



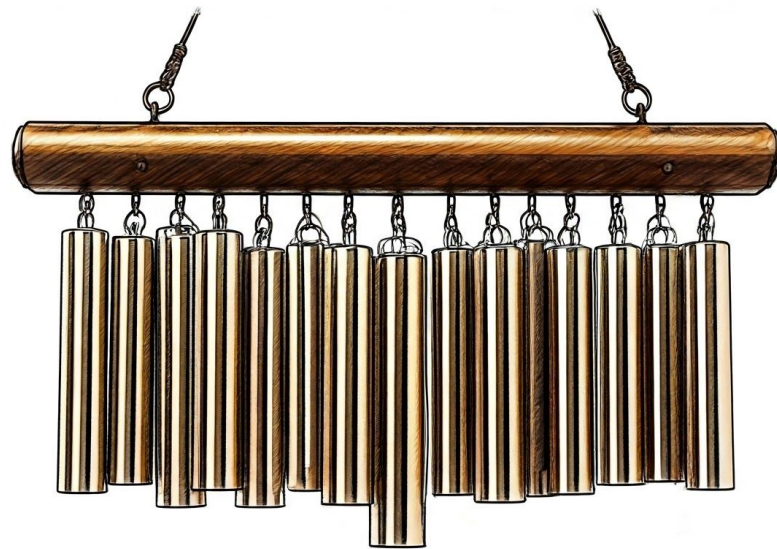
Get Curious, Not Furious: Leading Effectively Across Difference

Laurice Snyder

Sophia Transformational Leadership Conference 2026

June 4, 2026

Today's Call Back



Musical Pairs

Find a photo
that warms
your heart



Thank your partner



Outcomes



- Practice the power of **curiosity** to build trust and defuse tension
- Build **confidence** in communication, active listening, and reflective questioning

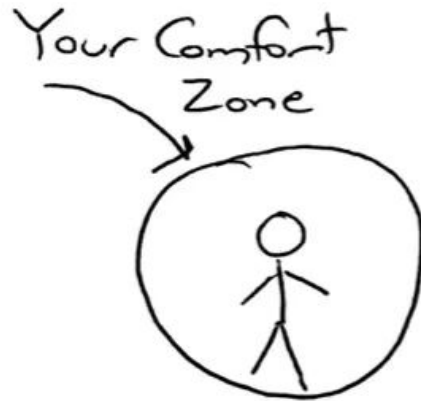


“

*Do the best you
can until you **know
better**. Then when
you know better,
do better.*

Maya Angelou

How are you
showing up
today?



