

Talking Politics: Moving Forward Post-Election

Facilitated Dialogue Schedule for 3-6 Participants

5:30 p.m. - 5:50 p.m.

Pre-Dialogue Setup

- **Purpose:** to provide time to setup prior to the arrival of participants.
- **Space:** private, low noise area that can comfortably accommodate up to seven people.
- **Chairs:** one chair per participant plus one chair for the facilitator, arranged in a circle.
- **Participant materials:** one Participant Handout, pad of paper, and pen per participant.
- **Facilitator materials:** one Facilitated Dialogue Schedule and one pen.
- **Snacks and refreshments** (optional).

5:50 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Participant Arrival

- **Purpose:** to give participants time to arrive, relax before the dialogue, and mingle in a positive atmosphere.
- Sign participants in and distribute participant dialogue materials.
- Remind participants to silence/turn phones off.
- Provide time for participants to use restrooms prior to starting the dialogue.

6:00 p.m. - 6:05 p.m.

Welcome and Orientation

- **Purpose:** to welcome participants and to remind them about the purpose and spirit of the dialogue; to say something about the roles, schedule, etc., so participants know what to expect.
- Welcome participants and revisit the purpose of dialogue.
- Go over the dialogue's schedule and confirm what time it will end.
- Review the facilitator's role, including how the facilitator will manage time.

6:05 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.

Agreements

- **Purpose:** to help the group craft a set of communication agreements that will serve the purpose of the dialogue and that everyone understands and agrees to observe.
- Review the proposed agreements (optional: each participant reads one agreement).
- Ask if there are any questions about what the proposed agreements mean, and if there are any revisions or additions.
- Get confirmation from each participant that they can observe the agreements.

Proposed Agreements:

1. ***We will speak for ourselves.*** We won't try to represent a whole group, and we will not ask others to represent, defend, or explain an entire group.
2. ***We will avoid making grand pronouncements*** and, instead, connect what we know and believe to our experiences, influences in our lives, particular sources of information, etc.
3. ***We will refrain from characterizing the views of others in a critical spirit,*** keeping in mind that we're here to understand each other, not to persuade each other.
4. ***We will listen with resilience,*** "hanging in" when we hear something that is hard to hear.
5. ***We will share airtime and refrain from interrupting others.***
6. ***We will "pass" or "pass for now"*** if we are not ready or willing to respond to a question – no explanation required.
7. ***If asked to keep something confidential, we will honor the request.*** In conversations outside the group we won't attribute particular statements to particular individuals by name or identifying information without permission.
8. ***We'll avoid making negative attributions*** about the beliefs, values, and motives of other participants, e.g., "*You only say that because...*". When tempted to do so, we'll consider the possibility of testing the assumption we're making by asking a question, e.g., "*Why is that important to you?*"
9. Are any questions about what the proposed agreements mean, and are there any revisions or additions?

6:15 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
2-3 min./participant

Introduction and Hopes

- **Purpose:** to give participants and opportunity to say something about themselves and/or share their hopes for the dialogue.
- **Question:** Let's start by going around and saying your name and... [choose one:]
 - Something that you hope to experience or learn while you are here.
 - Something about yourself that you'd like others to know, which doesn't relate to tonight's dialogue. Can be about work, play, passions, hobbies - anything.
- **Notes:**

6:30 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.
2-3 min./participant

1st Question: Experience

- **Purpose:** to invite participants to connect their views with their life experiences.
- **Question:** When you think about the 2016 election, what experiences stand out? How have your experiences with the 2016 election affected you personally?
- **Notes:**

6:45 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
2-3 min./participant

2nd Question: Heart of the Matter

- **Purpose:** to encourage participants to articulate the core of their perspective - the values, hopes, fears, and assumptions at the center of their convictions.
- **Question:** When you think about the 2016 election, what is the heart of the matter for you? What core values, hopes, or fears shape your way of viewing American politics?
- **Notes:**

7:00 p.m. - 7:20 p.m.
3-4 min./participant

3rd Question: Complexities

- **Purpose:** to encourage participants to reflect on and share some of the complexities of their views.
- **Question:** As you have thought about the 2016 election, have you found yourself grappling with any gray areas, uncertainties, or value conflicts? Are there values you hold, or concerns you have, or questions you grapple with that you'd be willing to share?
- **Notes:**

7:20 p.m. - 7:45 p.m.

Connected Conversation

- **Purpose:** to foster a more organic conversation that deepens understanding of what has been heard and explores connections among the participants' views and experiences.
- **Questions:** The connected conversation is our time together where you can ask questions, identify and pursue a theme, explore similarities and differences, or comment on how something you've heard has been enriching or, perhaps, unsettling. Let's take a minute to think, and we'll start with any questions you might have for each other.
- **Notes:**

7:45 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
2 min./participant

Parting Words

- **Purpose:** to encourage participants to reflect on what they have learned or valued; to invite participants to say something that will bring their participation to a satisfying close.
- **Question:** Are there any parting words you'd like to say to bring your participation to a close? For example, about your experience in tonight's dialogue, or an idea, feeling, commitment, or question that you are taking with you.
- Confidentiality reminder.
- Pass out surveys/feedback forms (optional).
- **Notes:**

8:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.

Post-Dialogue

- **Purpose:** to conclude the dialogue, allow time for participants to depart, and return the space to pre-dialogue setup.
- Collect dialogue surveys/feedback forms and notes (optional).
- Return space to pre-dialogue setup.