

BENEATH THE SURFACE

A GUIDE TO CONVERSATIONS THAT BEAR FRUIT

Move beyond small talk
into meaningful conversations that
build trust, find alignment, and nurture growth.



“You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.”



– Dale Carnegie,

Read more in [How to Win Friends and Influence People](#)

Welcome!

As a mother, teacher, entrepreneur,
and connector, I've learned how

CURIOSITY & CARING

can transform our relationships and our lives.

This guide will help you turn everyday conversations into opportunities for connection, clarity, and growth.

You'll be able to:

- Open new conversations with simple “**groundbreaker questions**”
- Explore purpose, vision, and alignment with “**rooting questions**”
- Use a simple framework for casual chats or networking events
- Watch aligned relationships take root and bear fruit for you

I invite you to
lead with curiosity
and watch what grows.

With Love and Gratitude,
LaToya Germaine





*“People don't care
how much you know
until they know
how much you care.”*

– John C. Maxwell,
Read more in [Developing the Leader Within You](#)

Why Curiosity Matters:

Every new connection is wondering:
“Do you care about me? Can I trust you?”

When people feel seen and heard, trust grows.
With trust, we can cultivate connections that enrich lives.

Think of each conversation as a seed.
Curiosity and care loosen the soil.
Good questions sprout roots.
listening deepens roots,
and as trust grows,
we all grow.



“When you are interested in others,
they become interested in you.

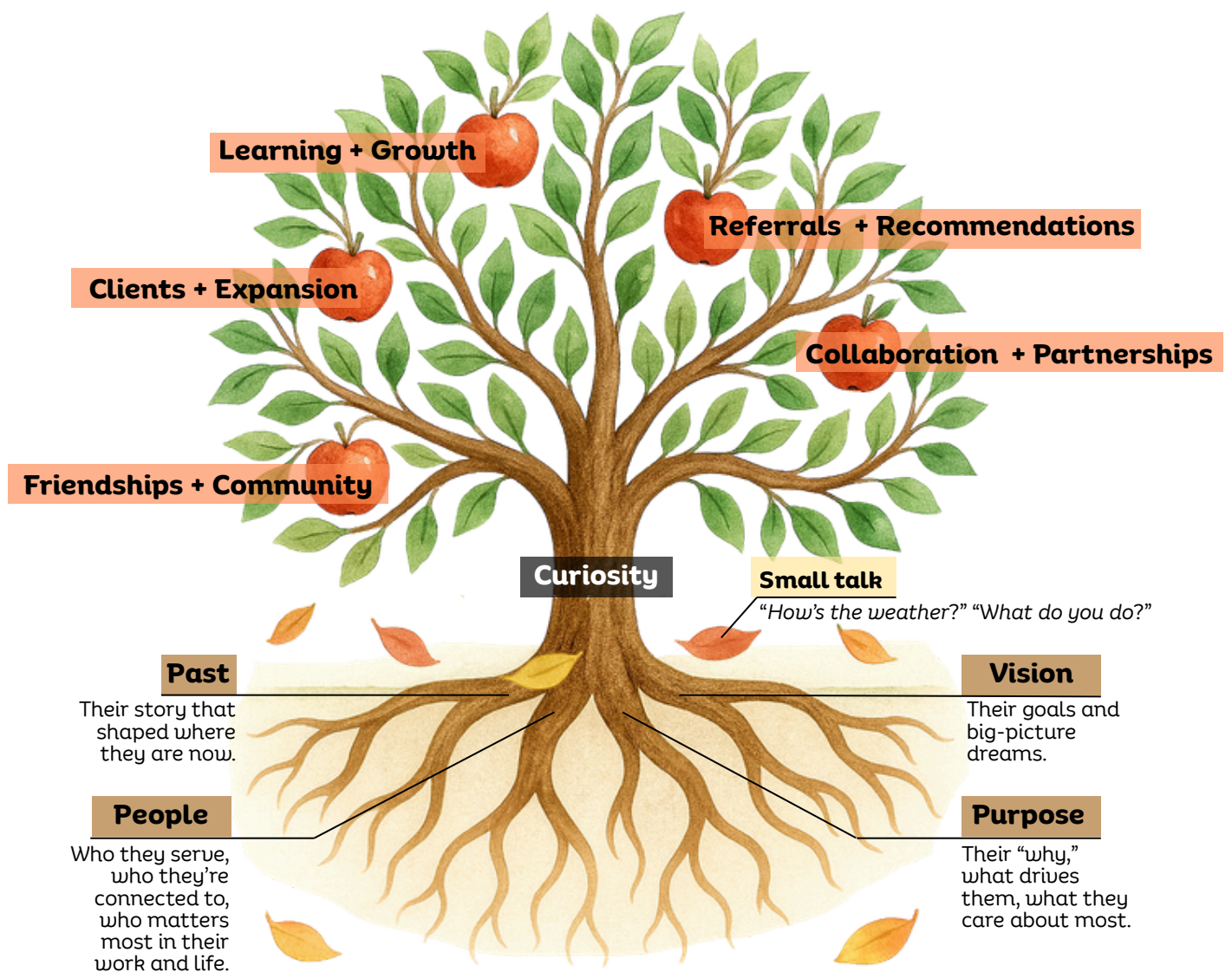
When you care about others,
they care about you.