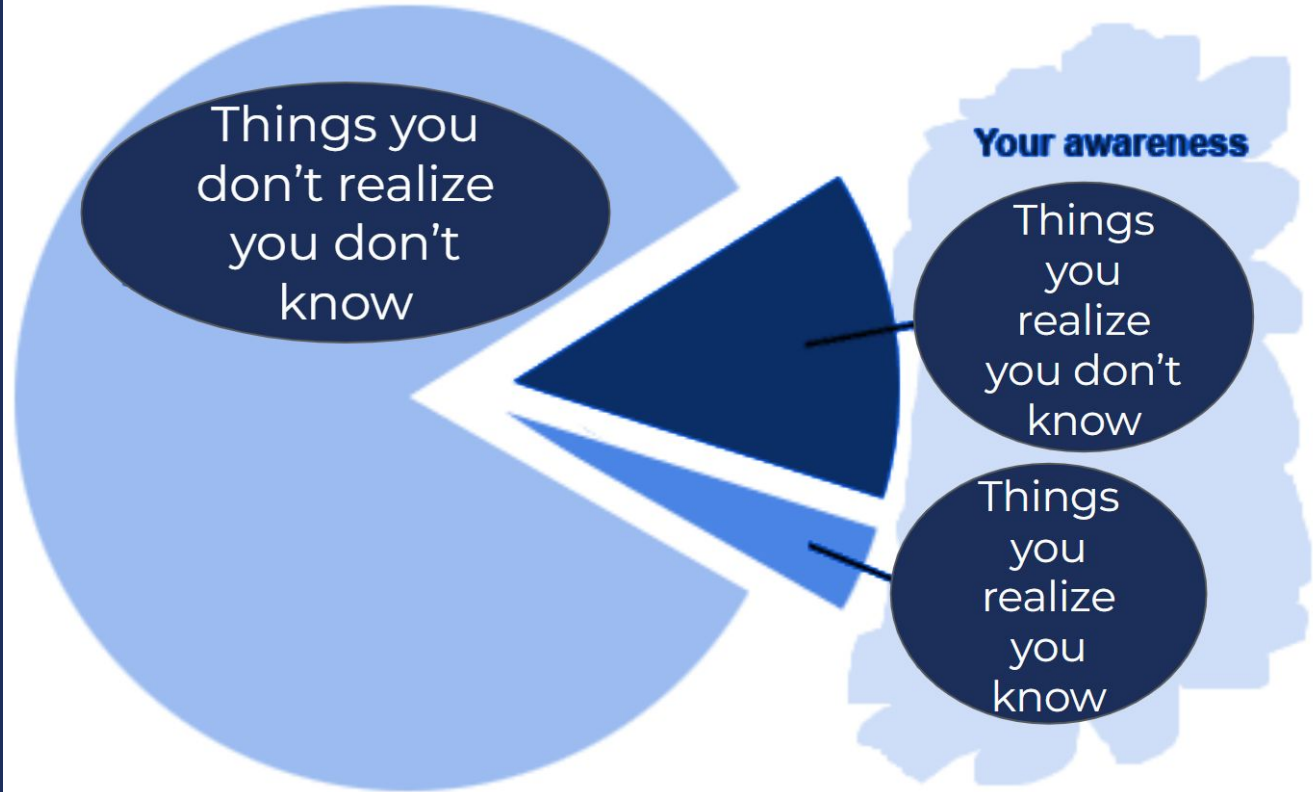


Why Curiosity?

To avoid.....



Body of All Possible Knowledge



How We Show Up Matters



“We see the world
not as it is, but as we
are.”





Adam Grant ✓
@AdamMGrant

02:00

It takes curiosity to learn. It takes courage to unlearn.

Learning requires the humility to admit what you don't know today.
Unlearning requires the integrity to admit that you were wrong yesterday.
Learning is how you evolve.
Unlearning is how you keep up as the world evolves.



