

PILOT Fall 2020

IF Certification Program in Collaborative Discussion **Table of Contents**

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Introduction to Collaborative Discussion Module

Required Module

Overview

Collaborative Discussion is the ability to work with others in productive and creative ways to address both large and small problems and to harness the potential of collective wisdom. It is essential in building relationships, encouraging sustained engagement, and improving possibilities. This introductory model builds the foundation for learning and practicing skills and engagement techniques that can improve the creativity and productivity of people working together in social life, the workplace, and in public life.

Module Design

This module starts with reflection, encouraging participants to think about what collaboration is and what makes it work well. Participants will then learn about and engage in activities that introduce some foundational skills and habits of a collaborative mindset, such as recognizing limitations of single perspectives and the role that values play in how people contribute to discussions. Finally, participants will critically reflect upon their own styles, habits, and needs within discussion spaces and learn how to support the needs of others within a collaborative atmosphere.

Module Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this module, participants will be able to:

- Describe the types of skills and habits of mind that support Collaborative Discussion
- Prepare themselves through reflection to participate in Collaborative Discussion
- Develop appreciation for multiple perspectives and the role of values in Collaborative Discussion

Module Content

Skills & Habits of Mind

Topic 1. What is Collaborative Learning? Understanding Essential Elements of Collaborative Discussion

Activity 1A. What Makes Collaboration Effective? A Reflective Exercise by Nick Longo

Topic 2. Developing Collaborative Perspective

Activity 2A. The Puzzle Piece by Lori Britt

Topic 3. Nurturing Respect for Those at the Table

Activity 3A. Value Statements by Jack Byrd

Topic 4. Understanding Values in Context

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Topic 1. What is Collaborative Learning? Understanding Essential Elements of Collaborative Discussion

Activity 1A. What Makes Collaboration Effective? A Reflective Exercise by Nick Longo

Description

This activity provides the opportunity for participants to reflect upon their own collaborative successes. We may contend that “the many are smarter than the few,” but under what circumstances? Participants will examine their own experiences to help determine which factors are necessary to achieve effective collaboration.

Learning Goals

- Describe strengths, benefits, and challenges of collaborative learning
- Identify key attributes associated with successful collaborative learning

Practice (60 minutes)

Step One	Calling on your own experiences with collaboration or working in teams (either in school, at work, in the community, or elsewhere), <i>write 2-3 paragraphs</i> reflecting on and analyzing an effective collaboration experience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who did you collaborate with? ● How did you collaborate and what were the outcomes? ● What conditions, activities, and/or characteristics made the collaboration work well? 	10 min
Step Two	Now, think about a negative collaborative experience. Again, think about the collaboration (Who was it with? Why were you collaborating? What were the desired outcomes?). <i>Create a bulleted list of attributes or characteristics of failed collaboration.</i>	5 min
Step Two	In small groups, <i>describe both experiences and analyze why one worked and the other did not.</i> You may come up with your own frame of analysis.	20 min
Step Three	As a group, <i>identify at least 5 common attributes</i> or factors associated with successful collaboration. Discuss their importance and rank them. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diversity of perspective ● Trust and respect within the group 	10 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsiveness to team members 	
Step Four	<p><i>Share back and debrief.</i> Each group should share their top 2 attributes with the entire class. Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some common observations? • Who is responsible for successful collaboration? • What single attribute is most likely to undermine the success of collaboration? • How do we anticipate or work around these obstacles? 	15 min

Reflection Assignment

- Do you believe “the many are smarter than the few”? Is this automatically the case? What preconditions or factors are necessary to help make this a true statement? What factors might undermine this practice?

Additional Resources

- Charles Duhigg, “[What Google Learned from Its Quest to Build the Perfect Team](#)” NYTimes Magazine (Feb. 2016)
- James Surowiecki, *The Wisdom of Crowds (Intro and Chapter 1, pp. xi - 22)*
- Sigman and Ariely TedTalk. *How Can groups make good decisions?:*
https://www.ted.com/talks/mariano_sigman_and_dan_ariely_how_can_groups_make_good_decisions

Topic 2. Developing Collaborative Perspective
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Activity 2A. The Puzzle Piece by Lori Britt

Description

This activity opens up the conversation and makes visible the need to gain a more broad perspective of issues in order to effectively explore and address them. Although what we individually know and experience is part of the issue and is important, what we can’t see is just as important in understanding a complex, difficult issue more fully.

Learning Goal

- Acknowledge the limitations of individual vantage points and develop appreciation for the perspectives of others

Practice (50 minutes)

Step One	In small groups (5-6 students) a puzzle piece will be given to each participant. The pieces will be relatively large (i.e. 50 piece puzzle) and part of a jigsaw puzzle with a recognizable image.	5 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do not show the puzzle piece to anyone else. ● <i>Write down what you think the picture is based on your individual piece.</i> 	
Step Two	<p>Members of each group will <i>describe and discuss their puzzle pieces</i>, but without showing them to one another. Be descriptive and while participants ask questions about others' puzzle pieces. The group will start to identify what the puzzle image might be based only on descriptions.</p> <p>Tip: This activity can be altered by adding a twist. At the beginning of the discussion, secretly assign one student to offer misleading or inaccurate information. The purpose of this role is to later encourage participants to reflect upon and address issues of intentional misinformation and/or deception in group communication.</p>	20 min
Step Three	<p>Next, show pieces to others in the group and look at them all together. Discuss what they can now see and as a group, <i>put forth guesses of what the overall image might be.</i></p>	10 min
Step Four	<p><i>Debrief as a group:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How did descriptions of other people's puzzle pieces alter your initial views of what the picture might be? ● Could you understand what each person was describing or did you have to ask clarifying questions? ● How did your perspective change when you saw others' puzzle pieces? ● After being shown what the full image was (hold up the puzzle box or have a power point slide that shows the full image) what were you not able to see that would have helped you identify the image? ● Twist: How does this puzzle activity relate to situations that you experience at work, class, or you see nationally where people intentionally use misinformation? ● Twist: What happens to the power of the group when one person is deliberately trying to mislead others? 	15 min

Reflection Assignment

- Think about an issue that you care about. From your perspective, what is at the core of this issue? How would you address it? Now, try to imagine how someone with very different lived experiences from you might think about this issue. What might they ask you? How would you respond? Bring in a third person to your imagined conversation. Perhaps a person who holds very different values. Ask this person how they would frame

and solve this issue. What do they say? How do the three of you discuss this issue? Has the complexity of the issue expanded? Have you rethought how you might frame it? Does this new framing change how you think about solutions for moving forward? Note: you can write-up this reflection as a conversation, play, short story, or as a short essay.

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Topic 3. Nurturing Respect for Those at the Table

Activity 3A. Crafting Value Statements by Jack Byrd

Description

This activity encourages participants to reflect on their personal values and on collective values that may be needed to shape collaborative space in ways that encourage mutual respect and rigorous discussion.

Learning Goals

- Understand how our personal values impact our contributions in discussions and engagement with others
- Identify important values that can shape a collaborative space

Practice (60 minutes)

Step One	What does it mean to engage in “civil” discussion? Is civility a necessary component of collaborative learning? What are the shortcomings of “civil discussion” in today’s current political climate? Does “civil discussion” mean agreement or consensus? <i>Take a few moments and right down your reflections.</i>	5 min
Step Two	In small groups, <i>brainstorm what it means to engage in a respectful exchange of ideas with others.</i> How do you know when you have achieved this? How might this be different from “civil” discussion?	10 min
Step Three	From what was generated in your brainstorm, <i>draft a list of 3-5 values that you feel are necessary to create a collaborative space</i> where a respectful, meaningful, and rigorous exchange of ideas is possible in a way that also maintains the dignity and value of everyone involved. For example:	20 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open Sharing of Points of View. Everyone in the discussion feels free and welcome to share their own thoughts on the topic. Ideally the discussion explores topics with equanimity, without fear or favor, minimizing the undue influence of status or pre-existing hierarchies. Participants should feel free to explore different perspectives and ideas openly, as free as possible from external consequences to this exploration. There is no hierarchy in the discussion that gives those with more authority greater influence. There are no consequences for sharing an unpopular perspective. ● Respectful Disagreements. When people in the discussion disagree, they do so with an appreciation for the shared humanity and points of view of the other participants. Every effort is made to understand each other and to the greatest extent possible converge on points where there is agreement. ● Contributions from Everyone. Some people are more comfortable speaking up than others. In civil discussions, there is a serious attempt to hear from everyone. The conduct of the discussion should be one that makes it easy for everyone to contribute while also minimizing the tendency of some to dominate the discussion. 	
<p>Step Four</p>	<p>While we might commit to upholding certain values in a collaborative space, we all also have our own deeply held values that will impact how we engage with others.</p> <p>Individually, <i>craft 3 value statements that reflect you as a person.</i></p> <p>For example, “I am responsible for myself, but I also accept that I have responsibility for others in the various communities of which I am a part.”</p> <p>If you are struggling to craft a value statement, try to think of a situation where you demonstrated or acted upon a value that you hold as important. Develop a general value statement from this experience.</p>	<p>10 min</p>
<p>Step Five</p>	<p>After you have crafted 3 value statements, <i>share them with at least one other person.</i> This person should ask you questions about your value statements. Are your statements clear? Do they understand the value you are trying to express?</p>	<p>15 min</p>

	All value statements will be collected and later shared online with the group.	
Step Six	After class, you will be invited to participate in an online discussion with a small group. You will select a topic from the list of What IF... Scenarios . Before the online discussion, <i>review the collaborative space values and the personal value statements of those in your group.</i>	N/A
Step Seven	During the next discussion, <i>think about how comments and beliefs within the discussion might be an extension of values. Reflect upon how that may, or may not, change how you engage with each participant.</i>	N/A

Reflection Assignment

- Does understanding the values of others help to promote a respectful discussion? What dangers do you see for an overreliance on values statements when engaging in discussions with others who have contrasting values?
- As you reflect on the values statements of other participants, revise your own values statements as you feel appropriate. What changed?
- What challenges did you face in reacting to the discussion scenario from the perspective of your values statements? How do you believe that the values statements shaped the discussion?
- Was your group able to demonstrate the collaborative space values? Which were hardest to maintain? Which were easiest? How might this vary in other groups?
- How would you deal with a person whose values seem to be deferential to others? Or unduly persuaded by others? How would you deal with a person whose values are inconsistent across issues?

Additional Resources

Forthcoming

Topic 4. Understanding Values in Context

Activity 4A. Values Sorting adapted from Martín Carcasson by Lori Britt

Description

This activity will highlight that challenges in groups are often not values conflicts, but rather differences in which values are important in a particular context.

Learning Goals

- Understand how we rank and order our values based on the context and issue

- Understand that we sometimes have very different interpretations of a value
- Recognize the importance of discussing our values

Practice (30 minutes)

<p>Step One</p>	<p><i>All participants will have a set of common values</i> on small slips of paper.</p> <p>Here is a suggested list of the values. These can be adapted to fit particular topic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Community • Prosperity • Individual Responsibility • Diversity/Inclusion • Equality • Consistency/Tradition • Opportunity • Justice • Liberty/Freedom • Change/Innovation <p>Note: Additional lists of values can be found in the Additional Resources section.</p> <p><i>Each participant will rank the values and be able to identify in particular their top 5 values and their last two values.</i></p>	<p>10 min</p>
<p>Step Two</p>	<p><i>Share and discuss your top 5 values.</i></p> <p>Participants should discuss how they interpreted or defined the value and see if others interpreted the value differently.</p>	<p>15 min</p>
<p>Step Three</p>	<p>Introduce a few issues such as Gun Legislation, Higher Education, or Wearing of Face Masks. For each topic, participants will <i>resort their values</i> and discuss whether their top 5 values shift? Did they reinterpret what any of the values meant in the context of a particular issue?</p>	<p>10 min</p>
<p>Step Four</p>	<p><i>Debrief as a large group.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can understanding that many people share similar values but prioritize them differently help us work together in groups? 	<p>15 min</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might collaborative groups explore and find common values? 	
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Reflection Assignment

- Where do values come from? How are they shaped?
- From whom and how did you learn your values? How was this shown or expressed to you?
- How do you recognize the influence of your values on your behaviors and actions?
- Are there any values that you were taught but you know reject or find less important? What influenced this change of values?

Additional Resources

- Public Problems, Values and Choices, Phillip Boyle.
<https://www.sog.unc.edu/publications/articles/public-problems-values-and-choices#:~:text=Before%20people%20can%20decide%20how,Boyle%2C%20Phillip.>
- [Ben Franklin Circles \(13 Virtues\)](#)
- [Aristotle’s Ethics in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.](#)

Topic 5. Making Space for Everyone

Activity 5A. Personal Space Inventory by Jack Byrd

Description

This activity will provoke participants to reflect upon and identify their needs in a discussion space. They will be encouraged to build on their strengths and support the development of their weaknesses. Participants will share their needs with one another and work together to acknowledge and support the needs of fellow discussants.

Learning Goals

- Develop an awareness of personal needs in group discussion
- Support others in their needs to help nurture a more collaborative discussion environment

Practice (60 minutes)

Step One	<p><i>Self-evaluate your personal space attributions</i> as shown in Personal Space Inventory Worksheet. You should assess your personal space as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • F – Fulfillment: A personal space where you are completely satisfied with your abilities. 	10 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● C – Comfort: A personal space where you feel confident of your abilities but would like to refine. ● D – Developing: A personal space area where you recognize you have a serious need and would like the discussions to support growth in this area. ● L – Lacking: A personal space area where you are very deficient but not yet comfortable with the development of this area. <p>Tip: This can be completed prior to class.</p>	
Step Two	In small groups, <i>develop a composite view of the discussion group’s rankings</i> . For each personal space attribute, identify the number of evaluations in each category (i.e. F, C, D, L)	20 min
Step Three	Identify 3-4 D categories you would like to enhance through the discussions. Coming back to the full group, <i>comment on how you will support each other to grow in your respective developmental needs</i> . Save these support statements using the template shown in the Personal Space Growth Commitments Worksheet .	30 min
Step Four	Each discussion session will begin with a review of your support statements. At the conclusion of every third discussion, assess your developmental growth in each personal space need you’ve identified.	N/A

Reflection Assignment

- How comfortable were you in sharing your needs with others?
- How effective were the discussions at helping you improve your discussion space needs?
- Was it useful to have others sharing responsibility for your development?
- How might you continue the process once these discussions have concluded?

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Feedback and Evaluation

[Please complete this short survey to offer feedback on this module and individual activities.](#)

Creative Collaboration Module

Elective Module

Overview

Creative Collaboration is the ability for a group to work together in ways that encourage seeing new possibilities. Our thinking can often be limited by unconscious constraints and conditioned patterns of thinking. Having habits and tools to unleash creativity can help groups create imaginative potential and harness productive energy in groups.

Module Design

This module is structured with a series of topics explored through activities. These activities give participants a chance to experience these concepts through hands on practice, often completed in small groups. Then participants reflect on their own experiences and how these skills or tools could be useful in supporting creativity in small groups and thus collaborative discussion.

Each of the topics also has additional resources that can be used to help participants explore these concepts in more depth. For instructors who wish to assess students, the reflection assignments could be used as a journaling activity that can be turned in for evaluation and feedback.

Module Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this module, participants will be able to:

- Cultivate personal habits that lead to creative thinking
- Employ a number of tools to help unlock group thinking
- Direct collaborative energy toward finding innovative solutions and new opportunities

Module Content

Skills & Habits of Mind

Topic 1. Promoting Curiosity

Activity 1A. Curiosity Narrative by Jack Byrd

Topic 2. Embracing Contradictions

Activity 2A. Harry's Contradictions by Jack Byrd

Topic 3. Seeking Innovation

Activity 3A. Mind Map + Good Words by Jack Byrd [Forthcoming]

Topic 4. Being Bold and Taking Risks

Activity 4A. Future of Higher Ed by Jack Byrd

Activity 4B. Playing Creativity Coach [Forthcoming]

Topic 5. Cultivating a Willingness to Play

Activity 5A. Name it and Sell It by Lori Britt

Topic 6. Expanding Thinking

Activity 6A. Using Metaphors in Problem Solving adapted by Lori Britt

Topic 7. Encouraging Bold Imagination

Activity 7A. Telling the History of the Future by Jeff Prudhomme

Topic 8. Transitioning Creativity to Implementation [Forthcoming]

Topic 1. Promoting Curiosity

“What I have is a malevolent curiosity. That’s what drives my need to write and what probably leads me to look at things a little askew. I do tend to take a different perspective from most people.” –David Bowie

Activity A. Curiosity Narrative by Jack Byrd

Description

This activity will illustrate how curiosity can be enhanced by the use of prompts to exercise the mind. These prompts are designed to explore dimensions of an issue which may not be evident upon examination.

