



THREE GATES

Purpose & Focus

We ask ourselves three questions to determine whether something we are about to say is helpful and kind: Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind?

Participants

Any number of participants.

Time Allotment

15 – 30 Minutes

Activity Level

Low

Materials

No materials required.

Method

- Talking points: Sometimes we can hurt someone's feelings even if we don't mean to. How can we know if something we're about to say is respectful? What can we do if we accidentally hurt someone's feelings?
- One way to avoid hurting someone's feelings is by asking these three questions before we say something: Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind? It's like passing through three gates: if it's true, you pass through the first gate. If it's necessary, you pass through the second. And if it's kind, you pass through the third.

Give examples of things you might say and ask the participants to help you figure out whether they are kind and respectful by asking the three questions together.

- Talking points: When should we ask these questions? Do you ever get a feeling that what you're about to say might not be respectful?
- Try asking yourself the three questions next time you get that feeling and tell me what happens.

Use Three Gates to talk about how words affect other people, and use "Is It Helpful?" to talk about actions.

Discussion

- Have participants ask a fourth question: Is it the right time?
- Remind the participants that they don't need to ask these questions every time they speak, only if they catch themselves feeling that what they're about to say may not be kind or respectful.