

AN EMERGING TOOL IN THE POLARIZATION REDUCTION TOOLBOX

A Guide to Understanding and Using Meta-Perception
Correction Interventions

March 2025

About Beyond Conflict

Beyond Conflict is a global nonprofit organization that combines more than three decades of experience in conflict resolution with brain and behavioral science to strengthen peacebuilding and conflict management processes around the world. Over the past several years we have been deploying research to address some of the most intractable challenges—from deepening identity-based polarization to preempting racism. In partnership with leading universities and using a science-based approach, we seek to better understand the social, psychological, and political factors that shape human behavior, consciously and unconsciously. In partnership with affected communities, we then develop evidence-based tools and resources that are measurable and deployable to address these challenges.

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Letter from the CEO

Dear Reader,

We are living through an alarming period of democratic decline in the United States and abroad. Growing support for authoritarian actors and practices erodes established norms of cooperation and institutions of accountability. Rising toxic polarization undermines our ability to solve shared problems, casting a darkening shadow of distrust and hostility on our political well-being. As these threats to democracy become increasingly mainstream and further entrenched, it is more urgent than ever to use evidence-based approaches in charting a new path forward.

My career in helping communities around the world seek peace and healing has repeatedly shown me that one of the significant costs of entrenched conflict is the persistence of harmful, inaccurate beliefs about others across divides. These misperceptions deepen and sustain conflict, limiting opportunities for engagement and resolution. Beyond Conflicts' decades-long work in conflict resolution has revealed time and time again that a more accurate understanding of one's opponent can have a concrete, actionable, and positive impact. Constructive and sustained contact between adversaries leads to the recognition of shared values, concerns, and aspirations, enabling each party to see a less threatening and more humanized version of the other and laying the foundation for greater understanding and cooperation. Driven by my fundamental belief in the conciliatory and hard-won power of shared experiences, Beyond Conflict turned to behavioral science research more than a decade ago to more precisely and measurably adapt these promising psychological insights across other instances of conflict and division, such as the growing gap between Democrats and Republicans in the United States.

The research highlighted in this report, supported by Beyond Conflict, shows that Democrats and Republicans significantly overestimate how much the other side dislikes or dehumanizes them and the degree of difference between them on key policy issues. Namely, psychological interventions that correct these meta-misperceptions have been shown to reduce support for anti-democratic norms and political violence.

While academic studies may highlight the short-term effects of meta-perception correction, this does not undermine the value of applying this evidence-based approach in real-world contexts. These interventions are not a cure-all but rather a promising early tool that merits further research and testing by scholars and practitioners beyond the lab. Throughout my career helping communities around the world move beyond deep and seemingly intractable conflicts, it took years of sustained contact for adversaries to realize how much they had in common and to understand how often their inaccurate perceptions of each other exacerbated conflict and limited the prospects for reconciliation. The ability to survey and correct dangerous meta-misperceptions before adversaries engage offers an exciting and powerful new tool in the conflict resolution and negotiation toolkit. Like many of my colleagues over the years, I've seen firsthand how difficult it is for individuals to engage with their adversaries across divides when the political, social, and psychological risks are so high. I am convinced that surveying and correcting meta-perceptions prior to contact between groups in conflict will reduce the barriers to constructive dialogue and advance prospects for peace in a range of pressing challenges.

Research and practice affirm that perceptions about our social environment can significantly influence norms and behavior. These consequential downstream effects make challenging inaccurate perceptions across a range of conflicts a worthwhile and effective endeavor. Beyond Conflict remains committed to bridging divides and leveraging innovative insights like meta-perception correction to reduce conflict and promote lasting peace. I encourage practitioners and researchers alike to read this report with an open mind, recognizing it as a step forward in fostering a more mutualistic and productive relationship between the science and lived experience of conflict resolution.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Phillips', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tim Phillips, Founder & CEO

Overview of Meta-Perceptions and Polarization

In the United States, political polarization continues to rise at an accelerating rate (Heltzel & Laurin, 2020; Schoenmueller et al., 2023), presenting a complex challenge to democratic discourse and productive civic engagement. Americans across the political spectrum report worsening political divisions, and 43% believe a potential civil war is likely within the next decade (Orth, 2022). This is not merely an American phenomenon but part of a global trend where democracies are increasingly vulnerable to autocratic shifts (Economist Intelligence, 2023). While it's true that some degree of political disagreement is fundamental to a well-functioning democratic society (Lees & Cikara, 2021; McCoy et al., 2018), the current landscape has evolved into a more dangerous terrain.