Learning Goals

- Participants will be able to examine an issue and suggest questions for deeper understanding of the issue
- Participants will understand the value of reshaping the narratives of problems into narratives of possibility

Practice (70 minutes)

Step One	Developing curiosity requires a mental workout similar to the physical workout that many people follow. The practice of being curious is a daily activity. The basic building blocks to becoming curious are to keep these 4 prompts in mind at all times and use them in thinking about everything you encounter each day <ul style="list-style-type: none">● What if...● Think about...● Can we imagine that...● Why is that true?	20 min
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	<p>In small groups (3-5 participants), try out these prompts on a familiar topic. Consider the following stories that have appeared in national media over the past year or so:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Scandals over illegal influence to gain acceptance at elite schools</u> ● <u>Colleges drop SAT and ACT requirements</u> ● <u>Admission requirements show bias against first generation students</u> ● <u>Career success shows no correlation with college admission criteria</u> <p>Each group selects an article, reviews it together (or in advance of class) and then <i>explores the first curiosity prompt</i>. When considering the problems these articles are discussing regarding higher education, think about the topic and make a list of “<i>What if...</i>” possibilities.</p> <p>Tip: The list should be exploratory only. There should be no critical evaluation of any item on the list at this time. Be bold and imaginative. Try not to self-censor your responses.</p>	
Step Two	Next, <i>develop similar responses to the other three curiosity prompts</i> . Again, suspend critical judgement.	20 min
Step Three	<p>Once the four lists are completed, <i>develop a curiosity narrative outline—this can be a bulleted list</i> that combines similar items from each of the lists. The curiosity narrative outline would address the following question:</p> <p><i>Would it be possible to change the acceptance into college by adopting the following practices?</i></p> <p>Repeat the process for a total of 2-3 curiosity questions.</p>	20 min
Step Four	<p>Debrief. Reconvene as a large group and each small group shares at least 1 curiosity narrative outline. Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are there any common themes in these curiosity narrative outlines? ● Which curiosity prompt was most helpful in thinking about the issue in new ways? ● How might the group present these ideas to the college’s admission committee? 	10 min

Reflection Assignment

- Where does curiosity come from? Are some people just naturally curious? What sort of experiences cultivate curiosity? What sort of individual traits encourage curiosity?
- How important are others in cultivating or encouraging curiosity around a topic? How might a group kill curiosity or playful exploration?
- What sort of prompts or habits might you incorporate in your daily routine to encourage more curiosity?
- How do you know when you have cultivated or developed habitual curiosity as a way of being? How do you know you've arrived at being more curious?

Additional Resources

- *Curiosity: we're studying the brain to help you harness it:*
<https://theconversation.com/curiosity-were-studying-the-brain-to-help-you-harness-it-122351>

Activity 2. Embracing Contradictions

“The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function.” –F. Scott Fitzgerald

Activity 2A. Harry's Contradictions by Jack Byrd

Description

This activity will demonstrate how each of us have contradictions in our lives that can be very useful when exploring issues with others. In fact, most issues also involve contradictions, and we can use our own contradictions to examine how we might think about the possibilities for issues we are exploring.

Learning Goals

- Participants will be able to examine their contradictions and those of others to explore issues.

Practice (70 minutes)

Step One	Contradictions in Others <i>Read</i> the story “Harry's Contradictions.” <i>Make a list of Harry's contradictions</i> using the provided Contradiction Template .	20 min
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	Once you have developed a list of Harry’s contradictions, <i>review these in small groups or in pair shares.</i>	
Step Two	<p>Contradictions in Self</p> <p>Next, think about your own internal contradictions and, again, <i>use the template to make a list. Share these lists with others in the group or in pair share.</i></p>	20 min
Step Three	<p>Policy Application</p> <p>Explore the following issue in small groups: <i>Sample Issue: “University Policy 173: Any student with a cumulative GPA of less than 2.50 will not be allowed to take more than 16 credit hours in a semester.”</i></p> <p><i>Explore the viability of this policy from the perspective of your own contradictions. Then, explore the issue based upon the contradictions of someone you know whose perspective is different from those in the discussion group.</i></p>	20 min
Step Four	Conclude this activity by asking the discussion group to <i>develop a revision to the policy that is more reflective of the contradictions that participants experience.</i> The revision should maintain the original intent of ensuring student academic success.	10 min

Reflection Assignment

- What effect, if any, did writing down and sharing with others your own internal contradictions have on how you understand yourself? How you understand others?
- When we think about policies, why is it helpful to think about them from a lens of contradictions? What does that offer?
- How might you practice embracing contradictions in your daily life? What tricks or habits might you employ to help you do this?

Additional Resources

- How our contradictions make us human and inspire creativity: <https://aeon.co/ideas/how-our-contradictions-make-us-human-and-inspire-creativity>

Topic 3. Seeking Innovation

Activity 3A. Mind Map + Good Words by Jack Byrd

[Forthcoming]

Topic 4. Being Bold and Taking Risks

“Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it.” –Goethe

Activity 4A. Being Bold and Taking Risks

Description

This activity will show how collaborative groups will often need to take risks as they explore an issue. All too often groups will be timid in their thinking. As a result, the groups fail to identify possibilities which are bolder and more directed at longer term possibilities. This activity will demonstrate how groups can embrace risk taking.

Learning Goal

- Participants will develop possibilities for an issue which might at first seem risky but when explored further offer bold new directions for the resolution of the issue.

Practice (60 minutes)

Step One	<p>Think about the phone you use every day. It’s hard to believe that Apple took a risk when the first iPhone was introduced. In January 2007 Steve Jobs introduced the first iPhone. Everyone was excited, but the problem was that a working iPhone didn’t exist. Within Apple, there was considerable disagreement about the iPhone. But Apple took the risk and the iPhone changed the way we communicate. What was occurring inside Apple is what occurs in many discussion groups – a tendency to opt for the familiar and a failure to think about new directions.</p> <p>The activity below will demonstrate how this failure of the familiar occurs in groups and some simple ways to encourage moving beyond the familiar to stimulate bolder ideas.</p> <p>Review this statement and question:</p> <p><i>Institutions around the world are being challenged by COVID-19. Institutions of higher education need to rethink their role and how they deliver education. What do you think the future university will look like?</i></p> <p><i>As a group, take a few moments to generate responses to the question posed and write them down.</i></p>	10 min
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<p>Step Two</p>	<p>Next, <i>take a few moments to hear from each person</i> and map these according to theme on a white board or flipchart.</p> <p>Challenge everyone to think bolder by asking them to respond to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How might your concept change if higher education is required to make this change immediately, within the next two years? ● How might your concept change if higher education involved the choice for students of only paying for what you wanted, not what you are told you have to pay for? ● How might your concept change if higher education were required by law to be available to everyone? ● How might your concept change if competitive forces required that you reduce the cost of higher education by 10% every 5 years? ● How might your concept change if the needs of the job market had a major influence on what was offered at colleges and universities? 	<p>20 min</p>
<p>Step Three</p>	<p>As a group, <i>re-imagine what a future university looks like</i> once you have answered the above questions. Describe your future university in a series of bullet points.</p>	<p>20 min</p>
<p>Step Four</p>	<p>Now, imagine the risks that a university would encounter in moving to this new model. <i>Make a list of these risks</i>. Then make a list of risks that a university would be taking if it didn't move to this new model when other universities moved in this bold new direction.</p>	<p>10 min</p>

Reflection Assignment

- A key to thinking boldly is to limit self-censorship. Why do you think you might self-censor? What steps might you take to limit self-censorship in group settings?
- How might you encourage others to think boldly and take risks in group discussions?
- Think about what it would mean for groups to encourage people to play the *creativity coach* role. Groups often have a devil's advocate who grounds the groups but encouraging them to think about feasibility, but how could it help groups to also have someone early on in the process encourage the group to think boldly?

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Activity 4B. Playing Creativity Coach [Forthcoming]

Topic 5. Cultivating a Willingness to Play

Activity 5A. Name It and Sell It

Description

This activity will show how collaborative groups will often need to take risks as they explore an issue. All too often groups will be timid in their thinking. As a result, the groups fail to identify possibilities which are bolder and more directed at longer term possibilities. This activity will demonstrate how groups can embrace risk taking.

Learning Goal

- Participants will experience how a task with a fun twist can generate energy and unleash creativity.

Practice (40 minutes)

<p>Step One</p>	<p><i>Set Up and Introduction of Monroe’s Motivated Sequence</i> In small groups, introduce a common persuasive “pitch” formula called Monroe’s Motivated Sequence. They should be able to recognize this sequence from the format of many television ads and infomercials:</p> <p>5 Steps of Monroe’s (in this order)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Grab audience’s attention ● Present the need– Discuss the current situation and why something needs to be done. Appeal to emotions. ● Offer a product/solution that addresses the need ● Describe how the world will look if this product or solution is implemented, help the audience visualize. ● Call to Action – Ask them to buy or support the product/solution and why they must do it now. <p>Tip: show any ad to help them “see” Monroe’s sequence – the Old Spice commercials with the man on the horse are a great example and show a playful ad.</p>	<p>5 min</p>
<p>Step Two</p>	<p>The group should quickly come up with a product or idea that will address a public need they have been discussing. Name the product or idea with a catchy name. Have fun with this and think outside the box. <i>Develop a 2-minute Monroe’s pitch.</i></p>	<p>10 min</p>

Step Three	<i>Each group presents their pitch orally</i> with everyone in the group delivering a part. For fun, the class as a whole can vote on the top pitch.	15 min
Step Four	<p><i>Discuss and debrief:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did it feel like to do this so quickly? Did you feel like you were free to be playful or silly? Did the format of creating a commercial or infomercial allow you to be less serious? • How difficult was it to come up with an idea originally? • Once you had your idea, how easy or difficult was it to develop a pitch to persuade others to buy or support your idea? 	10 min

Reflection Assignment

- Discuss how much energy was created when the group had to work quickly. Are their ways this energy might be both a positive and a negative to groups trying to engage in collaborative discussion?
- Think about how many processes to address complex issues make it feel like we must work quickly. How might this hinder the process?
- Can you see how once people develop an idea; they get invested in it? In what ways could this be counter to what we are trying to accomplish in collaborative discussion?
- In what ways did the “competitive atmosphere” impact the activity and your team? How much a competitive atmosphere impact collaborative discussion? Is it possible to harness it for productive outcomes?

Topic 6. Expanding Thinking

Activity 6A. Using Metaphors in Problem Solving adapted by Lori Britt¹

Description

In addition to understanding how our thinking can be socially conditioned, which results in blockages there are also ways to stimulate different types of thinking that can aid in collaborative exploration. Metaphors are known as a key way that we make sense of the world. They allow us to think about things we don’t know much about in terms of things we do know about.

Learning Goals

- Develop new perspectives by using metaphoric language
- Appreciate right-brain approaches to problem solving in groups

Practice (50 minutes)

¹ Originating in the Instructor’s Resource Manual for Groups: Theory and Experience, Fifth Edition, pg. 87.)

<p>Step One</p>	<p>In this exercise you will be using your imagination in amusing and clever ways. The use of metaphors to expand our understanding of a problem and to look for similarities between the problem and what it is being compared to can greatly enhance our understanding of the problem.</p> <p><i>Small groups should select a big problem facing their campus or community.</i></p> <p><i>Then, in small groups, they should discuss:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How is this problem like <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ... a vegetable garden? ○ ... like rush hour traffic in a large metropolitan area? ○ ... like learning to use a computer? ○ ... like a computer virus? ○ ... like an adolescent going through puberty? <p>Tip: If your class is working on projects or studying a particular issue, participants can use these topics instead of a campus or community problem to think metaphorically about.</p> <p>Tip: Use any example metaphors that you prefer.</p>	<p>30 min</p>
<p>Step Two</p>	<p><i>Share back some of your answers and what you learned from the experience.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How has the use of metaphors helped you to see the issue in new ways? 	<p>20 min</p>

Reflection Assignment

- Did approaching your topic from a right-brain (creative, imaginative) perspective feel different from approaching it from a left-brain (logical, rational) approach? What do you see as the potential of exploring topics from both approaches?
- Did your group laugh when thinking metaphorically? How did the humor help your group? How might humor offer a creative interruption and opportunity to see an issue with new eyes?
- Did humor interfere in some ways?
- How could this activity be useful in other settings?

Additional Resources

- Metaphors as Key to Creative Thinking:
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0937445940060208?src=recsys>

Topic 7. Encouraging Bold Imagination

Activity 7A. Telling the History of the Future by Jeff Prudhomme

Description

This activity asks participants to describe their positive visions for the future in regard to a complex topic—and to collaboratively describe the pathways to those desired futures. Often when a group is struggling with what seems like an intractable problem, they get stuck with analysis paralysis. The problem seems too big to solve. Often when trying to solve a problem, we use a deficit model: we focus on weaknesses or what’s not working. In contrast, the history of the future activity can help a group come unstuck by asking them essentially to start with their imagined solution and then recount how that solution was reached. This inherently conveys a sense of positive potential about the present. By connecting the path to the future to anchor points in the present, this activity embodies a strengths-based model of problem solving, which can foster innovation.

Learning Goals

- Shift participants from a deficit or weakness-mindset to one of strength (from being overwhelmed by impossibilities to a sense of positive potential in the present)
- Help participants to imagine innovative approaches to complex topics

Practice (65 minutes)

<p>Step One</p>	<p><i>Begin with independent reflection</i> where participants each imagine ideal or optimal future in regard to whatever topic is under consideration.</p> <p>Participants should try to picture what things look like in this future in regard to the topic (in 10 years, 50 years, or 200 years, etc.)</p> <p>Each participant can write down some ideas about how the topic is being dealt with in this ideal future.</p> <p>Tip: Remind them that you want them to develop their vision of an ideal situation, their desired future, where this problem has been solved in some way.</p>	<p>5 min</p>
<p>Step Two</p>	<p><i>Prompt participants to think deeper:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you notice that tells you, they’ve solved this problem—that things are really working optimally in regard to the topic? • Imagine you’ve used a time machine to arrive in this ideal future where they’ve figured out how to deal with the topic in 	<p>5 min</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">the best way possible. What do you see that tells you that they've really solved it?</p> <p>Tip: Avoid dystopias. Inevitably some participants will focus on a dystopian vision of the future. Remind them that the task is to develop a vision of their hoped-for future, an ideal future, not a vision their fears or of what they currently think is feasible.</p> <p>Tip: Add on imaginative time-travel framing. Feel free to develop the time-travel framing for this activity (“you’ve just arrived in the TARDIS and ...”). Using the time-travel motif can help free up participants to think more creatively, by putting them in a more imaginative headspace. In their responses, participants might describe not only what they see in the future, but also what they learn from interviews with people in the future, etc.</p>	
<p>Step Three</p>	<p><i>Each participant shares a brief description of their ideal future.</i> In the initial round, you want to keep it relatively brief so that everyone has time to share their vision. Stress that the group does not need to agree about what the ideal future looks like. It is likely that there will be a lot of overlaps and convergences. Do not push for consensus. Highlight how it can be valuable to sketch out different visions for the future.</p> <p>Possible Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you notice that told you that this was an ideal future in regard to the topic? • In a few sentences, what’s a key feature of how the future society is dealing with the topic? • How would you summarize the way they are dealing with the topic? <p>After everyone has had a chance to present a brief description of their ideal future, open up the discussion to flesh out more of the descriptions.</p> <p>Tip: Invite the participants to elaborate on each other’s descriptions in constructive ways. Remind the participants that they don’t need to agree on the vision of the future—nor to think that it is likely. You’re just trying to spell out a bit more of how things work.</p>	<p>15 min</p>
<p>Step Four</p>	<p><i>Bridge to the future. Next, shift the focus to telling the story about the pathways to the ideal future(s).</i> Keep in mind that there might be</p>	<p>15 min</p>

	<p>divergent visions of the future—and that there can be different pathways to the same ideal future—so there is no need to enforce consensus.</p> <p>Ask people to build on each other’s ideas where it makes sense, so long as they are not changing the basic vision of the future. Where there are clearly distinct ideal futures, it may help to collect notes on each one by using separate pieces of chart paper.</p> <p><i>Ask the participants to describe more of what had to be in place for the future situation to work.</i> Think of this as uncovering the implications of how things are working in the future. The participants might say things like, “to do this, they had to take these actions...”. The participants can <i>start to trace out the different policy decisions and societal changes that were required for the ideal vision of the future to function.</i></p> <p>In order to complete the bridge to the future, <i>the participants will need to find the anchor points in our present.</i> Ask the participants what people might build on in the present that could serve as an anchor for this bridge to the future. Participants can think of this as brainstorming the best of what-is. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where are things working well now—things that could be built on for the pathways to an ideal future? 	
<p>Step Five</p>	<p>Once the group has a sense of what has to be in place for the ideal vision of the future to function, <i>the participants can work together to fill in some of the key steps that were taken on the pathway(s) to the future(s).</i> Possible prompts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me more about how they made things work in the ideal future(s). What kinds of policies did they have to set up to make things work? <i>(Let’s all help each other build on these ideas, where we have suggestions or insights that fit).</i> • What are the anchor points in the present for creating the bridge to the ideal future? What’s the best of what we have now—that they ended up building on to get to the ideal future? • What are some of the key steps they took along the way to get from our situation to theirs? • What are some of the headlines that might have been come up over the years as they moved from our time to theirs? <p>Tip: the level of detail can vary by the amount of time for this whole exercise. In a roughly one-hour session, the participants might simply sketch out the rough details of these steps, especially if they are</p>	<p>15 min</p>

	working on divergent pathways and different possible futures. If there's more time, and there's interest in taking a more playful approach, you can have the participants brainstorm mock timelines, perhaps with key headlines along the way, tracking the progress across the years.	
Step Six	<p>Debrief. Review the collective vision(s) of the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we feel about these future visions? • What do you think are some of the most important areas to focus on in the present—if we were to build toward an ideal future? • How would you compare your attitude about positive change from before our conversation to after? 	10 min

Reflection Assignment

- How did you experience this process of starting with a “solution” and working back to the present? What was most difficult about this process?
- How does this process encourage positive change? What take-aways would you share about how best to engage this process?
- How might current policies be different if we practiced strength-based, imaginative change practices? What are the downsides?

