

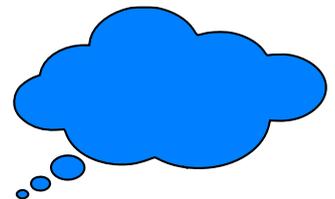
# RECOGNIZING YOUR OWN EMOTIONAL RESERVOIRS AND REACTIONS: ARE OUR EMOTIONAL RESPONSES CONSISTENTLY GETTING IN THE WAY?

In political discussions with people who hold opposing opinions, do...

...I frequently get too heated to listen to my counterpart?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
...conversations about contentious issues escalate rapidly for us?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
...I feel myself completely shutting down when things get heated?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
...I often say things I later regret?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
...my counterpart and I usually get locked in a cycle of negativity?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
...I have a difficult time calming down once I get agitated?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
...I feel easily overwhelmed when we start discussing politics?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
...I feel an urge to flee when we talk about politics?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
...I feel a sense of aversion toward my counterpart when things get heated?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
...small disputes become big disputes quickly for us?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
...I tend to jump to character judgements when we debate politics?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
...I feel personally affronted when we start discussing political viewpoints?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>

## REFLECT

If you answered yes to a majority of these questions, it suggests that you (or you and your counterpart) would benefit from cultivating strategies to manage your emotional responses more effectively before getting too deep into divisive political conversations. It is unlikely when these responses are rising in us that our conversation will lead anywhere productive.



The good news, however, is that there are a variety of strategies you can use to de-escalate your emotional responses. These strategies are not meant to suggest that there isn't value, legitimacy, and insight to be gained from your emotional responses—just that you are unlikely to engage constructively when you're immersed in the heat of your emotional impulses.