

Dialogue for all



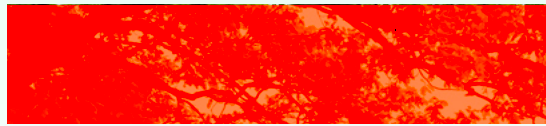
***A Short Guide to
Unlocking Your Dialogue Skills***





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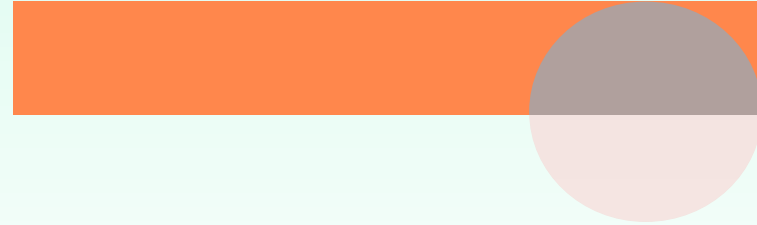
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Table of contents



- 4/** *Introduction*
 - 6/** *Why is this guide for you*
 - 10/** *What is dialogue?*
 - 22/** *Dialogue steps*
 - 28/** *When you find yourself
in a difficult situation*
 - 33/** *Online dialogue*
 - 34/** *How do you know that
dialogue is successful*
 - 36/** *Context perspective*
 - 72/** *About us*
- 

Introduction



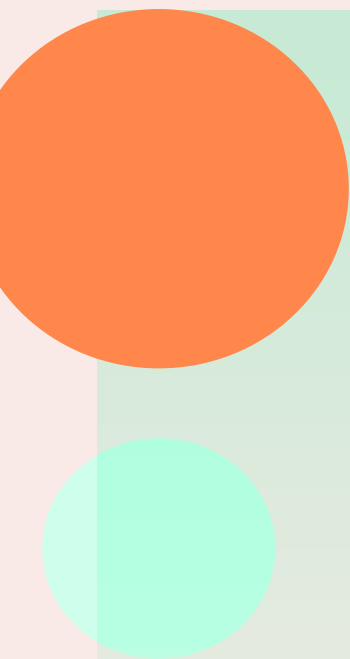
Welcome to this guide to dialogue, which was written by the international project Dialogue in Adult Learning (DIAL). We are very happy that you have reached out to us and are looking for new perspectives. We hope you will find valuable ideas and enjoy learning about good dialogue. In the following pages, you will find a definition of dialogue, along with tips on how to have a successful dialogue, how to check if your dialogue is constructive, what to pay attention to and how to overcome difficult situations.

We warmly invite you into the world of conversation! Dialogue brings us closer together and helps us to learn from each other, get to know each other and better understand each other's needs.

Dialogue skills allow you to participate at the workplace and be an active citizen, so they are vital life skills. Dialogue is not always easy, nor does it always come naturally to us. However, we encourage you to practise and not give up even if things don't go perfectly.

Take a few minutes and dive into the following pages. You will find:

- what dialogue is and the main roles of dialogue
- practical tips
- specific examples



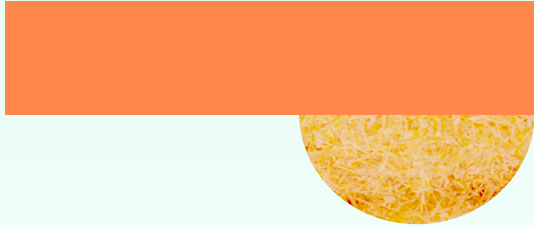
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and the main roles
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- practical tips***
- specific examples***



Why this guide is for you

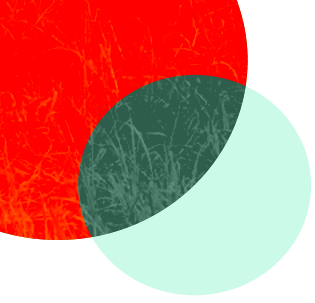


We have intended this guide for everyday use for anyone who feels that they want to communicate better, gain new skills or get to know different perspectives. We have tried to make the tips helpful in situations we encounter every day. We designed it with adults in mind, but the activities are suitable for young people as well.

The DIAL guide is a hands-on way of working – easy to use during informal encounters with friends, educational workshops or even dialogue sessions held online or offline. It enables you to get along better at work, at home and in your hobbies and other activities.

***Dialogue is really
for everyone.***





Dialogue is really for everyone:

- it is a basic skill
- we can all learn about it
- you don't have to be perfect
- just start talking to people

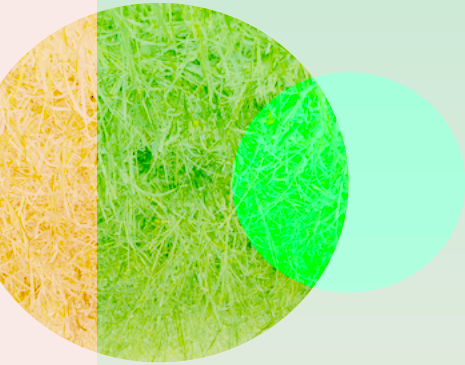
You can't live without dialogue, so why not get better at it? Dialogue is a vital life skill, like looking after your health or finances. Connecting with other people is likely to make you happier as well because most of the things that we do, we do together! Like with most skills, you need to practise it to keep it up.

You can use these ideas, for example, during:

- a family reunion
- a parents' meeting at school
- a co-housing community meeting
- when exchanging emails
- a visit to an elderly relative in a care home
- a local community event (at the library, in a museum, at discussions open for the public)
- an online event
- posting comments on web forums and on social media
- an everyday meeting at work
- Volunteering

***You can't live
without dialogue.***





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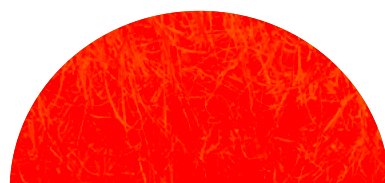
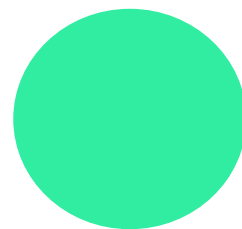


We have included practical activities for all these dialogue situations at the end of this model so that you can practice them in everyday situations.

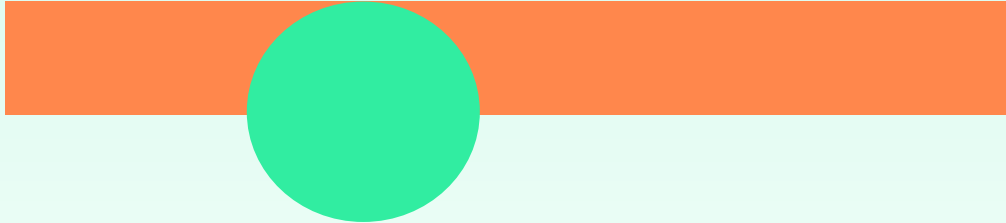
So, if you want to:

- talk to your friends and colleagues with openness and curiosity
- understand other people better
- get to know your neighbours better or do a project with them
- get along with your partner on a joint vacation
- have a pleasant time when your children and grandchildren visit you, or
- you want to be able to take part and contribute at local community events

This may be just what you are looking for. Enjoy our guide and use and adapt and mix it with other ideas and approaches. And please let us know if it is useful for you! You can use this guide and its principles and activities in any kind of situation, also during online conversations. At the end of this publication, you will find a set of tips for different situations. Look at them before you start as they will help you avoid common problems that arise in a dialogue.



What is dialogue?



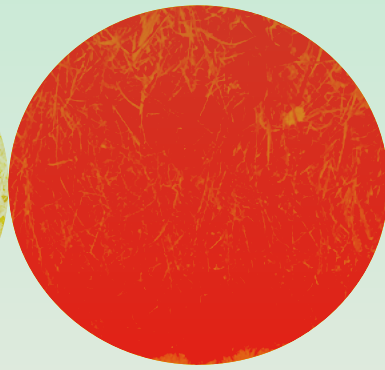
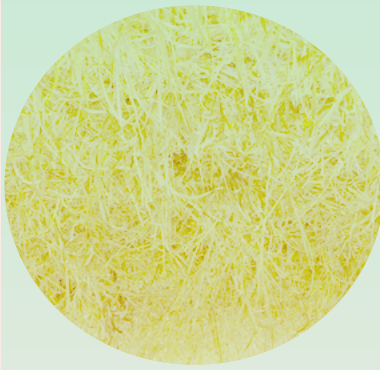
The journey to dialogue is good to start by looking at some terms and concepts. When we understand what dialogue is about, we can avoid conflict and promote communication. We will now present the definition of dialogue, which we will use in this publication.

