

# Touchstones #2

Speak truth respecting other truth, No fixing, Open honest questions What about this Touchstone challenges you and how is it a gift for you? How have you seen this Touchstone at work in professional or personal circumstances? What are you curious about when you consider this Touchstone?

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## Speak your truth in ways that respect other people's truth.

### Challenge/gift

For me, speaking my truth in ways that respect other people's truth does not mean that I will always respect the positions or perspectives that other people share. It's about how I will respond/stand in my own truth or perspective.

### Gift

Share your experience and your story

### Curiosity

What is my truth vs my perspective? And your truth vs your perspective?

And can I respect your truth but not your perspective?

### Gift

Totally counter to the culture I live in. Into my world where intolerance, grandstanding and fighting seem more and more insidious and inevitable, finally comes basic and ancient human wisdom. Respect other people.

### Gift

Enables you to express yourself

Intention and Impact

They are not either/or's — ability of a leader to live into these. Team will never outperform the limitations of its leader without living into these.

Speaking my truth can be very difficult at times. It is hard. Speak your truth at the speed in which you want to speak your truth. Daring to be speak your truth, esp. when you're afraid, can be cathartic.

Speaking my truth requires courage. Wondering what will other people think. That's the part where it requires courage. Be honest with myself and express that in the way that respects other people's truth too.

### Both a challenge and gift

### I try to Remember

Someone's perfectly benevolent well-meant perspective can seem like an uncompromised evil if viewed through a different person's lens or preferred suite of assumptions. Assume good will, and honest open questions to figure out the worldview of the person to unlock that person's truth on its own terms. ie: honoring its integrity.

### Challenge

mutual agreement is needed...

### Agree:

Assume good will.

### challenge: all knowledge is incomplete

How can each conversation serve as an interaction that can help fill in the gaps in our own knowing, thinking, believing?

### Assume good intentions

I believe that respect in conversations requires assuming the best of others, and asking them for a read on intent before deciding otherwise.

Can't do this in every setting

Agree, not everyone and every place is safe

Different than how we're trained — to convince others of our position. Question: how might listening to each other bring about change in the world?

what happens if we think of this in terms of others speaking their truth?

Invitation to a dance, and we don't have to be polished.

**invitation to dance. We will probably step on toes but we can keep dancing acknowledging those missteps.**

Intention and impact — trust and respect both. May require cleaning up messes. Muck can be generative. Need to know my motivations behind what I'm saying.

Allowing for interactions that consider what we are saying and how it might be received = a gift

**At work, I see this as a way to see my intentions and noticing the impact.**

**Agree :)**

We need to be mindful of our impact as we speak the truth.

A balancing act between knowing what we want to say and how it might be received – especially in difficult conversations

**Curiosities**

- Are there truths that don't need to be told?
- How might we know the truth's of others?

**Personal Experience**

When I first encountered this years ago I find it so awkward to frame everything in 'I' statements. Over the years I have tried to make it my default mode of communication and I feel my relationships have benefitted. Also I find I am more sensitive to times when others make (implicit) generalisations about what we all do or all believe as a result.

**Our views of reality may differ, but speaking one's truth in a circle of trust does not mean interpreting, correcting or debating what others say. Speak from your center to the center of the circle, using "I" statements, trusting people to do their own sifting and winnowing.**

**No fixing, saving, advising or correcting each other.**

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**Gift**

If I can believe that this is possible it is an infinite invitation to take the risk really connecting with what is most strong and real and true.

**Challenge**

How to ask someone who doesn't know these practices for this (i.e. to not fix or save or correct you) when you are telling them something difficult?

**Challenge**

Much easier for me to practice this touchstone in a Circle of Trust vs in my family, with friends, etc.

**Gift**

Such a powerful practice in relationships with friends and family.

**Gift**

Not needing to have all the answers

**Gift**

Across personal and professional life, this touchstone opened up a completely new way of being for me. I think taking on the

fixer/problem-solver role (especially in career) had narrowed what was possible for me. Having shed this skin, I have something else that feels more truly me. A softer self. One that also trusts that everyone else's inner teacher has got their own back too. I don't need to get in the way of that. I am on my own journey.

Feels tricky in real life as the person on the other side. Start to feel like there's one tool for every situation. There are times when I feel desperate for advice and someone kindly listening to me feels like an unkindness. Requires me to ask for what i need, and that's a gift.

Had to realize at some point we're doing something different.

A relief both ways. As the person who is sharing – get what I need without being bombarded. Relief as the person who is holding that space, I can focus on listening and be present. It's enough to just be there. I don't have to try to do more.

No feeling like I need to help. Trusting that I can be with that person and that is enough.

These are hardest. Wanting to alleviate. Going gets really rough for these last two.

Such a relief to me!

## **Increases awareness about the possible need for inner work and curiosity about relational patterns**

### **challenge**

how, when we are witnessing evidence of violence, do we not respond with fixing, saving or advising?

