

FACILITATED CONVERSATIONS



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To our community members, traditional knowledge keepers, and elders who we acknowledge as expert contributors:

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Thank you for lending your wisdom and insights to lead the development of material, ensuring cultural relevance and usefulness for this guidebook. We have heard the input and recognize that this is only the starting place for future development and work on this important topic.

Meet the Artists

Brian Kowikchuk

Cover Art

Inuvik, Inuvialuit Settlement Region,
Northwest Territories



Brian Kowikchuk was raised in both Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk. With roots in both worlds, his expression of truth is through his art. Working for the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Brian is passionate about community based work. Developing relationships in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region is where most of the magic happens – Working toward the betterment of today's society, he is working on taking back space through creating murals, painting art pieces, and facilitating art classes.

Corrine Bullock

Graphic Design

Inuvik, Inuvialuit Settlement Region,
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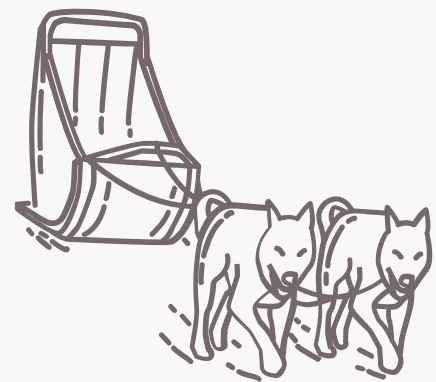
Born and raised in Inuvik, Corrine Bullock is a wife, mother and active community member. She works with the Western Arctic Youth Collective, a grassroots collaborative of both Inuvialuit and Gwich'in youth working to re-envision community and promote empowerment and capacity building through inter-generational community based goals and solutions. An advocate for mentorship and inclusivity, she grounds herself in her language, culture and artistic expression.



"Prevention is a component of our work which holds the greatest potential for making a difference in the lives of those in the communities we serve. Facilitated conversations are a measure that falls into this category of preventative actions that are restorative and rebuilding. Working with communities of people affected by the traumatic legacy of colonialism and residential schools it is critical to approach the work of our roles from a trauma informed lens. "

-Eva Kratochvil

May our guidebook serve as one more tool in our collective toolbox, allowing us to engage in this meaningful work



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About Us



The Inuvik Justice Committee was started in May of 1992 when concerned citizens of Inuvik realized there was a need for community involvement in the criminal justice system, and that different approaches were required in dealing with both victims and offenders. It was incorporated as a Society on December 16, 1996.

The committee was formed by several community volunteers, who worked with offenders who accepted responsibility for their actions, did not have a lengthy history with the criminal justice system, whose crimes were not serious, and where diversion had been recommended by the RCMP and/or court. The purpose was to provide an alternative to the criminal justice system for those who were willing to make changes in their lives. The basis of restorative justice is that the offender and victim meet to acknowledge the harm caused by their actions, in a supportive setting. In diversions as we know them now, the offender then also makes amends to the victim and community through a variety of means, decided-upon by the board and the justice coordinator.

Recognizing that additional support was required for victims of crime and tragedy, the Inuvik Justice Committee added the position of Victim Support Worker in 2000.

The purpose of the committee is to facilitate community-based restorative justice and to provide a voice for victims of crime. It works in cooperation with the RCMP, Probation Services, Crown Counsel, defence lawyers, Social Services, and the court system, to accept referrals of cases deemed to be appropriate for community resolution and/or where victims of crimes may need assistance. The committee endeavours to find solutions to the crimes that affect the local community, and to provide a means by which youth and individuals accused of minor offences can avoid a permanent criminal record.

Currently, there are three staff: one Justice Coordinator, one Inuvik Victim Services Coordinator and one Outreach Victim Services Coordinator, along-with a volunteer board. Together, we aim to assist those involved in the court system or who may just be going through a difficult time. We run preventative programs designed to raise awareness about issues in our communities, and to promote wellness and healing.

Table of Contents

Section 1:	Overview	7
Section 2:	What are Facilitated Conversations?	10
Section 3:	When are Facilitated Conversations Helpful?	12
Section 4:	What are the Key Components of a Facilitated Conversation?	19
Section 5:	Facilitator's Guide	22
Section 6:	Focused Conversations Guide	24
Section 7:	Listening with Intent	25
Section 8:	Common Ways that Conversations Fall Apart	29
Section 9:	When are Facilitated Conversations Not Appropriate?	32
Section 10:	Summary	The Final Word Belonging to Indigenous Voices 34
Section 11:	Appendix	A. Creating a Respectful Environment B. Goals Exercise Worksheet C. Pointers for Facilitation D. Healthy Conversation Goals 36
Section 12:	References	41

Section 1

Overview

Preface

Facilitated Conversation represents a set of strategic approaches designed to lessen the traumatic triggers that often lurk in the shadows of people's lives.

Facilitated Conversations offer an alternative set of guidelines that move the participants as safely as possible through a potentially disagreeable conversation toward a common goal shared by the contributors.

Each section of Facilitated Conversations illustrates some part of a trauma informed approach.

In this document, Facilitated Conversations are explained in terms of what it is and is not. Teamwork and focus represent a gateway to a range of therapeutic strategies that might guide the participants toward a naturally formed solution.

Facilitated Conversations represents a practical strategy for safely fostering differing points for view toward a shared understanding of the others position, and potentially, goals acceptable to the participants.

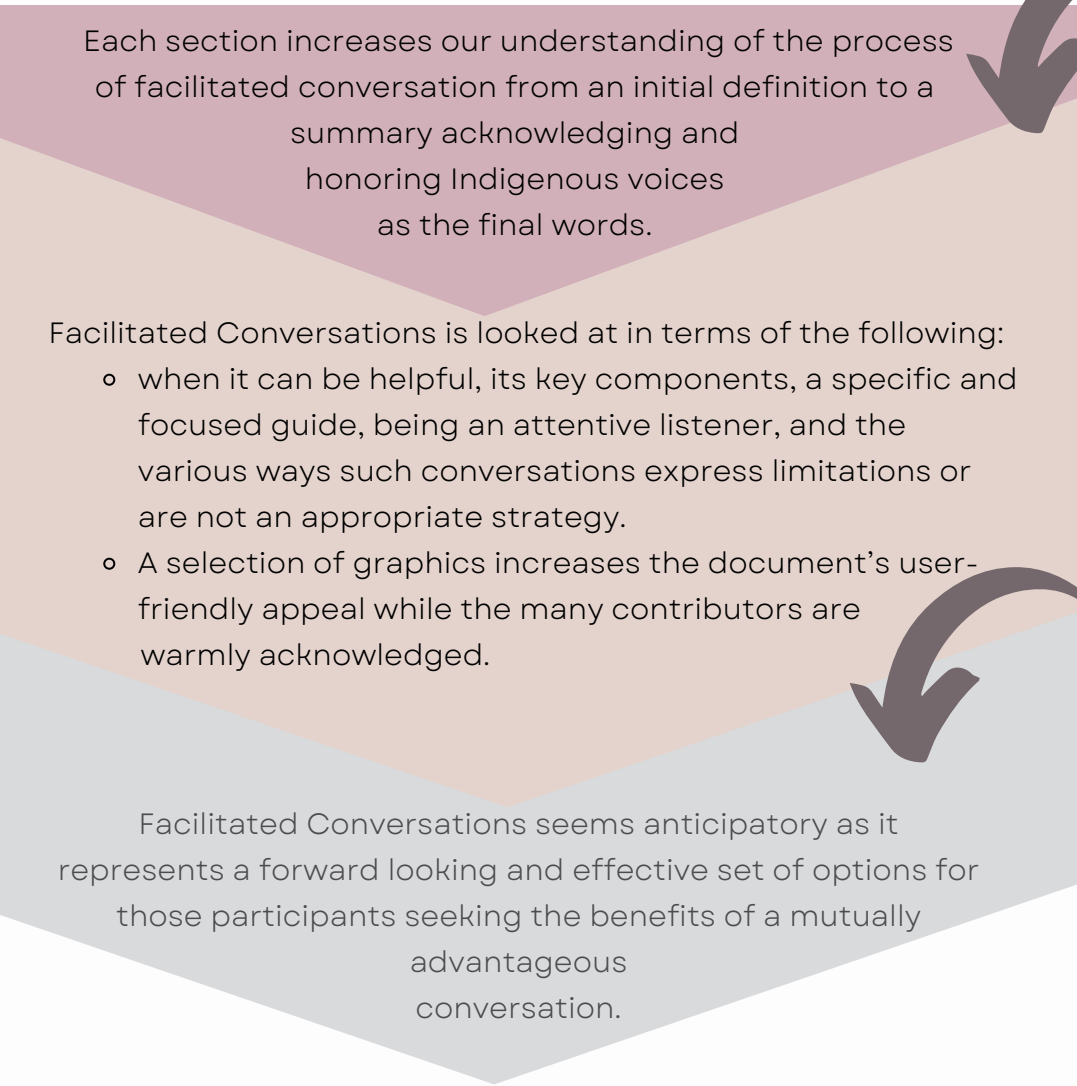
Colonialism and the residential school experience represents a blight that continues to ripple through the community like an ongoing toxin. Such experiences potentially generate emotional landmines that often derail and thwart important conversations between individuals, or groups.

