

FYP

~Persuasion

Persuasion has to do with influence and motivation. Webster's dictionary definition is the act of causing people to do or believe something. We tend to follow the suggestions of someone who we feel is a trustworthy source. Usually, we think of persuasion in relation to advertising, politics or religion. Persuasion is taking place all around us, cajoling for our attention; the internet, television, movies, the nightly news, conversations with our family members – all can be filled with persuasive messages.

A few questions come to mind as we discuss the idea of being persuasive.

First, how can we use persuasion as a force of good rather than a force of manipulation? Honoring our own free will while honoring the free will of others allows us to share our beliefs and ideas with those that we come in contact with an open mind and knowing that they have the free will to choose to agree or disagree. This is where expectation comes into play. In our persuasive endeavors, letting go of the expectations about the outcome of the other person's decision to be or not be persuaded can be very liberating.

Second, how can we stay true to our own beliefs while being bombarded by the persuasions from all of the outside forces around us, yet staying open to new ideas that might elevate us to a new level? Listening with a whole new level of curiosity is a game changer when it comes to persuasive communication. Listening without walls can help us to hear what is being communicated without precon-



ceived ideas. The beauty of curiosity is that involves risk and uncertainty, but without it, we stay flat.

Coaxing, flattery and sweet-talking are all types of persuasion, but so is authentic conversation. Be persuasive in an authentic way while honoring the opinions of others. Be open to hear beyond what someone is saying and listen for the heart of what is being said. Get to know the story behind the persuasive conversation and find common ground even if it's not something you agree with. Persuade and be persuaded. It keeps life interesting.