**Phrases for Cultivating Intellectual Humility**

**Overview:** Intellectual humility is the practice of being forward with your knowledge and speaking limitations. When you can boldly articulate your deficiencies, you defuse the worry associated with them. This allows you to better access your full intellect. Below are listed the most common speaking insecurities that prevent people from being open and assertive. The responses on the two right columns are derived from various interviews and conversations featuring world-class speakers and leaders. Begin by identifying the insecurity most applicable to your speaking and review the appropriate response.

| **Insecurity** | **Response 1** | **Response 2** |
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| I need more time to think | “Give me a moment to process that.” - **Simon Sinek** | “Do you mind if I think for a moment?” - **Dr Alok Kanojia** |
| I don’t understand the question | “I’m a terrible listener. I’m sorry, I simply don’t understand the question.” **-Carl Sagan** | “Could you go back two sentences and repeat that last bit?” - **John F. Kenned**y |
| I don’t know the answer | “I’m not qualified to give a good answer. What I can offer is this…” **- Simon Sinek** | “This is a subject that I don’t know enough about to comment on.” - **Barack Obama** |
| I’m uncomfortable with the topic | “I simply would much rather discuss something else. Perhaps we shift topics?” **-Rod Serling** | “I’d rather not discuss this at the present time. I haven’t fully worked out my thinking on that just yet.” **- Steve Jobs** |
| I don’t have an opinion | “I simply don’t know enough to comment on this issue. Ask me again after I’ve done my research.” **- Steve Jobs** | “I haven’t formed a definitive view on this matter yet.” **- Martin Luther King** |
| I’m not the right person to ask | “I’m afraid my answer wouldn’t be all that good. I suggest you ask [name] that question.” **- Frank Sinatra** | “This is outside my area of expertise, but let me connect you with someone who is more knowledgeable on this subject.” - **T. Robbins** |
| I disagree with the topic or question | *“*Well, I would like to disagree with the notion that…” - **Martin Luther King** | *“*You’re asking the wrong question. I think the right question is…” - **Mohammad Ali** |
| I’m feeling anxious with the discussion | “This topic is making me feel rather anxious at the moment. Can we come back to it at a later time?” **- Stephen Fry** | "I appreciate the importance of this conversation, but I'm feeling a bit anxious right now. Can we take a moment so I can gather my thoughts?" - **Brene Brown** |