Dialogue is a genuine **exchange of our views and experiences** that can generate **new insights** and **help us see different perspectives**. By listening to each other we deepen our understanding and connection with one another. After taking part in a dialogue we might find ourselves change and grow. In a good dialogue **we feel good**, it creates bridges and makes cooperation easier.

How to listen so that others want to speak? How to speak so that others want to listen?

***In a good dialogue
we feel good.***





***How to listen
so that others
want to speak?***

***How to speak
so that others
want to listen?***





Principles of dialogue

- Anyone can participate and share their story equally
- Everyone has an **open** and curious mind
- There are no right or wrong answers
- People are respectful towards each other
- Everyone has a part in creating a safe and confidential atmosphere

Have you ever had a conversation that went really well? Can you think about things that made it so good? Was it the information you shared or the way you felt during your conversation? What do you think makes a good dialogue?

Dialogue is built on four basic skills. These skills are:

- self-reflection
- listening
- talking
- suspending your reactions

You can visualize these as the four legs of a table. Each leg needs to be strong enough to keep the table upright. If one of them is missing or bent, the whole structure is a little wobbly. When we think about dialogue, there are quite a few things that affect the situation. The person you are talking with may be busy, tired, reactive etc. You cannot predict the situation, nor do you have to. You don't have to be perfect in all areas of dialogue. But if you try to pay a little attention to your own listening skills, the way you talk to another person and stop to think what you hear and how it makes you feel, you are already on your way.

Let's take a look at some basic dialogue skills. You can reflect on your own skills on the way. If you like, you can write your observations as notes for yourself or share them with a friend or a colleague.

Self-reflection

Self-reflection is about becoming aware of our own thoughts, feelings and reactions, i.e. understanding yourself. Once we understand ourselves a little more, we might understand the other person's thinking better, too. It also helps us understand our own behaviour might affect the interaction with other people.

Self-reflection is a key to a good dialogue. You can't change how others react, but you can always develop yourself. It is not that hard if you give it a chance. You can start with these questions:

- What are you like as a talker or listener?
- What is easy and what is challenging for you in a dialogue?
- What would you like to improve?
- Are you easily irritated or hurt? What do you do when that happens: do you pull back, attack or start being passive-aggressive (sarcastic, or changing the topic or laughing it off)?

***Self-reflection
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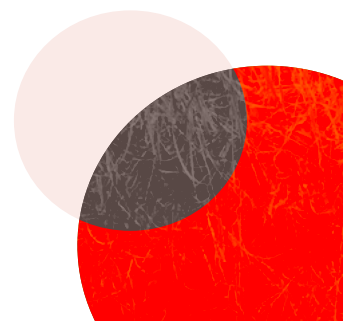


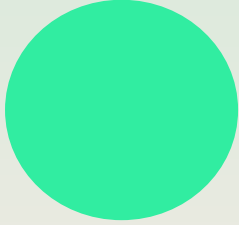
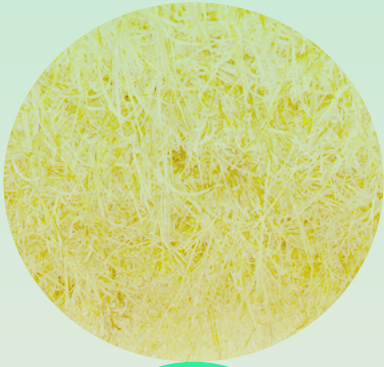
Listening

Dialogue is built on listening. One can say that dialogue is even more about listening than talking. It is about being genuinely interested in the other person and their thoughts. It is about paying attention and being empathetic to what the other person is saying. It is also a willingness to change your own thinking.

Here are some tips for practising your listening skills:

- Be present and respect others.
- Show curiosity towards the experiences and thoughts of others.
- When another person is talking, avoid thinking about your reply or what might you say and just listen.
- Ask questions to make sure you have understood correctly and then give your response.
- Avoid interrupting or starting additional discussions.
- Don't judge. We all have different experiences and personal circumstances.
- Be curious about the person and avoid assumptions based on their religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, political beliefs or political affiliation, socio-economic status/class, race, education, nationality, cultural background, or physical or learning disabilities.
- Remember that it is ok to also have silences in a dialogue. You don't have to fill every moment with words. Silence can be a precious moment to process what you have just heard.





***Silence can be
a precious moment
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have just heard.***



Stop to think: What are you like as a listener? Do you like to cut in quickly and take the conversation in new directions or do you prefer to listen first and talk then? What are your strengths as a listener?

If you want to practise your listening skills, you can try this exercise:



Active listening

The next time you have a meeting or encounter with your friends or peers, try active listening. Instead of rushing to share your own experience, let the other person share his/her thoughts or ideas in peace. With little gestures show that you are interested: nod, look at the person when he/she is talking, give an encouraging smile. You can use phrases like “Tell me more” or “Please go on, I am listening.” Express that you take him/her seriously. Give positive feedback like “Thank you for sharing this...” You can also make sure that you understood correctly what the other person is saying: “Did I understand correctly that you would like to improve...”

What kind of impact does this have on the situation or your interaction? Do you see any difference in the other person’s behaviour?

Talking

Talking and participating in a discussion is part of a good dialogue. Dialogic talking is respectful and honest. It is about giving words to one's own thoughts and emotions and talking from one's own experiences. Good dialogue is about thinking and making sense of the world together.

Here are some tips to consider when you talk with another person:

- Use everyday language.
- Relate what you say to what others have said. Refer to what you are just hearing. If necessary, ask the other person/s to be more precise when expressing their thoughts.
- Talk about your own experience. Start your sentences with “I” and don't generalize.
- Talk to the others directly, notice and acknowledge their emotions and ask about their views.
- Do your own share to make it possible for everyone to take part in the conversation. Allow other people to finish speaking and give them time to think and speak.
- Ask the other person/s open-ended questions about their thoughts, experiences, values and views (questions starting with What, When, How, Which, Who, Why etc.).
- Be sincere, brief and concise in expressing your thoughts.
- Remember that body language expresses as much as our words – pay attention to the tone of your voice and to what your body is expressing. A nod, a small sympathetic change in facial expression or a sound shows you are listening. Mirror the speaker with your gestures.
- Express your opinion without insulting, underestimating, or calling another person names. Make sure they feel safe.

Go back to a situation when you talked to someone else, and you made them feel good. Was it your tone of voice, your body language or what you said that made the conversation run smoothly and other people feel at ease?



Talking exercise

You are at a family encounter. Suddenly a burning issue that you disagree with arises in a conversation related either to politics, current affairs in the local community or family affairs. First try to find out more about what the others think by asking the following questions: “What do you think about it? I never thought about this in this way. Can you tell me what makes you think so?”

Then express your own opinion by starting with:
In my experience... / As far as I'm concerned... / Speaking for myself... / In my opinion... / Personally, I think...

Test what a conversation will be like if you leave out phrases like: *When I was young, we didn't have... / Your life is so much easier than our life used to be... / You will see when you come in my age / If only we had all that you have in my days... / Young people these days are...*

You might be surprised how much more comfortable and ready to talk everybody will feel if you approach the conversations in this way. A dialogue will bring you closer together and help make your encounters a pleasant experience.

Suspending your reactions

We are often quick to judge and react. Suspension is about not reacting immediately, but taking a little time to reflect on what the other person is saying. It means stopping for a moment and letting things sink in. The challenges of suspension are different for each of us. Someone needs to hold back their excitement, another one their need to be right, the third to prove their knowledge, the fourth their fear of being ignored. In a true dialogue, suspension is a virtue that is needed of all of us.