Additional Resources

- The process used here has some similarities with the Appreciative Inquiry approach, which could be used to augment this process of building out pathways to the future (<https://appreciativeinquiry.champlain.edu/>, <https://positivepsychology.com/appreciative-inquiry/>)
- The process also has some similarities with scenario planning exercises that map out alternative possible futures. The chief difference is that the history of the future approach is not interested in mapping out a range of possible futures (including negative ones), but with mapping out desired futures.
- There are also commonalities with Solutions-Based or Solutions-Focused Approach to therapy. The idea of those approaches is not to start with reciting all the elements of problematic behavior or digging into the roots of a problematic relationship. Rather, participants start with a positive vision of what a solution would look like, and then break out the different behaviors that go into embodying that vision.
- For fun, read Looking Backward by Edward Bellamy

Feedback and Evaluation

[Please complete this short survey to offer feedback on this module and individual activities.](#)

Critical Collaboration Module

Elective Module

Overview

Critical Collaboration requires that participants take time to reflect on how their thinking has been conditioned and how that impedes working with others effectively. Over time we have learned how to think about certain issues which may act as blinders and prevent us from seeing issues more fully. The activities in this module can serve to help groups pause and critically question their thinking and habits, in order to improve collaboration.

Module Design

This module is structured with a series of topics explored through activities. These activities give participants a chance to experience these concepts through hands on practices, often completed in small groups. Then participants reflect on their own experiences and how these skills or tools could be useful in supporting critical collaboration and thus improve their overall collaborative discussion skills.

Each of the topics also has additional resources that can be used to help participants explore these concepts in more depth. For instructors who wish to assess participants, the reflection assignments could be used as a journaling activity that can be turned in for evaluation and feedback.

Module Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this module, participants will be able to:

- Learn how to think expansively and beyond constraints
- Help others to think expansively and beyond constraints
- Recognize the value of thinking at the outset about assumptions we and others hold about issues
- Encourage critically thinking about consequences of decisions

Module Content

Skills & Habits of Mind

Topic 1. Understanding the Key Elements of Critical Thinking

Activity 1A. CLUE Model for Critical Dialogue by Christine Barbour and Matthew Streb and adapted by Jessica Friedrichs and Shannon Wheatley Hartman

Topic 2. Awareness of Context, Bias, & Assumptions

Activity 2A. Suspending Assumptions by Lori Britt

Topic 3. Developing Comfort with Ambiguity

Activity 3A. Moral Dilemmas by Jack Crittenden

Topic 4. Seeking Divergent Thinking and Understanding
 Activity 4A. Surrounding the Topic by Shannon Wheatley Hartman

Topic 5. Anticipating Implications and (Un)Intended Consequences
 Activity 5A. What IF...Scenario Discussion by Jack Byrd

Topic 1. Understanding the Key Elements of Critical Thinking

Activity 1A. CLUE Model for Critical Dialogue by Christine Barbour and Matthew Streb and adapted by Jessica Friedrichs and Shannon Wheatley Hartman

Description

We often associate the practice of critical thinking with reading and critically examining text. How do we practice critical reflection while actively engaging in dialogue with others? This activity is an adaptation of the CLUE approach, designed to encourage critical dialogue.

Learning Goals

- Develop strategies to critically reflect while in discussion with others
- Critically analyze contributions while participating in discussion with others

Practice (60 minutes)

Step One	<i>Pre-select a relevant topic for discussion.</i> For this discussion, it is best if all participants review a shared learning resource before the discussion. This might be an article, video, photograph, blog, or even a meme related to a contemporary topic.	
Step Two	In small groups (6-8 participants), engage in normal discussion of the topic. Participants share their initial reactions, reflections, or opinions about the topic and the shared resource. Engage in brief discussion by asking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your position on this topic? How does the shared resource support or challenge your position? 	20 min
Step Three “C”	As the discussion continues. Participants should <i>consider the source of the statements being offered.</i> Record reactions on this <u>CLUE worksheet.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are people contributing to the discussion? Are they citing sources (external evidence)? Are they referring to personal experiences (anecdotal evidence)? Or are they making general statements without much evidence or support? 	10 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are people presenting their ideas? With authority? With caution or caveats? Which approach is most convincing as you hear their comments? • What authority does the person speaking have on this topic? Are they a reliable source of information? • Do the people speaking have some sort of political leaning or agenda in this discussion? 	
<p>Step Four “L”</p>	<p>As a group, discuss the underlying argument or thesis of the shared resource.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is this resource trying to convey? What position does it take? • Do you agree with this argument or position? Why or why not? <p>As this discussion unfolds, try to <i>lay out the argument, values, and assumptions of</i> a few of the participants in the discussion. Record your deductions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What assumptions about the world does the discussant make? • What is one value you think the discussant holds? Provide evidence for this, perhaps use a quote from the discussion. 	<p>10 min</p>
<p>Step Five “U”</p>	<p>Continue to analyze the discussion and participating discussants by <i>uncovering the use of evidence in the discussion</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which discussant is most convincing? • Does this person present evidence to back up their claims? Do they offer clear arguments? • What about their contributions seem convincing? Why are you persuaded by their contributions? 	<p>10 min</p>
<p>Step Six “E”</p>	<p>As the discussion winds down, have all discussants offer a concluding statement that reflects their opinion on the topic and the shared resource.</p> <p><i>Evaluate these concluding remarks and record on the worksheet.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the group reached a shared consensus? If not, how has the discussion group been divided? On what grounds? What drives the division? • Is one side more convincing than the other? What do you base this on? 	<p>10 min</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you rethought any of your beliefs as a result of this discussion? What convinced or challenged you? 	
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Reflection Assignment

- Look back at your notes and consider how your perspective of your own and others' arguments and opinions changed as you worked through the CLUE framework.
- Which step was most difficult? What does this framework draw attention to in its focus on how people are using different resources to make arguments?
- How might going through this process help a group engaged in collaboratively trying to address a challenge?

Additional Resources

- [“Introduction to Critical Thinking” by Jack Byrd](#)
- Barbour and Streb. (2010). *Clued in to Politics*. CQ Press: Washington DC.

Topic 2. Awareness of Context, Bias, & Assumptions

“It is useless to attempt to reason a man out of a thing he was never reasoned into.”—Jonathan Swift

Activity 2A. Suspending Assumptions by Lori Britt

Description

This activity will help participants to identify their own assumptions about an issue and put those assumptions in plain view of others during a discussion. This activity will demonstrate how these judgments affect how we communicate with others.

Learning Goals

- Gain skills in thinking critically and beyond normal constraints.
- Encourage honest introspection about one’s beliefs, values, and biases.
- Learn how to use the knowledge of biases and assumptions in a positive way.

Practice (75 minutes)

Step One	Each small group will be given a controversial topic to discuss. For example: <i>Providing universal government-funded health care for everyone in the US.</i>	10 min

	Before you begin, <i>each participant will write down any preconceived ideas, biases, or pre-formed opinions about the topic on a large piece of paper.</i> Tape the piece of paper to the front of your desk.	
Step Two	Participants are literally “suspending” their assumptions about the topic. <i>Take a few moments to review all of the assumptions around the room.</i> Constructively ask for clarification about any assumptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you mean by this? • Where does this assumption come from? • Can you give me an example or context for this? <p>Do not criticize or debate the value of the assumptions.</p>	15 min
Step Three	<i>Engage in a discussion with your group.</i> Discuss the prompt. Explore various dimensions or elements of the prompt. Examine it from multiple angles or perspectives.	30 min
Step Four	<i>Debrief as a class:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What impact, if any, did “suspending” your assumptions have on your own contributions to the discussion? • How did knowing the assumptions of others affect your own communication in the group? • Did you communicate differently with any individual because of their assumptions? Because of your assumptions? 	20 min

Reflection Assignment

- How would knowing others’ assumptions benefit discussions in your respective groups? How would such knowledge obstruct a group?
- Are there certain types of topics for which it would not be helpful to know others’ assumptions?
- Do you think it is possible to know people’s assumptions up front and not essential or stereotype them? Do you think others would stereotype you for your assumptions?
- How might we discuss our assumptions in a way that encourages people to look at us as individuals whose perspectives on an issue have been shaped by the context of our lives?

Additional Resources

- William Isaacs on Dialogue and Suspending Assumptions:
<https://spectrum.mit.edu/winter-2001/the-art-of-dialogue/>

Topic 3. Developing Comfort with Ambiguity

“A true dilemma is a situation with options for action in which choosing one action leaves undone or on the table another action which should also be taken.”—Jack Crittenden

Activity 3A. Moral Dilemmas by Jack Crittenden

Description

This activity is designed to encourage participants to grapple with “no win” situations. Through discussion, participants will explore seemingly simple moral dilemmas which will actually expose the complexity of decision-making.

Learning Goals

- Develop an appreciation for complexity and ambiguity. Participants will move beyond simplistic “good vs. bad” binary thinking.
- Learn to move beyond emotional responses and develop arguments for particular actions.

Practice (70 minutes)

Step One	<i>Pre-select a single or set of moral dilemmas</i> from the What IF...Moral Dilemmas Collection	
Step Two	In groups of 4-6 people, <i>each participant should read and then react to the dilemma</i> . Record or take note of initial reactions, such as “I’d do this...This is wrong...You can’t act that way, etc.” Get all views on the table without discussion or critical examination.	10 min
Step Three	Then move to the discussion and persuasion part of the discussion. <i>Participants should ask each other questions:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What’s wrong with doing X? • What would someone who loves X say they like about it? • Why is doing Y the right thing to do? • Why would someone oppose Y? • What’s the argument against someone holding a certain view? <p>Tip: Push past emotional reactions and opinions and try to present arguments as best you can.</p> <p>Tip: For those who refuse to move off their position or see the position of others, ask them to articulate and defend the opposite view.</p>	30 min

<p>Step Four</p>	<p>Initiate a round of “monkey wrench.” When the discussion begins to slow down or reach consensus or an impasse, initiate a lighting round of “twists.” Going around the circle, each person introduces a <i>new twist to make the dilemma more difficult</i> or force participants to think about it in new ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What if this had happened instead of that? • What if this person was really this type of person? • What if this unintended consequence resulted? <p>Tip: The Monkey Wrench can add new variables, alter the dilemma, or use another strategy with the aim of getting some participants off-balance. Continue the discussion.</p>	<p>20 min</p>
<p>Step Five</p>	<p><i>Wrap-up the discussion by rearticulating the broad responses and highlighting the conflicts.</i> If the dilemma and discussion are rich, participants should have developed some appreciation for the complexity of situations that on the surface might not seem at all complex.</p> <p>Tip: Practicing this activity once will not automatically result in participants being comfortable with ambiguity. Like all skills, it needs to be practiced regularly. Consider adapting this activity for shorter amounts of time, like 15-minute Moral Dilemma Speed Rounds as a warm-up exercise at the beginning of any class or meeting. With practice, participants will develop an appreciation for the complexity of situations.</p>	<p>10 min</p>

Reflection

- How, if at all, did your initial reaction to this dilemma change over the course of the discussion? What helped you to change your mind? Or, what helped you to solidify your initial reactions?
- How important was it to discuss this dilemma with others? Could you have had a similar conversation in your own mind? What benefit, if any, did discussion contribute to your understanding of the issue?
- What role did values, assumptions, experiences play in this discussion? What would it take to reach a universal agreement about this particular dilemma?

Additional Resources

- The Problem with Binary Thinking, Stein (philosophy):
https://medium.com/@hennepindave_75991/the-problem-with-binary-thinking-92bc4a138da1

Topic 4. Seeking Divergent Thinking and Understanding

“My contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period.” –Edward Said

Activity 4A. Surrounding the Topic by Shannon Wheatley Hartman

Description

This activity will help participants think about a topic from multiple dimensions. It encourages divergent and exploratory thinking by asking participants to generate as many different viewpoints about a single area of concern. This helps to gain deeper insights and develop greater appreciation for the complexity of any given topic.

Learning Goals

- Practice examining an issue from multiple perspectives, dimensions, and layers
- Develop greater appreciation for the complexity of any given topic

Practice (50 minutes)

Step One	In small groups, <i>select an issue</i> that is important or pressing to you.	5 min
Step Two	<i>Generate a list of all of the possible dimensions</i> that affect or are affected by this topic. See Surrounding the Topic Diagram .	10 min
Step Three	Together, <i>craft open-ended questions</i> for each dimension that you generated. These are questions that you might ask the larger group when you reconvene. Use this Crafting Questions Worksheet to record your open-ended questions. Note: You will not have time to ask all of these questions. This exercise is designed to help you see an issue from multiple dimensions, but you won't have time to fully explore these dimensions in a single conversation.	20 min
Step Four	<i>Review your list of questions. What is missing? Think about overlooked or unlikely dimensions.</i> If necessary, pretend like you are an alien from another planet. You are seeing Earth and engaging this topic for the very first time. What dimensions or categories of concern might occur to someone who is looking at this topic with completely foreign eyes?	15 min

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Reflection Assignment

- How and when might you “surround the topic” in your own mind prior to a conversation? When is this a good strategy and when might this be discouraged or avoided?
- What are the strengths of divergent thinking? What are the limitations? When might convergence (or the coming together, sorting, and consolidating of ideas) be a necessary step?

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Topic 5. Anticipating Implications and (Un)Intended Consequences

“Without reflection, we go blindly on our way, creating more unintended consequences, and failing to achieve anything useful.” –Margaret J. Wheatley

Activity 5A. What IF...Scenario Discussion by Jack Byrd

Description

This activity will explore how to imagine the possible consequences of actions. We often hear of unintended consequences. The reality is that many consequences which are thought to be unintended could have actually been anticipated.

Learning Goals

- Participants will be able to critically analyze actions being considered and identify possible consequences in advance of implementing the actions.
- Participants will be able to develop plans for dealing with adverse actions.

Practice (80 minutes)

Step One	<p>There may be forces that you don’t anticipate that change the designed outcome. We often use these forces as an excuse for failure rather than as an opportunity to improve our critical thinking skills. You can anticipate the unintended forces in some cases. Also, you can develop solutions that are robust enough to be successful should the unexpected occur.</p> <p><i>As a discussion group, select one of the following scenarios.</i></p> <p><i>Raising Academic Standards</i> Ever since David Perick joined the college as Dean, he was on a mission to increase academic standards. Entrance requirements were</p>	10 min

	<p>raised resulting in a 20% drop in enrollment. Requirements to get into a major were raised. This resulted in a transfer rate of 10% of students from college. Periks' latest effort was to increase the overall graduation requirement GPA from 2.00 to 2.25.</p> <p>or</p> <p><i>City of Greenmont</i> The City of Greenmont was devastated by a major flood. All of the riverfront was destroyed. The city leaders decided that the need to rebuild the riverfront was an opportunity to upgrade the appearance of the city. Building codes were upgraded. Design standards were created. The Building Commission added aesthetics to one of its decision criteria for approval of new construction or major renovations. A public/private partnership was created to rebuild the city's riverfront. The project was a huge success and became a showcase for how the city could transform its appearance. This led to further changes in the city. Older buildings were condemned and replaced with structures that met the new codes, building standards, and aesthetics.</p>	
<p>Step Two</p>	<p>In small groups, <i>work through the process of identifying unintended consequences.</i></p> <p>What could go wrong if this possibility were implemented? Record each unanticipated consequence on the provided Consequence Chart without discussion. When the group has exhausted its list, see if any like items can be combined.</p>	<p>10 min</p>
<p>Step Three</p>	<p>Next ask each individual in the group to <i>assess the likelihood of the unintended consequences.</i> Do this step silently at first with each participant making an independent assessment of the likelihood. Use the following rating scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I believe this unintended consequence is very likely to occur (5 points) ● I believe this unanticipated consequence could occur, but it's not very likely that it will (3 points) ● I don't believe this unanticipated consequence will occur (1 point) <p>Add the scores for all participants and identify which unanticipated consequences are most likely.</p>	<p>20 min</p>

Step Four	Take each one of the <u>most likely</u> unanticipated consequences. <i>Make a list</i> of things that could be done (strategies) to minimize the possibility that this will become an unintended consequence. Do this for all the most-likely consequences.	20 min
Step Five	<i>Add the strategies from Step 4 to each possibility.</i> Then present all of the most likely possibilities with strategies to the larger group.	20 min

Reflection Assignment

- Why is it valuable to work through this particular process in small groups? What is lost when thinking through unintended consequences in isolation?
- Take a look at your group. What types of perspectives are missing from the group? Try to imagine how someone or some viewpoint not present in your group might contribute to the discussion? Why is group diversity so important in exercises like these?

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Feedback and Evaluation

[Please complete this short survey to offer feedback on this module and individual activities.](#)

Culturally Responsive Collaboration Module

Elective Module

Overview

Culturally Responsive collaboration is about a commitment to learning from and relating respectfully to others who are both similar and different from oneself. This commitment to working across a variety of differences that participants may bring to a collaborative discussion can help groups make these differences resources for the group.

Module Design

This module is structured with a series of topics explored through activities. These activities give participants a chance to experience these concepts through hands on practices, often completed in small groups. Then participants reflect on their own experiences and how these skills or tools could be useful in supporting culturally responsive collaboration and thus improve overall collaborative discussion skills.

Each of the topics also has additional resources that can be used to help participants explore these concepts in more depth. For instructors who wish to assess students, the reflection assignments could be used as a journaling activity that can be turned in for evaluation and feedback.

