

## SHIFTING PUBLIC NARRATIVE GUIDELINES

### DO

- *Unmask* – Name the dominant public narrative when you see it at work. Point out (or ask about) what you just saw on the news or heard from a friend, or the law that was just passed, that was based on particular values and beliefs.
- *Uncover & Elevate* – Name the values and beliefs that you want to see lived out in the world. Connect it to places where your audience may see that happening already.
- *Contrast* – Lay out what might be different if your values/convictions were the ones shaping what happens in the world. – Be specific about how we have the choice to approach situations through a different belief system. Invite a rethinking of the situation
- *Draw on your own journey* - While it's important to personalize this, it's also important to do it in a way that anyone can see themselves in it. Describing your own realizations and shifts will help others find their own way in the conversation.
- *Sustain your efforts and connect with others* – Shifting narrative does not happen quickly – it takes sustained effort, over time, with many people working at it
- *Demonstrate narrative*, don't just write or talk about it. Our actions say as much or more about our values and beliefs as our words

### DON'T

- *Focus on challenging facts or interpretations of information* – this will not challenge narrative thinking. Your arguments, as convincing as they may be, will ultimately lose out to the dominant public narrative
- *Attack people for their narrative* – many people operate out of the dominant public narrative, even if unconsciously. Shifting public

narratives will take personal conversion and transformation. You cannot move people if you attack them

- *Name the dominant public narrative as “wrong”* - Our assumption is that competing values & beliefs live within people. We want to provide people a chance to chose the ones they want to live out of and/or balance those competing narratives
- *Try to convert or convince people* – We are trying to bring out the best of what is already in people, to help them find the resonance for themselves. This is, in part, an emotional journey and our usual approaches to argument and logic don’t work so well in this arena.