1. **Do you agree with the argument that public leaders and citizens are skeptical about each other’s abilities to address problems? Why or why not? If you do agree, what do you think are the causes of this skepticism, and how might it be addressed?**

I tend to agree that citizens and public leaders are skeptical about each other’s ability to address problems. Human beings encounter a wide range of daunting challenges, such as financial instability, terrorism, and climate change, among others. The problems are complex, but people have advanced the power to address them more effectively than in the past. The greatest power to solve the challenges lies in the citizens who enjoy high communication and education levels and are devoted to the concept that humans deserve some inalienable rights. The ability of people to apply, understand, and improve technology is advancing daily, improving the perception that every person is a potential inventor, analyst, or scientist. Human progress as a civilization relies on the ability of institutions, civil societies, and governments as well as the power of ordinary citizens to unleash technology capacity.

However, the reality of the rising capacity of ordinary citizens is not a suitable fact for public leaders. A wide range of leaders, including managers and public officials, are skeptical about the good sense, capability, and virtues of their fellow citizens. The public leaders get trapped in systems that focus on protecting their expertise from the interface of ordinary citizens. The leaders encounter hostile citizens at public events, who do not respect their authority or believe their data. The citizens, in turn, have skepticism over the public officials' good sense, capabilities, and virtues. High government distrust from the citizens emerges from massive influence from moneyed interests, the inability of leaders to reach collective agreements on simple matter, and divisive policy debates. The skepticism is caused by the outdated and inefficient participation infrastructures that limit the collective potential to solve problems by failing to recognize the capacity of citizens.

Interventions to address the skepticism between public leaders and citizens on their abilities to solve problems would include developing new formats, structures, and processes for public engagement. The interventions include developing online networks, effective digital tools, and intensive face-to-face deliberations to add agility to the powers of physical relationships. The interventions demonstrate the power of public participation in providing solutions to complex issues and making difficult choices in addition to satisfying the citizens’ goals and needs. The interventions work in ad hoc and temporary basis, and leaders should incorporate them into the community and government operations. Face-to-face public participation can promote equality and justice, help liberty protection, and improve individuals’ quality of life. Researchers should devise strategies to ensure the strategies allow tapping the full problem-solving and democratic potential of all citizens.

1. **Discuss the characteristics of an adult-adult relationship. Do you believe it is important to incorporate these characteristics into public participation? Why or why not? What would you do to integrate these characteristics into public participation?**

Any successful public participation embodies aspects of the adult-adult relationship between public leaders and citizens. Attributes of adult-adult relationships include giving individuals the opportunity to explain their views, providing information as wanted, presiding a variety of policy options, and providing the public sense of political legitimacy. The relationships provide valuable opportunities in public participation to use information, speak, and exercise choice. Other characteristics of the relationship include the use of a sound group process approach, supporting individuals to take action in various forms, and making participation convenient, enjoyable, and easy. The adult-adult relationship often occurs in tension with the main public participation forms, such as thin, thick, and conventional. Thick participation, the most powerful and meaningful form, encompasses individuals in a large number to work in small groups in learning, deciding, and acting. Effective thick participation projects rely on tactics such as network-based and proactive recruitment, discussion sequence, small-group facilitation, action strategy, and issue framing. Thin participation takes a wide range of forms, with telephone and face-to-face activities. The various activities within thin participation include open houses, polls, surveys, booths at festivals and fairs, petitions, and telephone hotlines. Conventional participation is the traditional engagements to uphold transparency, accountability, and order, especially to provide the public with government power checks. The participation describes the wide range of hearings or meetings held by zoning commissions, school bodies, federal and state agencies, and city councils, among others. The participation relies on procedures such as preset agenda, advance notifications, room setups for audience style, and comment segments for the public.

A tradeoff exists between benefits and convenience received by individuals. Thick participation form treats individuals as adults and requires greater energy and time commitment. Good participation entails the treatment of citizens like adults. A wide range of activities exists in which efficient participation activities in thin and thick participation can confer the responsibility, recognition, and respect typifying adult relationships. Despite their complexity and less convenience, thick participation features a variety of adult-adult relationships. Thin participation is convenient and easy and, at times, features the characteristics of the relationship. Conventional participation, on the other hand, provides only a few of the relationship’s features and is not particularly easy and convenient in most cases.

Incorporation of adult-to-adult relationship characteristics into public participation is of great essence. The characteristics would create civility because treating individuals as adults would promote them to act accordingly in public participation. Integration of the characteristics into public participation would include providing individuals a chance to share and digest information and invite them to share their personal experiences and narratives in explaining their thoughts. The integration would embody providing individuals with information, policy choice, and a sense of political legitimacy. Storytelling in public participation would help individuals to handle disagreements, analyze provided information, and relate well with others. Officials should cultivate a sense of legitimacy by establishing clear expectations by sending a message that demonstrates the value of people's input.

1. **One goal of the War on Poverty was to change the nature of participation, particularly in urban areas. Do you think the War on Poverty was successful in achieving this goal? Why or why not?**

The war on Poverty did not succeed in achieving its goal of changing the nature of participation, especially in urban areas. However, the war was the backbone of participation and democracy revolution. The revolution calls for the development of stronger participation interventions through the empowerment of various participation leaders and the activation of networks, as well as the incorporation of systematic support.

The failure of the War on Poverty to achieve its goals was evident in how low-income residents could still take part in making public decisions. The poor demonstrated efforts to take part in providing solutions to the problems in their communities. However, the most prevalent form of participation provided by community action agencies was not anywhere near participatory, and seemingly became controversial sparking critical debates that continue today. The community action agencies were entitled to achieve increased practical participation of residents of served members and areas, provide services, and mobilize private and public resources. Controversies erupted because residents in low-income areas had board representatives that governed the agencies because board makeups were easier to evaluate. The evaluation assumed that the board's representations conveniently indicated that the poor participated, based on its bureaucratic nature. However, various processes did not allow residents from other neighborhoods to participate in the work of the agencies.

Controversies surrounding the maximum feasible participation, concerns about the failure to engage nonprofits in policy decisions, and complaints of local governments influenced the establishment of the 1966 act of demonstration cities and metropolitan development. The legislation promoted increased participation of citizens, but its crafting ended up limiting rather than maximizing the participation of the poor. City control became optional after the establishment of the community action program. Still, the model cities program later gave local officials the entire responsibility to develop the program by returning their power, a move that increased expenditures. Consequently, difficulties emerged, followed by regular conflicts during contentious negotiations in city scores as public officials and citizens decided on federal resource distribution. The discussions influenced the first neighborhood council system wave that institutionalized the participation of residents in local and community decision-making.

Based on views by pundits and politicians, and most of the general public, the War on Poverty was a total failure except in enhancing the size of the government. Decades that followed experienced strong backlash against activists' demands leading to the reduction of community development and community organizing funding by foundations and governments. Monetized efficiency notions, neoclassical economics, and language regarding "running government like an enterprise" dominated attitudes about the public sector's role between the 1970s and 1980s. The general public complained about the costs, inefficiencies, delays, and the size of the government. Public officials addressed the problems by enacting a variety of business-like reforms to streamline bureaucracy into a more customer-driven, entrepreneurial, and result-driven. Experts dominated policy and decision-making in efforts to address the needs of citizen-customers through analysis of “hard” information at the expense of citizens' understanding, opinions, and judgment. Most of the 1960s direct participation structures, although not entirely demolished, were weakened, promoting a significant overlook of participation processes.