Module Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this module, participants will be able to:

- Reflect on the nature of difference and how differences can impact collaboration
- Learn to question assumptions about others and engage with authentic curiosity
- Reflect on how differences can impact power in groups and how to recognize and address power imbalances

Module Content

Skills & Habits of Mind

Topic 1. Practicing Cultural Humility

Activity 1A. Identity Pie by Richard Kiely

Topic 2. Taking the Perspective of Others

Activity 2A. The Continuum Exercise by Janice McMillan

Topic 3. Embracing Complexity

Activity 3A. Creating a Covid19 Task Force by Janice McMillan

Topic 4. Nurturing Critical Empathy

Activity 4A. [Forthcoming]

Topic 5. Demonstrating Curiosity and Openness
Activity 5A. Asking Questions to Promote Curiosity by Lori Britt

Topic 6. Recognizing Power Imbalances in Decision-Making
Activity 6A. The Bean Activity by Janice McMillan

Topic 1. Practicing Cultural Humility
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Activity 1A. Identity Pie by Richard Kiely

Description

The primary purpose of this activity is to assist you in becoming more aware of your identities and worldview, the different aspects of the cultures you identify with, and, importantly, how culture and other social, political, economic, and spiritual elements of your worldview affect your beliefs, values, behaviors, and sense of self. It should highlight how culture defines who we are, how we understand ourselves and others, and the misperceptions we might have about our own or others' cultural identity and assumptions (i.e., stereotypes).

Learning Goals

- Develop better understanding of your identities, as well as dominant (and marginalized) norms and beliefs of your home culture(s)
- Begin to uncover visible and invisible aspects of culture
- Encourage exploration of dominant (and marginalized) norms and beliefs of other cultures and contexts in which you operate

Practice (55 minutes)

Step One	<i>Personal free write:</i> What are your cultural identities?	5 min
Step Two	<i>Write down 5 to 10 aspects of your primary culture and identity/identities.</i> You could begin by returning to what you wrote in response to the free-write prompt at the top of this page. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflect on the meanings of each dimension of your identity/identities, life experiences that have shaped who you are, and the role and importance that each aspect plays in your life.• Provide examples of visible and invisible aspects of culture and identity.	10 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate each contribution as a slice of pie. Draw your pie. Larger slices of the pie represent more dominant aspects of your identity/identities. <p>Tip: It is not necessary that you use the pie as a metaphor for your drawing. You could choose another metaphor that visually illustrates your identity, or simply draw the things that you feel compose your cultural identity. Whatever visual you choose should show which elements of your identity have greater or lesser significance.</p>	
<p>Step Three</p>	<p><i>Share with a partner.</i> Note: There is always the option not to share or share only certain items that you are comfortable sharing.</p> <p>Partner with another person who has completed the identity exercise and <i>share with each other the meanings you attach to 3 of the elements you drew.</i> Hold your drawings up to your cameras and share them as you describe them if you're doing this online. Take turns listening to each other and be sure to ask questions to probe more deeply into the meanings of each identity element, i.e.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role does this element play in your life? • What similarities or differences exist in the ways you describe and experience your identities in different contexts? • What surprised you about what you wrote about your own identity/identities? What surprised you about your understanding of your partner's identity/identities? <p>When you join a group debrief, you may want to share from your conversation with your partner, so ask your partner if that is okay.</p>	<p>10 min</p>
<p>Step Five</p>	<p><i>Group Debrief.</i> When you come back together for a group conversation with your cohort, it will begin by asking you to share something you learned through listening to your partner's explanation. This could include things you realize you left off your identity pie or things you thought your partner articulated particularly well. Questions that the group might explore include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did this activity help you to examine deeply held cultural assumptions? • How does this examination of cultural assumptions lead to action? For example, how might critical self-reflection 	<p>30 min</p>

	challenge power imbalances across cultures and advance institutional accountability? Tip: This activity can be repeated over time and in different contexts with different collaborators, often yielding different insights.	
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Reflection Assignment

- This activity aims to encourage cultural humility. How would you articulate cultural humility? Why is cultural humility important on both individual and community levels?
- How might cultural humility help you to better collaborate with others?

Additional Resources

- [Cultural Humility People, Principles and Practices](#): 7-minute video describes the three core commitments of cultural humility: 1) Lifelong learning and critical self-reflection, 2) Recognizing and challenging power imbalances for successful partnerships, and 3) Institutional accountability.
- Kiely, R., Zukerman, S., & Hartman, S. (2020). How can you strengthen your knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors to enact cultural humility in diverse contexts? In E. Hartman (Ed.). *Interdependence: Global Solidarity and Local Actions*. The Community-based Global Learning Collaborative. Retrieved from <http://globalsolidaritylocalaction.sites.haverford.edu/cultural-humility/>

Topic 2. Taking the Perspective of Others

Activity 2A. The Continuum Exercise by Janice McMillan

Description

This exercise makes visible a range of views on an issue as well as how hard it is to take on the view of someone else. It can also help participants become aware of how strongly held views can lead them to be dismissive of the views of others.

Learning Goal

This exercise is useful in helping participants identify how we read the world through deep-seated views which can often lead us to think in stereotypes about others. By doing this exercise participants also think about what it might mean to take on the view of someone else, even if it is very different.

Practice (80 minutes)

Step One	Stand in a long line, side-by-side, i.e. on a continuum, with the rest of the participants. Instructors should indicate that one end of the continuum represents position A and the other represents position B.	2 min
Step Two	<p>Statements will be read to you indicating two very different positions on one topic, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Would you A) rather eat a burger OR B) eat a veggie wrap for lunch? ● A) Development is about the alleviation of poverty OR B) Development is about the increasing of people’s capabilities ● A) Freedom means having choices OR B) Freedom means being left alone to do as you like <p>As each statement is read, take a minute to think about where you want to stand and then move along the line to indicate your feeling about it. Standing at the ends indicates having the strongest feeling, standing closer to the middle indicates that you still agree with the position but feel less strongly about it. Try not to stand directly in the middle i.e. have no view or claim you are neutral on a topic.</p> <p>You won’t be justifying your positions just yet - rather, remember your thoughts about the statements for the next step of the activity.</p> <p>Tip: Often one can start with fun statements and work towards more serious ones. Also, it is useful to think about statements that link to the topic for which you are using the exercise. This first round might include approximately 5 choices.</p>	10 min
Step Three	<p>The next statements you offer can be tailored to your relevant course topics/s. These can be offered in a more complicated, nuanced way which is useful as it can indicate critical issues within the topic without actually talking about the issues directly. For example, take the topic of “development.”</p> <p><i>Read the statement, think about your opinion, and move to that end of the continuum:</i></p> <p>If you were the head of the United Nations, would you A) prioritize projects focused on the provision of medicines, OR B) prioritize the education of young girls and boys?</p>	2 min

Step Four	With the rest of the participants standing in your group on the continuum, <i>discuss with each other</i> why you are standing where you are. Even though you are all standing in the same place, you might be there for very different reasons.	10 min
Step Five	<i>Share back to the full group</i> , switching back and forth from one end of the continuum to the other as opinions and responses are shared.	10 min
Step Six	If you feel swayed by an argument on the opposite side from where you're standing, switch ends. For those who switch, offer a brief explanation of what persuaded you to move on the continuum.	2 min
Step Seven	Repeat the activity with another statement, for example: If you were a starving and politically oppressed citizen, would you rather be given food daily or the right to vote? <i>Move to the end of the continuum that you feel strongest about.</i>	2 min
Step Eight	This time as you discuss with your new group, <i>develop an argument for the opposing view.</i> Wow. That's right. It's a surprise twist in the instruction. What are folks on the other end of the spectrum thinking? What argument would they put forth to explain why they are on this end of the spectrum. You will have to think from their perspective. Put forth the strongest argument for the opposing view.	20 min
Step Nine	<i>Share back to the full group</i> , switching between the opposing groups and feel free to move if you feel swayed by the other's argument. Tip: Make sure your group takes your discussion far enough to come to a firm conclusion about what you believe. Clarity-seeking questions and examples can aid in this.	10 min
Step Ten	<i>Debrief.</i> As a large group, share your thoughts on the following questions (relevant to the topical area of discussion): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is it easy to say what development is and what it isn't? Why? ● When thinking about what should be prioritized in terms of development, what factors influenced your decisions in the last two activities? 	20 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you think big development organizations or states consider the same factors? What other factors might they take into consideration? 	
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Reflection Assignment

- How did you experience taking a point of view and being asked to articulate it versus another view? Not just how did you think, but how did you feel as well?
- Was it easy to take a point of view?
- If you changed your view, what did you take into account in making the change?
- What is it important to think about in terms of having strong views on issues of importance? And in the context of collaborative discussions?

Additional Resources

- Ernesto Sirolli Ted Talk: https://www.ted.com/talks/ernesto_sirolli_want_to_help_someone_shut_up_and_listen

Topic 3. Embracing Complexity

Activity 3A. Creating a Covid19 Task Force by Janice McMillan

Description

This activity opens up complex thinking; it helps participants to understand issues of prejudice and stereotypes, and it also helps them to find ways of coming to consensus on issues that affect them.

Learning Goal

- Examine how our views are shaped by many factors including the media, family, religion, class, racial and ethnic identities, etc.

Practice (70 minutes)

Step One	<p>You have been asked to pull together a task team linked to COVID-19. The task team needs to come up with ideas about how to build community cohesion or to rebuild community, after the end of lockdown/when there is more movement allowed in your neighborhood.</p> <p>People were asked to volunteer their time but there are only 8 places on the team. The following residents came forward, from whom you have to select your team of 8:</p>	5 min
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An unemployed Black teenager 2. A Russian doctor 3. A 50-year-old army general 4. A Bollywood star 5. A jazz musician 6. A pregnant schoolteacher 7. A paraplegic bank manager in a wheelchair 8. A Methodist minister 9. A gay nurse 10. A farm worker 11. A middle-aged architect 12. A Rastafarian newspaper seller 13. An immigrant shopkeeper 14. A young transgender person 15. A homeless man whose “home” is a shopping trolley 	
Step Two	<i>Think about your own neighborhood</i> and who you know there that you would like to have a team like this, and why. Write down a few characteristics of ideal team members.	5 min
Step Three	Working individually and referring back to the list given above, <i>rank the volunteers from 1-15</i> in order of your preference. Make sure you can say why you would or would not select someone for the task team.	5 min
Step Four	<i>Think about and write down</i> the criteria you used in making in your decisions.	5 min
Step Five	In small groups, <i>compare your individual rankings and discuss the criteria you each used.</i>	20 min
Step Six	Through trade-offs and negotiations, <i>arrive at a decision of the final 8 volunteers, collectively.</i> Tip: It is really important to let each other talk about your choices and for other participants to listen carefully.	10 min
Step Seven	Regroup with the entire class. Each group should share the list of team members. Write these on the board or flip sheets. Compare team membership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is there consistent overlap? Why? 	20 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any outliers? Why were these team members chosen? • How might the complexity of the issue influence the diversity of team membership? • How important are diverse perspectives when dealing with complex issues? When might it be a hindrance? When might it be a benefit? 	
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Reflection Assignment

- In your ideal task force formation, what criteria for team members rose to the top of the list? Why these criteria or characteristics? Are these criteria/characteristics that you would want for all important teams or are they specific for this particular task force?
- Was it difficult to come to a shared list of team members? Why or why not?
- During the discussion, how did your discussion of COVID 19 (and the complexity of reopening) inform your decision for team members?

Additional Resources

- Chimamanda Adichie’s TED talk “The problem of a single story.”

Topic 4. Nurturing Critical Empathy

[Forthcoming]

Topic 5. Demonstrating Curiosity and Openness

Activity 5A. Asking Questions to Promote Curiosity by Lori Britt

Description

This activity focuses attention on the intentionality of asking questions. A good question can help promote a rich and meaningful discussion and goes beyond talking “on the surface.”

Learning Goals

- Understand what makes questions “good questions.”
- Practice developing questions that will surface insights and perspectives that can be helpful when addressing issues.

Practice (75 minutes)

Step One	A key way to promote broad knowledge of an issue is to ask good questions. How do we know what good questions are?	30 min

	<p>One way to start thinking about questions is to identify what you assume people think about an issue and then develop questions to explore whether or not that is the case.</p> <p>Introduce a complex problem. In small groups, create a stakeholder chart [hyperlink to worksheet]. Think about how each stakeholder would define the issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think are their major concerns? <p><i>Think about and list sources that lead you to these perceptions</i> (such as media accounts, personal experience, knowledge you have gained in your education, others?). You can even turn to online news sources and the comment sections, blogs, nonprofit websites, etc. to help you think through this.</p>	
Step Two	<p>Next, <i>think about what questions you can ask to each group of stakeholders</i> that would help to unearth what concerns they have and what hopes they have regarding this issue. One thing we need to avoid is assuming we know what people value, care about, and fear because someone else tells us this is the case. Identify which stakeholders it would be very important to try and communicate with directly regarding this issue.</p>	20 min
Step Three	<p>With this background knowledge, your task now is to <i>write good questions</i>. A good question offers you a perspective and helps you understand how a participant makes sense of the issue. In the ways people respond to questions we gain insight in what they tell us, how they tell us, and why they chose to tell us what they did. Asking good questions can help open up someone's world to us.</p> <p>See Question Chart for a few types of questions that can help support collaborative learning about an issue from stakeholders. Examples oriented around the problem of healthcare are offered to show you how you might write each type of question for a particular issue.</p>	5 min
Step Four	<p>In your small group, <i>write 3-4 questions directed at your assigned stakeholder group that are grounded in a spirit of curiosity</i>, of wanting to understand a person's perspective deeply.</p> <p>Even if you are not able to ask these questions to stakeholders, the process of writing these questions is a valuable one and is a good habit to habituate.</p>	20 min

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Reflection

- Which types of questions do you think are most important when learning about others?
- What types of questions should be avoided or more carefully crafted when learning about stakeholders or community members?
- How can we ask questions of others different than ourselves in ways that are respectful and authentic?
- Is it better to ask questions or to express your own vulnerability and positionality within an issue?

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Topic 6. Recognizing Power Imbalances in Decision-Making

Activity F. The Bean Activity by Janice McMillan

Description

This activity makes visible the ways in which power works in society but more particularly, in the context of joint decision-making. It opens up the conversation about how power reinforces stereotypes about how power is distributed in society. It can also offer an opportunity to challenge power.

Learning Goal

- Participants will be able to examine their own stereotypes, how these might influence how decisions are made.
- Participants will also gain from the illumination of how power works covertly in many contexts.

Practice (55 minutes)

Step One	<p>For this activity, you will break into small groups of 6-8 people.</p> <p>Each participant will be given one of the following identities as well as the specified number of beans. The beans indicate the number of opportunities you will have to speak during the meeting, and thus the amount of power you have. Participants should not reveal how many beans they have.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pregnant teenager (1-2 beans) 	5 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gay schoolteacher (3 beans – as a teacher, the person might get more beans but adding sexual orientation could lower their beans depending on perceptions...) ● Businessman (5 beans) ● Unemployed youth (1-2 beans) ● Minister of the local church (4 beans) ● Nurse (3 beans) ● Old man in a wheelchair (1 bean) ● Leader of a local gang (1 bean) ● Local farmer (4 beans) ● Mother of 8 (2 beans) <p>Tip: Create characters and situations that are relevant to the context you are learning so that it feels authentic and real. This is critical in terms of getting participants to take on roles. Bringing in nationality is also useful e.g. the Russian...the Somalian...</p> <p>Tip: You can also reverse the beans giving the person with the least influence stereotypically the most beans and the most “influential” person the least. This then allows for an interesting debrief because often participants say, “if only this was how power worked...we would see such different outcomes...!”</p> <p>Tip: You could experiment and have two groups, one with the expected power/beans ration and the other with the inverse and have them discuss how their conversations were different.</p>	
<p>Step Two</p>	<p>In your small group, <i>consider the following scenario</i>:</p> <p>You are a community group living in a context where jobs are scarce, poverty is rife, and there are not many opportunities for making a decent living. The community is quite cut off from neighboring communities as the train that used to link the community doesn’t run anymore due to the lines being faulty. You are able to receive some funding for a project and the community has to decide between the building of a resource/youth/skills center in the community OR repairing the train line.</p> <p>A community meeting is being called to decide which of the 2 options the community will vote for.</p>	<p>5 min</p>
<p>Step Three</p>	<p>After reading the scenario, <i>introduce yourselves</i> as your given roles. Do not reveal how many beans you have.</p>	<p>5 min</p>

Step Four	<i>Have a discussion</i> with your group members. Each time you speak, put one bean on the table. At the end of your discussion, your group must come up with a decision about the proposal.	40 min
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Reflection Assignment

- How did you feel about the role you were in?
- Did you think the number of beans/amounts of power is a fair reflection of how society values certain people/roles over others?
- How can you challenge these stereotypes and the power that comes with different roles?
- What does this tell us about collaborative discussions and the role of power in decision-making?

Additional Resources

- Introduction to Difference Matters by Brenda J. Allen:
<https://www.cu.edu/doc/bjallendifferencematters12.pdf>
- The Trouble We're In: Privilege, Power and Difference, Allan J. Johnson:
<https://www.maryville.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Article-JohnsonTheTroubleWereIn-.pdf>

Feedback and Evaluation:

[Please complete this short survey to offer feedback on this module and individual activities.](#)

Constructive Collaboration Module

Elective Module

Overview

Our world is created and shaped in our interactions with others. We recognize that how we interact with others creates possibilities and can also create barriers. This module stresses the importance of thinking about how we interact with others to socially construct spaces, shared understanding, and practices that work toward our goals of collaborative discussion.

