

A stylized illustration on the left side of the page. A hand is shown in profile, holding a dove. From the dove and the hand, numerous thin lines radiate outwards, creating a sunburst effect. The background is white with a faint, large 'BB' watermark.

**BUILDING BRIDGES FOR  
AMERICA**

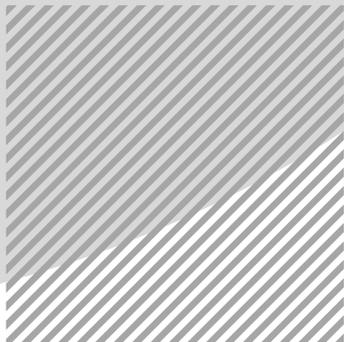
**Unlock  
Your  
Political  
Power  
Workbook**

# Why is this important?

THE POWER YOU SEEK IS WITHIN YOU RIGHT NOW.

FEELING POWERLESS SOWS DISTRUST IN DEMOCRACY. YET IT IS EASY FOR EACH OF US TO BUILD TRUST AND GROW DEMOCRACY,

ACTIVELY LISTENING AND TELLING YOUR STORY BUILDS CONNECTIONS AND CREATES SPACE TO BRIDGE DIVIDES. AND INTENTIONALLY ENGAGING YOUR NETWORK EMPOWERS OTHERS TO SUPPORT PROGRESSIVE ISSUES AND CANDIDATES.



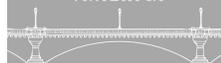
# Unlock Your Political Power



Picture your phone ringing. The call is from a candidate reaching out knowing you can deliver votes. Once elected, you call them with an issue in your neighborhood, They see your number and they answer your call.

Picture a loved one in your life who lost faith and did not think politics matters. You talked to them about politics in a way that made them listen. Their eyes lit up with understanding. Now they are volunteering with you on a campaign.

That is your political power. You build that power with your personal story and connections.



# Workbook Goals

## IDENTIFY YOUR VALUES

Learn how to speak to others by connecting to shared values.

## DEVELOPING YOUR STORY

Speaking from personal experience to show that politics matters to you.

## ACTIVELY LISTENING

Pick up new habits to create space that allows for understanding.

## TALKING WITH YOUR NETWORK

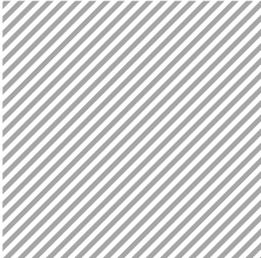
Follow the step-by-step process to identify and build a plan to intentionally talk with people you know.



# Sharing Your Story

The best way to convey a progressive message is through personal connections. Using the common language of personal stories will effectively communicate your political feelings to people who are apathetic or who disagree with you. Feel empowered to speak from your heart and encourage others to do the same through active listening. This is the challenge of empathetic people to hold together the fabric of our families, neighborhoods, and the nation.

We share values, we share empathy for people we know, and we all understand personal stories. Our brains form morality, logic, and interpretation of facts differently. You cannot use these differences to make a connection. Focusing on differences will only drive you farther apart. To connect about why you care about an issue, speak to what is most important to you by sharing how politics walks into your home, your family, your wallet, or your body. Share how the issue affects you personally or affects the life of someone you love.



DO NOT USE:  
FACTS  
LOGIC  
MORALITY

USE:  
YOUR VALUES  
YOUR STORY

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# Speaking Your Values and Feelings

Start by sharing how you feel. And state your core values that make you feel that way. People will listen when you first make this personal connection to an issue or policy.

## **ISSUE**

Climate crisis

## **POLICY**

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

## **VALUES**

Security

Justice

Compassion

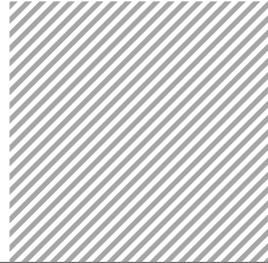
## **Feelings**

Afraid

Frustrated

Hopeful

I feel so frustrated that my car hit standing water on the highway. It is terrifying, The storms are getting worse and the roads are getting worse. For me it is security, our roads should be safe. That is why I am relieved we got the funding to make our roads safer.



DO NOT  
START WITH:  
ISSUES  
POLICY

START WITH:  
YOUR VALUES  
YOUR FEELINGS

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## What are your core values?

What is important to you? Deep down in your core? That core that drives you is your values.

First, let's distinguish values from issues and policy. Policies enable us to bring those motivating values to life through actions and systems. For example, economic growth for all is an issue, raising the minimum wage is a policy, but what draws you to that issue are your commitments to values, such as justice, equality, freedom, compassion, or resilience.

Dig down and identify and name those values that drive you.

**My core values:**

EMPATHY  
SERVICE  
COMMUNITY  
FREEDOM  
PROSPERITY  
FAIRNESS  
TRUST  
SECURITY  
DEMOCRACY



## **Recall a time that you felt one of your values**

Describe moments in your life that drew you to care about a specific value. For example, identifying compassion as a core value because your neighbor helped your family when you were a child. Describe how, when, and where you saw and learned compassion. Then name how you act on it today.

**An experience that made me care:**



## **Share how that values is reflected in a campaign or cause.**

Example: "The Equality Act gives me the freedom to expand my career and take a job in any state without losing my right to work because I am LGBTQ."

**How a campaign or policy helps me:**



## **Why is it important to you that we act and get involved now?**

e.g. We are at a make or break moment in our country. We do not have decades to wait. The moment compels us to act. We have a chance to get this right.

