

Welcome!



Outcomes

- ❑ Understand the key elements of a civic reflection practice;
- ❑ Understand the benefits to your program, members, and self; and
- ❑ Be intrigued enough to want to try it at some point in the near future.



Agenda

- ❑ Building the Learning Environment
- ❑ Jumping In
- ❑ What is Civic Reflection?
- ❑ How does it look like in action?
- ❑ Why Civic Reflection?
- ❑ Tips
- ❑ Next Steps
- ❑ Wrap Up



Agreements





AmeriCorps Pledge

I will get things done for America - to make our people safer,
smarter, and healthier.

I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities.

Faced with apathy, I will take action.

Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.

Faced with adversity, I will persevere.

I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.

I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done.



Let's Reflect!



My Optimism

by Shao Yanxiang

Pair Share

Think of a time in the last year and a half when your optimism was challenged. What was that moment? What happened?



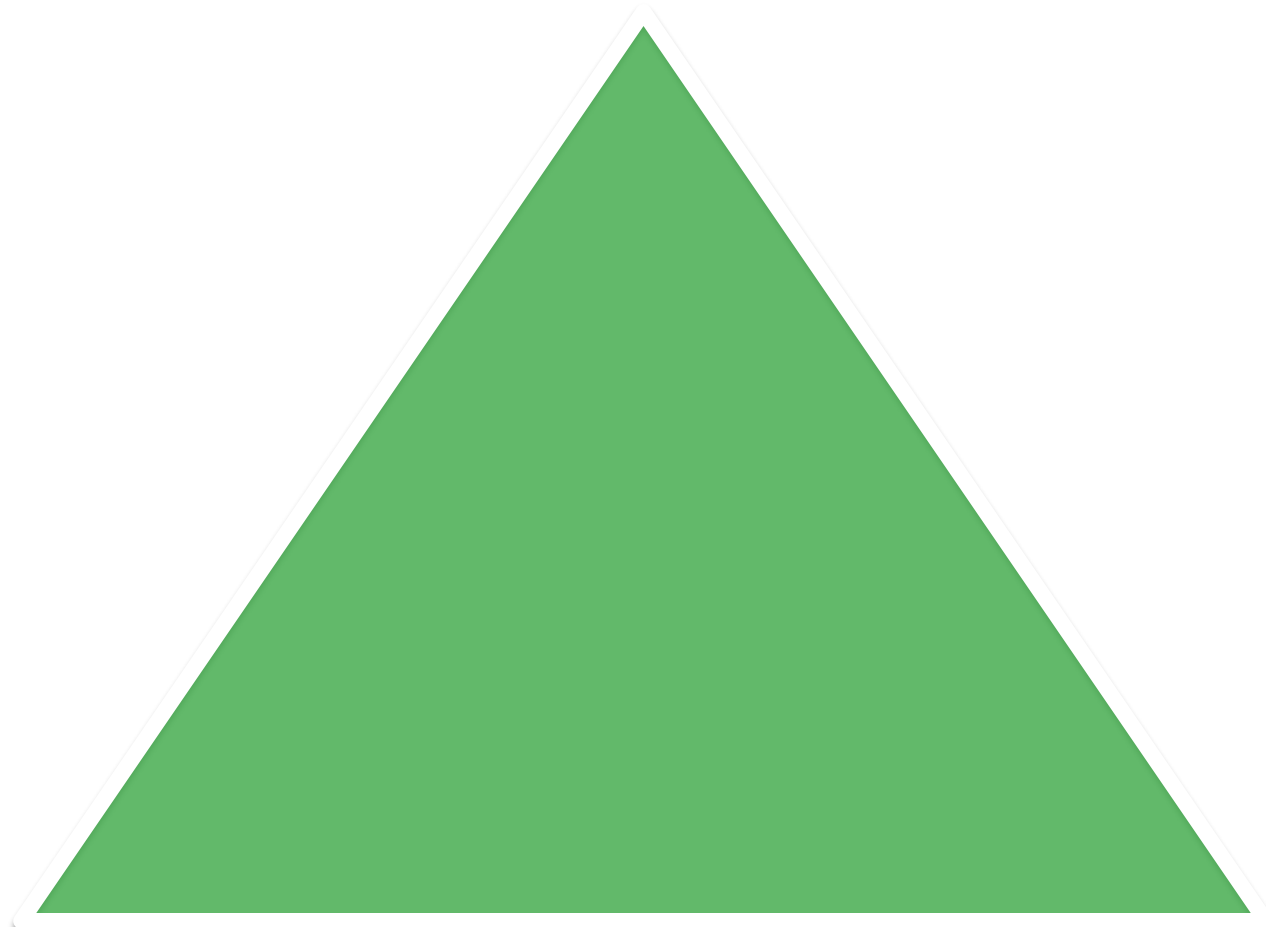
What is Civic Reflection?