***Suspension is
about not reacting
immediately.***



Here are some tips for suspending your reactions:

- Take time to reflect on what you are hearing.
- Sometimes it is best not to let out the first reactions or thoughts that emerge from what the other person is saying. Instead, try to refrain from immediate reactions and interpretations.
- Observe your own reactions: What are you experiencing, what are your feelings and how do you feel like reacting? Why does this subject make you angry/sad/irritated?
- Let your thoughts develop for a moment. Then choose what, how and when to express them. Sometimes it is more constructive not to say out loud everything that comes to mind.
- Suspending your reactions is not a passive state, but very active: you give time for your thoughts to become clearer and become more aware of your own and others' feelings.
- You will have a deeper dialogue when your feelings and reactions don't dominate the situation.

Are you easily excited and have difficulties holding back your strong feelings? Or do you have a naturally slower tempo and are afraid of being left out if you don't cut into the conversation? How would you like to improve your suspension skills?

Observe your own reactions.





Suspension exercise

You are at a parents' meeting. The school is planning a day trip to a nearby city. One of the parents is anxious to know if there is a proper breakfast provided for the pupils during the day. And what about lunch: Are there enough vegetables? What about snacks? The teacher is patiently answering his questions. You notice yourself getting irritated. Why is this even the subject of discussion? Why does he bring this up over and over again?

Instead of reacting to your impulse to snap out at him, take a minute and stop to examine your feelings. What are you actually reacting to: what is stirring feelings inside you and why? What do your reactions tell about your relation to the matter and maybe even to the person talking?

Maybe these seconds or minutes of suspension give you a little time-out and a moment to breathe. Maybe this pause will help you understand the other parent and your own feelings a little better. And instead of snapping out you might be able to construct your own words and thoughts in a constructive manner even if you feel irritated.

Dialogue steps

Let's get ready!

Sometimes you have a chance to enter a dialogue spontaneously without preparing, but you might also be taking part in a facilitated dialogue. Sometimes you know in advance that you are going to a meeting where the discussion gets heated. Here are tips for preparing for every kind of situation.

- In every dialogue it's vital to **focus on the present situation** and the people with you. Especially when entering a facilitated dialogue, leave your laptop, phone and calendar behind.
- Have you got the time to talk? This is of course easier if you are taking part in a facilitated discussion, but it might be trickier when you encounter people randomly. If you are in a hurry, let the other person know this in advance, so that they don't feel awkward if you keep looking at your watch.
- Do you need to tune yourself into the situation somehow? **Physical factors** affect your ability to be constructive or fully present in a situation. Are you already stressed out when you enter the situation? Have you eaten? Do you need a breath of fresh air before you start? Maybe it is not the best time to have deep conversations when you are tired and hungry. Grab a snack, take a short walk outside, and tune yourself to the situation. You can also postpone your meeting/dialogue. It is not always the right time and place to talk.

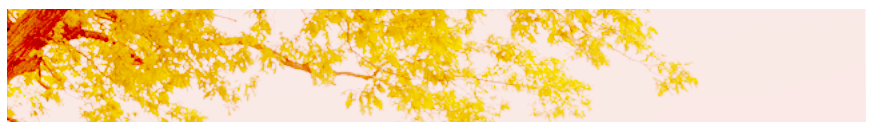
- Think of what you bring into the dialogue. Do you project positivity and calmness or negativity and impatience?
- If you are taking part in a more structured dialogue, there are often more than just two people present. Get to know people who are taking part in the dialogue. Introduce yourselves, but not through merits or work titles. Instead, try using some basic ice-breaking questions. Explain what you want to talk about during the meeting.

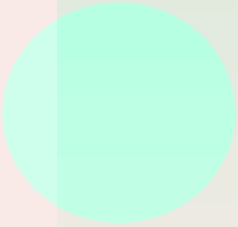
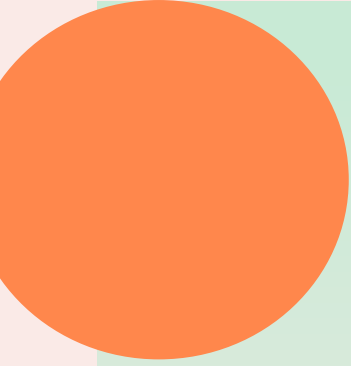
How you start a conversation sets the tone for everything else to follow. That's why it's vital to begin in a calm, respectful, reassuring way.

“Thanks for talking with me.” “How are you?”

“I'm reaching out to ask for your help so I can better understand some challenges I've observed [student] having with....”

Get to know people who are taking part in the dialogue.





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During a dialogue

It is not always easy to find an understanding between people. We all have different personalities and different ways of expressing ourselves. Dialogue is not about finding agreement. It is about being respectful towards each other and trying to find common ground, understanding each other's views and finding ways of enriching our own perspectives.

A good dialogue happens in an atmosphere that is equal, respectful and confidential. We can all do our own share that the dialogue stays constructive. Maintaining a curious attitude and not making assumptions is important. Listening without judgement is equally important.

You can use these questions to show interest, keep the dialogue going and make sure that everyone understands each other. Try to find words that come to you naturally.

- Did I understand correctly what you said...?
- I am not sure what you mean. Can you tell me more?
- How does what you are saying connect to... (the situation, though, the topic being discussed)?
- When you talk about this, you use this and this word. Can you clarify what you mean by it?
- When you talk about this, it raises thoughts/questions in me. Do you want to hear about them?
- What makes you think this way?
- I just noticed that I may have misunderstood what you were saying...
- Maybe I took this conversation to the wrong direction: can we go back a little?

Tips for a dialogue:

- Visualize the people you want to talk to.
- Be open and clear. Explain what you would like to discuss together. Don't come with a hidden agenda.
- Keep an open mind and try to focus on listening to the other person. Don't be focused on what you want to believe.
- If you find somebody's way of talking or manners annoying, don't react immediately or attack. Take a minute, inhale and try to listen and understand what he/she is saying before you react.
- Sometimes it can be hard to express one's thoughts clearly. Or it may be intimidating to say your own opinion and be in the spotlight. Don't let it stop you. Try your best and with more time it will become easier.



“Yes and...” exercise

It is a common situation in the workplace that you have to come up with an idea or a solution as a team. What if the next time instead of arguing different points of views you build on each other's ideas?

Let's try the “Yes and...” exercise!

- Form a small group of 3-4 people.
- Choose a topic or scenario to discuss. It could be a hypothetical situation, or a social issue.
- One person will start by sharing an idea or suggestion related to the topic. The other

members of the group will respond with “Yes, and...” and build on the idea. For example, if the first person suggests a marketing campaign for a new product, the next person might say “Yes, and we could use social media influencers to promote it.”

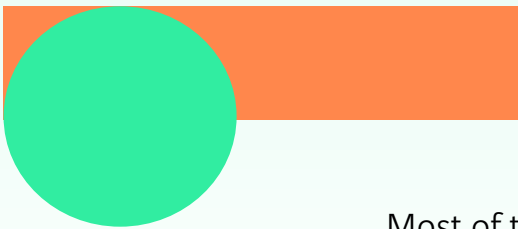
- Keep the conversation going, building on each other’s ideas and suggestions.

After a set amount of time (e.g. 10 minutes), reflect on the exercise as a group. How did the exercise feel? Was it challenging or easy to build on each other’s ideas? How did this exercise affect co-operation and creativity? What did you learn about the topic or scenario?

Be open and clear.



When you find yourself in a difficult situation



Most of the time your dialogue will be a great experience if you keep in mind its principles. However, dialogue can be challenging if the issues are difficult, or they raise strong emotions. Sometimes the views of the people engaged in a dialogue are very far from each other.

Sometimes you may find yourself getting lost in a conversation. Remember that you are not accountable for another person's reactions and behaviours. What you can take care of is your own response.

These tips may help you get back on track in both everyday situations and facilitated dialogues:

- As it is not always **the right place and time** for all discussions, ask beforehand if it is a good time to talk.
- You can always ask for a **short break** if the conversation gets heated and is not going anywhere.
- When you have a completely different opinion, avoid saying: "You're wrong." Rather say: "I never thought about that exactly that way before. Can you tell me more so that I can understand it better?" Or: "I see, this is your view. Let me share mine."