Adam Grant ✓
@AdamMGrant



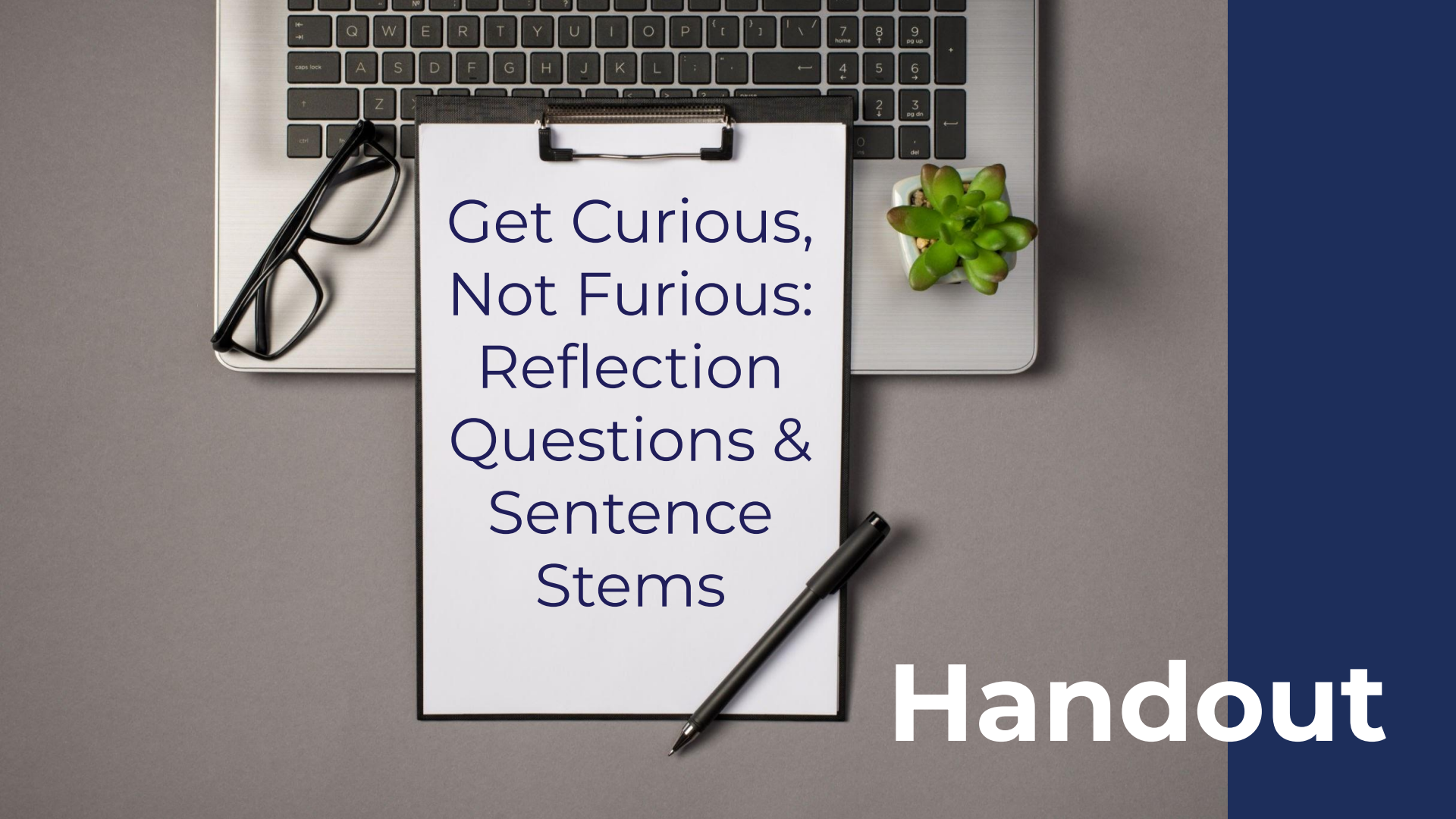
When you have an open mind, a challenge to your ideas isn't an attack on you. It's an opportunity to learn something new.

You don't have to agree with someone's points to benefit from understanding their perspective.

Spirited debate clarifies assumptions and sharpens reasoning.

Thank your partner





Get Curious,
Not Furious:
Reflection
Questions &
Sentence
Stems

Handout

Staying Curious....

- *What I heard you say was...*
- *Tell me more about what you meant by...*
- *Can you help me understand?*
- *What is not sitting right with you about....?*
- *How did that affect you?*
- *Do you need more time or more information before we move on?*
- *What does support look like for you?*
- **How can I be helpful?*





Curiosity in Practice (Examples)

- *What I heard you say was you didn't feel that your time was being respected.*
- *Tell me more about what you meant by nobody works together around here.*
- *Help me understand how that decision aligned with our commitment to integrity.*
- *Who might have felt left out or unheard in that moment?*
- *What might a more careful or responsible approach have looked like?*
- *I am not quite seeing it that way yet, I am getting stuck....*



Affirming Phrases

- *Thank you for sharing your story with me- that means a lot.*
- *You're amazing- thanks for being you.*
- *I really admire your strength/courage/resilience.*
- *I have no idea what it's like to be you but I am here to listen.*
- *I believe in you and will be here to support you especially when times get challenging.*
- *I feel you..I see you....*
- *You got this!*