- ❑ Group of participants engaged in shared civic activity
- ❑ A highly participatory discussion, anchored by a short, thought-provoking reading, image, audio element, or video
 - Jumping point for discussing values, beliefs, relationships
- ❑ Trained facilitator leads the discussion
- ❑ Series of questions – why and what does it mean? (instead of how and what)
 - Service, Community, Leadership, and Other Key Themes



Civic Reflection Triangle

SHARED ACTIVITY/EXPERIENCE

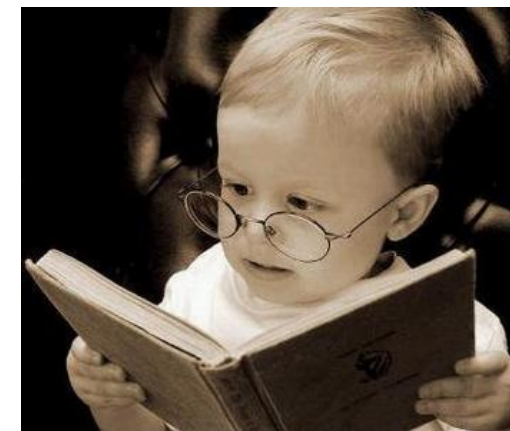
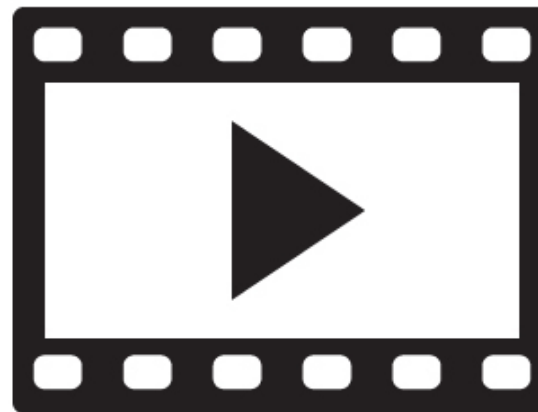


**CIVIC
LIFE**

**READING
OR
OTHER
MEDIUM**

Why a Reading or Other Element?

- ❑ Anchors the discussion – a shared, common object
- ❑ Creates a safe space – it's neutral and can be disagreed and argued with
- ❑ Adds depth and complexity
- ❑ Connects people to new ideas and diverse perspectives



THE CONVERSATION



Big Questions

- ❑ Is my service making an impact on people and community or only on myself?
- ❑ How do service participants talk across differences?
- ❑ How do we make authentic **connections** both with the people we serve and the people we serve with?
- ❑ Is service simple?



Five Key Elements

Opening Activity or Exercise

- Gets participants relaxed, breaks the ice, opens them to the reading and larger ideas

Clarification Questions

- Gets people looking at the text or element, breaking it apart so that everyone has a better understanding

Significance Questions

- Questions that focus on meaning – what is the point, the message, the larger lesson we are trying to understand

Implication Questions

- Typically focused on now what – what we want to take away from the reading and do differently

Closing Activity or Exercise

- Provides a sense of closure without shutting down the open thought the discussion has stirred up

Clarification Questions

- What is going on in the text?
- What is being said or done?



Significance Questions

- ❑ What do you think about this?
- ❑ What is going on?
- ❑ Why did the author/speaker or persons do something?

- ? Where, as you review this piece, do you have questions?
- ? Where does your mind stop, or pause, as you move through it?
- ? What large themes or big questions come to mind?



Implication Questions

- ❑ So what?
- ❑ How does what we just read, listened to, observed, discussed relate to you, your community or your service?