The desire to fix, save, advise and correct is what leads me to say unhelpful things when the going gets rough.

### **challenge: creating a culture where people learn to identify what they want or need and not just rely on the listeners to know how to listen or respond**

This is the hardest touchstone for me personally.

### **Gift:**

It has been a gift to me personally to have somebody just accompany me when I am struggling. I try to remember this when the tables are turned.

### **Its an art**

Outside of these circles, its an art to figure out if fixing is needed or simply listening.

There are times (especially at work) when our roles do require us to advise. But we can listen first.

Society rewards problem solvers. Now more comfortable with not having to have the answers. Listening is getting easier as I get older. Can help others listen to themselves.

Wondering about affirming what's being said.

so different than usual interactions - to allow voices to speak and allow words/thoughts to "land" in the space ... without reactions - radical difference

Dovetails with Speak Your Truth. Training in debating/discourse/critique contrary to this. This way of being together and listening as others' words land is radical.

educator challenge - idea of scaffolding/support vs fixing/correcting

Gift: releases me from thought that I have to do anything. Holding space is enough. Reminds me to take a step back.

Challenge: If we're scaffolding to get to something, it's hard to uphold no fixing and guiding.

Gift - releases from thought "need to do something" - it is enough to be in the space, holding ....

Hard for parents, especially if we see ourselves in our kids. At work, easier not to have the answers.

**In my personal life, I discover that I can give this same grace/trust to myself and the various parts of me, allowing the soul to sift and bring forth what I need to attend to in the moment.**

## **Gift**

Being given permission not to try and 'help' has probably made me more 'helpful'... in that it seems what is most often required when someone speaks of their suffering is a compassionate witness (and that is what might often get lost if I have been conditioned to try and fix or advise).

**This is one of the hardest guidelines for those of us who like to "help." But it is vital to welcome and make space for the inner teacher.**

**Learn to respond to others with honest, open questions.**

## **Challenge**

Teaches me how important the particular words I offer can be. Does my question interrupt and block the flow ? Or does it crack the door open for the other person in a totally unexpected way that leads to new life and growth?

## **Challenge**

The most beautiful questions are exactly this and yet it is so hard to offer them sometimes. They require effort and intention. Am I asking this question for me, or is it an offering to the other person? This inquiry requires effort.

## **Challenge**

How to acknowledge what has been said and respond appropriately

## **Gift**

I love this practice - often don't realize how much through our questions we are covertly fixing, saving, advising, and correcting.

This practice speaks to no fixing, saving. There's more space for questions when we're not trying to fix, save, advise.

Moving forward with OHQ creates most lasting sustained change.

Links all three: Compassion. Especially this one. This is a compassionate response. Open-hearted, evocative questions.

**Living into love, hope, and courage can offset the challenge and empower us to "hear each other into voice and deeper speech."**

## **Challenge and a gift**

## **When to use them**

A technical question needs a technical answer. A question from the heart need open honest questions.

If my questions are about hearing another into deeper speech, I need to parse what is just in service to my curiosity and what is in service to the speaker's inner work

## **Anthropologist's mindset**

I find that honest and open questions are easiest when I approach conversations with an anthropologist's mindset. They immerse themselves in cultures and try to discern what's really happening.





## I've learned to love this one

...but my kids have told me "Just answer the question Dad!" But the outcomes of these are so fun and enlightening.

Challenge: people may be disappointed if they really do want advice

requires deep listening, not premeditated responses

Gifts:

-takes pressure off us to solve or ask the best question.  
-can help us recognize our own mental models - stay in curiosity, not judgement. And we learn more about ourselves.

Can frame question without trigger, with the reflection of the other person foremost.

deescalates conflicts

listen with heart - rather than intellect

"hearing others into deeper speech" amazing.

Easier in professional life than familial life.

Amazed at what I've learned doing this with family.

## Gifts

- Creates space for people to feel seen, heard, and respected
- Feels intuitive, once one really pauses and listens
- Allows us to listen with heart

Connects to being curious. If I don't agree with something, it's good to be curious about it so I can learn more.

Challenge - really examining and being honest with staying true to this touchstone ... being very careful about staying curious .... not trying to manipulate, challenge ...

## Challenge

This requires clear instruction, I feel. (Maybe the other touchstones too, but here that's more clear. For instance, seeing examples of honest, open questions is helpful.

## Challenge: being playful with this

In a Circle of Trust I was recently in, my first one, I took it very seriously. My inner teacher wanted to be playful, but I was too afraid of making mistakes, and then became quite stilted! Yet, somehow, even with that, the process worked.

## Challenge

This seems to be an art that I have not yet got the hang of! Or possibly it is that I have not got the hang of doing it on demand in groups where we are practicing it.

**Do not respond with counsel or corrections.  
Using honest, open questions helps us "hear  
each other into deeper speech."**

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