- If a person digresses from the topic, remind him/her sensitively of it. You can also say “I am sorry, but I am not quite sure if I understand what you are talking about now. Could you please tell me where your comment comes from?” Maybe it is not you who is lost, but the subject?
- Use kind words. Little things may make a big difference. Instead of blurting out your opinion, you could say: “May I tell you what I think? Is it ok with you if I share my experience? Is it ok for you if I explain what I mean? When you finish what you’re saying I would also like to add something.”
- If the other person gets angry, keep calm and don’t get swept away with his or her feelings. Your anger doesn’t help matters.
- If you notice yourself getting angry or upset: Instead of bursting everything out, express (as matter-of-factly as possible) what makes you angry/raises emotions in the situation.

***What you can
take care of is your
own response.***





Exercise

When you notice yourself getting angry you can use these four steps:

1. Tell as matter-of-factly as possible what makes you angry: “We were supposed to meet at 12 and now it is 12.30.”
2. Tell how you feel about the situation: “I feel disappointed because now we don’t have time to discuss this together.”
3. Build a solution together: “I hope that if there was a change in timetable, I would be informed in advance.”
4. Explain why you would like to work this way: “When I know about the change in timetable, I can plan my own time better, and my feelings won’t get hurt.”

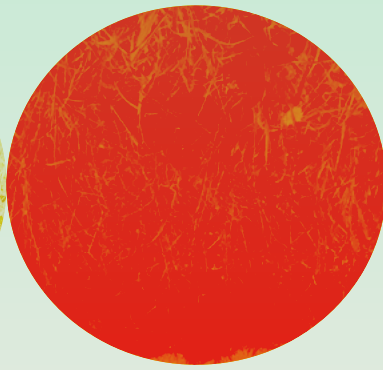
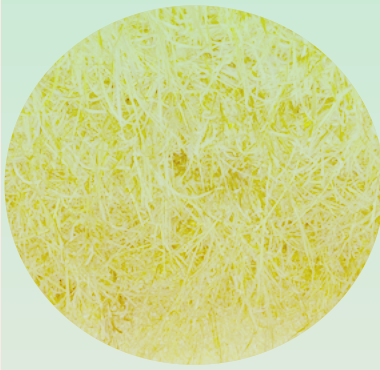
When the other person gets angry:

1. Listen. Give him/her a chance to argue his or her case. Show that you are listening by keeping eye contact and validating his or her speech.
2. Thank him/her for expressing his/her feelings: Give him/her credit for expressing what he/she thinks. If you can genuinely say that they are right, say it. If not, thank him/her for bringing it up “it’s good that you brought this up.”
3. Express that you are sorry for the situation: If you have any reason, admit your mistake and say you are sorry. If not, you can always say you are

sorry that he/she is feeling upset. Don't make excuses or explain. The time for explanations is later when you are calm.

4. Don't leave matters unfinished: Don't change the subject until you agree on something either by solving the problem has been solved or by coming up with another time when you will get back to the issue.

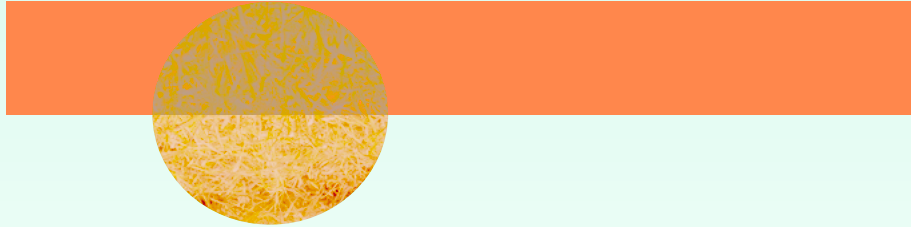
- **If the dialogue has moved too far away from the original subject**, ask the other person if she or he could stick to the point. If you have agreed on a contract at the beginning of the discussion, you can refer back to it.
- If the **dialogue turns into a debate**, take a “freeze-frame shot” to describe the situation. Note that the issue you are discussing raises emotions and ask if it touches on something that is important to other individuals. Invite them to think about the values behind their beliefs. Ask people to think together how you can acknowledge everyone's beliefs but still stick to the principles of dialogue. Emphasize that there is no need to end the dialogue with one point of view, and that each person can take from the dialogue what he or she wants.
- If **one person dominates a structured dialogue**, thus preventing others for participating, thank the person for sharing his or her thoughts and invite the others to speak up by saying, for example: “I notice that some of us have remained quiet, is there something you would like to add?” Or if it is just two of you, you can say “I notice that I talked to much. Is there something you would like to say?”
- If the situation is dangerous or is genuinely too scary, leave the situation or seek help.



If the dialogue turns into a debate, take a “freeze-frame shot” to describe the situation.



Online dialogue

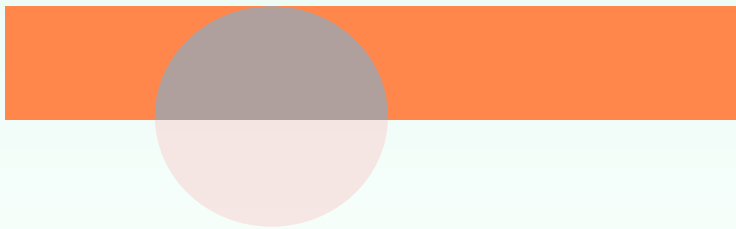


The principles are basically the same in all dialogue. But there are few more things that you need to remember in an online situation.

Remember some essential rules that are specific for online communication:

1. **Tone:** In written communication, it can be difficult to convey tone and nuance. Be mindful of how your words may be interpreted by others and try to avoid sarcasm or humour that could be misinterpreted. Remember, too, that swearwords or other taboo language seem more aggressive when they are written than when they are spoken.
2. **Nonverbal cues:** Without the benefit of nonverbal cues like facial expressions and body language, it can be difficult to understand the intent behind someone's words. Try to be as clear and explicit as possible in your communication to avoid misunderstandings.
3. **Anonymity:** On the Internet, it's easy to hide behind a username or avatar. While this can encourage more honest dialogue, it can also lead to less accountability for one's words and actions. Try to be mindful of this and avoid using anonymity as an excuse to behave inappropriately.
4. **Diversity:** The internet allows people from all over the world to connect and engage in dialogue. Be mindful of cultural differences and avoid making assumptions about someone based on their nationality or ethnicity.

How do you know that dialogue is successful?



Dialogue is not always the answer in all situations. Sometimes the conflict is too deep or complex. Sometimes the issue is so sensitive that we might need a specialist to resolve the challenges. And to the end we are not responsible for other people's behaviour - if they are not ready and open for dialogue there is not much we can do about it.

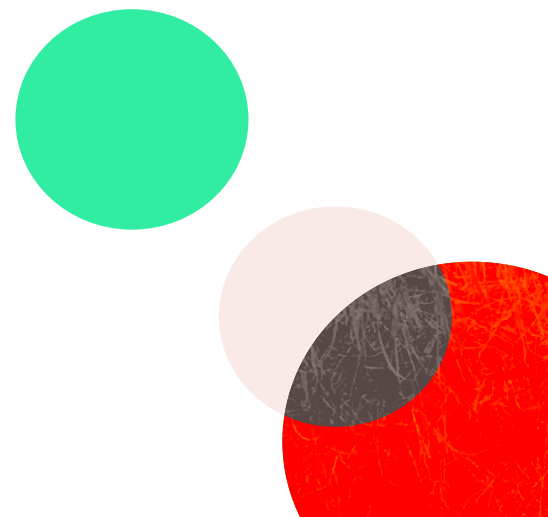
Sometimes you also need to make decisions quickly. Even though dialogue will help you understand many points of view, this is not its aim.

Dialogue is not always the answer.

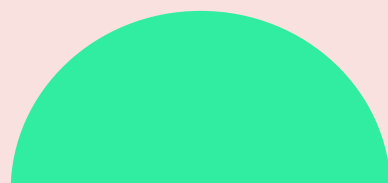
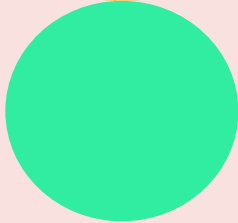


Nonetheless, there are factors that help us recognize if the dialogue has been successful:

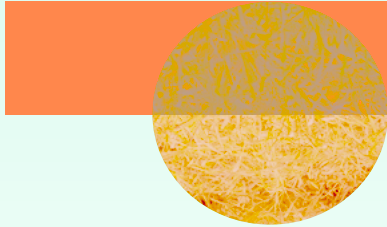
- We engaged in joint reflection, reached a deeper understanding, and broadened our own perspectives
- We know each other better
- We respect each other and are ready for more such encounters
- We exchanged our experiences, thoughts and values and built bridges
- We have created a space for all
- We found common values
- We feel invigoured



Context perspective



Poland



School contexts – teachers and parents or caregivers working with schools

Introduction

A school is a place where people of highly different views, backgrounds and cultures come together. On top of that, a school environment brings together people of different ages, whose interests often differ greatly. For the school to fulfil its tasks effectively, regular dialogue is needed between all groups inside the school community. The problem is that raising a child is a very personal matter with various cultural burdens, aspirations and expectations attached to it. It is a matter of trust and understanding.

