# Long image description for “Shared Values excerpt from Animal Think Tank”

The image shows an excerpt from Animal Think Tank’s Messaging Guide. It reads:

“Shared values bridge the perceived barriers between us and those we’re trying to reach.

Why open with shared values?: Because it establishes common ground and emphasizes what already connects us. Effective messages get people agreeing with what we’re saying from the outset – then they’re already engaged and open to listening to the rest of our message.

Why not open with the problem?: Most social justice messages tend to open with the problem, but research shows it can make a lot of people feel threatened and either dismiss or switch off from the message completely. If we open with shared values, we lower people’s defenses and more quickly engage them.”

Image Source: From the section “[Look Under a Rationalization & You May Just Find a (Shared) Core Value](https://bitesizevegan.org/should-vegans-empathize-with-meat-eaters/#underrationalizations)” on the article “[Should Vegans Empathize with Meat-Eaters?](https://bitesizevegan.org/should-vegans-empathize-with-meat-eaters/)”