Political polarization becomes toxic when it mutates to exist along lines of identity rather than specific issues or policies (McCoy & Somer, 2019). Increasingly, Americans who identify themselves as either Democrats or Republicans view one another less as fellow citizens and more as enemies who represent a profound threat to their own identities, creating a form of American sectarianism. Toxic polarization, like violent sectarianism in many parts of the globe, distorts our view of reality. This leads people to underestimate what they have in common and creates a vision of the world that is defined by a destructive “us versus them” mentality. When this occurs, political divisions no longer facilitate respectful debates on issues with mutually agreed-upon facts but instead normalize undemocratic practices, obstruct compromise, and increase the escalation of political violence (Moore-Berg et al., 2020b).

Meta-perception correction—correcting false beliefs about what individuals think others think about them and people like them—is a vital yet nuanced tool in addressing this challenge. The significance of this work lies not in presenting a quick fix, but in illuminating the complex psychological mechanisms that perpetuate political division. Beyond Conflict and allied researchers posit that correcting specific meta-misperceptions can help reduce the psychological, social, political, and fear-based barriers that prevent meaningful engagement across political divides. By addressing these perceptual distortions, we aim to create initial psychological shifts that can help partisans overcome hesitation toward meaningful conflict resolution and create pathways for more constructive dialogue.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of research on meta-perceptions. The research shared in this report recognizes that while correcting specific meta-misperceptions can reduce barriers to meaningful engagement, these interventions are not a definitive solution but rather an important entry point for more comprehensive efforts to mitigate polarization. Like most social science research, our findings require ongoing validation, particularly regarding the long-term durability of interventional effects outside of a traditional research setting.

Critically, we view these interventions not as an end-all solution, but as a crucial first step in a broader strategy of building a new foundation of civic trust and understanding. Because deeply entrenched conflict can exacerbate harmful beliefs about adversaries, inaccurate meta-perceptions can serve to sustain and intensify divisions.

The question, therefore, is not whether we can completely eliminate political polarization, but how we can constructively manage and mitigate its most destructive manifestations. Meta-perception correction offers a promising starting point—a lens through which we can begin to understand and potentially reshape the perceptual barriers that fuel toxic polarization. However, it is crucial to view this approach as part of a broader, nuanced strategy for strengthening healthy democratic dialogue and mutual understanding.

Understanding Polarization: A Primer

Researchers and practitioners alike are eager to elucidate the antecedents and consequences of political polarization in hopes of alleviating some of the divides that we see in the public and among political elites. Two of the most commonly discussed forms of political polarization are affective polarization, or the amount of dislike and negative feelings people have towards opposing party members, and ideological polarization, which refers to disagreement about issues and divergence on ideological positions (Kubin & von Sikorski, 2021; Moore-Berg et al., 2020a). In more concrete terms, the extent to which Republicans and Democrats dislike one another is an example of affective polarization. Ideological polarization, on the other hand, refers to differing viewpoints on specific policy issues, such as whether there should be more stringent universal background checks for gun purchases.

More recent work has started to focus on another facet of affective polarization that goes beyond just dislike of political opponents: the dehumanization of political outgroup members (Moore-Berg et al., 2020b). While partisan animosity refers to members of different political parties not liking each other or the amount of prejudice that exists between groups, dehumanization is a more extreme indicator of negative affect and beliefs about outgroup members, where political opponents are viewed as less than human (and thus less evolved and less civilized) than political ingroup members. Dehumanization in particular has been found to be a strong indicator of toxic intergroup conflict (Moore-Berg et al., 2020b). Though partisan animosity and lack of compromise across issues are signs of polarization and potential red flags for more serious intergroup conflict (in this case, between Democrats and Republicans in the US), increased dehumanization is a particularly alarming sign to observe. In other countries rife with conflict and violence, such as Hungary where the Fidesz party is targeting immigrants and refugees, dehumanizing rhetoric is more apparent and is often used as a tactic to turn parties against one another (Kteily et al., 2016; Szilágyi & Sükösd-Kósa, 2018). The divides between political parties are noteworthy, because they can lead to immediate consequences and also downstream effects like greater support for undemocratic practices and political violence (Mernyk et al., 2022; Pasek et al., 2022).

