



Dialogue and Debate

Time: 1.5 Hours

Purpose

To understand the value using dialogue to share, learn from, and understand others.

Objectives

1. Understand the differences between dialogue and debate (seeking to understand or teach versus seeking to win).
2. Understand the prevalence of debate in our culture.
3. Develop dialogue skills.

Resources

- Materials: Flip chart and markers, Dialogue and Debate statements (15 total), Forced Choices Statements
- Prep in Advance: Prior to the start of the program, hang the fifteen (15) dialogue and debate statements around the room.

Introduction

10 minutes

Content

Facilitation

<p>Introduction</p>	<p>Note: Participants will be with their discussion group for the beginning part of this activity.</p> <p>Facilitator statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “During this session we will focus on two different types of communication, dialogue and debate. Our goal is to recognize the prevalence of debate in our culture, to understand the difference between dialogue and debate, and to develop or sharpen our dialogue skills.” <p>As a large group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using a flip chart, write the word debate. Ask 3-4 delegates to share what words they associate with debate while the scribe makes a list. • On a new flip chart paper write the word dialogue. Ask 3-4 delegates to share what words they associate with dialogue while the scribe makes a list.
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- A frequently asked question after this program is, “What can we do to dialogue effectively when we disagree?” This workshop is an opportunity to observe different response options and practice choosing a response choice for certain situations. It is important to emphasize that we make these response choices based on the degree of the situation, such as safety, power, and our own comfort levels. There is no “right way” to respond, and there are times when it may be wiser to do nothing. We are not sitting in judgment of your choice of action, or how or if you respond.

FACILITATOR NOTE: The facilitator(s) should be prepared to model or explain the options below.

Assertive Response Options:

- **1 - Ignoring**
 - Sometimes it is better not to “take the bait” and ignore another person’s behavior.
 - *Ask delegates when and why this might be the best choice?*
- **2 - Clarifying**
 - Asking someone if they, in fact, meant something racist/discriminatory/disrespectful by what they said.
 - I.E. “What I heard was... Did you mean to say that?”
- **3 - “I-message”**
 - This is a powerful tool that describes both what was said and how it affects you. This can be a valuable option when the relationship with the person you are talking to is important to you.
 - “When you say ____, I feel (use a feeling word) because (explain how the remark affects you), and I would like (explain what you want to happen instead).”
- **4 - Educating**
 - Sometimes opinions can stem from misinformation. This option should be used with someone who is listening to what you have to say, when there is conversation. Note: Be careful not to alienate by preaching. Sharing your knowledge with positive intent can be helpful.

Facilitation

Dialog or Debate Practice
Refer to the
[Dialogue & Debate Trap Scenarios](#)
Document

<p><i>Abolish Police</i></p>	<p>3rd Area Abolish Police The facilitator should state: “In this area you will be talking with the character _____. They will be talking about the need to abolish police immediately - no matter what. Your goal is to use dialog to find both the “need drivers” for this person. These needs are the deep fears or concerns they have that are the issues they think that abolishing police will fix, in addition you need to ask this character all the questions you think need answering (and if they have all those answers) before this idea takes place.</p>
<p><i>Refugee Cap</i></p>	<p>4th Area <i>Refugee Cap</i> The facilitator should state “In this area you engage in dialog around the refugee cap, in 2020 it was 21K and in 21 it is a proposed 18K. The goal in this area is to talk through the problem using dialog. Proposed questions area: What should it be? How would it be done? What factors need to be considered?”.</p>
<p><i>Finally Canceled</i></p>	<p>5th Area <i>Finally Canceled</i> The facilitator should state “In this area the purpose is to have two groups speak in rounds on the topic - when do or should you Finally Cancel someone for good? One team will be pro-canceling the other team should be anti-canceling.</p>
<p><i>Woke Performativity</i></p>	<p>6th Area <i>Woke Performativity</i> The facilitator should state “This situation you will be interacting with the character _____. This person is someone you are attempting to confront about how they claim to be about inclusion, diversity, etc but they only do their “work” online. Your job is to identify the ‘need drivers; for this person and to also confront their notion that social media IS action. The goal is to create an understanding of their feelings and your feelings they should be more involved with in person efforts to ‘live out their anytown spirit”’.</p>
<p>Other options: <i>Homelessness</i></p>	<p>Other options: <i>Homelessness</i> The facilitator should state “This situation you will be interacting with the character _____. This person is someone who lives next to a park. They are very upset with the homeless issue in their neighborhood. The goal is to identify their “need drivers” as concerns and attempt to engage in dialog and avoid debating with them to work toward a win-win outcome to allow camping in public parks. <i>Addiction</i></p>

<p>Addiction</p>	<p>The facilitator should state “This situation you will be interacting with the character _____. They believe that all drugs should be legal and people who have any addiction issues should be imprisoned. “The goal of this area is to have two groups work to dialog together to look at how to reduce addiction issues with rehab or supervised probation to not get into any trouble. Once groups focus will be on addiction as a public health issue, the other will focus on the criminality that addiction can cause. The groups need to work to identify possible solutions to the following issues, how to pay for things, how many ‘chances’ for rehab does each person get, at what point do they imprison folks for noncompliance.</p>
<p>Mental Health</p>	<p><i>Mental Health</i> The facilitator should state “This situation you will be interacting with the character _____. They believe that mental health issues do not exist because they feel they do not experience them themselves. The goal of this area is to dialog and avoid debate with the character to show how everyone struggles with mental health from time to time. The goal is to help them see a more full and complete view of mental health and see if they would be willing to be more supportive of others with mental health struggles.</p>

Debrief + Processing
10 minutes

Content

Facilitation

Debrief	<p>Debrief Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What? So what? Now what?• The dialogue we witnessed today was hypothetical. What about real life scenarios that we engage in, how do we know <u>which assertive response to use</u>?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ How do we ensure we are using dialogue and not letting things turn into debate? <p>Once finished with your questions, let the participants know that this is just the beginning. We hope you are able to practice these new skills you have learned throughout the rest of the week.</p>
Closing	