Module Design

This module is structured with a series of topics explored through activities. These activities give participants a chance to experience these concepts through hands on practices, often completed in small groups. Participants are encouraged to reflect on these practices and their own experiences. Together, we learn how to build the skills and practices essential to constructive collaboration.

Each of the topics also has additional resources that can be used to help participants explore these concepts in more depth. For instructors who wish to assess students, the reflection assignments could be used as a journaling activity that can be turned in for evaluation and feedback.

Module Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this module, participants will be able to:

- Recognize and foster habits & skills that promote authentic and sustained engagement
- Learn ways to model personal behaviors that will contribute to constructive group discussions
- Learn tools that will help groups manage challenges that arise in collaborative discussion

Module Content

Skills & Habits of Mind

Topic 1. Listening to Understand

Activity 1A. The Active Listening Exercise by Jessica Friedrichs

Topic 2. Building on the Ideas of Others

Activity 2A. Yes, and ... by Jack Byrd

Topic 3. Expressing Beliefs with Confidence

Activity 3A. Creating Strategies for Sharing Ideas by Jack Byrd

Topic 4. Practicing Generosity of Interpretation

Activity 4A. Calling Upon Your Best Self by Shannon Wheatley Hartman

Topic 5. Dealing with Conflict & Disagreeing Productively
 Activity 5A. Setting Ground Rules & Using CPR by Jack Byrd

Topic 6. Recognizing Complexity
 Activity 6A. The Fishbone Diagram by Jack Byrd

Topic 7. Building and Shifting the Discourse
 Activity 7A. Escalating Memes Activity by Timothy Ruback

Topic 8. When to be a Disruptor
 Activity 8A. [Forthcoming]

Topic 1. Listening to Understand

Activity A. The Active Listening Exercise by Jessica Friedrichs

Description

This activity is designed to help participants become aware of specific elements of listening and to practice using these elements to actively listen to another person.

Learning Goals

- Learn specific elements and strategies of listening
- Practice active listening
- Reflect on the experience of listening in terms of both content and process to explore how active listening can be applied regularly in all facets of daily life

Practice (85 min)

Step One	Reflect on the following questions. <i>Write down</i> your responses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do you consider yourself a good listener? ● Are you more comfortable listening or talking? ● How do you know if someone is really listening to you? 	5 min
Step Two	Consider the following listening concepts adapted from Berg-Weger (see additional resources) and <i>write-down or pair share</i> your reactions, thoughts and questions about each. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Silence is golden ● Try not to relate the experience you are hearing to yourself ● Being conscious of body language ● Hearing what’s “not said” ● Balancing inquiry and advocacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Open-ended questions elicit more information 	10 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Closed-ended questions allow you to control the conversation ○ Don't ask excessive questions ● Checking understanding: recapping or paraphrasing what you heard to validate and clarify ● The problem with "why?" 	
Step Three	As a group, <i>discuss these elements</i> .	20 min
Step Four	<p><i>Practice Active Listening</i></p> <p>Arrange the chairs so that they are either in concentric circles with the chairs facing each other or in short rows with chairs facing each other. Each person should be facing only one other person, so they are in pairs. Take into account that you will be switching pairs a few times, so make it easy for that to happen. After each round, one group will get up and move to the chair to their right (for example, the inner circle in the concentric circles) so that they will have a new partner. If you are in rows rather than circles, have one row (for example the back row) move to the next chair to the right and the person on the end loop around to the other side.</p> <p>Make sure everyone is in a chair facing one other person.</p>	5 min
Step Five	<p><i>Round 1</i></p> <p>For round 1, the inner circle will be the "listeners" and the outer circle will be the "speakers."</p> <p>The listener is going to try to practice the following goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silence is golden • Try not to relate the experience to yourself • Be conscious of body language • Hearing what's "not said" <p>If you are assigned to "speak," your challenge is to continue talking for the entire time.</p> <p>If you are assigned to "listen," you should not speak during this round. You will not get a chance to respond to this person so you don't need to worry about what you would say next. You are simply listening.</p> <p>For two minutes, the speaker will talk about the following prompt:</p>	5 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share a life transition you've experienced. <p>Stop immediately at the 2-minute mark.</p>	
Step Six	<p><i>Round 2</i></p> <p>Thank the person you have spoken with. The inner circle will move over one seat to the right, while the outer circle remains where they are.</p> <p>You now have a new partner. This should be the second person you've conversed with.</p> <p>Flip the roles for this round so that if you listened last time, you are speaking this time and vice versa.</p> <p>For two minutes, the speaker will talk about the following prompt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share a life transition you've experienced. <p>Stop immediately at the 2-minute mark.</p>	5 min
Step Seven	<p><i>Round 3</i> <i>Practice Active Listening + Dialoguing</i></p> <p>Thank the person you've spoken with. The inner circle will move over one seat to the right again, while the outer circle remains where they are.</p> <p>You now have a new partner. This should be the third person you've conversed with.</p> <p>For this round, you are going to practice the following elements of listening – which include dialoguing:</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Open-ended questions elicit more information – Closed-ended questions allow you to control the conversation – Don't ask excessive questions • Checking understanding: recapping or paraphrasing what you heard to validate and clarify 	10 min

	<p>You will have three minutes for this round. While the speaker responds to the prompt below, the listener may ask two or three thoughtful questions. Do not express statements (“I totally agree!”) – only ask questions (“Was there a person that was important in your life then?”)</p> <p>For 3 minutes, the speaker will respond to the following prompt with the listener asking a few questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your most significant gift? 	
<p>Step Eight</p>	<p>Round 4</p> <p>For this next partnering, it can be useful for them to stay with the person they were with in Round 3 or move one more time (so they are with a fourth person). The advantage to them staying is they can have a richer conversation and it allows them to build on what was said in the beginning of the third round but the disadvantage is the last “speaker” may not get to have the experience of sharing fresh and being listened to in the same way.</p> <p>Tip: The activity is significantly more powerful if used with a particular content area and it works very well with issues that can be challenging for people to discuss. In those cases, you could use the activity to focus on the process of listening one day, and then on a later occasion, bring in a content area once students are familiar with the process elements of listening.</p>	<p>10 min</p>
<p>Step Nine</p>	<p><i>De-Brief. Review these process questions as a group:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What did you learn about how you listen? About how you speak? ● What emotion did you pick up on from the person you spoke with in each round? Was it different depending on the round/prompt and if so, why might that be? ● What did you learn about power dynamics in Round One? ● As the questioner, was it hard to listen while also thinking of questions to ask? What about thinking about what you were going to say when it was your turn for prompt? <p><i>Review these content questions as a group:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Was the second prompt harder? Is it harder to talk about our gifts than our challenges? ● Did your questioner ask good questions? If so, give us an example ● Did you come to new insights? If so, share. 	<p>20 min</p>

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Reflection Assignment

- Sometimes, just reminding yourself of these active listening elements before a conversation on a controversial content area is helpful. How might you make a habit of this practice?
- What might you experience if you practiced these listening elements regularly in daily life?
- Think about how listening occurs or doesn't occur when discussing controversial or complex topics in our society and talk about how listening could connect to dialoguing about these issues to look for common ground.
- Commit to actively listening one time in the coming week and write about it

Additional Resources

- Berg-Weger (2016). Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare 4th Edition. Routledge. Pp. 456-458.

Topic 2. Building on the Ideas of Others

Activity 2A. Yes, and ... by Jack Byrd

Description

Improvitational comedy has developed a rule of thinking which is called *Yes, and ...*. The premise of *Yes, and ...* is that you accept what the other person has said, and then you add your own thoughts. The “yes” means that you accept what the other person has said even though you might not agree with it. The “and” is your contribution to expanding on what they just said. Instead of negating an idea (“yes, but...”) this practice encourages finding the shred or nugget of truth in a statement and building upon it.

Learning Goals

- Develop the practice of listening and affirming what is heard rather than negating others
- Practice listening for ideas or arguments that can be built upon through collaborative discussion

Practice (45 minutes)

Step One	<p><i>Read the following scenario:</i></p> <p><i>Public colleges and universities collect end of course feedback from students. This official data is used as one-way faculty members are evaluated annually and as part of their applications for promotion and tenure. However, this feedback is not made widely available to</i></p>	3 min

	<p><i>students and so other ways for students to gain information about faculty and courses such as Rate My Professor have popped up.</i></p> <p><i>Research has shown that not all students complete the official end-of-course evaluation resulting in data that shows those highly favorable of the course and those who were extremely displeased with the course. In addition, research has shown that students' evaluations are often tied to the race, ethnicity, and gender of the faculty, and other factors not related to the course content and learning.</i></p> <p><i>Legislatures are now pushing for these ends of course evaluation to be made publicly available to provide a checks and balances approach to prompt public pressure in ensuring that colleges and universities are retaining good faculty. The goal is to also encourage students to use this data when considering which colleges and universities to apply to.</i></p>	
<p>Step Two</p>	<p><i>Divide into three groups:</i></p> <p>Group A: I totally agree with the public's right to know what faculty are contributing to the state's higher education system. I also believe that there should be employment consequences for faculty who do not score well on student end of course evaluations.</p> <p>Group B: I agree with the public disclosure of a faculty member's contribution, but I think not everything that a good faculty member does can be measured by student end of course evaluations. Public disclosure should include more qualitative criteria.</p> <p>Group C: I totally disagree with making this data public and feel that this data is best interpreted and addressed by a faculty members' department chair who conducts the annual reviews. These data are not an effective way for students to be choosing college options.</p>	<p>2 min</p>
<p>Step Three</p>	<p>One participant from Group A will make the case for the public's right to know.</p> <p>Then participants from Groups B and C will frame <i>Yes, and ...</i> statements in response to the position expressed by the Group A participant. Capture these statements in a place where all participants can see them.</p>	<p>10 min</p>

	Tip: When you are doing this, try to expand on the initial perspective even if you don't agree with it.	
Step Four	<i>Repeat the process two more times</i> , with participants from Groups B and C making cases for their respective positions followed by <i>Yes, and ...</i> responses from the other groups. Again, make sure to capture the <i>Yes, and ...</i> responses.	20 min
Step Six	Once all rounds of <i>Yes, and ...</i> are completed, look at the three rounds of <i>Yes, and ...</i> statements. Where do the groups converge? Do common themes develop? Where is there overlap of thinking? <i>Develop a list of common themes from the statements.</i>	10 min

Reflection Assignment

- Did the common themes end up as a better resolution than the starting points of the discussion? Did the need to provide a *Yes, and ...* response help you see the positives of other points of view?
- Describe how difficult it was to use a *Yes, and ...* response to a statement you found fundamentally wrong.
- What is the limitation of the *Yes, and ...* approach? When might it be better to use *Yes, but ...* or intentionally negate or disagree with a perspective? When is it better to not build on the ideas of others?

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Topic 3. Expressing Beliefs with Confidence

Activity 3A. Creating Strategies for Sharing Ideas by Jack Byrd

Description

This activity is designed to help participants develop skills and strategies to better express their ideas in group settings with confidence. In addition to expressing beliefs with confidence, participants will also practice how to disagree or respond to disagreement productively.

Learning Goals

- Consider what things hold us back from fully contributing to collaborative discussion
- Identify goals and strategies to more fully contribute in a way that balances self-contributions and other contributions

Practices

<p>Step One</p>	<p>In small groups or pair shares, generate a list of possible reasons why people do not speak up in group settings (like in the classroom, workplace, or at social events or gatherings). Some examples might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shyness ● A sense that your ideas may sound foolish ● Being intimidated by others ● Discouraged by the tone of the discussion 	<p>5 min</p>
<p>Step Two</p>	<p>In the same group, brainstorm strategies for overcoming some of these obstacles, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Think about why you were invited to the discussion. When you realize that you have a perspective that others are interested in, that may help boost your confidence. ● Prepare ideas you want to share in advance of the discussion. You may have information or data that others will find interesting. ● During the discussion, take notes to keep tuned into the discussion. A good way to do this is to place the person’s initials along with a brief recap of what the person said (i.e. JT: “need a rationale that anyone understands”) 	<p>10 min</p>
<p>Step Three</p>	<p>Discuss the set of questions below with your group. Use this discussion to help craft 3 discussion goals for yourself. Take a few moments to write these down and then share them with the group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In general, what insights do you want to share with others in collaborative discussions? ● What insights would you like to gain from others? ● What perceptions do you want to create in the minds of others about your contributions? ● What contributions do you want to make to the tone and effectiveness of the discussion? ● How do you want others to articulate about the ways you contributed to the conversation? 	<p>25 min</p>
<p>Step Four</p>	<p>Develop Discussion Tricks</p>	<p>10 min</p>

	<p>Even with your goals in mind, it is hard sometimes to figure out how best to enter a discussion. Sometimes it is helpful to develop comfort with phrases designed to help you enter a discussion, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I would like to build on what (name) said” • “I have information that may be helpful” • “I have another perspective that may be helpful” • “Here is what I’m hearing” <p>These intros can help you lead into your comments in a way that makes them sound less like assertions and more like contributions to the discussion. Take a few moments to <i>generate additional phrases</i> within your group.</p>	
<p>Step Five</p>	<p>Commit to intentional practice:</p> <p>Using an Index Card, write down the goals and Discussion Tricks you identified earlier, Keep this card with you and refer to it before engaging in future discussions. As you gain more experience, add additional goals and tricks to the card.</p>	

Reflection Assignment

- As you reflect on this activity, what did you learn about strategies you can use to improve your confidence in expressing your beliefs?
- Comment on the following as they relate to expressing your beliefs:
 - Strength of your voice
 - The timing of your contributions
 - Connecting your comments to the contributions from others
 - Eye Contact
 - Nervousness
 - Comfort with the reaction of others in the discussion
- What strategies can you use to help others in the discussion become more comfortable in expressing their beliefs?

Additional Resources

Forthcoming

Topic 4. Practicing Generosity of Interpretation

Activity 4A. Calling Upon Your Best Self by Shannon Wheatley Hartman [Forthcoming]

Topic 5. Dealing with Conflict & Disagreeing Productively

Activity 5A. Setting Ground Rules & Practicing CPR by Jack Byrd

Description

Many discussions can involve a significant amount of conflict between the participants. Conflict is not necessarily a bad thing. Conflict can be useful when there is an honest airing of all points of view and the discussion ends with a mutual understanding of the issue under discussion. Conflict is not useful when the discussion ends up with a hardening of positions and no understanding. This activity is designed to help develop strategies for increasing the chances of “successful conflict.”

Learning Goals

- Practice seeing the value in ideas you disagree with
- Recognize that working through conflict productively can open up areas of agreement
- Practice using the CPR tactic to productively address conflict

<p>Step One</p>	<p>Within your small group, <i>establish behavioral norms for the discussion</i>. Some typical norms include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No personal attacks • Listen first • Be willing to work toward common understanding • Share the air space • Everyone contributes to the discussion 	<p>5 min</p>
<p>Step Two</p>	<p><i>Select discussion on topic relevant to the class. If a topic is needed, see What IF...Scenarios.</i></p> <p>When the discussion begins, place background information on the issue being discussed on a flipchart. This information will include facts, perceptions, and assumptions.</p>	<p>10 min</p>
<p>Step Three</p>	<p><i>Discuss with your group options for resolving the issue.</i> Place these on a flipchart and work with each other to identify if there are any combinations that can be made.</p> <p>Capture pros/cons on each option and discuss with your group members what might be done to reduce the negatives of each option. When someone expresses a negative about an option, ask that person what can be done to make that option more acceptable to them.</p> <p>Continue this process until there is a common understanding of the different ways the issue might be approached.</p>	<p>30 min</p>

	<p>Tip: Throughout the above process, keep the discussion focused on the issue. If the behavior norms are violated, point this out. Keeping a focus on the process should minimize the confrontational aspect of the discussion.</p>	
<p>Step Four</p>	<p>Anticipating Confrontation & Disagreeing Productively Should the conflict or confrontation arise in the discussion, use one of the CPR techniques to respond:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarify – ask for more information on what the person’s concern is ● Paraphrase – Restate their concern and then ask “is that a fair statement of your concern” ● Reflect – Describe your sense of how the person feels about the concern (e.g. “it seems as this is a major issue for you”) <p>Tips: Whenever you express disagreement, you should propose an alternative way of viewing the issue. A good way to do this is to start your disagreement as follows: “Have you thought about...?” When you make your alternative proposal, try to include as many components of the other person’s idea as possible.</p> <p>Work through the areas of disagreement in a respectful way. One way to do this is to work through scenarios of different situations. See how each approach would work with these scenarios. Often you will find ways to work through disagreements when tangible situations are used rather than abstract concepts.</p> <p>Avoid destructive or hostile expressions of disagreement. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Taking a contrarian view just to engage in debate or to stir up controversy ● Raising your voice or becoming threatening ● Personalizing the issue or letting the disagreement become a conquest of egos ● Drawing a “red line” for areas where you won’t accept another approach unless these “red lines” are truly fundamental to your beliefs. 	<p>N/A</p>

Reflection Assignment

- What strategies would you use to get participants to accept the discussion process outlined in the background reading?
- What will you do should if a participant continually violates the behavioral norms?

- What will you do if the participants are unwilling to suggest anything that can be done to make an unfavorable option more acceptable to them?