Indigenous voices from within the community are prominently considered guides throughout the document. Facilitated Conversations has been enriched by powerful direct quotations from the community that speak not only about trauma but also about the authentic deactivation strategies displayed throughout the manual.

Restorative practices begin by getting physical—we exist in both body and mind. Breakdowns in communication begin at our beginning with our physiological self. A brief focus on the HPA Axis system suggests how our body's nervous system sets the stage for future perceptual distortions that upset the most well intended conversation. The HPA axis describes the coordinated relationship between the hypothalamus and pituitary gland, located near the brain stem, and the adrenal glands—resting on top of the kidneys. Elevated cortisol levels from continuous activation of the HPA axis, due to real world stressors and trauma, wear on the body and mind.

Anxiety, fatigue, and depression are just a few of the byproducts of our fight or flight mechanism that can trigger behaviors leading to lost opportunities and conversations that can't be saved.

Facilitated Conversations is composed of 12 self- explanatory sections.



This document has a potentially real-world application as a training manual. This is fitting and appropriate as the voices of its contributors have called for its practical use within the community.

Practical applications represent the logical next chapter. Community voices within the document call for this process to begin. People want to use this tool now. Let the work begin.

Facilitated Conversations: TRAUMA 101

➤	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In a facilitated conversation, the facilitator(s) guide and shape conversation between individuals and groups, with often conflicting viewpoints, toward a common ground workable to all.
➤	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Questions and discussions then serve as tools used to create a respectful environment in which a reasonable agenda can develop and where safe ground rules point the way toward success.• However, conversations can and are derailed by the traumatic triggers within each participant’s personal life. We are the sum of our experiences and old histories die hard. So, our past emotional scars are imprinted within us and call with an insistence that often demands attention at the most awkward time.
➤	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognizing emerging triggers and responding with sensible deactivation strategies need to be a must in the facilitator’s tool kit as suggested in the manual.

TRAUMA

may be defined this way:

'it results from the exposure to an incident or series of events that are emotionally disturbing or life threatening with lasting adverse effects on the individuals functioning and mental, physical, social, and emotional, and spiritual well- being' (IOTIC 2014).

➤	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traumatic triggers create chaos in well-intentioned conversations. Understanding trauma, its activation and deactivation, then becomes an important strategy for the effective facilitator.
➤	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of effective examples demonstrate the type of traumatic triggers found within a discussion and the influence on its participants. A contributor spoke of her residential school experience. "Residential school made us lose our places in our families.... you don't talk back to your elder siblings; you don't talk back to your parents." These cultural expectations were extinguished.
➤	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following examples demonstrate an escalating range of triggering behaviors: body language and tone, leaving, remaining silent, one-sided conversations-feeling talked at, interruptions, being corrected, or insulted, and eye rolling. The examples offer a demonstration of traumatic triggering and conversations going side-ways as trust and safety breaks down and common ground is lost.
➤	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disrespect can start a disruptive range of triggering behaviors that undermine the most well-intentioned conversation.
➤	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to negative life experiences creates traumatic triggers that turn conversations into emotionally charged reactions that collapse opportunities for tough conversations and their potentially successful resolution. Deactivation strategies begin with questions: objective, reflective, interpretive, and decisional. Facilitators guide conversations so that people can reach beneficial conclusions. Deactivation strategies or grounding strategies are an important part of the facilitator's toolkit. Basic grounding strategies create separation from emotional pain by focusing on the outside world rather than the inner self. – (Maryann Rigoni: Robinson).
➤	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounding techniques help people gain control of overwhelming feelings. Uncomfortable participants might be encouraged to focus on their physical surroundings and breathing. A facilitator might also use humor to ease strong emotions while also offering calming reassurances that end goals can be achieved. Calming techniques speak to the trust and safety that a facilitated conversation tries to create.
➤	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitated Conversations provide a mindful discussion of triggering situations and grounding techniques. The manual also discusses some mental health issues that do limit the effectiveness of a facilitated conversation. Facilitated Conversations offer a real world practical approach that speaks to its use in the healing and restorative justice process.
➤	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An elder said, 'we need to know this for self-government. Facilitated Conversations, guided by a skilled facilitator, offers a therapeutic strategy for clients to move forward effectively toward a reasonable endpoint that works.



What are Facilitated Conversations?

“A facilitated conversation is designed to address issues at a formative stage to prevent issues becoming more deep-seated and escalating to a more formal process.”

– Kim Ruben

To understand what a facilitated conversation is, it is easiest to begin by breaking-down the words facilitated and conversation. By definition, a conversation is: a talk, especially an informal one, between two or more people, in which news and ideas are exchanged. A conversation is an oral exchange of sentiments, observations, opinions, or ideas. Moving on, to facilitate is to make an action or process easier, to help bring about a goal or objective endpoint.

Joining these definitions, a facilitated conversation is when a neutral third party helps to bring about a talk between two or more people. In this conversation there is an exchange of opinions, ideas, observations, and sentiments. The facilitation by a third-party individual(s) can be used to ensure that time and space are shared equally or fairly; so that all present have a voice. In this sense, a facilitator guides the conversation forward by summarizing what participants say, and by asking questions when clarification is needed. Moreover, a facilitated conversation is a conversation guided toward a common goal that is shared by its participants.

To better understand what a facilitated conversation is, it is also helpful to consider what it is not. A facilitated conversation is not mediation. Mediation depends on the presence of a dispute, disagreement, or conflict; whereas a facilitated conversation does not. The purpose of a facilitator is simply to keep the conversation on track by ensuring that everyone has the chance to express themselves- have a voice; and that their opinions or ideas are reasonably understood. For example, a conversation about the placement of a parent into a long-term care or nursing home, may be a conversation that siblings would want to have facilitated. There may be a range of aspects to consider in this never easy type of decision.

While facilitation does not require a conversation to be based on conflict, facilitated conversations do sometimes address a dispute or disagreement.

For example, if two neighbours are in disagreement over a matter that does not pertain to the law, they may still choose to have a facilitator present as they attempt to form a resolve.

In any emotionally charged situation where two parties passionately disagree having a facilitator present may help guide the conversation

During a facilitated conversation, there is adequate time for each party to share their perspectives of the topic at hand, including the reasoning behind their beliefs.

This ensures a direction that is productive toward forming some level of understanding or common ground. Remember that it is not the facilitator's role to form an agreement; but rather to guide the conversation so that a solution may naturally be formed between both parties. In this sense, facilitation is not about convincing others.

Here the facilitator may ask questions or help summarize the perspectives of participants, to ensure that all viewpoints are accurately presented and understood. As each participant provides this insight the intent is not to persuade others that one position is correct. Rather, it is to help others gain a more fulsome understanding of how each participant's position was reached.

