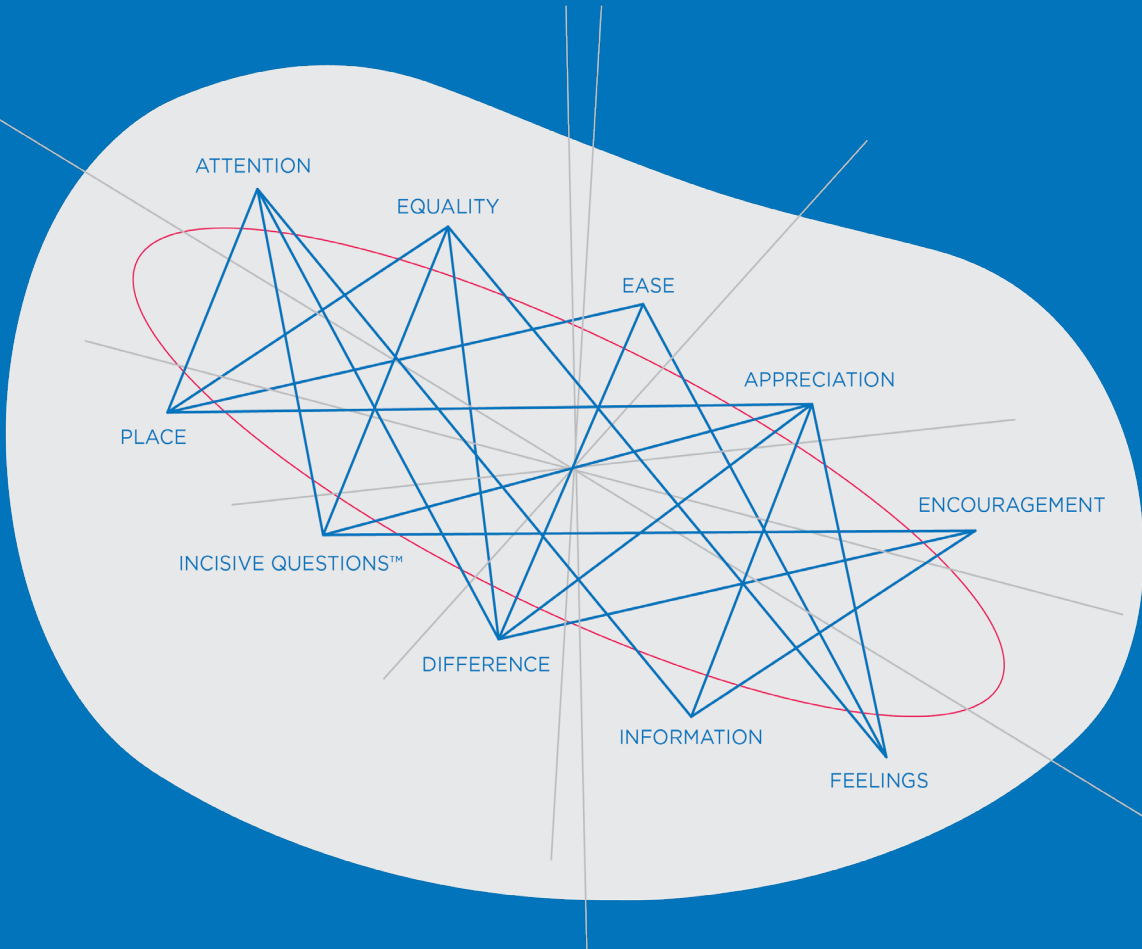


How to be a good thinking partner



It starts with creating a Thinking Environment™

The quality of our doing depends on the quality of our thinking. Author Nancy Kline's stunning observation gave rise to 10 behaviours that generate best thinking.

1. **ATTENTION:** Listening without interruption and with interest in where the person will go next in their thinking
2. **EQUALITY:** Regarding each other as thinking peers, giving equal time to think
3. **EASE:** Discarding internal urgency
4. **APPRECIATION:** Noticing what is good and saying it
5. **FEELINGS:** Welcoming the release of emotion
6. **ENCOURAGEMENT:** Giving courage to go to the unexplored edge of our thinking by ceasing competition as thinkers
7. **INFORMATION:** Absorbing all the relevant facts
8. **DIFFERENCE:** Prioritising diversity of group identities and understanding their lived experience
9. **INCISIVE QUESTIONS:** Freeing the human mind of an untrue assumptions lived as true
10. **PLACE:** Producing a physical environment — the room, the listener, your body — that says, 'You matter'

Practical tips

As a leader, it's important to understand that your role is to listen with the intent to ignite thinking in others and create an environment where every team member feels bold and courageous enough to think for themselves.

A good leader asks themselves two questions:

- Do I want to know what this person really thinks?
- Do I know how to help them think at their best?

Why it matters?

The most important factor in the quality of our thinking is how we treat each other while we are thinking. When we give someone our uninterrupted focus and generative attention, we allow them to truly think for themselves.

Nancy Kline writes about the tiny huge question: "How far can you go in your own thinking before you need mine? How much further can you go than that? What if the idea or your answer is just around your own corner? What if I muzzle the mouth in my head for a little longer and not speak?"

When we create a Thinking Environment™ for each other:



Fresh ideas
can emerge



Confusion
can dissipate



Painful feelings
can subside



Creativity
can explode

A few steps on how to have a thinking session

- Keep your eyes on the eyes of the person as they speak – giving generative focused and uninterrupted attention.
- Cultivate fascination with what they are saying and what they will say next.
- Trust that they have the answers within themselves, they just need uninterrupted time to think.
- Do not interrupt – it is not a conversation. If they need a question from you, ask "What more do you think, or feel, or want to say?"
- Trust that not uttering a word is one of the most effective things you can do as a thinking partner.
- Remember to appreciate your thinker - sharing takes courage to be vulnerable.
- Commit to confidentiality.

**Listening to IGNITE rather
than listening to respond**

Call to action

What small step will you take to create a Thinking Environment™ for yourself and others?

If the quality of the thinking of the people around you is dependent upon the way you are treating them, you might be interested to learn more about the extent to which you are creating a Thinking Environment™ at the moment.

Complete this quick online 10 Components Assessment

- <https://www.timetothink.com/online-assessment/>

“The single most important factor in whether or not people can think for themselves well... is how they are being treated by the people with them, while they are thinking!”

- Nancy Kline



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