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Topic 6. Recognizing Complexity

Activity 6A. Fishbone Diagram by Jack Byrd

Description

Discussions often get bogged down in the complexity of the issues under discussion. Comments can go off in many directions, leaving the participants frustrated and unable to focus. Without a structure for dealing with complexity, discussions may never reach the desired outcomes. In this activity, participants will learn a structure for dealing with complexity that puts the various dimensions of an issue in a visual format.

Learning Goals

- Learn how a fishbone diagram can be a tool to help groups discuss a complex issue without losing focus
- Practice using a fishbone diagram

Practice (65 minutes)

Step One	A fishbone diagram can be a simple and useful way to unpack the complexity of an issue so that it can be discussed productively. <i>Read the scenario White Water Rafting.</i>	5 min
Step Two	In small groups and using the Fishbone Diagram , start to fill in the complexities of this scenario. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the head of the fish (at the right), place a 2-4-word description of the issue or topic being discussed. • Then identify the major dimensions of the issue (approx. 4-5 items). Place these in the boxes that form the body of the fish. • Then identify specific aspects of each dimension. These form the bones of the fish. Tip: If using a different scenario, share the Sample White Water Rafting Fishbone Diagram as an example for the group to review.	20 min

Step Three	Once the fishbone diagram is completed, <i>identify the prominent contrasting aspects and dimensions of the fishbone diagram</i> . For example, the local entrepreneurs may be hurt by the interest of the larger companies. In contrast, the larger companies could increase the impact on the local economy by bringing much larger resources to increase the customer base.	10 min
Step Four	<i>Discuss</i> these contrasts as a large group. Explore where there are common themes. Recognize the areas of major contrast. Are there any outlier topics? Which dimensions stood out? As a class, what is missing from these diagrams?	20 min
Step Five	As a class, <i>develop a summary statement of the discussion</i> . Think of the summary statement as a compilation of the insights gained from the discussion, highlighting the different dimensions that emerged. For example, one summary statement for the White Water Rafting scenario might be “While opening up the White Water Rafting to larger national companies could increase economic activity, the community may not be ready for the changes that such an increase would bring about.” Typically, the summary would include 5 to 7 statements.	10 min

Reflection Assignment

- Think of discussions that you have been involved in that seemed to be “all over the place.” What was the outcome of the discussion?
- How could incorporating a Fishbone Diagramming exercise have improved the outcomes?
- How would you describe this approach to a group dealing with a complex issue in a way that would make them open to using a fishbone diagramming approach?

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Topic 7. Building and Shifting the Discourse

Activity 7A. Escalating Memes Activity by Timothy Ruback

Description

For many social theorists, our experience of the world is dependent on our worldview. In some ways, this is exciting because it can be easier to imagine people changing their minds than it can be to conceptualize large, systemic material change. But it can also be unsettling because ideas and beliefs may sometimes be based on factually incorrect information, or unstated assumptions that have important consequences. In this activity, students will be challenged to change the world by changing ideas about the world.

Learning Goals

- Understand how ideas shape our worldview.
- Realize that discourse is built from many different parts and explain the difference between a discursive field and an element of the discourse.
- Identify the important hidden assumptions behind seemingly simple “face-value” texts.
- Recognize tactics that are commonly used to make ideas gain traction.
- Evaluate how one’s own online behavior can build and shift discourse.
- Creatively consider ways in which people can begin to change their minds.

Practice (120 min)

Step One	<p>Start a brief conversation about memes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where do we see memes? • When, if ever, do we share them? • What are some of our favorite memes? 	5 min
Step Two	<p>Introduce the concept of “discourse” as a series of ideas, shared in many different places, that communicates some important meaning about the world and peoples’ place in it. Talk about the ways in which memes may be a <i>part</i> of discourse. Important points here include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each meme is only a part of a larger whole. • It seems unreasonable to think that any one meme can shape how people think about things. • But when similar ideas are repeated often enough, they seem to become normal. 	5 min
Step Three	<p>In small groups, generate a series of original memes designed to change peoples’ minds about an important issue. You are encouraged to caption your creations by using an online meme-making site like Meme Generator. However, you do it, your captions <i>must</i> be original captions written by the group. You may caption your own images, but you also may choose to use a popular image instead (e.g., Kermit drinking tea, Distracted boyfriend, etc.). ALL meme content <u>must</u> be appropriate for a classroom setting.</p>	5 min
Step Four	<p>Consider the following scenarios:</p> <p><u>Group A:</u> It’s 2024. Zombies have started to emerge in cities across the world. But they’re not a big threat. Last year, 27 people were killed and 240 were injured by zombie attacks in North America, with over half</p>	10 min

	<p>those attacks between Nashville and Orlando. In most parts of North America, you're more likely to have a vending machine fall on you, or be struck by lightning, than to ever see a zombie. However, last week, on an unusually warm day, there were two zombie attacks in Niagara Falls. Starting on the Canadian side, the zombies caused panic as they moved across the bridge to the USA. No one was killed, but because it was the first zombie sighting in the Northeast in 15 months, because there was a lot of clear amateur video footage, and because it was an international incident at a culturally significant place, it is front page news. Now, there's has never been any serious talk about building a wall on the US-Canada border, and it is hard to imagine that one incident would change years of good border relations. But since zombie attacks rarely happen in cold weather, the countries near the Arctic Circle are starting to realize that there may someday be wars for territorial control of the Arctic, so behind the scenes, things are more tense than usual. You work for Iceland's Intelligence Agency, and you want US-Canadian relations to deteriorate to the point where a wall will be built between them. After all, if these two powerful Northern nations are busy distrusting and policing each other, then they will have fewer resources to devote toward containing your plans to consolidate power in the Arctic. <i>Create a series of memes that would take advantage of the spectacular current events to support your point of view.</i></p> <p><u>Group B:</u></p> <p>It's 2029. Over the last year, hundreds of millions of zombies have arisen across most of the world, with one exception. They still have not yet appeared in any large numbers in North or South America. Even the nations closer to the equator have suffered fewer zombie attacks than nations with similar climates elsewhere. In fact, since Panama closed the canal in late 2028, the number of attacks is going down. As the rest of the world is actively fighting zombies, with some limited success, countries in the Americas are trying to figure out what they should do. Right now, it looks like most countries want to become isolationist: close all borders, end all travel, and invest heavily in military technology to keep out the zombies, to keep out those fleeing from zombies, and to be prepared for a fight if the zombies arrive. You are an expert on military strategy, and you think this is a mistake. The co-founder of your think-tank is an epidemiologist, and she agrees. You both think that the Americas should be actively working to help the world fight the zombie menace, or it's just a matter of time before the zombies arrive. But most people don't see it that way. <i>Create a series of memes designed</i></p>	
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	<p><i>to make people more likely to consider joining the fight against the undead.</i></p> <p><u>Group C:</u></p> <p>It's 2034. Zombies have taken over entire nations. They're present in most large cities around the world. And far from being mindless agents of destruction, the zombies are starting to build their own societies from the rubble of the human-zombie wars. Once a team of human & zombie scientists developed a processed vegetarian food for zombies that could replace human brains, a fragile peace has emerged. Zombies no longer eat humans. But humans and zombies still distrust one another greatly and live in separate communities. This is a problem because your country faces challenges that the neither the human community nor the zombie community can resolve on their own. Specifically, most of your country's infrastructure was destroyed during the zombie wars. Rebuilding that infrastructure is important. People cannot get back to normal without roads, bridges, train tracks, airports and harbors – to say nothing of wireless internet service. Unless these things are restored, communities will go hungry. But, to succeed, it's clear that work needs to take place in areas controlled by humans and zombies alike. You are the chief urban planner for the human community in New-New York, and you believe that for your city and your country to thrive, the living and the undead will have to work together to rebuild the infrastructure network that has been so badly damaged. <i>Create a series of memes to help the living and the dead do what is necessary to rebuild your country.</i></p>	
<p>Step Five</p>	<p>Before dividing the class into groups, brainstorm strategies about ways to create memes that can shape discourse. Possible important points, coming from the group or the instructor, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't advocate for a specific policy position, if it's very far from what most people currently believe. • Think about the unstated assumptions behind your preferred outcome. What do people need to believe before your position will seem reasonable? • Ask yourself – how do you change those assumptions? • Think about appealing to emotions – both positive and negative ones. • Think about whether you want your memes to be based in the facts you know, or whether you want to stretch the truth. 	<p>5 min</p>

Step Six	Assign students into small groups, no more than 4-6 people. At least one student should have an internet-connected device: phone, tablet, or laptop, ideally more. Assign each group an A, B, or C designation.	5 min
Step Seven	Give students time in class to create their memes.	30 min
Step Eight	<p>Keeping students in their groups, ask them to look at their memes and discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is the audience you're trying to convince? What values are important to them? • What do they currently think about the world and their place in it? • What do you want them to think about the world and their place in it? • What needs to change before people will accept your point of view? How do people need to think differently? • How did your memes contribute to the discourse? Which ideas were you trying to change with your memes? How were you doing it? • Do your memes fit the facts that you know, or did you try to contradict those facts? If you tried to fake the facts, how did you do it, and why? • Which of your memes seems to you to be the most effective? Why do you think it is effective? <p>Tell students about the next step at this time and encourage them to think about how they will present their campaign.</p>	20 min
Step Nine	Reconvene as a full class. Give each group a few minutes to present their (3-4) most effective memes. Ask them to discuss what ideas the memes were trying to convey, and how the memes worked for that purpose. Ask them to discuss how the memes helped shape the discourse toward their larger goal.	20 min
Step Ten	<p>As a class, <i>discuss the full set of presented memes</i>. Sequence the presentations (A, B, and then C). Together the group should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore where there are common themes and strategies. • Point out important differences. • Consider the effect of the memes together versus any one of the memes on their own. One good way to do this is to ask the class to organize the memes for the greatest effect. 	15 min

Reflection Assignment

- What was the effect of seeing all the memes from each group together? Did it feel the same as seeing only one or two at a time, or was it different? If it was different, what do you think the difference is?
- How did you figure out which ideas your memes needed to address? Did finding the assumptions behind the ideas you wanted to support feel easy or difficult for you? Why do you think that is?
- How often did you pay attention to memes before this exercise? Did you share them or make them in the past? How many do you think you see on a typical day?
- After completing this exercise, do you think you'll view memes differently? If so, how? If not, why not?

For reflections on the content, consider asking questions like:

- What do you think the most effective memes did well? Were they primarily sharing information? Eliciting an emotional response? Something else? Why do you think these memes were so effective?
- Were there any memes that seemed especially ineffective to you? Why do you think they did not resonate? Can you think of any ways the meme could be improved?
- Choose any one meme and analyze it closely. What is it saying and what is it leaving out? What assumptions is it trying to reinforce or change? What does it contribute to the discourse about this topic, and how does it do so?
- Could you see a difference between the memes that stuck to the facts presented in the scenarios and the ones that did not? Why does it matter?

Additional Resources

- Because this activity is based on a far-fetched hypothetical scenario (at the time you read this, zombies are likely not invading any place near you. Possibly. I mean 2020, right? Who knows any more) it is difficult to dive deeply into questions of truth and misinformation. But developing critical awareness skills is important when it comes to memes, because they have been prominently used to spread disinformation. *Get Bad News* is an internet game, which also has an info sheet for educators. It helps students develop tools to recognize disinformation, and to understand (and inoculate themselves) against psychological strategies that are commonly used in memes. Find out more at: <http://getbadnews.com>
- Dominic D. Wells (2018) You All Made Dank Memes: Using Internet Memes to Promote Critical Thinking, *Journal of Political Science Education*, 14:2, 240-248. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15512169.2017.1406363>

Pro Tips:

- If you have the time to do so, this activity works well over two course sessions. Devote the first session to steps 1-7. Complete the activity in the second session.
- One advantage of breaking up the activity into two sessions is that you can ask students to send you electronic copies of their memes prior to the second session. This allows you

to check each groups memes for appropriateness and prepare them to be shared with the whole group.

- Be prepared to answer technology questions about how to create memes.
- Some students will do this quickly, others may not. If you're doing this in class, rather than giving them a set number (like 6 or 10), encourage the groups to make as many memes as they can.

Feedback and Evaluation

[Please complete this short survey to offer feedback on this module and individual activities.](#)

Civic Collaboration Module

Elective Module

Overview

Civic Collaboration is when people join together to address public issues that impact their communities. Frequently, we expect people to engage in projects about community issues, but we do not always prepare them with the skills and habits needed to address the complexity and nuance of such work. This module will help participants understand how they can work with communities to create collaborative and sustainable change by weaving the social fabric and connections that exist in communities.

Module Design

This module is structured with a series of topics explored through activities. These activities give participants a chance to experience these concepts through hands on practices, often completed in small groups. Participants are introduced to new skills and habits while also directed to reflect on their own experiences. Through these exercises, participants develop the skills, tools, and habits needed to advance collaborative discussion. As demonstrated in this module, collaborative discussion skills are essential when engaging in civic or community-based learning and projects.

Module Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this module, participants will be able to:

- Know the types of habits and tools that shape active and engaged communities and workplaces
- Understand ways to identify and work inclusively with others
- Better identify civic issues and their own civic passion
- Develop a deeper recognition and appreciation for community stakeholders
- Better understand the complexities and power of communities

Module Content

Skills & Habits of Mind

Topic 1. Identifying Your Civic Passion

Activity 1A. Civic Sweet Sixteen by Jessica Friedrichs

Topic 2. Developing an Awareness of Stakeholders

Activity 2A. Who has a Stake? A Mapping Exercise by Lori Britt

Topic 3. Identifying Your Communities

Activity 3A. Mapping Communities by Janice McMillan

Topic 4. Seeing Community Members as Assets

Activity 4A. The Interview Process by Discovering Community Power and adapted by Nick Longo

Topic 5. Developing a Public Narrative and Story of Self

Activity 5A. Self + Us + Now by Marshall Ganz and adapted by Michele Rudy

Topic 1. Identifying Your Civic Passion

Activity 1A. Civic Sweet Sixteen by Jessica Friedrichs

Description

This activity provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on what civic issues are most important to them, prioritize them and explore what motivates their priorities using a “Sweet Sixteen” competition between issues in different “brackets.”

Learning Goals

- Participants will identify civic issues, prioritize on the ones that are most important to them, reflect on their priorities, and articulate why they are passionate about those particular issues.

Practice (75 minutes)

Step One	<p><i>Write down civic issues that matter to you.</i> Come up with at least 3-5 topics.</p> <p>Tip: It’s best not to give examples or prompts here in order to generate a diversity of authentic issues, such as public policy issues, social welfare issues, and social justice issues.</p> <p>Tip: Complete this activity early in the semester to help identify a civic issue that participants want to learn about and petition for or against as the term continues.</p>	5 min
Step Two	<p>Share issues in small groups. <i>Record and organize issues on the board or piece of paper.</i> Be sure that the recorder writes the issue verbatim to capture the feelings and framing shared by the other participants. For example, there is a big difference between “policing” and “police brutality.”</p>	10 min
Step Three	<p>In small groups, <i>discuss the list of issues:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is there overlap or common themes? • How is the issue expressed? What sort of language or emotion is used? 	20 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What issues are particularly salient for the group? Why is this an important issue right now? ● What motivated you to write down or select issues on the board? Personal experience? Research or learned through study? ● Which single issue do you feel most passionate about? As an individual? As a group? 	
Step Four	<p>Take a look at Sample Civic Sweet Sixteen Brackets</p> <p>As a group, <i>decide which of your group issues should “face off” and put them in the brackets</i>. Be sure to use broad, conceptual issues so that there is some room for interpretation. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Elderly versus Youth ● Addiction versus Mental Health ● Employment versus Criminal Justice ● Community Development versus Education ● Racial Justice versus Women’s Rights ● Immigration versus LGBT ● Poverty versus Healthcare <p>Once each group has created their brackets of issues, trade your worksheet with another group.</p>	10 min
Step Five	<p>As a group, <i>“play” the Civic Sweet Sixteen game</i>, choosing the issue that you are more passionate about in each bracket match-up. For example, if you chose “Elderly” over “Youth” in the first bracket on the left side of the page and “Addiction” over “Mental Health” on the right side of the page, the next level choice would be “Elderly versus Addiction” and so on until there are only two choices and, then, you select one for the winner.</p> <p>Helpful prompts for group decision-making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If you had to devote your life (or the semester) to the issue, which one would you pick? ● If you had to convince others to join you to make a change for this area, which one would you pick? 	10 min
Step Six	<p>Debrief. As a class, share the “winning” civic issue for each group. Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Was it hard for your group to reach this decision? Was it a tough competition? ● What other issues or topics were close contenders? ● Are there issues missing from our collective list? 	20 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it helpful to prioritize civic issues? Why? Why not? 	
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Reflection Assignment

- Which issues were easier to “discard” and why? Which brackets were the hardest for you to decide and why?
- When discussing which issues to select in each bracket within your small group, what motivated you to speak up for a particular issue area? Did anyone else speak up for an issue area and persuade you and if so, what was most persuasive about their approach? Were there issue areas that didn't generate much debate within the group and if so, why might that be?
- What were the four issues in your conference “finals”? Look back at the individual list you generated – were they related or different and why?
- What was your winning issue and what ultimately motivated you to pick that issue? Was it something related to personal experience? If not, what was the motivation?
- How did completing this activity cause you to reflect on civic issues and your passions? Now that you have a “winner” – how will you move forward?