Reflections Questions to Ask in Conflict



- *How are my values, beliefs, and experiences showing up in this interaction?*
- *What assumptions or biases might I be holding about my own expectations or decision-making?*
- *What unspoken expectations or norms might be at play in this interaction? How might they be impacting my understanding or level of trust?*
- *What feels uncomfortable or challenging in this interaction? What factors may have contributed to this tension?*
- *What could I have done differently to foster deeper connection, respect, or responsiveness in this interaction?*

Practice Scenario 1: The Project



Situation: One colleague hasn't contributed much and shows up unprepared to project meetings.

Common Judgment Reaction: "They're lazy and don't care."

Shift to Curiosity: "*What might be going on for them?*"

- "Hey, I noticed it's been hard to connect on the project, what's been going on for you?"
- "Is there anything getting in the way of you being able to contribute right now?"

Practice Scenario 2: *That Political View*



Situation: A team member shares a strong political view that you *strongly* disagree with.

Common Judgment Reaction: “That’s so ignorant” or “I can’t believe they think that.”

Shift to Curiosity: *“What experiences might have shaped their perspective?”*

- “Can you share more about how you came to that perspective?”
- “What experiences have influenced your thinking on that?”



Practice Scenario 3: The Comment



Situation: The executive director makes a comment in a company meeting that feels insensitive or out of touch the people they serve.

Common Judgment Reaction: “That was offensive” or “They should know better.”

Shift to Curiosity: *“What might they not yet understand?”*

- “Can you say more about what you meant by that?”
- “I’m curious what you were thinking when you said that, can we talk about it after the meeting?”

My personal favorite...after a pause...

Tell me more...



5 Reflection Questions to Ask in Conflict

1. *How are my values, beliefs, and experiences showing up in this interaction?*
2. *What assumptions or biases might I be holding about my own expectations or decision-making?*
3. *What unspoken expectations or norms might be at play in this interaction? How might they be impacting my understanding or level of trust?*
4. *What feels uncomfortable or challenging in this interaction? What factors may have contributed to this tension?*
5. *What could I have done differently to foster deeper connection, respect, or responsiveness in this interaction?*



Power of Second Thoughts



*Don't let your first
thought be your last
thought.*



Conversation SELF-Assessment

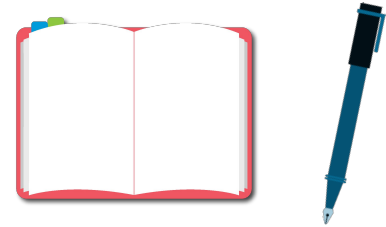
- Did I ask questions to *appear* engaged, or to *actually* understand?
- Did I respond to defend, or to learn?
- What challenged my assumptions?
- What else do I need to understand before forming a conclusion?
- How has my perspective been updated as a result of this conversation?



Questions & Ahas



Call to Action

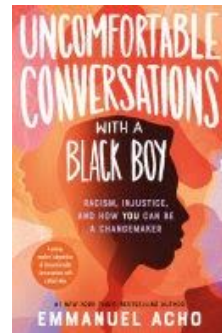
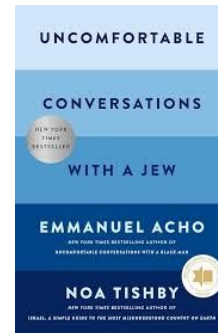


- *What are prickly situations for you right now?*
- *Where do you need to be more curious?*
- *What is one specific action you will take this week?*



Proximity breeds care.
Distance breeds fear.

- Emmanuel Acho



Know Better, Do Better Newsletter



Know Better, Do Better Newsletter Form

Sign up to receive educational news, inspiring leadership development tips and more!

First Name *

Short answer text

Last Name *

Short answer text

Email *

Short answer text

Connect with me on LinkedIn!





Laurice Snyder

Laurice@rootedwingstransformation.com

