

**UTOPIA**  
**JETZT**  
Bundes  
kongress  
2020

Documentation of an event as part of  
UTOPIA.JETZT:

Wie wollen wir miteinander reden?  
How should we speak to one another?  
16. Januar 2020



### **You have to...** (also **need to** and **must**)

How do you feel being told what to do? Do you find it motivating? Do you say, »I can't wait to go into the office today to hear people tell me what I have to do«? I would suggest that if you would like to invite more stress and anxiety into your life, use *have to*, *need to*, and *must* more! The shift we can make here is to one of choice. Do I want to? Am I prepared to or willing to? Perhaps I would even like to, love to, or can't wait to! To create a willing and motivated team, these questions are crucial. It sits more comfortably with a »no« in order to open up the negotiation of a true, rather than unwilling, »yes«.

### **You make me...angry!**

Who really has responsibility for your feelings? By saying, »You make me...«, I give you the responsibility and render myself impotent; things are done to us and it is the other person who must change in order for us to feel better. The shift we can make is from one of cause and effect to one of stimulus and response. Ownership of experience and curiosity are key here - »I felt... when I noticed/heard...«; »I felt angry when I noticed you left the room while I was talking with you...what went on for you?« This opens up a connection with others and can prevent further conflict down the line.

### **What you should do is...** (also **ought to** and **if I were you, I would...**)

When you receive uninvited advice, do you take it on? Do you do exactly as the person told you you should do it? One response (whether expressed outwardly or not), can be, »Don't tell me what to do!«.

How about when it is invited advice? We tend to take on advice when it is a confirmation of our own thinking. When we are given, or give someone, a new solution that resonates, an act of theft occurs. Working out a situation for oneself comes with that inspiring »Aha!« lightbulb moment, bringing with it energy and motivation, ownership, confidence, and personal growth. The shift we can make here is to a position of assisting each others' rigorous thinking through asking questions: »How would you like it to be? What do you already have? What could you do? What would someone you highly respect suggest? What will you do?«

Let's return to the two things you noted down at the start of the session. What happens if you rephrase them with the above shifts in language? How does it sound; how does it feel; what's the effect? Perhaps a renewed sense of agency and empowerment of owning the decision through choice?

What would happen if we dropped all *have to's*, *needs*, and *musts*, *shoulds*, *ought to's*, and *you make me's*?

The practice of upwording invites us to notice these hindering habits in our conversation to move towards less conflict and more connection.