Background

This material helps teachers at all types of schools, whose job is to maintain relationships with students, parents, management and other teachers. In this material we want to focus on teacher-parent and teacher-teacher relationships. Most of the principles can also be used in communication between parents.

Examples of dialogue situations in a school environment:

- meeting of the board of the school or the board of education;
- setting the rules of assessment and school rules, including those for pedagogical staff and school administration;
- conversations with parents during parent meetings.

Why dialogue is important for you?

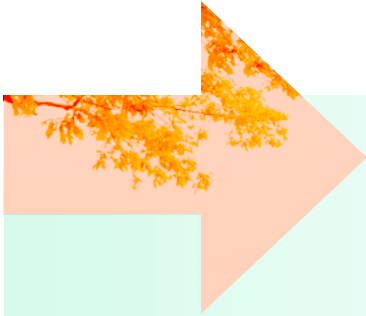
1. Teacher – parent contacts cause plenty of stress and tension. Moreover, raising a child is a very personal matter. Nevertheless, the state and school are responsible for children's education and to do so must cooperate with all the parties involved. It is sometimes hard but with small steps and a little bit of work it could be easier to achieve.
2. Teacher contact with the rest of the school (administration and board of education) to create a safe and efficient environment needs to happen through mutual conversation. Teachers need to talk about the methods of teaching and assessment, and work on the general atmosphere.

***Teachers need
to talk about the
methods of teaching.***



Practical activities

Here are a few easy exercises to invite a dialogic atmosphere to everyday work at school. You can use them as we proposed in different situations however suits you best.



Teachers and parents – school meeting

Conversations about e.g. behavioural issues can be equally difficult for families as they are for you. While it may be the first time you're bringing up a child's challenging behaviour or an academic concern, it may not be the first time the parent or caregiver has heard about it.

Family members may feel blamed or expected to fix the situation. They may have had past experiences with schools that have led to mistrust. And some families may have different cultural expectations about school-family partnerships. There is no one right way to engage with families. But there are some ways to make the conversation as collaborative and productive as possible. For example:

- 1. Ask to meet or talk** – Whether by phone call, email, or through another platform. Start by introducing yourself. Ask if you are reaching out to the right person. Then, use starter phrases like:

- [Student] is fine. I was hoping for a few minutes of your time.
- This isn't an emergency. I was wondering if you have some time to talk about some challenges I've observed lately.
- Do you have a few minutes to talk now? Or can you suggest a better time when we can talk?

2. Start the conversation – How you start a conversation sets the tone for everything that follows. That's why it's essential to begin in a calm, respectful and reassuring way.

- Thanks for talking with me.
- I'm reaching out to ask for your help so I can better understand some challenges I've observed [student] having with....

3. Share information – as you describe what you've noticed, provide context, be direct, and share specific examples of the behavioural or academic struggles you've observed. Explain any steps you've already taken to try to address the concern. Use starters like:

- Today during [subject/time period], I noticed that [student] really struggled with [behaviour/skill]. In the moment, we handled it by....
- Recently, I've noticed that in class, [student] is [describe concern]. I've been trying some strategies to provide extra support. They include

[describe specific strategies you have used and the outcome].

- I’ve observed a change in [student]’s behaviour/ progress/motivation/ability in the past [time frame]. They were [describe what was going well] and now they are [describe the change].

4. Ask for input – The parent or caregiver may have noticed something similar – or different – at home. Take the time to ask for their input. When you do, you’ll invite family members to have an equal voice in the conversation. Because they know their child best, their observations are very useful. Continue the conversation with questions like:

- Is this something you’ve noticed at home, too?
- Have you and your child talked about this? Are you comfortable sharing with me how [student] described the situation?
- Is there anything else you’ve observed at home that you think may be related?
- Has [student] had this challenge in the past? Can you share what has helped?

5. Ask for help – Ask for the family’s help in an open-ended way that doesn’t impose your viewpoint. Make it clear you’re not blaming them or asking them for a “fix.” Keep the focus on finding solutions together. Use conversation starters like:

- What are your thoughts on the situation?
- Are there things you do at home that might work at school?
- Are there things that you know won't go over well that I should avoid?
- Is there a teacher who knows/works well with your child that you'd suggest I talk to?

6. Finish the conversation – Be clear about the next steps as you end the conversation. This is especially important if you're meeting in person or asking other staff members for advice. Leave the door open for more communication and close out the conversation honestly. For example, don't say "This has been a great conversation" if it didn't go as well as you had hoped. Instead, say something like "I know this was tough to talk about. I appreciate your input." Use starters like:

- Thank you for taking the time to talk with me. As we discussed, I'm going to [confirm next steps you agreed on].
- I'm glad we're able to work together to support [student]. So, at home, you'll [summarize discussed strategies] and at school, I'm going to [summarize].
- I feel like this was a good start. I'll speak with [any additional staff], and we'll set up a time to continue this conversation.
- Thank you for your time. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you think of anything else.

Short everyday activities

When you meet a student or parent or caregiver, ask him or her about the previous weekend or a new movie at the cinema – try to make a connection on neutral ground.

This exercise will allow the parent to feel comfortable and inclined to have a conversation.

At a parents' meeting, encourage the parents to make a connection in a similar manner. Simple icebreakers at the beginning will encourage everyone to speak, making it easier for a proper dialogue to evolve.

***Encourage
the parents to
make a connection.***





Teachers with teachers – meeting of the school board

Teachers often feel excluded from discussions about school redesign. They experience it as something that's happening to them, not as something in which they have a direct stake. But when teachers have a chance to be at the table, to be a genuine part of the decision-making process, they are often receptive to changes and offer their own ideas for how to best engage in implementing them.

1. You want to start cooperation among yourselves. If there are many of you working in the school, start by checking if you all know each other? Introduce yourselves in a few words. You can, as a warm-up or ice-breaker, play a game of “All who...” (e.g., everyone who likes tomato soup stands up), or a game of “my first job”, where everyone talks about their first job and what they learned from it.
2. Then, as an exercise, try to think of one common goal you want to achieve/one change you want to make as a school, e.g. at least 3 school trips a year, or no numerical grades during the year, picnics together in the warm months or less homework.
3. If there are many of you working at the school, get into smaller groups and discuss your ideas so that you can later present them to the board. During the discussion, use the tips in the publication.
4. Choosing such a goal, can be a difficult challenge, but it can also be a good start to talk about shared values and vision for education.
5. During the meeting, you may not be able to choose a single goal. That's okay, the important thing is that you start a conversation about how you want to work.

Italy



Dialogue on social media

Introduction

Dialogue on social media is both challenging and rewarding. Social media provides a platform for people from diverse backgrounds and with different opinions to engage in conversations and exchange ideas. However, it can also be a place where people are quick to judge, attack, or dismiss those who think differently about matters.

Social media has changed the way we interact with each other. When we can't see other people's facial expressions or hear his/her tone of voice, there is a bigger possibility for misunderstanding. It is also easier to express thoughts quite straightforwardly or even forget that there is another person on the other end of the line. On social media we tend to focus more on ourselves and our thoughts than listen to what the other person wants or tries to say. Lack of visual factors and anonymity affect the situation and fuel polarization.

To some point we just have to accept the boundaries of dialogue on social media. Like-minded people gravitate towards each other and form "bubbles". Once these bubbles are formed dialogue with those we disagree with becomes harder. To have a real dialogue we need something

to connect the bubbles together. A fact-based and appreciative change of opinion is the key to this. It may be hard on social media, but we have to keep on trying.

And we have to remember that we all have a role in this.

