

End the Stalemate Discussion Questions

1. How are disagreements typically handled within your relationships? Do you feel comfortable talking with those you know who think differently than you do? Why or why not?
2. In chapter 1, Sean lists four “storms” that he believes contribute to an American culture that is angry and divided. Which storm do you see contributing most often to your divided relationships? Explain why.
3. What are the differences between the transmission and ritual views of communication? What is the role of sympathetic awareness in maintaining healthy relationships?
4. What is “bricolage”? How can understanding bricolage help you to better appreciate someone else’s perspective?
5. A person’s worldview is composed of many building blocks, including culture and community, family, hinge moments, narrative injuries, and influencers. Consider how each of these building blocks has shaped your own worldview. What are some aspects of your worldview that others often misunderstand or miss entirely?
6. When was the last time you had a conversation with someone who sees the world differently than you do? What went well in that conversation? What might you do differently next time?
7. Sean highlights critical race theory and the use of a person’s preferred pronouns as two of the most explosive issues today. What other explosive issues often emerge within your relationships? Why should Christians continue to engage explosive issues even though they can be so challenging to navigate?
8. In chapter 7, Tim claims that each difficult conversation is actually three conversations: the pre-conversation, the actual conversation, and the post-conversation. What are the elements of each of these conversations? Which conversation might you want to pay closer attention to next time you discuss a difficult issue?
9. What are the differences between strawman and steelman arguments? How can you present the perspective of others in a steelman fashion? What are the benefits of doing so?
10. Consider the questions for Sean and Tim listed in chapters 9 and 10. Which question and answer did you find most relevant to your own experiences? If you could meet with the authors, what further questions would you have for them?
11. What is one step you can take to work to end the stalemates in your relationships?