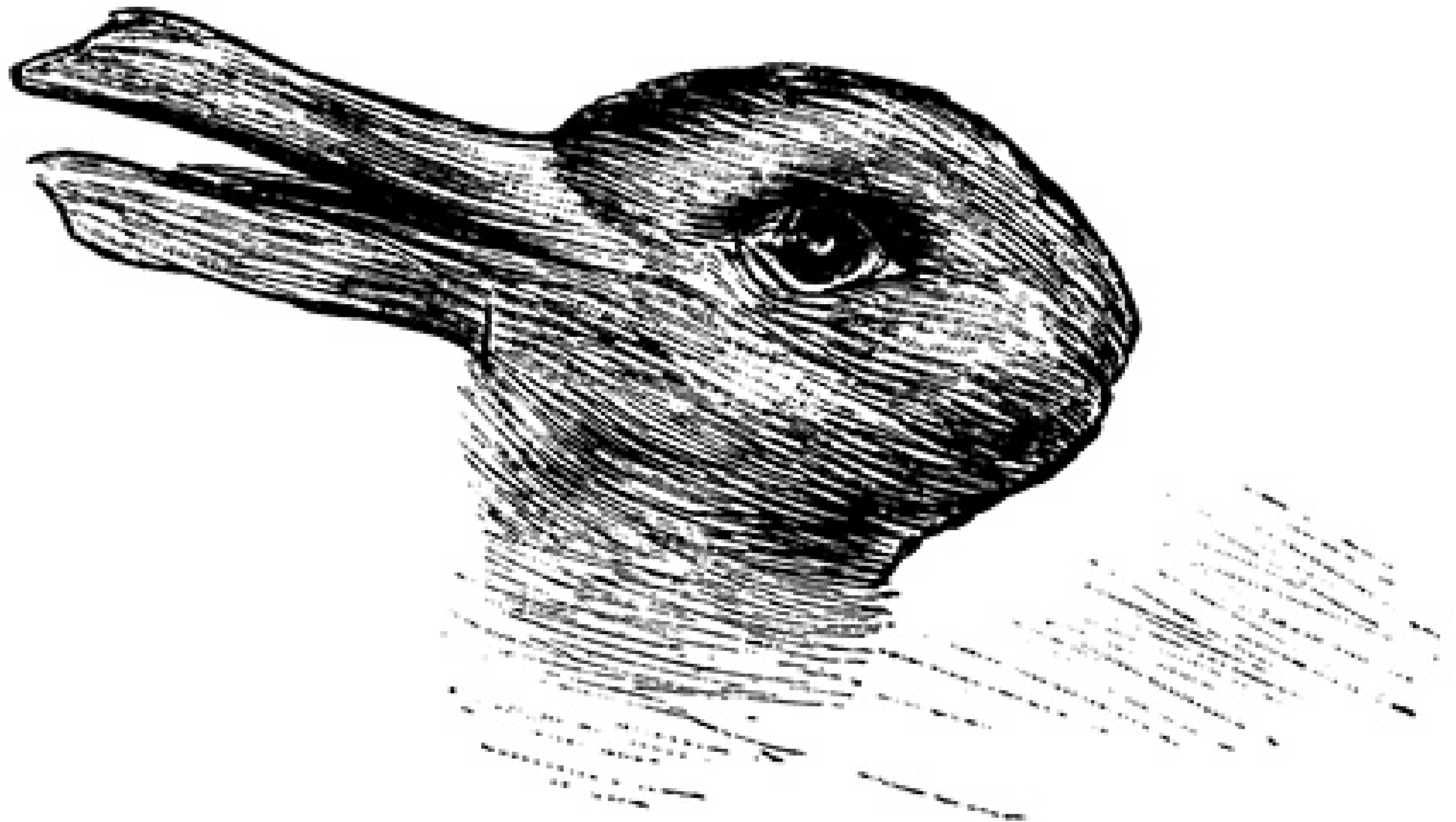
discovery

complexity

care

CURAR





*“Nothing is
more
dangerous
than an idea
when it is
the only one
you have.”*

- Emile Chartier Alain





Is it possible to believe that we can gain something from understanding someone else's point of view better?

High Conflict → **Good Conflict**



Contempt → Anger

Closed → Open

Superiority → Curiosity

Disgust → Sadness

Simplicity → Complexity

Predictability → Surprise



Peaceful Practices

Empathy: Seek to understand
rather than persuade



Lead with your ears,
follow up with your
tongue, and let anger
straggle along in the
rear.

- James 1:19

Open questions

- Cannot be answered with yes or no
- Often begin with “what”, “how”, or “tell me”
- Do not have a right answer
- Come from a place of curiosity
- Are often short
- Try “what” rather than “why”



High Conflict → **Good Conflict**



Contempt → Anger

Closed → Open

Superiority → Curiosity

Disgust → Sadness

Simplicity → Complexity

Predictability → Surprise

Active listening responses



- Thanks for sharing that.
- What I hear you saying is... am I understanding you correctly?
- I appreciate hearing your perspective/insight/experience.
- That is a helpful experience/story for me to better understand where you are coming from.
- Thank you for your honesty.

Your landscape



- What would you like to understand about them more?
- What questions can you ask of them that get below the surface?

Practice!

Look at your initial writing. Notice where you might be assuming superiority and attempt to turn that into curiosity with open questions. Try to write out a few questions you could ask.

Questions to ask in conflict



- How did we get here?
- What life experiences have shaped your views on this subject?
- What do you wish others understood about you?
- What is oversimplified about this issue?
- What do you think the strongest argument for the other side is?
- What's a question nobody is asking, but should?
- How do you decide what information to trust?



Peaceful Practices

Authenticity: Speak from the heart, contributing your own thinking and experience

High Conflict → **Good Conflict**



Contempt → Anger

Closed → Open

Superiority → Curiosity

Disgust → Sadness

One-dimensional
Single-story
Easy
Single-layered

Simplicity → Complexity

Predictability → Surprise

Back to your landscape



What life experiences have shaped your views on this subject? What STORY can you tell?

What do you think the strongest issue for the other side is?

What is oversimplified about this issue?

Practice!



What is your
climate story?



Peaceful Practices

Contact Kirstin and/or Analee:

kirstindemello@mcc.org | annaleegiesbrecht@mcccanada.ca

Sign up for *Talk Climate, Practice Peace*

<https://mcc.org/what-we-do/initiatives/climate-change/talk-climate-practice-peace>



What is your next step?

What do you take away from this virtual workshop?

What questions are lingering for you?