Background

In the world of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, Whatsapp, you can easily run into discussions with people of different cultural, religious, political, age and social backgrounds. It is easier to run into unpleasant and biting conversations on social media than in real life, but it is still important to remember that these “tools” can always become positive environments for yourself and other users.

Overall, a good dialogue on social media can help to promote greater understanding, mutual respect, critical thinking, and positive change, making it an important aspect of online communication and social interaction.

In particular it:

1. Promotes understanding: social media provides an opportunity to engage with people from different backgrounds and perspectives, leading to greater understanding and empathy towards others.
2. Fosters mutual respect: When engaging in a good dialogue, people tend to be more respectful towards one another, leading to a more positive and constructive exchange of ideas.
3. Encourages critical thinking: By engaging in a good dialogue on social media, people are encouraged to think critically and reflect on their own beliefs and assumptions.

4. Helps build relationships: Social media conversations can lead to building new relationships and the strengthening of existing ones.
5. Can lead to positive change: A good dialogue on social media can help to raise awareness about important issues, promote positive change, and inspire others to take action.

Practical Activities

The next time you get irritated about somebody's comments on social media and are about to write a sharp response, stop to think: There is a person behind those words. - He or she will probably get his/her feelings just like you if he/she receives inappropriate behavior or comments.

- Most of the time people don't have bad intentions. They may express their thoughts in a funny or twisted way or they may have not think their thoughts through. Often it may come as a surprise to a person that their words or expressions have fueled a conflict.
- Because you don't know the person's intentions, don't assume that you do. Avoid assumptions, generalizations and claims. Think what your take on the subject is and what you want to comment on it.
- Focus on the subject, don't insult anyone personally or become irritated about the person behind the words.
- Think how you could express yourself as constructively as possible. Read through your text before sending it. Sometimes using a smiley may help. However, the way we use emojis and punctuation on social media changes all the time.



***A good dialogue
on social media can
help to promote
greater understand-
ing, mutual respect,
critical thinking, and
positive change.***



Practice

A hypothetical situation on social media where an argument is ongoing could go as follows:

You come across a post on Instagram discussing a controversial topic, and you decide to engage in the discussion by sharing your perspective. However, someone responds to your comment with a rebuttal, and the conversation quickly turns into an argument with both parties becoming increasingly defensive and aggressive.

Here's how you could react to the situation:

Take a deep breath: Before responding, take a moment to compose yourself and calm down. It's important to approach the conversation in a calm and rational manner.

Try to understand the other person's perspective: Take the time to read and understand the other person's point of view, even if you don't agree with it. This can help to de-escalate the situation and promote a more productive conversation.

Be respectful: Always be respectful and avoid using derogatory language or personal attacks. Remember that the other person is entitled to their opinion, even if you don't agree with it.

Consider taking a break: If the conversation becomes too heated or unproductive, consider taking a break and returning to the conversation later. It's better to take a break than to say something that you might regret.

And some tips:

- What could you ask the person in order to find out what he/she really wants to say?

Think by yourself or share with a friend:

- How could the person have expressed him-/herself to get the message through better?
- What kind of emojis or other elements could he/she have used to support communication?

***Always be respectful
and avoid using
derogatory language.***





Intercultural dialogue

Introduction

Intercultural dialogue is an open and respectful exchange of views based on a mutual understanding between individuals and groups with different linguistic, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds and heritage. Have you been in a situation where you have wanted to learn from someone whose experience is different from yours?

Background

Intercultural dialogue is important for everyone in building our cultural identity. It encourages us to see the similarities and differences we have with others and to define who we are. This means that dialogue can also shape us, as our cultural identity changes all the time. We all feel prejudice, but to overcome this we also need to feel empathy. How would you like to be welcomed in a dialogue?

The objective of intercultural dialogue is to learn to live together peacefully and constructively in a multicultural world. It helps us develop a sense of community and belonging, and it can help us prevent and resolve conflicts. Ultimately, it helps us to build respect for human rights and democracy and can be a tool for anti-racism activity. Why should we engage in dialogue?

- We can share visions of the world, and understand and learn from people who don't share our world view or perspective;
- We can identify similarities and differences between cultural traditions and perceptions;
- We can achieve a consensus on heated issues that can help prevent conflict;

- We can help manage cultural diversity respectfully and democratically;
- We can bridge the divide between those who see diversity as a threat and those who view it as an enrichment;
- We can overcome our own prejudices.

Practical Activities

Examples on Intercultural communication:

- A Christian has an everyday discussion with a Muslim.
- An American and African share their views.
- A Chinese politician's discussion with an American leader.

Things to be avoided in IC

- Abusing the traditions of any culture.
- Being Insensitive and unsympathetic to other cultures and habits.
- Not giving due consideration to language barriers.
Don't use slang, idioms, dialect and other local sayings. Use language that you both understand.

***Don't use slang,
idioms, dialect.***



Getting ready

1) Make time to get to know people

It's hard to communicate with someone you really don't know. Take some time to get to know the other person. Because of language barriers or other issues, it may take some time, but you will have a deeper understanding of each other.

2) Learn about the other culture

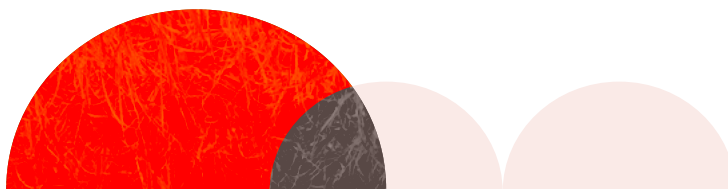
We often enter a dialogue situation unprepared, but if you have time to prepare, it's worth it. If you don't know about the cultural norms of a country, there is plenty of information even online. Put your phone to good use!

3) Initiate communication

The first step of talking to someone is simply to talk to them. Say "hi," and ask them how they are doing. Depending on the situation, you might benefit from asking specific questions about the other person's culture. For example, try learning how to say words in their language, show interest and appreciation. Be sensitive to the other person's needs, though, as asking about their culture when you are discussing something different can come across as micro-aggression even when your intentions are good.

4) Practice patience and suspension

We are often quick to react and judge. However, patience and taking our time before we react, is important, especially at the beginning. It will make the other person feel that you take them seriously and want to engage in a real dialogue.



5) Think about alternative ways of communicating

Think about ways to make yourself understood without talking down to the other person. One way is to avoid slang or expressions that are used in a dialect but aren't understood by others. If you can't understand what someone is saying or vice versa, you can even try writing. And think about body language. In a situation where you're not talking in your or the other person's mother tongue, facial expressions and gestures become even more important.

6) Don't be worried about making mistakes when learning from each other

Dialogue should help us understand each other. Sometimes we end up making mistakes and even insulting each other even when we don't want to. Show the other person that you're willing to learn from your mistakes and to fix the situation. Show them empathy.

Links

- The concept of Intercultural Dialogue, Council of Europe
<https://www.cuemath.com/learn/parenting/intercultural-communication/>
- The importance of Intercultural Communication
<https://www.cuemath.com/learn/parenting/intercultural-communication/>
- Improving our Intercultural Communication
<https://blogs.winona.edu/improving-our-world/2016/04/15/8-steps-to-intercultural-communication/>

Finland



Dialogue with neighbours

Introduction

Most of us live in a house or an apartment building where we encounter our neighbours and have to decide on mutual matters. When it comes to personal space and life choices, we may be quite sensitive and get easily agitated. Having basic dialogue skills may save us from many heated conversations and conflicts in both everyday situations and housing meetings.

We all have a role in creating fruitful mutual interaction with our neighbours. The quality of our relationship might be tested in disputes, which are often caused by loud partying, playing music too loud, handling waste, renovation noise, housing sales, water damage etc. Small matters may turn into long-lasting quarrels that have consequences on your own and your neighbours' well-being in many ways.

Resolving mutual matters constructively

Try out a little mind game to see how you would react in the following situation:

Your neighbour bangs at your door and shouts that your kids are playing too loud in the backyard. It is a beautiful day, the sun is shining and in your opinion the kids are just enjoying themselves. What do you do?

- a. Tell your neighbour to shut up and get off your property or you will call the police.
- b. Ask the kids to make even more noise because your neighbour has no right to complain about matters like these.
- c. You say you are sorry if the kids are making too much noise. Show him that you are willing to find a compromise and understand his feelings instead of joining his outburst. Remind yourself that your neighbour may be having a tough day and not necessarily because of you.