Additional Resources

- [Amanda Nguyen and the Sexual Assault Survivor’s Rights Act](#). Nguyen's personal experience led to involvement in a civic issue that ultimately resulted in passage of a new law. Her story provides a good example of how identifying one's civic passion can lead to action and eventually policy change.

Topic 2: Developing an Awareness of Stakeholders

Activity 2A. Who has a Stake? A Mapping Exercise by Lori Britt

Description

When collaborating with others on civic or public issues, it is important to ensure that a wide variety of perspectives on the issue are considered and that those with a stake in the issue are involved in collaborative efforts to address the issue. This activity helps students consider how to identify and think expansively about stakeholders.

Learning Goal

- Distinguish and identify various types of stakeholders in civic issues

Practice (70 min.)

Step One	<i>Explaining the various types of Stakeholders.</i> As we think about complex issues, we need to think about who the issue “touches” and then find out ways to gain their perspectives.	15 min

	<p>One place to start is by thinking about stakeholders. A stakeholder is someone with an interest in the issue. This might be hard to conceptualize at first, so it may help to think about four categories of stakeholders in public issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Affected: Those directly impacted by the issue, whose lives are directly touched by the issue 2) Helpers: Those who try to help those impacted, this could be family, friends, support groups, non-profits, institutions, etc. 3) Influencers: Those who try to influence how the issue is defined and/or advocate for changes 4) Decision-Makers: Those who have the power to make change through policy. (Policy being defined as a change in the status quo which might include, but is not limited to legislation.) <p>Tip: Work through an example of an issue with the class to show examples of the various types of stakeholders.</p>	
Step Two	<p><i>Assign groups to one of the “winning” issues from Activity 1A. Civic Sweet Sixteen.</i></p> <p>Tip: You might choose to have groups all focus on the same issue to be able to compare and add depth, or you may wish to have groups working on several of the final four issues.</p>	5 min.
Step Three	<p>Have students <i>create a chart</i> of stakeholders in each of these categories [Affected, helper, influencer, decision-maker] for their assigned issue. Encourage them to keep thinking for several rounds to encourage consideration of those beyond the “usual suspects” or people who are normally associated with the issue. But be sure these are people with a stake, connected with the issue in some way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is directly impacted by the issue? • Are their others affected indirectly? • Who are the people or organizations who help those impacted? • Who has the authority to make decisions about this issue? • Who might inform those decisions? • Who is shaping public perception of this issue? • Who has critical information about this issue? • Who is involved in addressing the issue? 	30 min.
Step Four	<p><i>Debrief.</i> As a class, share your group’s chart. Discuss:</p>	20 min

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any “surprise” stakeholders on these lists? • What are some strategies you can use to recognize the less obvious or marginalized stakeholders? • Why is it important to consider as many stakeholders as possible? What is gained by this? When might this hinder progress or development? 	
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Reflection Assignment

- If everybody in your community thinks the same way, how do you seek out divergent or different perspectives? What strategies could you use to help you think beyond your comfort zone?
- Are there ever disadvantages to seeking out too many diverse perspectives on an issue? When might you want to filter or limit perspectives on an issue?
- What sort of stakeholders are hard to identify? How might you better identify stakeholders on a particular topic? What might be gained by understanding the levels of stakeholders?

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Topic 3. Identifying Your Communities

Activity 3A. Mapping Communities by Janice McMillan

Description

This activity will open up the conversation and make visible that there are many different understandings of the term “community” and of where we feel part of or outside of a community. The term is often taken for granted and it is important when opening up conversation on what community means that participants understand how they feel in relation to certain communities or how they exclude certain people from communities they are a part of.

Learning Goals

- Develop a nuanced understanding of community
- Critically reflect on practices of inclusion and exclusion

Practice (60 minutes)

Step One	What does community mean for you, and what communities do you feel a part of? Think about these questions independently and either <i>write a few thoughts down or draw your answer.</i> Tip: Allowing students to draw offers participants a different way of thinking.	15 min.
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Step Two	In small groups, <i>share what you have written or drawn.</i>	10 min.
Step Three	Based on these stories, what for your group makes up “community”? What are the characteristics of a community? <i>Record your list of characteristics.</i>	15 min.
Step Four	<i>Debrief.</i> As a class, discuss the following prompt. Refer to your list of characteristics as you reflect upon your responses. <i>Do you feel part of the university community where you are based? Why/why not? Are there spaces where you feel like you belong and spaces in which you feel excluded?</i> Tip: The key here is to help participants understand that communities are complex; they are not necessarily always inclusive; they are not homogenous and there are many views in one community.	20 min

Reflection Assignment

- Communities can indicate spaces where you feel included, but on the other hand, they also exclude. What practices (intentional and unintentional) do communities use that exclude?
- How is the relationship between the university and the surrounding communities often described?
- How can we enter off campus communities in ways that indicates a genuine interest in learning about the community?
- What about power in communities? Who holds power in the communities of which you are a part? What does this say about how decisions are made?

Additional Resources

- Adichie’s TED talk on the ‘problem of a single story’,
https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en

Topic 4. Seeing Community Members as Assets

Activity 4A. The Interview Process by Discovering Community Power and adapted by Nick Longo

Description

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) focuses on the “gifts” and “talents” of the community as the best way to approach collaboration and solve problems. In this activity

participants will explore the value of community connectors and the importance of building connections across difference (“bridging capital”).

Learning Goals

- Recognize that gifts, skills, and dreams of others are assets and the foundation for collaboration
- Practice mapping assets in small cohorts and wider communities

Practice (50 min)

Step One	<i>Practice recognizing assets in others and in self.</i> Using Kretzmann’s Capacity Inventory worksheet , interview one person in your group. Take your time and ask follow-up questions. Then switch roles so that the interviewee becomes the interviewer.	20 min
Step Two	<i>Now take some time to reflect on your own assets.</i> Complete the self-evaluation of assets, Gifts I Can Give My Community .	10 min
Step Three	<i>Debrief in small groups.</i> What sort of assets are in your group? Was it harder to take inventory of the gifts of others or the gifts of self? Why? What types of assets might be missing in your group?	10 min
Step Four	In small groups, <i>discuss how assets can be turned into “strategy capacity.”</i> As a group, imagine how this capacity might be used to achieve a particular goal around on a pressing topic for your group.	20 min

Reflection Assignment

- What sort of assets do you think are most valuable for community or group work? Why?
- Were there common types of assets in your group? What types of assets were missing?
- How might you take next steps to mobilizing the strategic capacity of your group to take action on the issue that you all identified as important?

Additional Resources

- [Marshall Ganz, “Why David Sometimes Wins: Strategic Capacity in Social Movements”](#) in *The Psychology of Leadership*
- [Asset-Based Community Development in John McKnight, “The Educating Neighborhood: How Villages Raise their Children”](#) (2015)
- [John Kretzmann, John McKnight, and GERALYN SHEEHAN, *Discovering Community Power: A Guide to Mobilizing Local Assets*](#)

Topic 5. Developing a Public Narrative and Story of Self

Activity 5A . Self + Us + Now by Marshall Ganz and adapted by Michele Rudy

Description

Leadership is about accepting responsibility for enabling others to achieve purpose in the face of uncertainty. Narrative is how we learn to make choices and construct our identities – as individuals, as communities, as nations. In this activity, participants will practice telling a compelling story about self, constituency, and the need for urgent – and hopeful – action. In addition, participants will gain practice in listening, and coaching others to tell a good story.

Learning Goals

- Learn the basics of how public narrative works: values, emotion & story structure
- Improve in telling personal and public narratives
- Practice receiving feedback on the story of self and learn to coach others

Practice (50 minutes)

Step One	In small groups, identify a time keeper. Take some time to silently complete the Developing Your Story Worksheet by Marshall Ganz	10 min
Step Two	Go around the group and tell your story one by one. Each person has 2 minutes to tell their story. While participants are telling their stories, the rest of the group should be actively listening and completing components of the Self-Facilitation Worksheet by Marshall Ganz . After each participant tells their story in 2 minutes, then the group offers coaching to the participant (referring to their notes in the worksheet). Each participant receives 3 minutes of coaching. Tip: Each participant has 2 minutes to tell their story and 3 minutes of feedback or coaching. Stick to this limit. Make sure the timekeeper cuts off speakers. It encourages focus and ensures everyone has a chance to contribute.	30 min
Step Three	Debrief as a class. What makes for a compelling story? What was the most common type of feedback? What sort of challenges did you have as a speaker or coach?	10 min

Reflection Assignment

- What sort of feedback or coaching was most helpful to you? What did you learn from others' stories?

- Revise your story and write it up in a concise paragraph. Practicing telling your story to a friendly audience. What sort of response did you receive? What might make you more comfortable in telling this story?

Additional Resources

- Marshall Ganz, “Why Stories Matter”
- Marshall Ganz Public Narrative Manual
<https://www.ndi.org/files/Public%20Narrative%20Participant%20Guide.pdf>
- Jon Muth, Stone Soup
- Public Narrative, Self & Us & Now by Marshall Ganz

Feedback and Evaluation

[Please complete this short survey to offer feedback on this module and individual activities.](#)

Collaborative Discussion Project Module

Required Module

Overview

Application is the way we continue the learning cycle, and in applying what participants have learned about collaborative discussion to a culminating project, participants will be advancing Dewey's cycle of learning, doing, and reflecting that deepens knowledge. The applied project is also designed to give participants an understanding of the ways and contexts in which they can contribute their knowledge and skills of collaborative discussion to addressing the complex challenges we are facing as a society.

Module Design

This module asks students to demonstrate through application their knowledge of the skills and habits that support effective and productive collaborative discussion.

Module Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this module, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate that they can model, prompt and encourage the skills and habits of collaborative discussion in applied settings
- Organize and execute a discussion event or craft a reflection piece that can be shared with a broader audience

Module Content

Possible Project Activities

Project 1. Identify and Value the Knowledge of the Community

Activity 1A. "Create a Knowledge Tree with Members of the Community" by Janice McMillan

Project 2. (Co) Design a Collaborative Discussion Process about a Complex Issue on Your Campus or Within Your Community

Activity 2A. "Bring Your Government" by Warm Cookies of the Revolution and adapted by Julie Miller

Project 3. Demonstrate and Share What You Have Learned

Activity 3A. Lead a Workshop, Conference Presentation, or Training by Julie Miller

Activity 3B. Publish Reflective or Descriptive Writing on Collaborative Discussion by Julie Miller and Shannon Wheatley Hartman

Project 4. Organize a Discussion Event that Applies Collaborative Discussion Skills

Activity 4A. How to Organize Small Group Exploratory Discussions by The Interactivity Foundation

Activity 4B. “How to Survive a Zombie Apocalypse” by Warm Cookies of the Revolution and adapted by Julie Miller and Shannon Wheatley Hartman

Project 5. Create Materials that Help Others to Engage in Collaborative Discussion

Activity 5A. Produce a Discussion Guide on a Relevant Topic by The Interactivity Foundation

Project 6. Practice Collaborative Discussion that Leads to Decision-Making

Activity 6A. Organize a “Legislative Jury” by Debra Campbell

Activity 6B. Organize a “People vs. ____ Event” by Warm Cookies of the Revolution and adapted by Julie Miller

Project 7. Create Your Own Project!

Activity: Something Amazing by You

Project 1. Identify and Value the Knowledge of the Community

Activity 1A. Create a Knowledge Tree with Members of the Community by Janice McMillan

Description

This activity will open up the question of where knowledge comes from, what different modalities of knowledge might tell us about this, and how different kinds of knowledge have more power than others causing some voices to be deemed more important and valuable than others.

Learning Goal

- Through this hands on activity, participants will explore their own experiences and the kinds of knowledge they have gained through these experiences. By sharing and listening to stories of others, the exercise will raise questions about how knowledge is valued in society as well as the need to value knowledge generated in contexts outside of formal school and universities.

Implementation

Set-up (1-hour)

Event (1-hour, 30 minutes)

Step One	Set-Up This activity requires quite a bit of preparation before the activity takes place. See How to Organize a Community Discussion Event Checklist by the Interactivity Foundation.	1 hour
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	<p>A key component of this project is inviting community to be a part of this process.</p> <p>Specific Materials Needed: Paper strips and shapes; glue; flip chart paper; markers.</p>	
Step Two	<p><i>Exploratory Discussion</i></p> <p>It is necessary to first discuss what knowledge is and where it comes from.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What does the word “knowledge” mean to you? How is it different from intelligence, wisdom, experience? How might this word be expressed in other languages or contexts? ● Where does knowledge come from? Can one be born with knowledge? How does one cultivate knowledge? Can knowledge be bought? Traded? Owned? ● Who has knowledge? Who lacks it? Who is the most knowledgeable person you know? 	30 min
Step Three	<p><i>Create a Knowledge Tree</i></p> <p>After the initial discussion, break into small groups of 4-6. Each participant will construct a tree using different colors of paper. For clarity, check out these Sample Knowledge Trees. You will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Orange/brown strips of paper = roots (what you learned from your family/socialization) ● Pink strips of paper = stems (what you learned at school/formal knowledge) ● Blue strips of paper = branches (what you learned from experience) ● Green “leaf shaped”/oval paper = leaves (what you learned from nature) ● Yellow circles = buds (what you hope to learn from this workshop) <p>This exercise can be done in one of two ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You can use the pairings of tree component/type of knowledge indicated above (e.g. the tree root = family knowledge) 2. Or, you can choose where you want to put each type of knowledge yourself (e.g. maybe you feel that what you’ve learned from school matches the metaphor of a tree root more accurately for you) 	20 min

	<p>Note: What remains constant is the color linked to the form of knowledge.</p> <p>Each member of your group can put their colors in different parts of the tree. This could mean that for one participant, the roots of their knowledge about the world comes from their family but for another, what they learned from their family is the stem of the tree. This is also metaphorical in how knowledge is located in relation to parts of a tree.</p>	
Step Three	Start by talking to each other about your learnings from school, from experience, from your families etc. Once you have shared, write words reflecting what that learning was on the relevant bits of paper	15 min
Step Four	<p>Tape your bits of paper to the appropriate sections of the tree, building the tree as a group (again, refer to these Sample Knowledge Trees).</p> <p>Once finished, place or hang the tree pictures for other groups to see.</p>	5 min
Step Five	<p>When all trees are held or hung up, walk around the room viewing the different trees across the groups.</p> <p>Think and take notes about what was common, what was different, what was surprising between the trees.</p> <p>Tip: The key point here is for participants to understand that formal school/university knowledge, while important, is only one form of knowledge. Very often participants also say that what they learned through other modalities are in many ways more important to how they are in the world. It also helps participants understand that communities with whom they engage have a lot of very important knowledge even if not the traditional formal kind associated with university.</p>	20 min

Reflection/Final Project Write-up Assignment

- What was the most challenging part of this project? What was the most rewarding?
- How did you go about recruitment and the logistics of this event? What would you do differently?
- What surprised you about this discussion event?
- What might be some of the impacts of this event?
- What sort of advice would you offer future conveners of this event?
- Share photos or images of the Knowledge Trees.

Additional Resources

- https://www.ted.com/talks/alejandro_aravena_my_architectural_philosophy_bring_the_community_into_the_process/up-next. This is a useful video on how important it is to bring community into the architecture process.

Project 2. (Co) Design a Collaborative Discussion Process about a Complex Issue on Your Campus or Within Your Community

Activity 2A. “Bring Your Government” by Warm Cookies of the Revolution and adapted by Julie Miller

Description

Three presenters pitch campus initiatives or community programs they want to keep, get rid of, or flirt with in order to create their ideal shared community. Participants discuss their own ideas while building a collaborative city out of LEGOs.

Learning Goals

- How to actively listen to and constructively incorporate diverse opinions, needs, or concerns when working towards a shared vision.

Implementation

Set-up (1-hour)

Event (1-hour, 30 minutes)

Step One	<p><i>Set-Up</i></p> <p>This activity requires preparation before the event takes place. Review the Warm Cookies of the Revolution Event Checklist.</p> <p>Basic materials needed: LEGOs</p>	1 hour
Step Two	<p>Have all participants sit around a large table with LEGOs spread in the middle. Explain to them that, throughout the event, they will be using the LEGOs to collaboratively build a city.</p> <p>This hands-on activity will happen concurrently, in the background, while participants listen to the pitches that are being made.</p>	N/A
Step Three	<p>As participants begin to build their city, introduce the goal of the event and the three guests who will be pitching the campus or community programs they want to keep, get rid of, or flirt with.</p>	10 min

Step Four	Have each guest give their pitch, one at a time. Each pitch will have 10 minutes. Keep track of time and let speakers know when they are running out of time.	30 min
Step Five	When the pitches are complete, invite participants to give elevator speech-type pitches of their own ideas regarding programs that would exist in their ideal community. This is a lightning round to keep things fast paced and fun, so encourage them to keep it under two minutes per person. Anticipate, perhaps, 10 elevator speeches or pitches.	20 min
Step Six	To conclude the event, debrief as a large group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What were some common themes that came up in the three main pitches and/or the lightning round? ● What kinds of features did folks build in their ideal LEGO city? ● What surprised people about the pitches? 	30 min

Reflection/Final Project Write-up Assignment

- What was the most challenging part of this project? What was the most rewarding?
- How did you go about recruitment and the logistics of this event? What would you do differently?
- What surprised you about this discussion event?
- What might be some of the impacts of this event?
- What sort of advice would you offer future conveners of this event?
- Share photos or images of the Lego designs and the event.