Good Questions

- ❑ Short and Clear
- ❑ Open ended with multiple plausible answers
- ❑ Connect or draw upon the thoughts and ideas of the people in the room



Questions to Avoid

- ❑ Require special expertise or outside knowledge to answer
- ❑ Put participants on the defensive
- ❑ Lead people toward a conclusion
- ❑ Point to a single answer instead of multiple interpretations



Preparing Your Activities and Questions

- ❑ Read the text all the way through a few times
- ❑ Consider themes that you want to discuss i.e. leadership, difference, etc.
- ❑ Identify 3-4 areas of the text you want to explore further with your group
- ❑ Identify potential challenges with text and how you might overcome them.
- ❑ Prepare many questions and be flexible for where the group might take you



Questions

WHY?



Service is Not Simple

- Service is Complex
- Problems are Complex
 - Many causes and forces that contribute to what is happening

AmeriCorps is Not Simple

- Managing an AmeriCorps program is not easy
- So much of what you do is on the compliance, requirements, and managing people side
 - We want to do something that also speaks to your spirit and why you do this work.

Alumni Survey

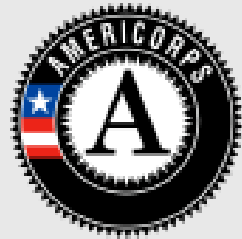
- ▣ 2016 AmeriCorps Alumni Outcomes
- ▣ Built on previous research by exploring how national service experiences successfully encourage national service alumni to stay civically engaged, develop and utilize skills gained through service, and/or pursue service-oriented careers and post-secondary education and employment



AmeriCorps

AMERICORPS SERVICE SPURS PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

You may join AmeriCorps to serve others, but during this adventure, you also gain skills and experience that help jump start your career. When asked, AmeriCorps alumni make it clear—service changes lives.



A LASTING IMPACT

Alumni show a significant, sustained impact in life satisfaction and feel their service was worthwhile.³

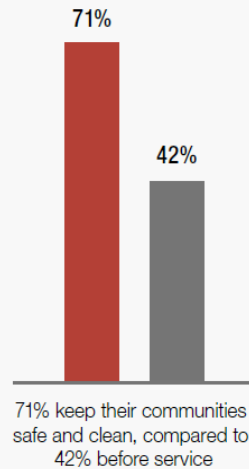


90% OF ALUMNI FEEL THEY IMPROVED THEIR ABILITY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS

94% OF ALUMNI FEEL THEY BROADENED THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIETY AND DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES

91% OF ALUMNI FEEL THEY MADE A CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY

92% OF ALUMNI FEEL THEY MADE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF AT LEAST ONE PERSON



A PROMISING FUTURE

Alumni agree—AmeriCorps made a difference in advancing their career.¹



- 55% FIGURED OUT THEIR NEXT STEPS in terms of educational goals
- 64% FIGURED OUT THEIR NEXT STEPS in terms of career/professional goals
- 79% OF AMERICORPS ALUMNI ARE SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED with their career path after service



8 OUT OF 10 SAY AMERICORPS BENEFITED AND ADVANCED THEIR CAREER PATH



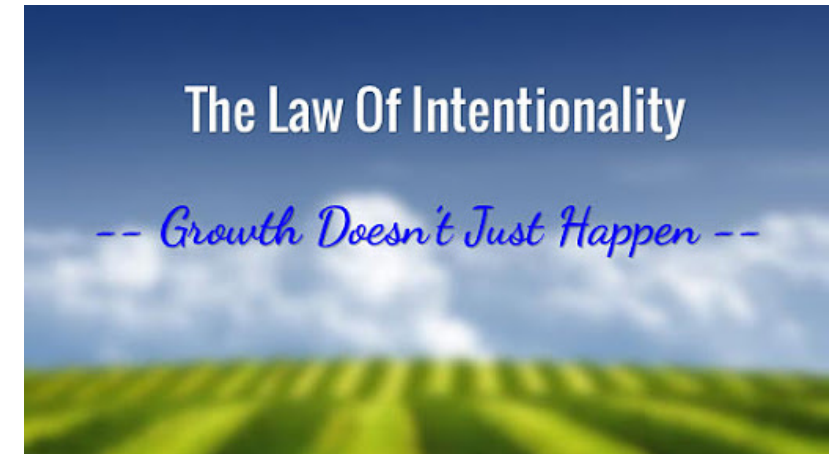
66% ARE EMPLOYED WITHIN 6 MONTHS after completing their AmeriCorps commitment