**My motivation to act now:**



**Step**

**5**

**Bring it all together using your experience and core values.**

**My Story:**

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# IDENTIFYING YOUR NETWORK



**The people you encounter in your everyday life are your network. Do not overthink it, include everyone on your list.**

MAKING A LIST

IDENTIFYING YOUR NETWORK

NETWORK TRACKER



# Making Your List

USE THE PROMPTS BELOW TO HELP YOU  
START TO LIST YOUR NETWORK

THREE PEOPLE YOU  
KNOW WILL VOTE

Three empty rounded rectangular boxes for listing names.

THREE PEOPLE YOU  
KNOW WILL NOT VOTE  
OR ARE NOT REGISTERED

Three empty rounded rectangular boxes for listing names.

THREE PEOPLE  
EASIEST TO TALK TO

Three empty rounded rectangular boxes for listing names.

THREE PEOPLE YOU  
HAVE NEVER SPOKEN  
TO ABOUT POLITICS

Three empty rounded rectangular boxes for listing names.

THE PERSON YOU WISH WOULD SUPPORT YOUR ISSUE

A wide, empty rectangular box for listing a name.



# Starting the Conversation

**Last person you spoke to:**

Imagine you intentionally made plans to speak with them, and committed to telling them your story in conversation.

Now you are having the conversation. You hold yourself to your commitment and you are ready to tell them your story. To start, you ask them a question then listen.

You ask them, “Did you hear about The Equality Act?”



# THE CONVERSATION



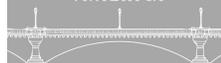
Stay open and listen. You may have to fight your instinct to push back or defend. No matter what they say, be curious and respond with “Tell me more about that.”

Then share your story. Speak about your values and your experience.

Continue to listen and stay open. Make a note of their response. Again, do not react and get defensive, listen and share.

Now change the subject. Talk about something you have in common.

Lastly, make a commitment with yourself to reach out to them again.



# THE BEST WAY TO CONNECT AND BE HEARD IS FIRST TO ACTIVELY LISTEN.

AN EFFECTIVE ORGANIZER'S GREATEST SKILL IS TO LISTEN. TO BE HEARD AND UNDERSTOOD FIRST YOU NEED TO OPEN THE DOOR OF UNDERSTANDING. PRACTICE THESE BASIC HABITS AND SKILLS TO SHOW YOU ARE LISTENING AND WATCH AS THE CONVERSATIONS YOU HAVE GROW DEEPER.

## **AVOID DISTRACTION**

Set your intention to listening.  
No daydreaming or multi-tasking.  
Remove things that might keep you from paying attention.

## **REFLECT, PARAPHRASE OR CLARIFY**

Repeat back what you have heard  
“It sounds to me like you are saying...”

## **PAY ATTENTION**

Do not use this time to prepare for a rebuttal. Ignore the divides and listen for the connections.

## **DO NOT INTERRUPT**

Allow the other person to finish what they are saying.

## **USE DOOR OPENERS**

Keep them engaged and talking  
“Tell me more”  
“That’s interesting”

## **DO NOT ARGUE**

“I can tell you are very upset/frustrated”  
“I know that it has been hard for you to change gears”



## REFLECT AMBIVALENCE

“So, on the one hand you want \_\_\_ and on the other you don’t think you can \_\_\_\_\_”

## LOOK FOR COMMON GROUND

“Where do you think we could find common ground?”  
“We agree on this, what else do we agree on?”

## EXPRESS YOUR ATTENTION

Words and phrases like “Oh”, “I see”, “uh huh” and “hmm” show that you are listening.

## CREATE DISSONANCE

“Tell me (describe to me) what your feeling are on \_\_\_\_\_”  
“Can you tell me what is keeping you from supporting \_\_\_?”

## SHOW EMPATHY FOR THEIR FEELINGS

“I am hearing you say that you are frustrated because \_\_\_\_\_”

## WRAP UP

“Thank you for talking with me.”  
“I appreciate your opinion and understand your concerns.”





# Next Step

**Put your story to work. Build your political power and connect with others who are taking action.**

**Take the next course in the Power series to build your confidence in talking politics to voters. Prepare yourself for effective conversations when door knocking, tabling, phone banking, and text banking for campaigns.**



## EMAIL

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## WEBSITE

[WWW.BUILDINGBRIDGESFORAMERICA.COM](http://WWW.BUILDINGBRIDGESFORAMERICA.COM)

# OTHER AVAILABLE TOOLS

AVAILABLE AT  
[WWW.BUILDINGBRIDGESFORAMERICA.COM](http://WWW.BUILDINGBRIDGESFORAMERICA.COM)

## TEAM SERIES

Build your grassroots team with Grassroots Organizing for Change.. And learn messaging with Say This, Not That, how to host events with Events for Change, and step up your organizing with Facebook Activiist to Change Maker and Local Leader.

## CIVICS SERIES

Know the system to fix the system. Get the basics with Civics for Everyone, then learn to use civics for effective organizing with Civics for Change.

## DAYS OF ACTION

Join Building Bridges for Days of Action throughout the week to support candidates and issues.

## REAL TALK: POP THE DISINFORMATION BUBBLE

Timely sessions to understand how people can believe lies and how to use empathy to break through with the truth.

## VOLUNTEER'S TOOLBOX

Ready to print infographics, online presentations and workbooks.

## ROADMAP FOR PROGRESS

Support local down ballot candidates throughout the U.S.

# BUILDING BRIDGES FOR AMERICA LEADERSHIP TEAM



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