When you help others grow, you grow.”

– Zig Ziglar, [Read more in See You at the Top](#)

Curiosity breaks the ground. Care nurtures the soil.
Listening strengthens the roots – and trust bears the fruit.



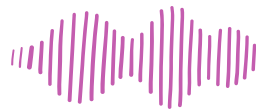
THE FOUNDATION FOR FRUITFUL CONVERSATIONS

Before anything, the soil must be rich and ready.
That means showing up to every conversation with:



A Caring Presence

Listen with your whole self.
Lean in to learning about them.



Your Undivided Attention

Put distractions aside.
Honor the person in front of you.



An Intention to Serve

Frame the conversation with
"How can I give?" not *"What can I gain?"*



Genuine Curiosity

Hold space to be surprised, to learn,
and to *connect beneath the surface.*





THE FRUITS OF CURIOSITY & CARING

These are the rewards of positive conversations rooted in awareness and wonder:

Learning + Growth

The insights, skills, and breakthroughs we gain. Every conversation can teach us something new.

Friendships + Community

Genuine bonds that provide support, encouragement, and belonging along the way.

Clients + Expansion

The people who choose to work with you. The expanded reach and impact that follows.

Referrals + Recommendations

When someone trusts you enough to open doors, connect you, or vouch for your work.

Collaborations + Partnerships

Opportunities to co-create, combine strengths, and build something bigger together.



THE FOCUS OF FRUITFUL CONVERSATIONS

Everyone you meet is the main character in a story that's still unfolding.
Listen with curiosity about three chapters of their story:



PAST

What shaped them.
The roots of what matters most.
Origins, values, defining moments.



PRESENT

What's alive right now.
Their tone, energy, current focus.
The threads of shared humanity.



FUTURE

What they're reaching toward.
Where their growth is leading next.
Their hopes, goals, and possibilities.

When you keep all three in mind, your curiosity becomes multidimensional – not just about what people do, but about *who they are* and *who they're becoming*.



THE ART OF OPENING UP: GROUNDBREAKER QUESTIONS



Most people start conversations with icebreakers – surface-level small talk about weather, weekends, or “what do you do?”

Groundbreaker questions are warm and disarming.

They spark trust early and invite people into a space where honesty, vulnerability, and real connection can grow.

*Choose 1-2 questions that feel natural.
Start light, then follow your curiosity deeper.
Each question unlocks another layer of trust.*

Light + Warm

What’s new and exciting in your world right now?

Where did you grow up? Where do you feel most at home?

What’s one thing people would be surprised to learn about you?

Human + Heartfelt

What brought you into the work you do?

What do you love most about what you do?

What’s something simple that brings you peace or joy?

Curious + Connecting

What’s something you’re learning or exploring right now?

How do you usually like to connect with new people?

What kind of collaboration lights you up?