42% FOUND EMPLOYMENT due to an AmeriCorps connection

A Tuft's University study found that resumes listing AmeriCorps were **7% MORE LIKELY TO GET A CALL BACK** for an interview than those without²

Alumni Survey

- ▣ 54% of ASN alumni were very satisfied with their overall experience
 - if you look at this data over time, 3/5 of 2005 alumni were very satisfied with their overall experience compared to half of alumni in 2010, 2013 and 2016 cohorts.
- ▣ Only 14% of ASN members experienced personal growth
- ▣ 43% of ASN alumni strongly agree that AmeriCorps was a defining personal experience



AmeriCorps Guiding Principles

Get Things
Done

Strengthen
Communities

Develop
Participants and
Ensure a Strong
Experience

Focus on Brand Identification

Encourage
Responsibility

Expand
Opportunity

AmeriCorps Guiding Principles

**Problems are
complex**

**Get Things
Done**

**Requires us to
think about
what we do
critically**

AmeriCorps Guiding Principles

**Renew the ethic
of civic
responsibility and
the spirit of
community and
service
throughout the
varied and
diverse
communities of
the United States**

**Strengthen
Communities**

UNITE
**We bridge divides by
bringing people
together**

LEAD
**We empower an
entire ecosystem
committed to the
betterment of
communities across
America**

AmeriCorps Guiding Principles



AmeriCorps Guiding Principles

**Deepened
connection to
what they are a
part of**

**Brand
Identification**

**Strengthened
Alum Network**

Outcomes

- ▣ Short
 - Improves individual morale
 - Builds skills – listening, communication, articulation, critical thinking, strategic thinking, leadership, ability to discuss across differences
- ▣ Medium
 - Increases team cohesion and collaboration
 - Supports retention and program satisfaction
- ▣ Long
 - Impacts civic identity
 - Leads to higher rates of civic and community future



Bottom Line – All Spectrums

- ❑ Skill-Building
- ❑ Civic Engagement
- ❑ Leadership Development
- ❑ Dialogue Across Differences
- ❑ Community Development
- ❑ Retention and Sustainability



Skill Building

- Helps individuals build tangible skills that translate directly to increased effectiveness at work/service site and improved relationships through service:
 - critical thinking and analysis
 - active listening
 - facilitation skills
- Broad skill-set is developed through civic reflection trainings and discussions.



Civic Engagement

- ❑ Help individuals better understand the complexities of civic work and their own purpose in relation to public service.
- ❑ Develop a stronger commitment to communities and civic life.



Leadership Development

- Develop a number of leadership qualities:
 - ability to understand diverse perspectives;
 - build relationships across difference; and
 - clearly articulate one's own thoughts and beliefs



Dialogue Across Differences

Conversations often provide a deeper understanding of one's own choices and values, and a forum to better understand the diverse perspectives of others.



Community Development

- Helps to understand themselves and their communities
- Leads to:
 - strengthened community relationships; and
 - deepened networks within and across communities.



Retention and Sustainability

- Groups who do civic reflection:
 - increased retention and renewal rates;
 - deepened volunteer commitment;, and
 - strengthened relationships with staff, volunteers, and the communities they serve.
- Civic reflection reminds people why they do what they do and makes their work more sustainable in the process.



Bottom Line – AmeriCorps

- ❑ **Higher rates of retention**
- ❑ **Increase in renewal of service**
- ❑ **Improved relationships** between and among program staff and service members/participants
- ❑ **Development and satisfaction** – with 70% of participants saying that civic reflection increased their commitment to serve.
- ❑ **A fresh perspective** for program staff and participants on their day-to-day work and a newfound ability to see the “big picture”.



Why do Civic Reflection?

- ❑ Talking across differences is crucial
- ❑ Service (and solving problems it seeks) is value-laden and complex work – engages our deepest values and beliefs
- ❑ Effective action *requires* reflection – understanding **why** we do what we do impacts **how** well we do it and **how long** we will do it.

