The Flowchart That Will Resolve All Political Conflict in Our Country

Do you want to have a conversation with someone who holds political views different from your own?

NO

Move along. This chart is not for you.

YES

Do you want to vent, have an argument, or generate conflict?

NO

Raise your voice
Interrupt
Question motives
Point out why they’re wrong
Say “are you f***ing kidding me?”

YES

Listen:
Allow uninterrupted speaking
Reflect back what you hear
Use “I” statements
Ask open-ended questions

Rethink whether you should be having this conversation

Do you want to understand their perspective?

NO

Perspective-Taking:
Be curious and nonjudgmental
Really focus on the other person
Assume they have positive intentions
Ask questions; float hypotheses
Try advocating for their position
Consider why they might hold their views

YES

Do you understand their perspective?
Can you treat them with respect?
If not, go back to listening and perspective-taking.
If so, and if you still want to try to persuade them, carry on...

PERSUADE

What is your goal?

COMMON GROUND

Apologies to:
- Sympathy
- Compassion
- Nurturance
- Rights
- Justice

Liberals and Conservatives all have morals, but they have different priorities. Where are they on the political spectrum?

LEFT

Appeal to:
- Loyalty
- Obligations
- Authority/respect
- Traditions
- Social order
- Purity/sanctity

RIGHT

Seek shared personal or political hopes, fears, goals, interests, likes, dislikes, experiences.
Agree to disagree.

How can I deal with distressing feelings that come up during dialogue?
- Anticipate and be aware of reactions
- Breathe
- Remember your motivations
- Pause the dialogue
- Seek support elsewhere