Once you’ve started to connect using these questions, the next step is to deepen the connection – that’s where the C.A.R.E. Framework comes in.



THE C.A.R.E. FRAMEWORK

The C.A.R.E. Framework helps you flow through four levels of questions that take you beyond small talk and into meaningful connection.



CLARIFY

These questions uncover what they do, for whom, and why.

- What influenced you to do what you do?
- What do you enjoy most about your work?
- Whom do you love serving through your work?
- How do you usually find your best partners or clients?
- What major impact are you focused on creating right now?



ALIGN

Next, you can explore where visions and values overlap.

- What impact do you want your work to have?
- What does success look like for you this season?
- When you think about the future, what excites you?
- What kind of people do you love working with most?
- What principles guide how you do business or lead others?



REFLECT

These questions invite self-awareness and honest storytelling.

- What feels like your main priority or challenge this season?
- What lessons have you learned that still guide you now?
- Who or what has influenced your approach the most?
- What drives you to keep going on the hard days?
- How has your view of success evolved?



EXPAND

These encourage collaboration, growth, and mutual support.

- How can people best support your goals or vision?
- What would a powerful partnership look like for you?
- What kinds of collaborations are you open to exploring next?
- What are you working on right now that you're excited about?
- How can I or others in my network support what you're building?

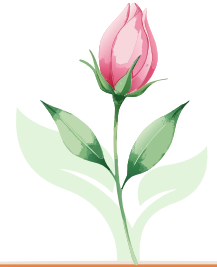


THE ART OF CURIOSITY: DIGGING DEEPER

Once someone opens up, your next move is to stay curious.
Instead of moving on, try layering your questions with these stems:

To Clarify Understanding:

Can you tell me more about ____?
When you say ____, what do you mean?
Why is that? What makes you say _____?
What does that look like for you day-to-day?



To Explore Emotion or Meaning:

How did that impact / benefit you?
What part of that matters most to you?
What's the most rewarding or challenging part of that?



To Reflect and Connect:

It sounds like ___ – is that right?
How has that shaped your perspective now?
What has been the benefit/impact of _____ on _____?
That reminds me of _____. Has that been your experience, too?



To Expand Possibility:

What would it look like if _____?
What's the next step or bigger vision for you?
If everything went ideally, what would that open up for you?
Who else could you see yourself partnering with to make that happen?

*These stems help you layer questions naturally.
Curiosity isn't about interrogating; it's about exploring together.*





“Trust is built in very small moments.”

– Brené Brown,

Read more in [Dare to Lead](#)



CULTIVATE CONNECTION:
KEEP THE CONVERSATION GROWING

Meaningful connections don't end when the call does – they grow through care, consistency, and gratitude.

When you follow up with genuine appreciation, you can *turn a moment into momentum*.

Simple ways to nurture trust and stay top of mind:



Send a handwritten or digital card* expressing gratitude for the conversation.



Celebrate milestones – birthdays, business launches, wins.



Share a resource or make an introduction that supports their goals.

*I [send out cards](#) to make thoughtfulness easy, turning connections into seeds that keep bearing fruit.

What's one simple sign of appreciation you can send today?



A FINAL WORD

You made it this far, so you care about conversations that actually lead somewhere.

Most people stay on the surface.

You explored how the right questions can create new possibilities. Now it's your turn to experience that kind of conversation.

Let's Take It a Step Further

I offer a [Freedom Mapping Session](#), and it's not a sales call.

It's a focused 20-minute conversation where we look honestly at:

- Where you are
- What's creating friction
- Your next step forward

This isn't just conversation—it's a guided process designed to help you see what most people miss. No pressure. No pitch. Just truth and direction.

Your Next Step:

Stop guessing. Let's get you clear on your next move:

[BOOK YOUR FREEDOM MAPPING SESSION](#)

If You'd Rather Stay in Conversation First
Join us inside The Gold Mind → [Friday gatherings](#)

Prefer to Process on Your Own?
Use: [The Root to Rise Planner](#)

*Every genuine conversation is an act of creation.
What you nurture with curiosity today
can bear fruit for generations.*