Equally, a facilitated conversation is not a debate. Individuals do not need to prove their position to be the correct one. The purpose of facilitation is to guide flexibility in a conversation toward multiple perspectives being heard and considered. Although no party is there to defend their position, openness to others' views is a necessity, or precondition to engagement.

Facilitated conversations are about reaching a more desirable relationship, restoring bonds, and creating more harmony and peace. It is not about drawing greater divisions or increasing a rigid positioning on points. Facilitated conversations are never about one's own desire to figure out how to come out ahead. Instead, they are about creating space for both parties to feel seen and heard in their views. In a facilitated conversation, opposing viewpoints may be exchanged. This, however, does not mean an argument. An argument is an exchange of divergent or opposite viewpoints with generally angry or heated tones. It is important to maintain focus on individual tone and delivery. This helps maintain a productive path toward understanding and compromise, with solution focused goals or endpoints in mind.

Section 3

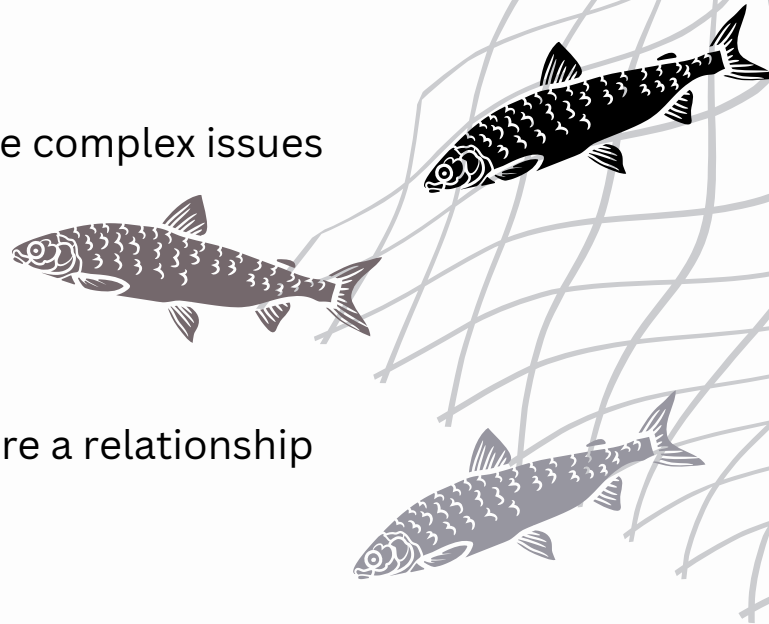
When are Facilitated Conversations Helpful?

“It would be really helpful for town meetings. Everybody would get a chance to speak up no arguments involved.”

- Jeffery Hunter

A facilitated conversation can be helpful when you want to:

- A** Address dysfunctional communication, misunderstandings, or hurt feelings
- B** Come to a Solution
- C** Make decisions to solve complex issues
- D** Re-establish Trust
- E** Create a bond or restore a relationship
- F** Move Forward



“Facilitated conversation should be the basis for any discussion. Especially in our community; many issues need to be addressed. Having situations addressed through a facilitated conversation leaves more room for mutual agreements and understanding individuals’ opinions.”

-Kianna Goeson



Addressing dysfunctional communication, misunderstandings, or hurt feelings

Often what makes a conversation difficult is the emotional investment of participants to the matter of discussion. Emotionally charged conversations are often difficult to have because participants have a strong sense of care toward the conversation.

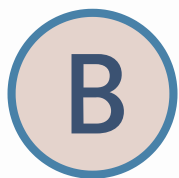
When a conversation is charged with emotion, it may cause the discussion to lose its direction or purpose. In a passionate discussion, emotions may influence tone, volume of voice, and choice of words. What this means is sometimes when conversations get heated the tones that people use can sound rude, condescending, angry, frustrated, dismissive, and sarcastic as examples. The volume of a person's voice may become raised which can be perceived as intimidating, and aggressive.

EMPATHY:

*the ability to understand
and share the feelings
of another*

Alternatively, a person may speak in such a soft low voice which can be frustrating. The speaker loses conviction and credibility in what they have to say; while the listener may be annoyed at having to ask the speaker to repeat themselves or perceive this as a tactic. Heated conversations may include innuendoes, contentious, vulgar, or belittling word choices. Having a facilitator present during such instances can be helpful, reminding all of the purpose and ground rules of the conversation, creating a safe space for a more respectful exchange. For example, take or give a minute; a short break to process any overwhelming feelings or thoughts may be all that is needed to continue productively.

Often with a little self reflection we are able to own when we were potentially not at our best within a conversation. A facilitator would be able to raise participants' attention to needs such as this (i.e., dysfunctional communication, misunderstandings, or hurt feelings), and support them to re-engage in respectful conversation where it is possible. Without a facilitator, conversational tension can be difficult to navigate, because any desire to restore respectful communication requires a collaboration from all participants.



Come to a Solution

While conflict is not an essential element when engaging in a facilitated conversation, facilitation can be a useful tool in bringing people together to resolve a conflict. At the same time, it is important to remember that it is not the job of the facilitator to offer up proposals and potential solutions. For a personal conflict to be resolved, those who are personally affected must sit and commit to working through their deeper-rooted issues and have open and safe discussions.

While a facilitator can help to foster a safe environment, and aid in effectively communicating points-of-view, any real solution must ultimately be formed through the mutual understanding and agreement of persons directly involved.

As an example, if there was a conflict between two coworkers, to avoid continued conflict, they may decide to simply ignore one another. This does not effectively solve, however, the fact that they work alongside one another; and need to find a way to cordially continue to function as part of the greater workplace.

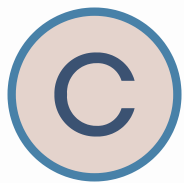
**SOLUTION:
BASED**

*learn what can be done differently
by using their existing skills,
strategies and ideas – rather than
focusing on the problem*

Actually, discussing what is at the root of the conflict, how did the parties get to their positions, can lead to far more effective dealings with one another, and comfort, rather than ongoing avoidance. Avoidance over time increases the discomfort for every person within the environment; and can result in less satisfaction with work, considering leaving the workplace, and over time may create a toxic work environment.



Being able to address the root causes of conflict allow for the restoration of peace and order which will have more longstanding and lasting impacts.

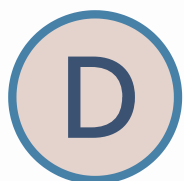


Make decisions to solve complex issues

In aiming to negotiate a verbal commitment, agreement, or resolution, a facilitator may ask questions to guide the conversation on a path that maintains inquisitiveness and curiosity of both parties' perspectives. With regards to a conversation about the participants' relationship, for example, a facilitator might ask about each person's perspective, personal efforts and impacts on the relationship, and interpretation of the other's parties' influences.

Facilitators are not mediators, and therefore are indifferent to whether a commitment, agreement, or resolution is formed. They do not favour any particular side of a discussion, and do not insert themselves as negotiators to seek compromises from either party. Using a need-oriented approach, facilitators only interject to guide conversational respect, productivity, and focus. This is especially helpful in conversations about complex issues where there may be various participant outcome needs to consider.

"Having more trauma informed people who are willing to step out of the bystander role and foster safe spaces, is so necessary to exploring challenges" - Corrine Bullock



Re-establish Trust

Meaningful conversations require trust. Without trust between participants the conversation is likely to remain on a more superficial level which does not contribute to a genuine or lasting outcome. In repairing a relationship, or forming a mutual agreement, the first step is to introduce or re-establish trust. Trust is built through genuine exchanges that are reinforced by physical and emotional bravery. What makes a person feel safe within a conversation is to know that they will not be attacked verbally or physically. A verbal attack is hurtful when it is done publicly; it can evoke feelings of shame, worthlessness and anger. If a verbal attack occurs more privately it can cause the person on the receiving end to feel unsafe, doubted, and fearful.

What makes a person feel safe within a conversation is to know that they will not be attacked verbally or physically.