You have the right to stand up for yourself. But you can do it in a variety of ways: constructively, less constructively or aggressively. The constructive way does not always work but at least you have tried. Being aggressive only makes matters worse. Instead, show that you value the relationship with your neighbour and want to find a solution to the problem.

Starting a conversation

Start a conversation about the weather or another easy subject with your neighbour. Or say a friendly hello and ask how he/she is doing. What is your neighbour's reaction? How does it make you feel? Based on your neighbour's reaction and the way you feel about it think of a conversation starter with your neighbour for the next time you meet.



Dialogue in volunteering

Introduction

Volunteers are an asset to any organisation. Volunteering also brings joy and a sense of meaning to the volunteer herself/himself. It is essential that the volunteers of an association feel safe, comfortable and welcome in their role. The diverse background (eg. age, background, experience and motives) of volunteers may sometimes fuel conflict. Conflicts can appear between volunteers or between a volunteer and an employee. The causes of conflict often include insufficient information, competing methods of communication or a lack of common rules. Conflicts may fuel inappropriate behaviour such as aggression, loud talking or even shouting, demeaning behaviour, exclusion or even name calling.

Creating a positive volunteer experience

So how can we contribute to a better volunteer experience? It all starts with an organisational culture that cherishes equality and all of us as part of an organisation. When the atmosphere is such that everyone is respected and valued, there is usually little harassment or inappropriate behaviour. The values of equality flow down and cut through the whole culture. But a culture like this does not emerge by itself. It starts with everyone's own self-reflection, open discussion, listening and mutual rules.

1) Reflecting on your role in creating positive atmosphere

If you are a volunteer in an organization, you can start by asking yourself the following questions:

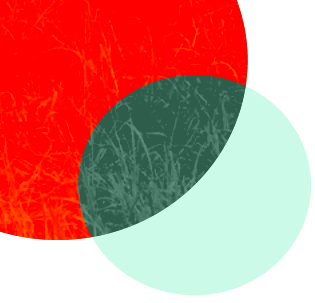
How do you relate to the other people around you? Do you consider people to be generally good or bad in their intentions? Do you like to listen to other people's opinions or is it more important for you to get your message through?

2) Listening and trying to find out more before speaking

The next time you have a meeting or encounter with other volunteers try active listening. Instead of being in a hurry to share your own experience, let the other person share his/her thoughts or ideas in peace. With little gestures show that you are interested: nod, look at the person when he/she is talking, give an encouraging smile. You can use sentences like "Tell me more" or "Please go on, I am listening." Express that you take him/her seriously. Give positive feedback "Thank you for sharing this..." You can also make sure that you understood correctly what the other person is saying: "Did I understand correctly that you would like to improve..."

***Let the other
person share
his/her thoughts.***





What kind of impact does this have on the situation or your interaction? Do you see any difference in the other person's behaviour?

3) Giving and receiving feedback

This exercise is done in pairs. Pick a role: one of you is a chairperson of a volunteer group and one of you is a volunteer.

The chairperson: You find out that the volunteer has hurt another volunteer's feelings when instructing him/her about something in an aggressive way. You feel annoyed and give feedback in a very straightforward way in a way mirroring the aggressive behaviour of the volunteer.

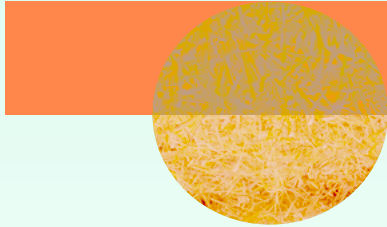
The volunteer: How does the feedback make you feel? How could the feedback be modified for it to feel better and be more effective?

Change roles and try it in a more constructive way. Point out what exactly made a difference so that you could accept feedback in a positive way. You can also discuss your observations in a group.

Sources

- <https://hyvinvoiva-jarjesto.humak.fi/kohtaamisen-taidot-teemapaketti/>
- <https://mieli.fi/vahvista-mielenterveyttasi/ihmissuhteet-ja-vuorovaikutus/nain-opit-paremmaksi-kuuntelijaksi/>

Greece



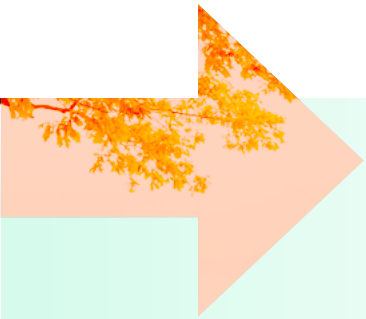
Dialogue in the workplace

Introduction

Effective communication is crucial at any workplace. Communication is especially important because working life is constantly changing. For some it is easier to keep up with the changes, but for others it can be quite challenging. Not all employees have the same level of education or technical skills. This can create communication barriers and lead to misunderstandings.

Dialogue can help bridge this gap and create a more inclusive and collaborative work environment. It can help build trust and well-being and increase engagement in the workplace.

By encouraging discussion, reflection, and peer support, you have employees who are committed, perform well and need to take fewer sick days.



Some tips for a better dialogue in the workplace

TIP 1:

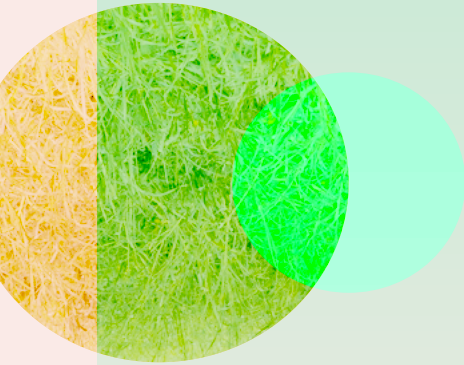
Encourage all the team members to actively listen to each other during discussions and meetings and be respectful towards one another even if they do not agree. This means paying attention to what the others are saying, asking questions, and seeking clarification when necessary.

TIP 2:

Encourage open-ended questions. For example, instead of asking “Did you like that project?” ask “What did you think of the project?”. In addition, when you are facing an idea that you don’t like and you have a better one yourself, you need to: a) acknowledge your colleague’s idea, b) share your perspective, c) ask for his/her feedback d) find common ground and e) be willing to compromise.

TIP 3:

Organise regular team-building exercises. They can help build trust and encourage communication among team members. Some examples of team-building exercises are the following: Two Truths and a Lie ([link](#)), Blind Drawing ([link](#)) and other Icebreakers. It is possible to add dialogue elements to these activities.



- Encourage all the team members to actively listen to each other**
- Encourage open-ended questions.**
- Organise regular team-building exercises.**



It is a common situation in the workplace that you have to come up with an idea or a solution as a team. What if the next time instead of arguing different points of views you build on each other's ideas?



Let's try the "Yes and..." exercise!

- Form a small group of 3-4 people.
- Choose a topic or scenario to discuss. It could be a hypothetical situation, or a social issue.
- One person will start by sharing an idea or suggestion related to the topic. The other members of the group will respond with "Yes, and..." and build on the idea. For example, if the first person suggests a marketing campaign for a new product, the next person might say "Yes, and we could use social media influencers to promote it."
- Keep the conversation going, building on each other's ideas and suggestions.

After a set amount of time (e.g. 10 minutes), reflect on the exercise as a group. How did the exercise feel? Was it challenging or easy to build on each other's ideas? How did this exercise affect the co-operation and creativity? What did you learn about the topic or scenario?

Dialogue with individuals in challenging situations

Introduction

Dialogue and a sense of being heard and seen is particularly valuable for individuals who live in marginalized positions in society. Everyone needs to have their voices heard.

If you don't belong to any minority regarding your race, gender, socioeconomic status or other identity, you probably have a more privileged status in society. It is important to recognize your own status and take into consideration questions of power, even the hidden power structures that affect your behaviour unconsciously. Even if you don't recognize them yourself, the person that belongs to a minority probably does. So please acknowledge this fact, be sensitive and be willing to learn from others. This is the first step for a dialogue.

We encourage you to approach situations with an open mind and not to be afraid of making mistakes. And don't be discouraged if all the situations don't always go smoothly. Instead, be willing to apologize and learn.

Everyone needs to have their voices heard.



Here is an exercise that might help in promoting empathy and understanding in difficult or challenging interactions, while also encouraging self-reflection and introspection.