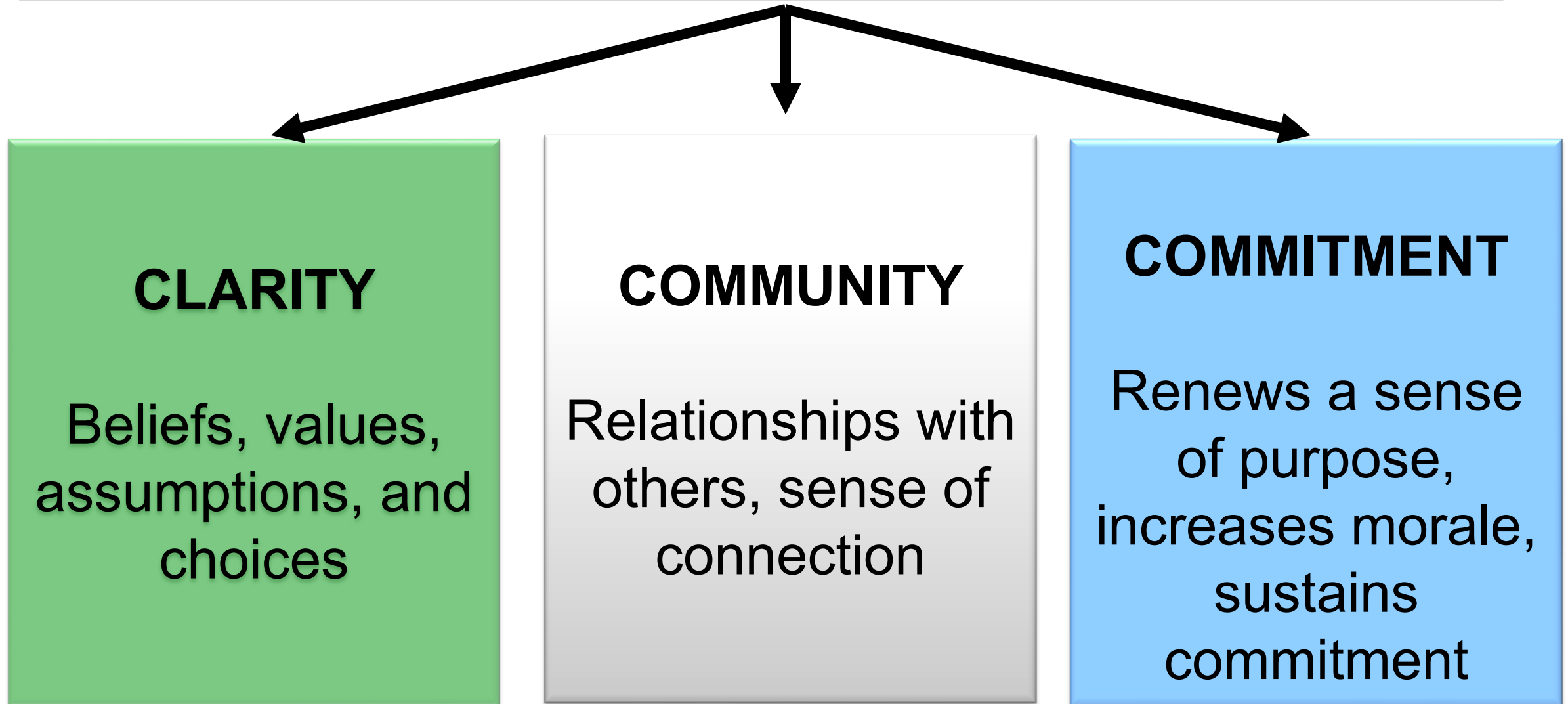
Coaching and Management Tools

- Knowing that our members don't come with all they need to succeed and that this work is hard, what tools can we use to help coach our members to success and to provide them with a strong experience?
- How do you get the best out of your members?

How will you empower members of all backgrounds and abilities to serve at their greatest capacity?



Impact of Civic Reflection



Resources

- ❑ Dropbox Folder with Sample Discussion Guides
- ❑ Tips for Leading Discussions
- ❑ Handbook for Facilitators
- ❑ Post Discussion Reflection Form



The image features a 3D-rendered word 'Questions' in a bold, red, sans-serif font. The word is positioned centrally and appears to be floating above a soft, pinkish-red shadow. Surrounding the word are numerous grey, 3D question marks of varying sizes and orientations, some appearing to float in the background and others resting on the surface below. The overall composition is clean and modern, with a white background. On the far left edge, there is a vertical bar with a blue top half and a red bottom half.

Questions

Thank You for Your Participation!

