

## Shifting Debate to Dialogue Let's Talk

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### Questions, resources and discussion from the chat box:

#### 1. What is debate? How would you define it?

- Defending a position
- Taking a side on an issue and defending
- Usually a winner and a loser
- Fact based articulation of an issue that tries to persuade
- Two sides arguing for the merits of their position.
- Informed conversation with the goal of educating/persuading the audience.
- You have a set topic and rules -- and you are designated as being for or against the argument put forth.
- Taking a firm stance on an issue with the goal of persuading the audience to join your viewpoint.

#### 2. Is debate bad?

- No (4)
- Depends
- Not usually
- It depends on the context and how it is used
- No, depending on the circumstances
- Sometimes
- Debate is polar and assumes issues only have two sides/position, so it is limiting
- Sometimes
- Not as long as it is civil

#### 3. When is debate not good?

- When the moderation isn't fair/balanced
- When an issue is nuanced, there are more than 2 positions
- When people speak their side but don't actually listen to the other people involved
- When the subject is not cut-and-dried. When there are shades of gray.
- When it is not civil or becomes personal attacks
- Uninformed
- When not governed by strong rules, including civil dialogue
- When looking for unity and positives of all sides incorporated into the outcome.
- When a group needs to reach consensus to move forward

#### 4. What makes finding space for dialogues hard?

- Distractions (3)
- Wrong physical room set up
- Technology
- Not meeting face to face
- Information is overwhelming
- Willingness
- Poor listeners
- People talk more than listen
- Reporting and evaluation. We get measured by the number of people we interact with and dialogue is slow
- Topics can be 'fuzzy'
- We have become distracted and disconnected.
- It's not valued
- People don't trust the process
- People aren't as willing to be open minded
- Difficulty for people to set aside their own agendas and truly be open to listen and learn
- Increasing reliance on technology - interaction and talking are no longer the norm

#### 5. What do you need in order to trust someone?

- I like that image because I think it can help us frame dialogue as important for a healthy life (speaking as an FCD educator 😊)
- Commonality
- An established relationship of some sort
- I need diverse representation
- A genuine person
- Time
- Agreement on goal
- Common interest
- Feeling that there will be some benefit to open dialogue
- Validation, someone else I trust
- An active listener
- Time to build relationship and share experiences
- People need to put their needs/wants/limits on the table
- They won't judge your opinion, even if it's different

#### 6. Which of the Touchstones for Safe and Trustworthy Space resonate with you? What would you add?

- Similar values
- Trust more in silence
- Be present
- Turn to wonder
- In our Navigating Difference curriculum, we introduce Ground Rules at the beginning
- Speak truth respectfully

## 7. What are some other ways you are using dialogue?

- University of Florida/Florida A&M has a minority small farmer forum planned for March
- Funding for water projects/expanding access to public water
- We've facilitated dialogue on affordable housing in Marion, Ohio
- Pregnancy and addiction
- Youth engagement in elections and citizenship
- Rural equity/diversity effort in Southern Minnesota
- Dialogue around community revitalization strategies

## 8. What resources are available to support this work?

- Coming Together for Racial Understanding is a great program and I'm waiting for a session to be offered (again) nearby so I can attend.
- eXtension has some opportunities.
- Kettering Foundation has resources
- Extension's network is useful in that we know someone outside the area who can come in as an objective facilitator or moderator, especially for issues which are contentious.
- Have you found ways to incorporate these concepts into social media group/site moderation?
- Maybe a best practices in social media moderation manual?
- Text, Talk, Act is one example of using social media for dialogue: <https://www.texttalkact.com/>
- The NACDEP Member Services Committee is looking for ways to increase the value of membership. If there are topics for in-depth training, that is something the committee could look into to (or try to get a pre/post conference session at a conference).
- Helped facilitate community group to work through 'data analysis' that focused on 'things that are going right/wrong with this group'
- Michigan State University offers the Facilitative Leadership training curriculum. [https://www.canr.msu.edu/facilitative\\_leadership/](https://www.canr.msu.edu/facilitative_leadership/)
- OSU has a fact sheet that may also be helpful <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/cdfs-1555>
- Planning and Conducting Effective Public Meetings
- Coming Together for Racial Understanding <http://srdc.msstate.edu/civildialogue>
- Fostering Civil Dialogue Community of Practice on eXtension – This site documents resources identified by ECOP's Rapid Response Team on Civil Dialogue. Feel free to suggest a resource if you know of something that is missing. Rachel Welborn (presenter) manages the site. <https://civildialogue.extension.org/>

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