The Empathy Map

- Draw a large circle in the centre of a piece of paper.
- Divide the circle into four equal parts. Label each section with the following headings: “What they say,” “What they do,” “What they think,” and “What they feel.”
- Think of a person or group of people you have difficulty understanding or connecting with.
- Reflect on your interactions with this person or group and try to fill in each section of the empathy map with observations, quotes, and insights about their behaviour, thoughts, and emotions.
- Take a step back and look at the empathy map as a whole. What patterns or insights emerge? What do you notice about the person or group that you may not have realized before?

Use this new understanding to guide your interactions with this person or group in the future. After completing this exercise, take some time to reflect on the following questions:

- How did the empathy map help you better understand the other person or group?
- Did you discover any biases or assumptions that you were previously unaware of?
- How can you use this newfound understanding to improve your interactions with this person or group?



Active Listening Exercise

- Find a partner and sit facing each other.
- Decide who will be the speaker and who will be the listener.
- The speaker will share a personal story or experience for a set amount of time (e.g., 3-5 minutes).
- The listener’s task is to actively listen without interrupting, offering advice, or sharing their own experiences.
- After the set amount of time has passed, switch roles and repeat the exercise.
- After both partners have had a chance to share, take turns summarizing what you heard the other person say. This can include thoughts, feelings, and key details from their story.
- Reflect on your experience as both the speaker and listener. What did you learn about yourself and the other person? What challenges did you face while listening or sharing? What did you appreciate about the other person’s approach?
- This exercise can help promote active listening skills and encourage individuals to communicate more effectively. By taking turns sharing and listening, individuals can develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for each other’s perspectives.

Slovenia



Dialogue at public events in local institutions (libraries, museums, galleries ...)

Introduction

Public places like libraries, museums, and galleries organize events where people come to learn new things or discuss different topics. These events are usually formal or semi-formal. However, some visitors don't feel comfortable sharing their opinions or asking questions because they lack confidence, fear they won't be understood, or don't have good communication skills. It's important to make these events welcoming for everyone, so people feel comfortable expressing their ideas.

Boosting your confidence for initiating a dialogue

If you are one of those people who are reluctant to take part in public events and you would like to engage in conversations and develop your dialogue skills, take one of the following challenges. It might boost your confidence in speaking up in public and encourage you to take part in discussions in other places, e.g. at work or in the local community, where expressing your opinion really makes a difference.

Go to a meet and greet an author event, a lecture or an opening of an exhibition at a local library, museum or gallery:

1. Get involved in a chat with another visitor about the event. You can start a conversation by saying: *That was an interesting topic. I enjoyed it a lot. How did you find it?* Just go ahead and give yourself a chance to exchange views with somebody you meet for the first time. It is likely they have wanted to start a conversation with you, too, but felt embarrassed to do so. You can prepare some information or questions at home before the event.
2. After the event, go to the author or the organizers and comment on the event or ask a question about what you would like to know. For example: *Thank you for an interesting presentation. Can I ask you something? I wonder what you think about ... / I would like to know ... / I am interested to learn more about ...* Invite a friend to go with you. Maybe you will feel more comfortable about going the event with someone you know.
3. Make up your mind before attending a public event that you would ask a question publicly when the host invites the questions.
Before you ask a question, greet the audience and tell them your name. Then pose a question related to the topic which you have prepared in advance. You can trust that your question will be most welcome; public speakers love interaction and so does the audience.



Dialogue at an elderly people's home

Introduction

Our modern way of living is reflected also in the way we spend the autumn of our lives. In the past it was common that the elderly used to live together with their families. In many cases, even three or even four generations shared the same household. However, it is now often the case that people at an older age choose to or need to live in an elderly people's home, in a living community of the elderly or in a sheltered housing unit.

Living in an elderly people's home with a roommate

If you have recently moved into an elderly care facility or have been relocated within the same facility, we invite you to have a conversation with your new roommate about the essential guidelines you need to follow in order to live in harmony with each other.

Remember, people are different and we all have different experiences, so it is very likely that we will differ in our needs as well.

1. Think about what is important to you in living together (You can also write it down in bullet points.)
2. Ask your roommate about life in a residential home in general and about what is important for them (e.g. *How long have you been living here? How do you like it? Who shall I turn to if I need something? What is your usual daily routine? What arrangements did you have with your previous roommate? What worked? What bothered you? What would you like us to do differently?*)

3. Now tell them what is important for you to accommodate to a new situation easily and explain why it is important to you. Then ask your roommate about their needs (e.g. *I am a bit of a loner. I used to live on my own most of my life, so I know I need my personal space. I might not be in the mood for long talks throughout the day, but I would be happy to talk about different topics over dinner. How about you?*)

You might realize you have several habits totally different from your roommate. A precondition for finding an agreement is that we express what is important for us, which we often fail to do, and of course, that we show a genuine interest also in what matters to another person. That might not be enough for a satisfactory co-living, but it is the first step.

***People are different
and we all have
different experiences.***





Talking to younger people

The lifestyle of every generation is different and so are the views we have formed based on our experience and the reality we live in. Simply, be curious about the views of the younger generation when they come for a visit without trying to convince them about your view.

1. At a family visit, when a burning issue that you disagree with, arises in a conversation related either to politics, current affairs in the local community or family affairs, first try to find out more about other people's opinion with asking the following questions: *What do you think about it? I never thought about this in this way. Can you tell me what makes you think so?* Then express your own opinion by starting with: *In my experience... / As far as I'm concerned... /Speaking for myself... /In my opinion... / Personally, I think...*
2. Test what a conversation will be like if you leave out comment phrases that you might use when talking to younger people, like: *When I was young, we didn't have .../ Your life is so much easier than our life used to be.../ You will see when you come in my age / If only we had all that you have in my days.../ Young people these days are ...*

You might be surprised how much more comfortable everybody will feel and ready to talk if you approach the conversations in such a way. A dialogue will bring you closer together and help make a visit a pleasant experience.

Organisations responsible for Dial project



Opintokeskus **Sivis**

Sivis Study Centre – is a Finnish organisation. Maintained by an association called Opintotoiminnan Keskusliitto, the Sivis Study Centre promotes non-formal adult education in the voluntary sector. We provide almost 100,000 hours of education annually in co-operation with our 78 member NGOs. We also support adult learning by providing training for trainers and publications. Our member organisations represent the fields of health, education and culture, citizens' advice, the environment and other specific areas of activity.

Contact: toimisto@ok-sivis.fi



CENTRUM
CYFROWE

Centrum Cyfrowe is a Polish NGO that supports openness and engagement in the digital world. Together with experts and practitioners open to change, we create space for new ideas, skills and tools development. We strive to ensure that social interest is always in the first place in the relationship between humans and technology. We work in the fields of culture and education to support policymaking and practice.

Contact: kontakt@centrumcyfrowe.pl



European Institute for Local Development – is a Greek NGO.

Our mission is to provide innovative tools for the sustainability of regions by promoting experience sharing between its members and partners for sustaining international cooperation, skillful networking and further progress and growth. Especially, during the big financial and social crisis, we strive to provide direct solutions to European needs. We continually develop our activities to become a dominant social player on the national and European level.

Contact: Ioannis Dontas (idotas@eurolocaldevelopment.org), Manolis Chrysostalis (echrysost@eurolocaldevelopment.org)



Cooperazione Paesi Emergenti - The Italian NGO. CO.P.E. is devoted to the development cooperation and international voluntary service. It was founded in 1983 and it is a non-profit-making association. CO.P.E. is officially recognized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs as International Cooperation Actor (NGO) since 1987 and officially recognized by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation since 2016. We manage developing cooperation projects on bottom-up governance and human rights, child protection and women's empowerment, education and vocational Education and Training, health, disease and disabilities prevention, agriculture and food security.

Contact: Andrea Zalabaiova (edu-eu@cope.it), Giuliana Pitino (eu@cope.it)



Glotta Nova, Centre for new knowledge: Glotta Nova is a Slovenian adult education center specialised in soft skills, leadership trainings and coaching. We serve organisations and individuals in the private and public sector to achieve wide-ranging competences (communication, teamwork and cooperation, public speaking, training the trainer, mentoring, leadership and coaching), which are reflected in their professional and personal growth.

Contact: info@glottanova.si

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