Facilitated conversations attempt to foster a brave environment because regardless of the precautions taken, it is impossible to ensure physical and emotional safety within the context of a facilitated conversation. Instead, your role as a facilitator is to foster a safer space that encourages brave participation. Examples of what this means are when participants are brave enough to speak openly, brave enough to listen without judgement, and to be curious about one another's perspectives and feelings. This creates space for genuine and vulnerable interactions to occur, which innately builds trust. This is not to say necessarily that participants will build trust between one another, but perhaps it will be possible for them to build trust in themselves- in their own ability to show-up for themselves.

...your role as a facilitator is to foster a safer space that encourages brave participation.



The presence of a facilitator may allow participants to enhance the ability to speak openly, and to listen and respond before they become defensive and react. We get further through collaboration than competitiveness. Over time, and if these skills are practiced outside of the facilitated conversation, this may help to restore personal trust between participants, or between the ego and self.



Create a bond or restore a relationship



Defensiveness and reactivity are common causes for a breakdown in communication, and are typically attributed to perceived judgement, unmet needs, or an otherwise lack of consideration for a person's opinion or ideas. An example of not getting needs met could be inadequate time for a person to explain or express themselves or point of view.

RESPECT:

accepting somebody for who they are, even when they're different from you or you don't agree with them.

Another way breakdowns in communication occur is through disruption, interjections, or conversations being ignored. When interests are not shared, some ways this is communicated is through dismissive actions such as: changing subjects, not responding, derisive nonverbal (i.e.) eye-rolling, smirking, laughing. Similarly, when any of the above occurs, it communicates that the individual's opinion does not matter. Another behavioural response to these perceptions is resistance to listen or contribute to the conversation, or emotional and behavioural shutdown. In the presence of a facilitator, just as participants can trust they are safely able to express themselves, they can also trust that it is safe to listen to a person's full sentiment before they respond. In this sense, the role of the facilitator is not only to guide the conversation, but also to guide the listening.

Facilitation does not necessarily ensure that a person will have all their relational needs met from the other participant.

However, a facilitator does ensure that a person's immediate needs of respect and inclusion are upheld within the conversation. From there, both parties are better equipped to validate one another's perspectives, and form a collaborative decision, plan, solution, or goal.

The purpose of facilitation is to aid or restore the ability of participants to hold and share space, accurately understand one another, and demonstrate respect for what each person can and cannot offer.

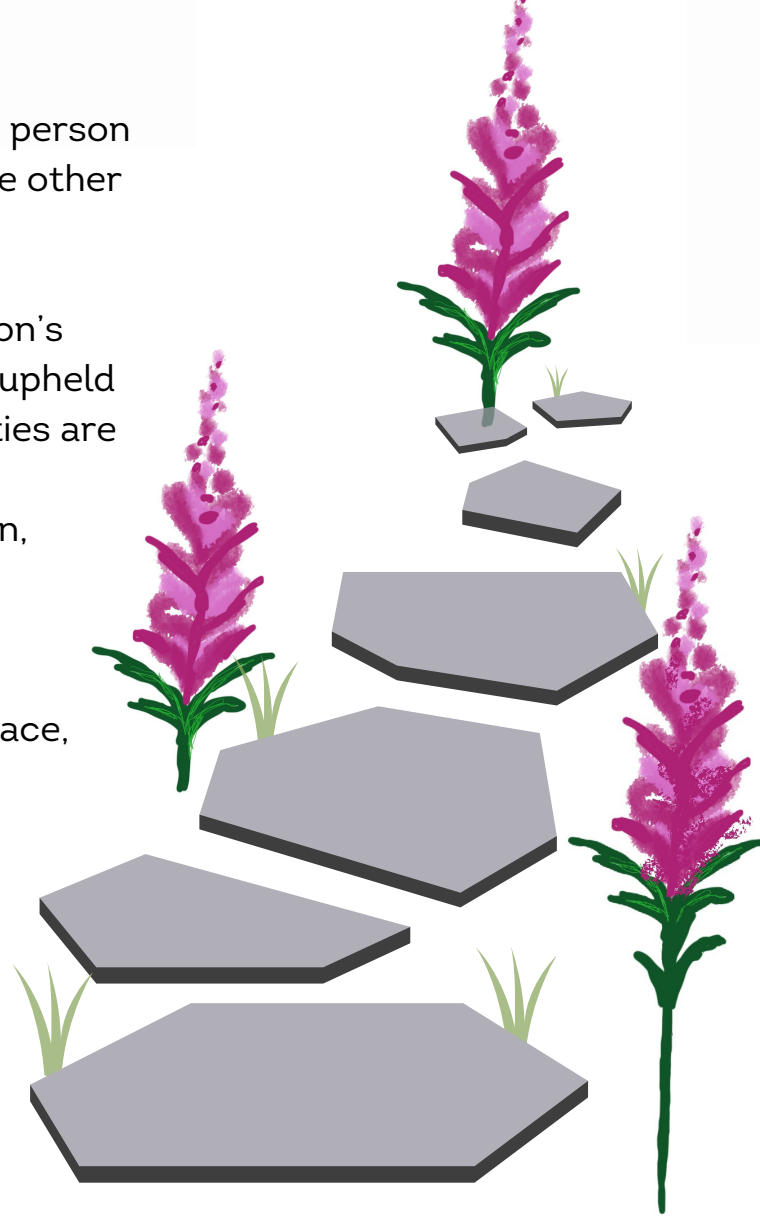


Move Forward

Facilitated conversations are future focused. A key purpose of facilitated conversations is to move the dialogue forward, whether toward a decision, plan, solution, goal, or simply a greater shared understanding.

In simple terms, you can't move forward while looking backwards. This is not about fixing all past mistakes. It is about what you can change or adapt for in the future. The overarching purpose is for participants to gain a forward-moving momentum in their personal and shared perspectives, and their decision-making capacities.

Ultimately, facilitation achieves this by fostering open communication, attuned listening, and greater clarity. Facilitated conversations acknowledge that participation occurs when there is a shared desire to move forward, and facilitation therefore prepares and looks toward reparation and restoration. These are key tenets to rebuilding relationships.



Section 4

What are the Key Components of a Facilitated Conversation?

“We need to know this for self government.” - Mabel Brown

The key components of a facilitated conversation are:

A. Teamwork: Respect, collaboration, empowerment, needs-based approach

B. Focus: Productivity, relevancy, purposefulness

Key components of facilitated conversations are teamwork and focus where the facilitator and participants work together to move ideas, opinions, and perceptions forward. As a team working toward the common goal of moving forward, values that align with their ability to do so include respect, collaboration, empowerment, and a needs-based approach. While each of these guides the team in how they interact, it is critical for them to stay focused on their why- the goals, purpose, relevance, and productivity of the conversation.

A. Teamwork

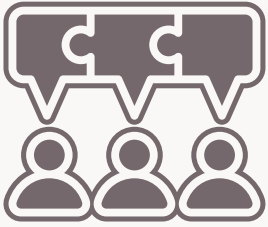
RESPECT



A lack, or perceived lack of respect is generally the first contributor to a derailed conversation. As a conversation becomes emotionally charged, and verges on argumentation, indicators of respect being lost include: a change in the tone or volume of voice, choice of words, and nature and direction of the exchange (i.e., insults, criticism, etc.). Other examples of disrespect can include speaking over others, eye-rolling, finger-pointing, huffing, or sneering, making demands, threats, or accusations.

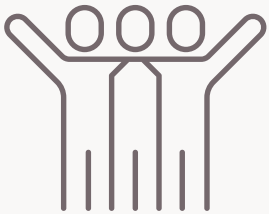
While this is not an exhaustive list, disrespect exists on a continuum, and may differ based on the individual, and their go-to ways of dealing with conflicts. (See Appendix A) Any time that disrespect or perceived disrespect has occurred in a facilitated conversation, a commitment to restoring respectful engagement is necessary by all parties. It can help to have individuals verbally own their behaviours that may have contributed to the breakdown in communication; and for all to agree that the established list of negative behaviours will not be employed in this new safe space moving forward.