Levels of Polarization

Besides different types of polarization, there are also different levels of polarization. In this paper, we address real (objective) differences and perceived (subjective) differences between groups (Lees & Cikara, 2021). More specifically, objective polarization refers to the actual differences between political groups, such as how much Democrats and Republicans truly disagree on issues such as healthcare or gun control (i.e., the measurable gap in their opinions) or how much they actually dislike one another. Subjective (or perceived) polarization refers to what people think the differences are. This is where our perceptions and beliefs come into play. There are two kinds of these subjective beliefs:

1. First-order beliefs: These are what one group thinks the other group believes. For example, a Democrat might think Republicans are much more opposed to abortion than they actually are.
2. Second-order beliefs, or meta-perceptions: These are what individuals think others think about them and people like them. For instance, a Democrat might believe that Republicans dislike or even dehumanize them simply because they are a Democrat, even if that's not entirely true.

More simply, when we talk about perceived polarization, we are looking at two things: (1) how far apart we think we are on specific issues and, (2) what we think the 'other side' thinks about our views on those issues. For example, a Democrat might think Republicans are completely against healthcare reform and also believe that Republicans think Democrats are all in favor of large-scale changes to the U.S. healthcare infrastructure, even if the reality is more nuanced.

Every group can fall victim to exaggerated meta-perceptions. Our perceptions of how others view us profoundly influence our thoughts and behaviors across various social contexts. These meta-perceptions are psychologically powerful because they tap into fundamental human needs for social acceptance and understanding. Researchers have found evidence that exaggerated meta-perceptions exist not only in the U.S. but also as a global phenomenon across many other countries, showing that similar psychological processes are at work regardless of who the person is or where they live (Ruggeri et al. 2021). Crucially, subjective differences can strengthen the actual differences that exist, and therefore intervening at the subjective level is one viable pathway for reducing the consequences of polarization.

The Relationship Between Meta-Perceptions and Toxic Polarization

Meta-perceptions have recently emerged as a key factor in increasing levels of affective polarization, such as levels of partisan animosity and dehumanization (Moore-Berg et al., 2024). Previous work has found that Democrats and Republicans greatly exaggerate the extent to which they think the other side dislikes them (and dehumanizes them) compared to how much Democrats and Republicans actually dislike (or dehumanize) each other. Exaggerated meta-perceptions prompt a cycle of defensiveness and stronger negative reactions to the other side (Kteily et al., 2016) which when normalized, can further entrench people into siloes of likeness. For instance, if Republicans think Democrats perceive them as less than human to a greater degree than Democrats really do, then it is more likely that Republicans will respond to this with greater animosity and dehumanization in turn and also be more likely to endorse more negative actions that "punish" Democrats.

Examples include support for restricting the flow of media from the opposing party, redrawing districts to maximize the potential for one's own party to win more seats, harassing outparty leaders with intimidating messages, or targeting ordinary outparty members on the internet (Mernyk et al., 2022; Pasek et al., 2022).

This cycle accelerates toxic polarization by normalizing increasingly extreme responses to perceived threats. It also further exacerbates thinking about outgroup members in more oppositional or inimical terms, and it heightens the likelihood of using "us versus them" thinking patterns. At the same time, these perceptions are not necessarily irrational. When we feel that an important ingroup of ours is threatened (i.e., social identity threat), we will react to alleviate this threat in some way, such as by fighting the ones by whom we feel threatened. However, the level of threat we are perceiving may not be completely founded in a physical or time-relevant sense. If we can correct these exaggerated meta-misperceptions, it can help reduce some of the threat we feel from (and thus the animosity we feel toward) the other side, creating an opening for engagement and reaffirming our shared humanity.

