



# Getting Ready to Lead for Equity

Adapted from Becerra, A. & Weisglass, J. (2004). *Take It Up: Leading for Educational Equity*. Santa Barbara: The National Coalition for Equity and Education.

Prior to leading or facilitating meetings and groups, it is important to get yourself ready in the emotional sense as well as the technical one. A tightly designed agenda is great, but your best-laid plans can go off the rails when difficult issues arise. “Getting Ready” means spending time reflecting on and even talking about your own emotional landscape. Learn to understand the factors that trigger your distress vs. those that open you to connecting, learning, and growing with others. Armed with this self-awareness, you will be ready to show up as a leader for equity.

Here are some questions for reflection:

When Have You Been ... ?	
Passive	Active
Distrustful	Trustful
Pretending	Authentic
Insecure and powerless	Confident and powerful
Fearful of emotions	Accepting of emotions
<b>What caused you to be this way? What can you do to overcome it?</b>	<b>How was this encouraged? How can you be sure to remain this way?</b>

Equity work requires us to move out of the left column and into the right column. Often, we have been conditioned to be passive in learning situations, distrustful of others, or to pretend that we know something when we don't. We may actually feel insecure and powerless, hopeless, or fearful for our own and others' emotional safety. These concerns, when unconscious, can impede our leadership and render us unable to support others.

It is vital that we get back in touch with our core internal sense of self that is active and eager to learn, able to develop trusting relations with different groups of people, able to be authentic about what we think and feel, confident and powerful in new situations, and able to accept and appreciate the value of emotional release. Becoming aware of how your experiences have affected you will clear the way for you to spend more time in the right-hand column and be a more confident, powerful, articulate, supportive, and effective leader.