COLLABORATION



Each participant within the facilitated conversation must commit to being invested in working toward a common purpose. Every person within the conversation is important and the loss of anyone's participation is a loss to all. In this sense, the goal is for each person to remain present for the entire duration of the conversation. It is important that no one person acts as a leader, authority, or voice for others. The conversation should build off everyone's contributions, naturally leading to answers, outcomes, or understanding. With the goal of a mutually established outcome, there is no need to compete within this forum. We rise together by lifting one another up.

EMPOWERING



A facilitated conversation allows participants to own their voices and positions. It is important to remember that understanding another person does not necessarily mean agreeing with them. Facilitated conversations are about sharing, actively listening, and having open-mindedness to others' opinions and perspectives.

Without trying to change anyone's point of view, a facilitated conversation allows for collaborative communication through understanding and respect. This empowers participants to own their own truths, and helps them to empower others, by openly listening to others speak theirs. In simple terms, this means listening with an open mind to get a sense of why another person has the opinions and perspectives they do. It is not about getting them to shift or change their perspectives. It is about appreciating it and finding ways to work together while having your own viewpoint also understood and respected.

NEEDS-BASED APPROACH



Often communication fails when individual needs become competing priorities in a conversation. Each person has unique needs with respect to communication styles, and relationships. It can be difficult to appreciate the needs of others in those contexts when your own needs are not being met. Facilitated conversation addresses this concern by setting ground rules mindful of balanced contributions where each participant can set boundaries and contribute to the conversation in full. One need that many overlook when trying to reach a solution is the need for an apology. Apologies are a very difficult thing for folks; some view apologizing as a weakness. Apologizing is actually an artform. It takes thought, genuineness, and crafted wording to get it right. This is a skill set that everyone should try to develop- it can serve you well.

“Not all individuals are educated on active listening and facilitated conversations. Training is needed and prep work is necessary before a discussion allows participants to read these pages or summarized version.”-Kianna Goeson

B. Focus

PRODUCTIVITY



In a facilitated conversation, productivity is measured by the ability of participants to work through an unshared perspective or problem. In a facilitated conversation, there is value in being able to thoroughly understand a person's perspective- its pros and cons. But it is important to note that this is not an opportunity to unleash on another person. Productive means that what you contribute is meant to genuinely assist in moving the discussion forward; the points you provide are food for thought and further consideration allowing others to be inquisitive and curious about what brought you to your position.

RELEVANCY

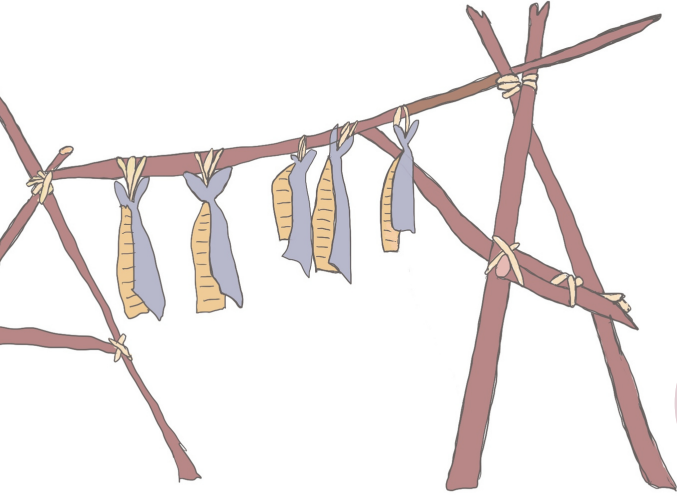


The focus of a facilitated conversation is the specific issue at-hand of the discussion. This could be a misunderstanding, disagreement, conflict, etc. When past occurrences or issues arise in conversation, they take away from the focal point while distracting from the initial purpose of the discussion. For example, gunny-sacking refers to an emotional outburst that happens when a person fails to address previous hurts over a time period; and then blows-up when a 'final straw' is placed on them. A facilitator helps to by-pass this by acting as a guide regarding the agreed upon subject. This can be accomplished by reminding participants of the conversations subject if they begin to go off-topic. A facilitator also supports conversational goals as they ask questions and make comments that refocus these perspectives.

PURPOSEFUL



Part of the facilitator's role is to ask questions intended to unveil complexities while bringing about an understanding of perspectives. By asking questions and focusing on the subject matter, facilitators support mindfulness regarding reflection, and a deeper understanding of other participants and approaches. Questions are not intended to lay blame, to cause friction, or to be met with defensiveness. Questions and responses are purposeful to bring about greater shared understanding and empathy for each participant. Once understood, questions are directed towards ensuring the outcomes continue to be considerate of each participants needs; by guiding through questioning how the decisions being made are inclusive of these considerations. How might these impact each of the participants based on what they have shared? It is important that participants also speak with purpose, using intentional language, as they share and respond. To use intentional language is to choose words and phrases that most clearly outline a perspective or idea, and which communicate the perspective or idea in a way that is respectful and open to commentary.



Section 5

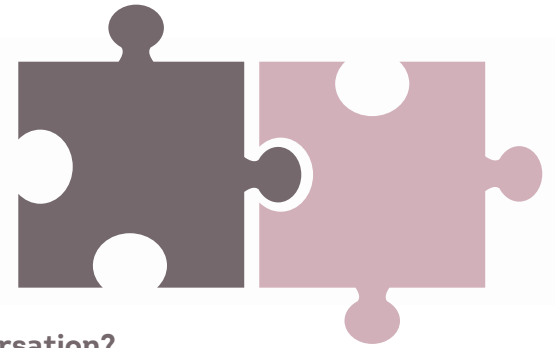
Facilitator's Guide

"Also know what you're saying. Know that is what you want to say! Think about what you're saying." – Shelley Haogak

As a facilitator, your role is to foster teamwork and focus among participants. This guide will provide you with a number of suggestions toward achieving this. But it is not absolute and should be shaped by your organization's policies and procedures.

In an effort to foster teamwork (respect, collaboration, empowerment, and needs-based approach) and focus (productivity, relevancy, purposefulness), a facilitator can take the following steps:

1 EXPLAIN THE NATURE AND USE OF FACILITATED CONVERSATIONS (REFERENCE SECTIONS 2-4)



2 ESTABLISH A FOCUS BY ASKING PARTICIPANTS:

- a) What is the subject of the conversation?
- b) What are the goals of the conversation?
 - Are there any specific outcomes that you hope to achieve?
 - How important is the outcome to you? (See Appendix B)

3 ESTABLISH GROUND RULES BY ASKING PARTICIPANTS:

- a) What are your individual needs from this conversation?
 - Establish conversational goals by asking participants what they hope to achieve. (See Appendix D)
- b) What are your personal boundaries in this conversation?
 - Use their responses to create a list of ground rules for the conversation.
 - Ensure that all participants meet an agreement about the ground rules before continuing.
 - Some examples of ground rules: no derogatory language, keep a conversational tone of voice, no aggressive body language, no eye-rolling, not interrupting, etc. (See Appendix A)

4

FACILITATE A MEANINGFUL EXCHANGE BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS BY:

- a) **Encouraging participants to be open, reflective, curious and openminded**
 - Each person has something to offer. For example: If Participant A disagrees with something that Participant B has said, rather than rejecting Participant B's perspective, encourage Participant A to ask questions that will further their mutual understanding. This will enhance your ability to channel disagreement and misunderstandings from conflict, allowing the conversation to advance mindfully.
 - You can also offer further support by asking clarifying questions from the perspective of an unbiased third-party. Refrain from asking questions if you feel judgement arising; pause to reflect on the nature of your question and the direction of the conversation. Then, if you still feel it is necessary, for the purpose of clarifying or directing the flow of the conversation, ask away.
 - Questions are not intended to lay blame or cause friction. Questions and responses should be purposed with enhancing the understanding of participants, and responses should be heard empathetically. This brings about a genuine shared understanding and empathy for each participant.