Countering Toxic Polarization by Correcting Meta-Perceptions

Given that people often hold inaccurate meta-perceptions, and that these inaccuracies can have harmful consequences, utilizing meta-misperception corrections is one promising area of work to reduce polarization (Landry et al., 2023; Lees & Cikara, 2020; Moore-Berg et al., 2020a). If people across the partisan spectrum learn that the degree of ideological separation between them is less than they thought, it is not only important for raising general awareness, but it also has the potential to create a cognitive shift that ushers forward easier and less threat-inducing conversations, ultimately promoting the ability to identify compromise on shared challenges between opposing groups.

Numerous studies have investigated the effectiveness of these correction interventions on a variety of outcomes (Moore-Berg et al., 2024). A typical correction intervention features participants providing their own subjective ratings about what the other side thinks about them and then receiving information (e.g., statistics about or actual ratings from an outparty member, having a conversation with an outparty member) that notifies them of the reality of the other side in terms of issue position, animosity, or dehumanization. By receiving this correction information, participants are ultimately presented with an opportunity to adjust their perceptions about the outparty members. Again, it's important to underscore that meta-misperception correction interventions are not a "cure-all," but they are an important part of the reducing polarization toolkit. Surveying meta-misperceptions can help identify key false beliefs that may be driving and sustaining conflict. In turn, practitioners and researchers can correct these false beliefs to reduce the barriers to more constructive engagement that otherwise may take much longer to reveal, let alone address.

Correcting meta-misperceptions can reduce some of the political division in the U.S., because this process reveals overlap and common ground between political outgroups. There is power in knowing that we might in fact have more shared experiences than we believe, especially in a world where media and elites often tell us otherwise. Moreover, this research can be utilized by practitioners trained in conducting meta-misperception surveys to be utilized in various conflict resolution and dialogue settings.

The Research: A Summary of Beyond Conflict and Research Partners' Methodology and Studies

To explore how correcting meta-misperceptions can reduce political polarization, Beyond Conflict collaborated with academic partners and Emmy award-winning filmmaker Wayne Price of Roomtone to develop an innovative video intervention (Beyond Conflict, 2022; Pasek et al., 2024). The project focused on addressing meta-perceptions related to dehumanization and issue-based polarization.

The Intervention Video

The core intervention video featured a sample of over 1,200 American partisans who shared their political perspectives through a survey. Participants first disclosed their 2020 election vote and then rated their views on immigration using a 0-100 scale (with 0 indicating a preference for all borders completely open and 100 meaning all borders completely closed). They also predicted how the opposing party would rate their views, revealing the stark difference between actual and perceived positions.

The video's power lies in capturing real-time moments of surprise when their perceptions were shown to be widely inaccurate. Participants visibly react as they learn about the significant discrepancies in their perceptions. One memorable moment highlights how social media fails to represent the nuanced political landscape. The video concludes with an animation emphasizing a crucial insight: while we may not see eye-to-eye, we are far less divided than we believe.

Study 1: Experimental Design

In the first study, 2,270 participants were randomly assigned to five different conditions and completed measures related to political polarization. The results were striking: watching the intervention video proved most effective across various target outcomes, significantly reducing partisan animosity and dehumanization.

Study 2: National Replication and Mechanism Exploration

The second study aimed to replicate the first findings using a nationally representative sample of 1,594 U.S. partisans. This study introduced video variants focusing on specific aspects of meta-perceptions. Key findings revealed:

- The core intervention video was most effective across multiple outcomes.
- The meta-dehumanization mechanism was particularly powerful in reducing political polarization.
- The video significantly reduced support for undemocratic practices.
- The intervention did not reduce support for political violence.

Broader Impact

The intervention gained more significant recognition as a winner in the 2022 Strengthening Democracy Challenge (SDC) at Stanford University. Among 25 interventions tested on a nationally representative sample, the video demonstrated that it:

- Reduced partisan animosity (with effects lasting at least two weeks).
- Decreased support for undemocratic practices.
- Lowered support for partisan violence.

Key Takeaways

Perhaps most importantly, the studies showed the intervention's broad applicability. The approach effectively reduced polarization for both Democrats and Republicans, and it worked equally well for strong and weak partisans. This suggests the underlying psychological processes affect people similarly, regardless of political affiliation or party commitment.