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Project 3. Demonstrate and Share What You Have Learned

Activity 3A. Lead a Workshop, Conference Presentation, or Training by Julie Miller

Description

Participants will practice digesting what they’ve learned in this certification program and then share about it in public spaces in order to draw new connections and develop deeper analysis and learning.

Learning Goals

- How to select the best mode of sharing information with a group based on your goals and the topic.

- How to build on what you have learned in a way that connects with other facets of your life/experience.
- How to breakdown information in a way that is applicable to your learning audience.

Implementation

Preparation (7-hours)

Event (1-hour)

Step One	<p>Giving a public presentation or teaching others about a topic you’ve recently learned about can help you further digest and explore the information in a new way, while passing along the education to new people.</p> <p>Select one topic or theme from the modules you’ve engaged with this semester. Some things to think about when selecting your topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What do you want to learn more about? ● What do you still have questions about? ● What topic really clicked for you, or helped you see things in a new way? <p><i>Review the topics that you learned about or practiced. Review your reflection assignments over the course of the program.</i></p>	1 hour
Step Two	<p>Depending on the topic you’ve chosen, decide the best way to share out about it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workshop <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is the topic best learned about through hands-on activities or group discussions? ○ Is it a challenging topic that could benefit from a piece-by-piece, fun and reflective approach? ● Conference Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do you want to do further research about the topic to add to what you’ve already learned? ○ Can you draw new connections to how the topic relates to a field you have experience/interest in? ● Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are there concrete methods or skills that people can learn and incorporate to be better equipped in their everyday lives? 	1 hour
Step Three	<p>Once you have your topic and have decided the best way to share out about it, get developing!</p>	5 hours

	<p>You will need to identify a location/audience for your workshop, conference presentation, or training. You might start small and locally: perhaps a brownbag lunch presentation on campus or in the workplace, or a training with a cohort of friends or family. For conference opportunities, check out the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation Website.</p> <p>Most conferences and formal workshops offer specific guidelines for presentations. If you are convening a more informal event, you will want to think through how you want to present and share this information.</p>	
Step Four	Lead your workshop/training or give your presentation.	1 hour

Reflection/Final Project Write-up Assignment

- What was the most challenging part of this project? What was the most rewarding?
- What could you do differently next time to better communicate/teach your topic?
- What do you think the impact of your presentation may be?
- How could you build on what you’ve accomplished here?
- If possible, share photos or images of your event.

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

[Activity 3B. Publish Reflective or Descriptive Writing on Collaborative Discussion by Julie Miller and Shannon Wheatley Hartman](#)

Description

Participants will further their learning by reflecting on and writing about their recent experiences with collaborative discussions.

Learning Goals

- Participants will practice writing about concepts they’ve recently learned about while sharing with a wider audience.
- Participants will gain new insights as they reflect and draw new connections between collaborative discussions and their own experiences.

Implementation

Preparation (2-hours)

Production (Varies, 5-10 hours)

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Step One	<p>Taking the time to think and write about a new concept can help you further digest and explore the information in a new way.</p> <p>Take some time to free write about your experience learning about and engaging in collaborative discussions. Consider these prompts, if you need a jumpstart:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What did you find challenging about practicing collaborative discussions? ● Can you think of a situation in which using collaborative discussion tools could have been beneficial to the outcome? ● How do you see yourself utilizing collaborative discussion techniques in the future? 	1 hour
Step Two	<p>Now, choose one aspect of your free write to expand upon in a reflective or descriptive essay. Before you start writing, think about your audience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who do you want to read this? ● What do you want them to take-away from this writing? ● How much time and/or energy should they expend reading this work? <p>Allow your answers to these questions to guide your format, perhaps you will create:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A blog/vlog entry for a personal or organizational website, such as The Interactivity Foundation ● An opinion editorial for the local paper or school paper ● An essay or article for a popular publication or online sharing platform (i.e. Medium). ● A children’s book for a friend, family member, or elementary classroom ● A play or skit for local production 	1 hour
Step Three	Get writing or creating and then submit!	5-10 hours

Reflection/Final Project Write-up Assignment

- What surprised you about what came out in your free write?
- What do you think the impact of your writing may be?
- How might you build on what you’ve learned here?
- Share a copy of your final product!

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Project 4. Organize a Discussion Event that Applies Collaborative Discussion Skills

Activity 4A. How to Organize Small Group Exploratory Discussions by The Interactivity Foundation

[Forthcoming]

Activity 4B. How to Survive a Zombie Apocalypse by Warm Cookies of the Revolution adapted by Julie Miller and Shannon Wheatley Hartman

Description

When zombies attack, the immediate threat is clear. How prepared is your city? Do you hide out in the attic, or hunker down in the basement? Do you hole up in the mall, or head for the hills? What about actual threats to our community? What if we don't even agree on what they are, or how and when to address them? Individual choices might work in a pinch, but how can we create solidarity? How do we work best together? How might we practice collaboration?

This program is designed to engage participants in some fun, hands-on activities and figure out if we have the skills to work together to address the apocalypses on the horizon.

Learning Goals

- How to use collaborative discussion skills to evaluate priorities and come to an agreement about the best course of action
- How to mediate disagreements within a working group so that everyone feels heard, while recognizing shared goals

Implementation

Preparation (3-hours)

Event (1 hour, 20 min)

<p>Step One</p>	<p><i>Set-Up</i></p> <p>This activity requires preparation before the event takes place. <u>Review the Warm Cookies of the Revolution Event Checklist.</u></p> <p>Basic steps that will need to be completed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● inviting participants ● finding a large room or collection of rooms to play this activity ● preparing props and materials ● Set-up the room or rooms with signs indicating “Shelter” 	<p>3-hours</p>
<p>Step Two</p>	<p><i>The Event</i></p>	<p>10 min</p>

	<p>Welcome participants to the event. Explain the goals of this activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “community members” work in small groups to deliberate and come to agreement about the best strategy to survive the zombie attacks. ● “zombies” try to tag community members and turn them into zombies. <p>Randomly divide the participants into these two groups, zombies and community members. Share props to distinguish the two groups.</p> <p>Tip: You can modify this activity so that everyone goes through this process twice so that each participant has an opportunity to play both roles.</p> <p>Tip: Props might include face paint, plastic zombie brains, torn clothing, etc.</p>	
Step Three	<p><i>Instruct participants of the ground rules:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listen to all audio announcements carefully ● Follow the instructions in the envelope ● Find shelter as you are instructed ● Shelters will have information and resources ● Follow all directions to the letter <p>If community members are confronted by a zombie:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Give it a brain (extra brains are found in the shelter zones). This will keep the zombie distracted and satisfied for at least 5 minutes. <p>If someone is attacked by a zombie:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sadly, the zombie will take the victim and the brain away and they will be turned into a zombie. ● This is positive news for the rest of the people in the shelter area, however! Attacking a human will distract a zombie for at least 10 minutes. 	10 min
Step Four	<p><i>Play the game.</i></p> <p>Depending on the size of the overall group, the host might divide community members into multiple groups (6-8 people per group).</p>	40 min

	<p>Each community group will have a set of <u>Community Instructions</u>. Each instruction is enclosed in a separate envelope. Also included in the instruction set is a <u>Goal Envelope</u>. Each group may have the same or different goal. When the group achieves the goal, the game is over and the community members win.</p> <p>The host will ask each group to open their Goal Envelope and their first Instruction Envelope. The group must execute the instructions within the envelope. They will have only 5 minutes to discuss before the first launch of zombies.</p> <p>While the community members get started with their first set of instructions, the host instructs the zombie group to open their first set of <u>Zombie Instructions</u>. The group must execute the instructions within the envelope.</p> <p>The host monitors the activity and will tell the participants when to open the next Instruction Envelope. Each envelope will contain new instructions, tips, twists, etc. Each group must follow the instructions.</p> <p>Continue with this process for at least 3 rounds of instructions.</p> <p>Tip: The host can intervene at any time over the audio system and add a new twist or dilemmas to the situation.</p>	
<p>Step Five</p>	<p><i>The Role of Shelter</i></p> <p>Throughout the room, the host will have areas designated as “Shelter.” Within the sheltered areas there will be tools and resources for the community members to fend off the zombie attack. During this time in shelter, community members will be able to discuss and strategize how to survive the upcoming attacks. Members might form basic principles of survival or talk through strategies like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sacrifice no one. We stick together! • Or, sacrifice certain community members for the good of the group. • Strategize how best to achieve the goal. <p>Tip: the host can place a time limit on the shelter discussions, such as 5 minutes.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Step Six	<p>The game is over when all community members have been turned into zombies or the community members have successfully accomplished their goals.</p> <p>Tip: If time permits, you can play another round switching roles.</p>	
Step Seven	<p><i>Debrief.</i> While munching on, preferably, cookie brains or some other form of refreshments. Discuss with participants the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What worked well for your group? • What challenges did you have in working together? What created these challenges? • How important were the “shelter discussions”? • What impeded collaboration? What improved it? 	20 min

Reflection/Final Project Write-up Assignment

- What was the most challenging part of this project? What was the most rewarding?
- How did you go about recruitment and the logistics of this event? What would you do differently next time?
- What might be some of the impacts of this event?
- How would you change or modify this event? How would you improve the instruction cards?
- What advice would you give for future organizers of this event?
- If possible include photos or images from your event.

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Project 5. Create Materials that Help Others to Engage in Collaborative Discussion

Activity 5A. Produce an Exploratory Discussion Guide on a Relevant Topic by The Interactivity Foundation
[Forthcoming]

Project 6. Practice Collaborative Discussion that Leads to Decision-Making

Activity 6A. “Organize a Legislative Jury” by Debra Campbell

Description

During the past thirty years, there has been a movement toward direct democracy in the form of citizen-sponsored “initiatives.” At present, twenty-four states allow ordinary citizens to propose and sponsor bills that are then voted upon in special or general elections. This form of direct democracy has been heavily criticized. A possible improvement to the initiative process would employ the use of randomly selected citizens to serve on “legislative juries.” The purpose of the

legislative jury is to discuss and refine possible initiatives before they are placed on the ballot. This process of citizen lawmaking would add the element of public discussion and deliberation to the initiative process and offer an improved form of direct democracy.

Learning Goals

- Develop the ability to distinguish between discussion and deliberation
- Organize a community event that moves participants from exploration to decision-making
- Practice collaborative discussion skills and habits that produce a specific outcome

Implementation

Preparation (1 hour + recruitment)

Event (2 hours)

<p>Step One</p>	<p><i>Set-Up</i></p> <p>This activity requires quite a bit of preparation before the activity takes place. See How to Organize a Community Discussion Event Checklist by the Interactivity Foundation.</p> <p>A key component of this project is inviting community to be a part of this process.</p> <p>Specific Materials Needed: Table (preferably round), paper, pens, name cards.</p>	<p>1 hour</p>
<p>Step Two</p>	<p><i>Introduction. The host welcomes everyone to the Legislative Jury Session. They begin the session by reading the following instruction.</i></p> <p>Tip: It may be helpful to provide these instructions as handouts or displayed on an overhead projector.</p> <p><i>“You have been randomly selected from a citizen list (e.g. motor vehicle registrations or voter registration rolls) to serve on this legislative jury. You have already been through extensive questioning and have agreed that you will engage in a good faith effort to deliberate on the above issue. Your task is to formulate the language for four different possible ballot initiatives regarding the issue of legalizing marijuana for recreational use. The four versions should vary greatly, even to the point of being diametrically opposed, in order to assure that the next jury (the naming jury) will have real alternatives from which to choose. For</i></p>	<p>20 min</p>

	<p><i>example, four (briefly stated) versions of possible initiatives on the issue of gun control could be:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Retain only the current restrictions on automatic weapons and semi-automatic weapons – no change</i> 2. <i>Restrict the sale of automatic and semi-automatic weapons by requiring rigorous background checks, annual training, and carrying insurance policies for victims of shootings.</i> 3. <i>Restrict the sale of all automatic and semi-automatic weapons.</i> 4. <i>Restrict the sale of all guns to the general public.”</i> <p>Tip: Select a topic relevant for your community. Be sure to offer example policy ideas of another topic so as to not limit the imagination of the participants.</p>	
<p>Step Three</p>	<p><i>Exploration and Deliberation.</i> Each group should elect one member of the jury as the foreperson. That person will preside over the deliberations of the jury.</p> <p>Next, explore possible ballot initiatives. Incorporate skills or habits learned during the Collaborative Discussion Program to encourage participants to think boldly, imagine stakeholders, build on the ideas of others, surround the topic, etc. so that the group develops four divergent and imaginative policy ideas.</p> <p>The group must unanimously support the final four options.</p> <p>Tip: Do not be afraid to change your opinion if the discussion persuades you that you should. Do not come to a decision simply because other jurors think it is right. It is important that you attempt to reach a consensus, but, of course, only if each of you can do so after having made your own conscientious decision.</p>	<p>60 min</p>
<p>Step Four</p>	<p><i>Share Out.</i> Spend time at the conclusion of the event to share out or “harvest” the policy ideas of each table. The host should keep track of the policy ideas on a flip chart or overhead projector.</p> <p>Tip: As tables share their policy possibilities, be sure to organize them according to theme (not just a list from each table).</p>	<p>20 min</p>
<p>Step Five</p>	<p><i>Debrief.</i> Review the policy options generated by the entire room.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is there overlap? • Where are there outlier or radical proposals? 	<p>20 min</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which proposals seem most interesting to the group? Most plausible? • What would happen if citizens were more involved and invested in the legislative process? 	
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Reflection/Final Project Write-up Assignment

- What was the most challenging part of this project? What was the most rewarding?
- How did you go about recruitment and the logistics of this event? What would you do differently next time?
- What might be some of the impacts of this event?
- How would you change or modify this event? How would you improve the instruction cards?
- What advice would you give for future organizers of this event?
- If possible include photos or images from your event.

Additional Resources

- Direct Deliberative Democracy: How Citizens Can Rule by Debra Campbell and Jack Crittenden

Activity 6B. Organize a “People vs. _____ Event” by Warm Cookies of the Revolution and adapted by Julie Miller

Description

This activity will utilize the concept of play to practice engaging in big, often controversial conversations.

Learning Goals

- Participants will learn how to employ creative game design in order to discuss complicated questions and come to a mutual decision.

Implementation

Set-up (1-hour)

Event (1-hour, 20 minutes)

Step One	<p><i>Set-Up</i></p> <p>This activity requires preparation before the event takes place. <u>Review the Warm Cookies of the Revolution Event Checklist.</u></p> <p>Basic steps that will need to be completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • select the mock trial / conversation topic(s) • invite speakers to represent the “lawyers” making a case for either side of the conversation 	1-hour

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advertise the event to bring in an audience of “jury members” <p>Specific materials needed: red and green index cards or pieces of paper</p>	
Step Two	<p><i>The Mock-Trial</i></p> <p>Begin the event by “swearing in” the audience as jury members. As this is meant to be a playful engagement of mock trial procedures, use this time to set a tone of humor and fun.</p>	10 min
Step Three	<p>Pass out the red and green index cards/pieces of paper to the jury and instruct them to hold them up to express their approval or disapproval of the points being made by the lawyers.</p>	N/A
Step Four	<p>The trial will begin with the person representing the “prosecution,” i.e. the person making the argument against the trial topic, presenting their case.</p> <p>The prosecutor has 10 minutes to present their arguments and evidence.</p>	10 min
Step Five	<p>At the conclusion of the prosecution’s case, the defense will make their argument in favor of the topic.</p> <p>The defense will also have 10 minutes.</p>	10 min
Step Six	<p>The participants will break into small groups to discuss and deliberate. To facilitate this transition quickly, each table can be assigned a group of jurors.</p> <p>The goal of each group is to come to a final “verdict” or decision about the particular topic.</p> <p>Before discussing, take a poll of where participants’ opinions currently land.</p>	20 min
Step Seven	<p>Some prompts for these deliberations may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was your opinion on this topic before the trial? Has it changed? Why? • Whose argument style resonated with you more? Why? 	N/A

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are there facts about the topic that didn't come up in the trial that you think are important to consider when deciding on a verdict? ● What perspectives were missing in the framing of the arguments? ● What are the key points in each argument that we should focus on to achieve our goal of a verdict? 	
Step Eight	Return to the full group and have a representative from each small group share their verdict.	10 min
Step Nine	<p><i>Debrief</i> as a full group about the mock trial process. You may want to have the small groups share out their responses to the deliberation prompts, or respond to new prompts, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What were the benefits of framing a challenging conversation as a playful activity? What were the downsides? ● What surprised you about the process of coming to an agreement in your deliberation group? ● Which collaborative strategies helped your group work better together? 	20 min

Reflection/Final Project Write-up Assignment

- What was the most challenging part of this project? What was the most rewarding?
- How did you go about recruitment and the logistics of this event? What would you do differently next time?
- What might be some of the impacts of this event?
- What advice would you give for future organizers of this event?
- Share any photos or images of the event.

Additional Resources

- Forthcoming

Project 7. Create Your Own!

Activity 7A. Something Amazing by You

Create your own group or community event that demonstrates or practices key elements of the Collaborative Discussion Program. This includes:

- Create instructions for the event (as shown above). Include a description, learning goals, step-by-step implementation plan.

- Execute the event.
- Complete the Reflection/Final Project Write-up Assignment.
- Suggest Additional Resources for others who might replicate this event.

Feedback and Evaluation

[Please complete this short survey to offer feedback on this module and individual activities.](#)