- b) **Encourage participants to move at the speed of trust:**
 - If a participant does not feel comfortable sharing a certain perspective or answering a particular question; respectfully direct the conversation forward. Perhaps there will be an opportunity to circle-back at a later time; or perhaps, the input is not necessary to the goals of the conversation.
 - It is helpful to encourage participants to use "I" statements when talking about their feelings or perspectives (e.g., I feel... I think... I am...). This helps personal perspectives to be conveyed without placing blame, guilt, judgements, or shame onto others.

5

SUMMARY OF "FACILITATE A MEANINGFUL EXCHANGE BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS"

- a) **Listen with intent- know when you should actively facilitate the conversation.**
- b) **Focus on conversational goals.**
- c) **Ensure personal boundaries are respected by establishing ground rules and encouraging breaks when necessary.**
- d) **Ask questions to help participants achieve a deeper level of understanding.**
- e) **Clarify and summarize key points.**

PROACTIVE FACILITATION

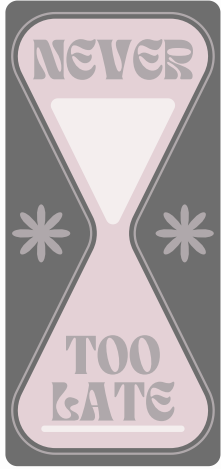
- ➡ As a facilitator, it is important to be mindful of how participants are feeling throughout the conversation.
- ➡ This includes from the time they arrive to the end of the conversation; where you may consider contextual factors such as existing power imbalances, differences in perspectives, harm done, etc.
- ➡ With a mindful approach, you are better able to anticipate the impacts of the conversation on participants, and thus able to anticipate emotional responses that may arise in them.
- ➡ By being aware of important contextual factors, you as the facilitator, can be on a higher alert to the necessity of your role, and able to predict and be ready to participate as necessary. (See Appendix C)

Section 6

Focused Conversations Guide

“Don’t stop someone from feeling their feelings; but also, don’t let their feelings overtake the conversation.” – Shelley Haogak

A focused conversation is a guided conversation technique based on a specific method of questioning. It helps people process information and reach their own thoughtful conclusions. Focused conversation involves discussing and answering a series of questions based on four levels of thinking:



OBJECTIVE QUESTIONS

dealing with data and sensory observation

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

related to personal reactions and associations.

INTERPRETIVE QUESTIONS

about meaning, significance and implications.

DECISIONAL QUESTIONS

concerned with resolution.

When using focused conversation, it is important to follow the order of the questions from Objective to Reflective to Interpretive to Decisional (ORID), while adjusting the number of questions in each area to meet your needs.

THE BENEFITS OF ASKING QUESTIONS:

- HELP US TO MAKE DECISIONS.
- HELP US TO BE MORE CREATIVE.
- HELPS US TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS – INTERESTS, UNDERSTANDING, BUILD RAPPORT.
- HELPS TO LEAD – CONFIDENCE AND HUMILITY.
- HELPS TO BE EMPATHETIC, RESILIENT, BALANCED AND SUCCESSFUL.
- HELPS TO BE MORE OPENMINDED.
- HELPS TO DEMONSTRATE YOU ARE LISTENING.
- HELPS TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATION SKILLS.

Interesting Fact

AT AGE 4YRS WE ASK ABOUT 300 QUESTIONS A DAY

“Everyone has questions, and everyone has fears and it is certainly okay for everyone to have them. We should work at getting comfortable with choosing to explore, ask and overcome them with each other. When we do this, relief and connection follows.” –

Corrine Bullock

Section 7

Listening with Intent



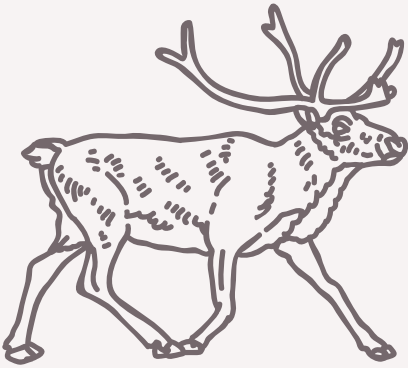
“As Indigenous Peoples it is through our story telling we became good listeners.”

– Susan Peffer

Conversations can be difficult to have. It can be challenging when authentically speaking about our opinions, wishes, desires and interests. We may worry how others will react to our positions, or be embarrassed that they differ from an alternative or more popular perspective.

Conversations can also be difficult to have if we are unsure of how to start them. Examples are: How do I bring up this topic for discussion without sounding ill informed, so that it is well received, so that it's not shut down, so that others don't take offense. The possibilities for delaying an essential conversation are endless. In many instances, it can be our own level of discomfort and desire to not make a situation worse. You may find yourself thinking: how long can I put this conversation off? This may be an indication that having a facilitated conversation is an avenue worth exploring. This conversation can also be a door that may hurt to open.

When entering into a tough conversation with others, we may notice our internal monologue telling us messages such as: OK, let's just get this over with. If this is your internal dialogue, you are likely about to embark on a conversation that would benefit from some facilitation.



It's human nature to avoid something when it feels difficult or uncomfortable. However, we need to get used to sitting with discomfort. This can sound contradictory, because from a young age, we are taught to regulate ourselves by creating a safe and comfortable environment for ourselves and others. An uncomfortable environment is often characterised by tension, awkwardness, feelings of discomfort or the urge to avoid or argue.

When tough conversations occur, people will often reflect on it by stating, “Was that really necessary?”, “This wasn't the time or place,” or “Can't they just agree to disagree?” Generally, we try to avoid public displays of conflict at all costs. Disagreement can often be viewed as conflict, therefore, best to avoid such a discussion; however, these divergent views can teach us a lot if we can listen with an open mind. Facilitated conversations are more about learning to listen to all perspectives fully to gain a credible understanding of how that person came to their viewpoint. It is not about discussing which viewpoint is the correct one.

“With events of upbringings and residential school experience, some people have blocked out their past, to where they don’t know why they don’t want to go to the past events or emotions.” – Shelley Haogak

Reflection

1. Have you ever used kindness to avoid discomfort or confrontation?
2. What happens when you use kindness to avoid discomfort or confrontation?
3. Are there any risks to you, if you use this method to deal with situations on an ongoing basis?
4. What are some of the ways you have used to avoid discomfort or confrontation?
5. Where are you in life?



Common responses might look like:

- Leaving the conversation
- Shutting down the conversation
- Not participating in the conversation but remaining present
- Negotiating for a compromising position
- Attempting to shift/change the topic of conversation.
- Advising that the conversation is for another time and place.
- Feeling walked-over
- Overreactions

As mentioned, facilitated conversations are really about the ability to listen well to others- to gain an understanding of what has led them to their perspectives. This requires an understanding and improvement of listening skills.

Basic elements to being a good listener:

- Taking listening seriously
- Resist distractions.
- Don’t speak for others.
- Don’t be diverted by the appearance or delivery.
- Listen to the main points.
- Take notes.
- Suspend judgement.
- Hear feelings without reacting to them.



“Learning to actively listen is a life skill.” – Kianna Goeson

Beyond these basic elements, it's valuable to understand the many forms of listening. We may consider ourselves to be good listeners, perhaps we are very good at being an appreciative listener, but maybe not as much when it comes to comprehensive, informational, or critical listening, as an example. When developing skills as a listener, it is important to familiarize yourself with the various forms of listening where you may wish to improve your ability to be a better listener.