Contextualization of the Results of the Present Research

The effectiveness of the video intervention provides hope for efforts aiming to reduce toxic polarization. Understanding the benefits as well as what remains to be explored when using interventions related to said meta-perception correction is key. The video intervention is simple, short, and successful at reducing polarization ratings in the lab, but it is critical to test this intervention in real-world settings. We urge both researchers and practitioners to adopt this research and further examine whether meta-misperception correction interventions are effective at scale and/or in localized settings. In other words, does this video intervention work as an entry point to readily reduce the threat of polarization in the general public?

As with all evidence-based research, in addition to testing scalability, there are other places for future research to explore. One avenue is how durable the interventions are—in other words, how long the reductions in polarization outcomes last. Our video intervention was successful at reducing partisan animosity up to two weeks later, per the SDC results, but other research has shown that correcting misperception interventions have mixed results in reducing polarization outcomes long-term (Landry et al., 2023; Voelkel et al., 2023). Video interventions broadly may need to be adjusted and watched more than once to produce lasting effects, as it may be unreasonable to expect a single intervention with a one-time dose to change something as pervasive and serious as polarization in the long run (Levy Paluck et al., 2021). Ideally, interventions that are simple and scalable would have both immediate and long-lasting impacts to enable larger-scale reductions in polarization in different social environments, such as community organizations, among political elites, and within the public at large.

It is also important to better understand how competing information—whether introduced by a research team or encountered independently—as well as opposing beliefs might influence the effectiveness of these interventions (Druckman et al. 2012, Druckman, 2022). For example, one study introduced competing information after selected participants received a meta-misperception correction—either by questioning the reliability of the survey or by directly contradicting the correction. In the presence of such competing information, the study found no reduction in polarization outcomes (Druckman, 2023).

Meta-misperception corrections rely on people believing the information they are given about the actual views of political outgroup members. However, it is much easier to accept information that aligns with one’s worldview than to integrate new information that challenges it—a dynamic tied to motivated reasoning that often fuels skepticism. Though learning and accepting new information can be psychologically uncomfortable, it is crucial for reducing discord between ingroup and outgroup members. The new information ensures people have a clearer and more accurate understanding of our sociopolitical landscapes, increasing the potential to find common ground and creating opportunities for strengthened empathy towards opposing viewpoints.

Recognizing the relative efficacy and durability of correcting meta-misperception interventions, along with a clear awareness of what remains to be understood, illustrates that with any science-based practice, there is never one all-encompassing solution. Evidence works best when insights from academic studies are adaptive to the contexts that occur in real life. Behavioral science approaches to social problems have much promise, but science can only do so much in its testing. We encourage a mutuality between science being accountable to practice, as well as practice utilizing available and productive evidence.

Recommendations for Practitioners

Meta-misperception correction interventions offer a promising entry point for addressing toxic political polarization. While these interventions alone cannot solve the complex dynamics of polarization, they provide a foundation upon which other strategies can build. Thus while academic settings provide a space to generate and test insights into effective interventions, we encourage practitioners to implement these strategies in the real world. The following evidence-based recommendations are designed to help practitioners integrate meta-misperception correction research into their work while acknowledging the importance of complementary approaches.

Facilitate Awareness of Toxic Polarization

The progression from normal division of opinions to toxic polarization is a slippery slope, where a positive feedback loop of defensiveness, animosity, and dehumanization can develop. If more people have access to resources on these topics and leaders are positioned to discuss them readily with their communities, awareness of these issues will continue to grow. Practitioners in community, political, and cultural organizations can create tailored guides to identify early warning signs of toxic polarization.

These resources could include:

- Practical examples of meta-misperception correction interventions.
- Discussion points for workshops or community forums, where leaders and participants can be educated about how distorted beliefs about "the other side" escalate divisions.
- Guidance on fostering open dialogue using data-driven approaches to clarify the gap between perceived and actual views of opposing groups.

