**Bridge divides, don’t win arguments**

* Winning an argument doesn’t mean someone’s mind has been changed, it often simply means they have been beaten into submission and these temporary victories may damage relationships in the long run. Focus on making connections, prioritising understanding the other person’s perspective and showing empathy.

**Speak from the Heart**

* Authentic expression is powerful. People are not hugely trusting at the moment, but

we do trust the voices of the people we know. Someone could doubt a statistic, but they can’t quibble with how you felt in a particular moment. Our passion is our power.

**Change the Story**

* When we’re countering opinions different to our own, misinformation or damaging rhetoric,

facts alone don’t change minds: we need to change the story totally. When we repeat

what we are trying to discredit, we further reinforce it. So whilst it’s tempting to bust myths,

by doing that we’re only giving those myths more airtime. Instead, we need to paint a different

picture and we do that by leading with shared values e.g family, friendship, justice, equality.

**Find Common Ground**

* Our sense of self is extremely malleable, so when we can find common ground with the person we are talking to, that person is less likely to focus on any differences we might have.

**Actively Talk**

* We can *reactively* change the story – this means when someone says something wrong or misinformed, we can gently present a different perspective. But we can also *actively* change the story. Reaching outside of our echo chambers really isn’t easy. So the most important thing is to practice & the best way to practice is simply by chatting.

**Actively Listen**

* When talking to people who’s opinions differ from our own, don’t dismiss their concerns. It might feel frustrating but meet them where they are rather than where you want them to be. A 2016 study in the journal *Science*, and more recently a new peer-reviewed study, have proved that by actively listening to a political opponent’s concerns, finding common humanity and essentially giving grace, it was possible to change minds and reduce bigotry.

**Be well-informed**

* Entrenched political scapegoating and the divisive nature of culture wars means the truth is often twisted or lost entirely. Talking about it is tough, but it is also vital. If we are to build a fairer, kinder asylum system, we the quiet majority need to break the silence and speak up.

**Save Your Energy**

* You’re not going to win everyone over. If someone feels very set in their ways, save your energy and leave them to it. You can roughly split society into three categories:

1.The people who are engaged and care. Encourage them to do the above too.

2.The people who are very opposed to immigration and are very set in their ways – these are the people we may really struggle to get on side.

3.The people known as ‘the persuadable middle’ – the people currently on the fence. They’ve probably believed some of the hostile messaging pushed by the government, but they are open to the positive alternative. Focus your energy here.

**Look After Yourself**

* Speaking up isn’t easy. Always remember to protect your wellbeing, know when to walk away and make use of your support networks to recharge