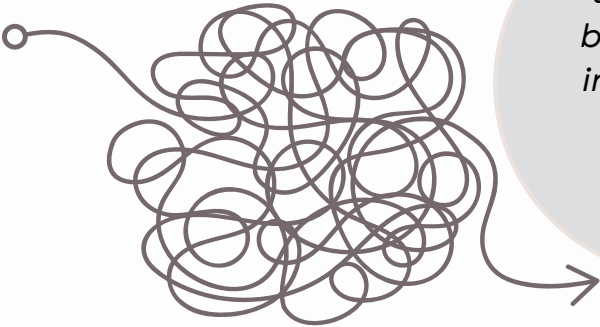
Types of listening:

Appreciative Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening for pleasure or enjoyment. • The most obvious forms of appreciative listening include music, media (TV, Film), or audio books.
Empathic Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to provide emotional support for the speaker. • This is the kind of listening that we offer to our family, friends, or to clients as a working professional.
Comprehensive Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to understand the message of the speaker. • A very popular example of this kind of listening is Ted Talks.
Critical Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to evaluate a message for the purpose of accepting, rejecting, or forming your own opinion on the information presented. • Critical listening involves just that - being focused about what is being said and taking the important bits while making judgement as needed. • It means cutting through what is being said to focus on the most important, relevant parts. • There are certain roles that call for this particular skill set. As an example, working as a 911 operator would require the ability to critically listen and pull out the most important pieces of information from the caller. This ensures the most crucial information is accurately dispatched to the emergency personnel responding.
Biased listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening for only what we specifically want to hear. • This form of listening may be our most frequent type of listening; as it is a way of confirming our position, expectations, and opinions. • Being aware of this type of listening may help us to become more self-reflective; as we can understand how we come to our own perspectives. • As an example, a form of biased listening that one might consider is religious ceremonies.

Sympathetic listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to show that we understand what a person is saying and how it is affecting them. • Sympathetic listening differs from empathic listening https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw Brene Brown Video explains this well. • A good example of where sympathetic listening would be an asset might be as an employee at a complaints call centre.
Informational Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to learn and understand the information being conveyed by the speaker. • This requires paying attention as it is the objective of learning. • This listening would be typical of students in lectures and audiences of political debates.
Selective listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to only hear what we want to hear, while often tuning out the other things because we find them irrelevant, boring, or are being disrespectful. • Of all the types of listening, this is probably the only one that can have negative connotations and causes disconnection. • It suggests trouble with communicating, empathizing, or paying attention. It is important to know that this is a form of listening; so that we can be conscious when it is taking place. • It is important to reduce our tendency to fall back or resort to this adverse listening type.
Rapport Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This type of listening is the one we use when we're trying to build a relationship by engaging with what's being said. • It requires showing a keen interest while preparing to respond with something appropriate. • This type of listening builds connection and is the basis of strong relationships, whether it be in our personal life, close relationships, workplace, or business.
Generous Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening with compassion and empathy perhaps the most desired listening type in which to engage. • A facilitated conversation is the concept of generous listening. • To be a generous listener means providing time, space, and openness in a judgement free safe space. • Generous listening requires actively processing and considering what the speaker is communicating, without interrupting and reserve questioning, shut down doubtfulness and allow silences.

Section 8

Common Ways that Conversations Fall Apart



“With residential school, parents lost their child (at age 7) they came back years later (age 17) and the connection / bond was lost. Residential school made us lose our places in our families. You cannot talk back to your elder siblings; you don’t talk back to your parents, these cultural expectations were extinguished.”

– Wilma Dosedel

Conversations don’t always go as intended. It’s not always about what we are saying, but how we are saying it. Our body language, tone and use of words are powerful tools when it comes to communication. While our words might be saying one thing, our tone and body language could be saying something the complete opposite, or vice versa. You may not even be aware that you’re giving wordless signals or using language that leads to misunderstandings. It also helps to be aware of the person you are talking to; be aware of their past as this often determines how they react. We will all encounter at some time in our life, a conversation that is intentionally set out to leave us feeling uncomfortable. In terms of facilitated conversations, this should be avoided at all costs.

Let’s explore some examples of common ways that conversations fall apart.

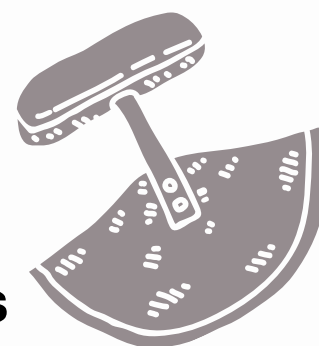
One-sided	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The conversation is flowing in only one direction. Commonly with a one-sided conversation, we feel like we are being talked at rather than talked to. It can feel like our perspective or opinion is irrelevant or not valued. You may have thoughts like “Why am I here?” or feel intimidated.
Interruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speaking over or louder than someone who is talking can stir up feelings of disrespect. It can leave the other participant(s) feeling unvalued, and inconsequential, resulting in the loss of thought or loss of interest to continue.

Dismissed (silenced)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not acknowledging or listening to others when they are speaking can result in the individual feeling unseen, unheard, reduced, unimportant, or disrespected.
Corrected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correcting someone when they are speaking is difficult to do politely and is rarely necessary. It creates a sense of being shamed, belittled, and unknowing. It suggests the listener is the authority on the subject matter.
Rushed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rushing an individual when speaking, or displaying impatience, can make a person feel as though they are taking up too much time or they are undervalued. Seeing someone with authority, you may sense that they are there for the wrong reasons.
Disrespect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being disrespectful during a conversation can include body language and tone. While 90% of communication is non-verbal, conversations frequently fall apart over tone if it is perceived to be condescending. Volume is a consideration. Some people are loud by nature; this can be perceived as obnoxious, overbearing, or aggressive. Body language also conveys messages that can negatively affect a conversation such as eye rolling, crossing arms, finger pointing, and appearing distracted.
Condescending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This involves the feeling of superiority. It can be conveyed by words or tone and will never add positively to a conversation. Words that are placating serve to do this in a more passive manner while tone will generally convey this in a demeaning fashion.
Emotions Running High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As emotions increase, our auditory reception changes physiologically which places us in survival mode. It is best to take a break when our emotions begin to run high, or the situation may continue to escalate.

Misunderstandings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Not what I said.”, “Not what I intended to say.”, “Not what I was trying to say.”; in any of these cases, typically, the message attempting to be conveyed was not received by the recipient as it was intended. Sometimes this can be due to the language used, perceived tone, wrong emphasis on wording, poor choice of wording, use of words with more than one meaning, and/or the poor ability to communicate.
Bringing Up Unrelated Issues to Current Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When this occurs, almost always, it will be perceived as an effort to instigate, aggravate and/or distract. Very seldom is this an effective technique to use when dealing with difficult conversations.
Saying Too Little	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This can include assuming others already know what you’re thinking and how you are feeling. People are not mind readers, and what may seem obvious to you is not always obvious to others. Some people may also not say too much because they are intimidated, or shy or not comfortable etc.
Having too many distractions present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although not entirely avoidable, there are steps to take to ensure a minimally distracted discussion such as having a safe and comfortable environment so conversation can be carried out practically.

“Our elders are sometimes seen as bossy or pushy but that’s how they were trained.”

– Susan Peffer



Cultural Considerations

“It can be easy to see a conversational partner as an opponent. Being side-by-side with the individual can allow you to be more focused on the same issue” – Kianna Goeson

Section 9

When are Facilitated Conversations Not Appropriate?

There are instances when a facilitated conversation would be considered inappropriate. A facilitated conversation requires an agreement of participation from all involved individuals. It also requires a safe space and a clear headspace. If the individuals you will be facilitating conversation with don't meet these requirements, it is a good indicator that a facilitated conversation will not be productive. The bolded headings below will take you through some examples.

Power Imbalances	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If there is a significant power imbalance, a facilitated conversation is not a good option. For example, consider a situation where domestic violence has taken place.• A facilitated conversation requires a space where everyone feels they have value and are safe. If a power imbalance exists, it is likely one or more participants will be hesitant to authentically engage and express themselves.
Mental Health Crisis'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When an individual is experiencing a mental health crisis, they will not have the appropriate thought processes to engage in a facilitated conversation.• While you will not be engaging in a facilitated conversation with an individual in such a state; it can be worthwhile to have awareness of these circumstances, and how best to engage in communications given the varied situations.• Additionally, this information is good to have to offer someone who is asking for assistance in communicating with a family member or friend who is experiencing a mental health crisis. Often, it is not so much of what you yourself can do for someone else but what it is you have to offer.
Thought Disturbances	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thought disturbances can make it difficult to engage in conversations that are productive.
Delusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delusions are not always related to an underlying condition, but can be a symptom of psychosis, stress, alcohol, or medication. Delusions involve a fixed or false belief that cannot be changed regardless of what evidence is presented to the contrary. If you insist on trying to correct the delusion, you risk ostracizing them from you and frustrating yourself. Avoid the situation, and talking about the delusion, as the individual is not ready to discuss reality-based challenges.