Provide Tools for Correcting Misperceptions

Given that correcting meta-misperceptions is one tool in our toolbox to reduce polarization, establishing quick and easy-to-understand interventions to provide in different capacities could help start constructive conversations about political misunderstandings. It can also launch discourse about building a more accurate sense of the world around us by considering the variability in people's own beliefs and issue positions, rather than solely listening to voices representative of the political extremes. Practitioners can utilize and disseminate evidence-based tools, such as:

- **Video Interventions:** Incorporate tested videos, like the one described in this report, into community programming. Pair these videos with facilitated discussions and reflection exercises to deepen their impact.
- **Quick Reference Guides:** Develop accessible materials for use in schools, workplaces, and civic organizations to help individuals recognize and correct meta-misperceptions in everyday interactions.
- **Measurement and Feedback Mechanisms:** Encourage peers and fellow practitioners to test these tools in real-world contexts, collecting feedback to refine their application to address inaccurate meta-perceptions.

Design Structured, Problem-Solving Intergroup Dialogues

Intergroup contact can be daunting to consider and is often not the most productive first step in mitigating toxic polarization (Levy Paluck et al., 2021). However, conversations with people who disagree with us are most productive as a pathway to working through our differences when collaborating toward a tangible goal, such as through citizen assemblies. Instead of focusing solely on general interpersonal conversations, practitioners can create structured environments for compromise-generating dialogue that integrate meta-misperception correction strategies. For example:

- **Facilitated Workshops:** Train moderators to guide participants through discussions that address dehumanizing beliefs and emphasize shared values.
- **College or High School Curricula:** Embed exercises into educational programs where students learn to analyze and debate polarized topics, using research-backed frameworks to challenge stereotypes and reduce animosity.
- **Community Roundtables:** Organize events where diverse stakeholders collaboratively explore solutions to local issues, using meta-misperception correction to establish common ground.

Promote Diverse Intervention Ecosystems for Practitioners

People are influenced by political elites and the media, both of which tend to showcase the most extreme positions and use emotional rhetoric (Lipsitz, 2018; Peifer, 2020). It is particularly important both for journalists and media professionals to have support integrating strategies that reduce affective polarization, and that we all make pointed efforts to diversify our media intake. While reducing echo chambers is broadly relevant, practitioners can also lead targeted initiatives that align this approach with meta-misperception research. Examples include:

- **Media Literacy Programs:** Equip community leaders with tools to train members to recognize biased reporting and diversify their media consumption, connecting this effort to reducing polarization.
- **Collaborations with Local Media:** Work with journalists to highlight stories that bridge divides, emphasizing underreported commonalities across polarized groups.
- **Fact-Checking Partnerships:** Develop partnerships with fact-checking organizations to create localized campaigns that combat misinformation and correct meta-misperceptions.

Implement Best Practices for Meta-Misperception Correction Interventions

Practitioners looking to deploy these interventions can follow these evidence-based strategies:

- **Leverage Humanizing Content:** Incorporate narratives that challenge stereotypes and highlight shared humanity.
- **Customize for Specific Audiences:** Adapt interventions for different contexts, such as faith communities, workplaces, or civic organizations to maximize relevance and impact.
- **Integrate into Broader Programs:** Embed these interventions within ongoing efforts to promote dialogue, community-building, or conflict resolution, ensuring sustainability and reach.
- **Monitor and Evaluate:** Regularly assess the effectiveness of interventions through surveys or focus groups, refining approaches based on practitioner and participant feedback.

By anchoring these recommendations for applying meta-misperception correction research, practitioners can amplify the impact of their efforts while recognizing the value of complementary polarization reduction strategies. These tools and approaches should empower practitioners to address toxic polarization with evidence-backed confidence and adaptability.

Highlighting the Efforts of Other Organizations Working to Reduce Polarization

As a result of this and other ongoing research, there are numerous other organizations that are not only interested in understanding and reducing political polarization but also whose mission centers around conversation strategies and immersive experiences to help foster shared experiences and common ground. Whether explicitly intentional or not, these efforts can all help reduce toxic polarization. Moreover, many of the recommendations we have provided can be implemented through a combination of partnership and utilizing these existing resources:

<p><u>More in Common US</u></p>	<p><u>Hidden Tribes</u>: drivers of polarization, strategies to bring Americans back together using evidence-based approaches and other key programming</p>
<p><u>More Like US</u></p>	<p><u>Resources</u> related to the Perception Gap (a term coined by More in Common), political polarization classroom curriculum</p> <p><u>SimilarityHub</u>, a website with public opinion data showing statistics that enhance understanding of common ground that exists between political groups</p>
<p><u>The Civic Health Project</u></p>	<p>Four key components (technology, entertainment, movement building, and research and evaluation)</p> <p><u>Video</u> that breaks down psychological processes behind polarization in a compelling and easy-to-understand manner</p>
<p><u>Civic Genius</u></p>	<p><u>Resources</u> for better understanding common ground between political groups, such as a series of short videos that describe the level of agreement versus disagreement on specific social issues in the US</p>
<p><u>Starts With US</u></p>	<p>Views diversity in beliefs and thoughts as a strength, rather than a weakness; encourages moving away from thinking in an “us versus them” mentality</p> <p><u>Resources</u> for joining the movement and other action-oriented information</p>
<p><u>The American Exchange Project</u></p>	<p><u>Week-long immersion experience</u> for high-school students to travel to a different part of the US to interact with students in the local area</p> <p>Provides students with a chance to engage with differing viewpoints in a facilitated and coordinated way to help foster the mindset of shared experiences and finding common ground</p>

<p><u>Moral Courage College</u></p>	<p><u>Resources</u> for more effective and civil conversation strategies</p> <p><u>Introduction video</u> features CEO Irshad Manji discussing the importance of conversations between people with opposing viewpoints, offers actionable steps for facilitating challenging but worthwhile conversations</p>
<p>UNITE</p>	<p><u>Dignity Index</u> measures how people talk to each other when they disagree</p> <p><u>Resources</u> including what dignity is, the scale for the Index, and conversation guides</p>
<p><u>StoryCorps</u></p>	<p>Narrative-based approach to understanding the human experience and bridging divides through their various programs</p> <p><u>One-Small Step</u> offers participants the chance to engage in a facilitated conversation between two people who have different political views to get to know each other as people outside of politics</p>
<p><u>Unify America</u></p>	<p>Strategies for collaborative problem-solving for reducing political polarization through things like the <u>Unify Challenge</u> and the <u>Unify Challenge College Bowl</u></p>
<p><u>One America Movement</u></p>	<p>Reducing toxic polarization with an <u>emphasis</u> on faith communities and faith community leaders around the US</p> <p><u>Matthew 5:9 Fellowship</u> initiative emphasizes people as peacemakers, how to have healthy conversations about divisive topics using a combined approach of religious sources and social science research</p> <p>Introduction video about the fellowship on their homepage, <u>resources</u> on polarization</p> <p>Video similar to Beyond Conflict’s intervention video that features elements of religion (e.g., parable of the Prodigal Son), which has the potential to strengthen the messaging about correcting misperceptions by providing resonant information for their community</p> <p>Episode two of the <u>Christian Peacemaking in Polarized Times</u> video series and the accompanying worksheet explore the relationship between meta-misperceptions and toxic polarization from a faith-based perspective</p>
<p><u>Disagree Better</u></p>	<p><u>Initiative</u> involving politicians promoting the idea that disagreement should not equate to incivility in a relationship</p> <p>Resources such as <u>videos</u> of different pairs of governors discussing the importance of civil disagreement and offers <u>ways</u> that people can take action</p> <p>Partner organization, Utah State University Extension, has a <u>parenting toolkit</u> for parents and kids on how to talk and disagree better</p> <p>Other videos on this initiative, found <u>here</u> and <u>here</u></p>

Looking Ahead

Meta-perception research and correction constitute a promising, emergent pathway to mitigate toxic polarization. The approach of correcting meta-misperceptions is relatively straightforward, with short and efficient ways of intervening, and the potential for durability and scalability. Learning that we may share considerable similarities with outgroup members, and recognizing that ingroup members may have more ideological diversity, allows us to further experience our shared humanity. This is necessary for compassionate interactions and moving toward substantive compromise. Correcting our meta-misperceptions, however, is only one avenue for curbing polarization, and its effects are often context-specific and time-bound from the point of intervention. Future research should explore the efficacy and durability of meta-misperception correction when paired with other mechanisms for threat reduction, bridge-building, and intergroup conflict management. Practitioners can also help us better understand the potential of correcting misperceptions by integrating these and emergent interventions into ongoing efforts to mitigate the harmful impacts of rising polarization.

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