

The New Socratic Method

A guide to developing mental immunity, combining ancient wisdom and modern psychology

NSM contract: I will (a) suspend judgement; (b) use mostly questions; (c) engage collaboratively; (d) seek shared understanding, not victory.

1. CLARIFY



2. EXAMINE



3. CALIBRATE

AIMS

Examine the methods by which the view came to be held; encourage self-redirection

Gain a sympathetic understanding of both the view and the underlying motivations

Raise awareness of gaps in understanding; help find alternatives to problematic ideas

SAY

How confident are you?

May I ask you a question?

Is X a generally reliable method?
Would you accept a contrary conclusion reached by this method?

Would you say you know X, or just believe in it?

What are your views on X?

How do you reconcile...?

How do you know? By what method or process?

Help me understand better.

What is a good test for responsible belief?

Do you believe X because it's true, useful, or both?

By X, do you mean __?

What standards should we share?

What would change your mind?

TIPS

- Listen actively
- Don't criticize
- Smile
- Maintain trust
- Exude a genuine desire to learn how the other person thinks
- Use questions to express gaps in your own understanding
- Suggest helpful rephrasing that reflect shared values
- Use a warm and natural tone
- Assume best intentions & interpret with generosity
- Validate admirable motivations

PRSA



voices4everyone

CIRCE