Psychotic (Disorganized Thinking), and verbally aggressive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be prudent to offer support while engaging in conversation that allows the person to vent energy. • Ensure that a safe distance is maintained, and a lowered, calm, often repetitive voice, reassures and provides support.
Hallucinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is suitable to validate the experience for the person. You can indicate that your conversational space is safe. • Attempt to have the person focus on you, offer help, while ensuring safety is maintained. • It can be helpful to be able to reality check for the individual. • If they are having auditory or visual hallucinations, you can indicate that you do not hear the sounds, or see the visions they are experiencing.
Compulsive Talking (mania)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in conversation while asking concise, specific, concrete questions using the “broken record technique” by repeating what you are stating until the individual experiencing mania accepts your statements.
Intoxication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to the individual by allowing them to vent. • Actively listen to the individual and respond by using a calm, even tone. • Listen to listen. Do not listen to respond or react. • Move the person away from others, if possible, be reassuring.
Depression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is significant to provide support through active listening. Take an empathetic approach and frequently reassure the individual by offering hope and validating their feelings. Be on their "side" to support their feelings.

Can you think of other times that you may not wish to enter a facilitated conversation?

Reflection

When I am not ready to open that door.

When I am not confident of the situation.

Personal priorities and commitments not able to expend further time or energy.

e.g., family member has passed away, dealing with grief, or having medical appointments.

Section 10

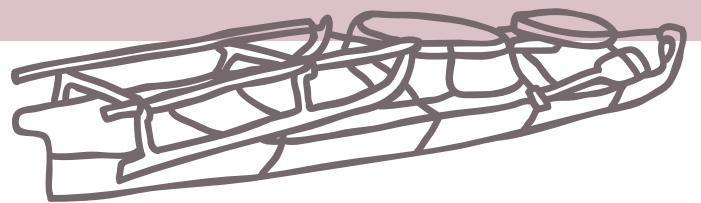
Summary:

The Final Word belonging to Indigenous Voices

Our people were always very decisive and focused on finding solutions. Our ways and traditions allowed for this. Residential school experience took this away from us and led to the disconnection that is felt today. We need to relearn our old values that were stolen from us and pass on to our younger generations. Children need to be taught the value of the land not only education through school.

“As a child, I remember these traditions helped us to be occupied with learning skills, allowing others to take care of their needs, and the community. For example, my mother would give me material and beads to sew, and then she would tend to tasks that needed to be done. I would work on my project; it taught me patience and pride in what I created and occupied me so that I was not getting in the way, finding trouble. As I grew up, the patches of material grew in size little by little as well.”

- Marlene Kagyut



Before we had nothing to compare ourselves to. When we started comparing ourselves that's when we started rebelling. This created a disconnection from one another. Part of our disconnection is that we have been expected to do everything alone. Through residential school, we were separated from our siblings. There was no one there who would help, or assist-we were alone. We couldn't talk to one another. We had to do things the way we were told to do things. Asking for help almost always resulted in punishment. We have to learn that this is not the way now. It is okay to ask for help now; and that there will not be bad consequences for doing this.



“It was good to hear the conversations that were had here from this. It would be good to start more of them.” - Jacob Pepper

“One thing to really know which is important is that it is triggering to our people now because of their residential school experience they do not want to be told what to do anymore. It is difficult for our people to take even professional criticisms now. We need to get people to understand to be professional universally.” - Anna Pingo

So how do we make these conversations happen? As Indigenous people we are very auditory and visual in the way we live and learn. This needs to be considered when facilitating. There needs to be prep work that gets done in advance of facilitating.

Facilitators also need to have a background history of our people to understand and facilitate. Ideally, we should have more trained Indigenous facilitators among our people to be the ones to do this work.

Role plays for training would be very helpful. Our people and our values are what ground us. I can hear it in each of us. We need to reconnect it within each of us.

There is a word in Inuvialuktun **“Ivaqtitut”** it means that they are ready to be independent. For example, they are able to go on their own to trap. This is strengthening. Our own language, our words are a source of strength. We need to know and find our words for these conversations.

Section 11

Appendix A:

CREATING A RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT

One way to create a respectful environment is by setting some ground rules. As participants in a Facilitated Conversation, we agree to **refrain from the following behaviours which ultimately communicate a disrespect to one another:**

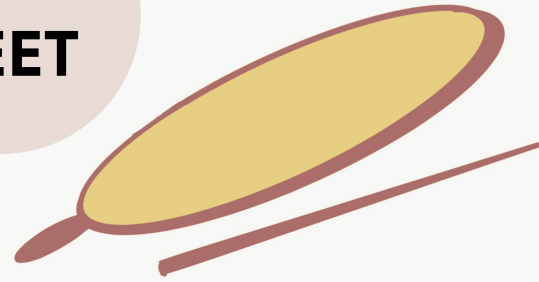
Speaking over others	Finger-pointing
Making snide remarks	Making accusations
Unnecessarily Increasing volume up to and including yelling	Dismissing
Using inappropriate tones	Walking out
o Condescending	Swearing
o Angry	Derogatory language
o Demanding	Disrupting
o Threatening	Not listening to the other person like they are not valued.
o Intimidating	Crossing arms
Eye rolling	Aggressive body language
Inattentiveness	Interrupting
Huffing	Sneering

and other behaviours people wish to identify

Appendix B:

GOALS EXERCISE WORKSHEET

Goals for the dialogue



Before a facilitated conversation is ever set up there should be goals set out for the dialogue that will take place. Knowing this helps the facilitator to develop questions that will assist. Having goals for a dialogue helps to keep a focus and reach an end point. One of the most frustrating issues with communication breakdown is when conversations become circular and repetitive, with no possible conclusion - a stalemate. Having goals for dialogue ensures that this is not an option. Participants should be aware of the goals prior to engaging; so that they commit themselves independently to reaching these. They have a collective responsibility to own their contributions to productively reach the goals identified.

Facilitator & Participants

What is the subject of conversation?

What are the goals of the conversation?

Have we done the prep work to make sure that this is a success?

Facilitator Specific

What questions might help guide this conversation?

What are some key indicators that this conversation is getting off topic?

Are there cultural factors that I need to be aware of before facilitating?

Participant Specific

Are there specific outcomes that you hope to achieve?

How important is the outcome to you?

Do I understand this process and are there any questions I need to ask before this facilitated conversation gets underway?

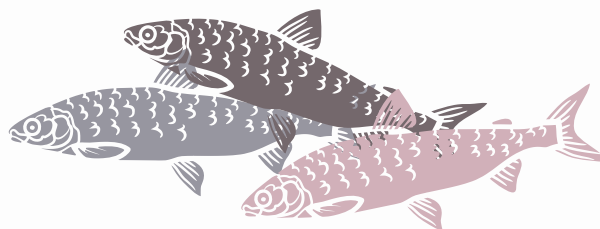


Appendix C:

POINTERS FOR FACILITATION

Facilitators shape conversation and help it flow.

This can be achieved by:



Ground rules for respectful environment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What constitutes a respectful environment?• It is worthwhile to have participants develop this list together before beginning the conversation.
Each perspective shared without interruption:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is time for discussion and questions once a person has fully shared their perspective.• Interrupting a person mid way through what they are saying results in not being fully heard, becoming distracted, and forgetting what they were in the course of saying. This devalues the person speaking.
Need to be open to multiple perspectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is never really just one way of looking at anything; and that is the most important thing to remember as you begin a facilitated conversation.• Each person contributes their very own perspective which can sometimes align with your own but also may not.• To be prepared for this and to accept that just because another perspective is different, or even opposing from your own, it does not mean that either are wrong.

<p>Able to anticipate Impacts & Consequences:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In other words - the ability to be mindful and thoughtful. When we can begin to anticipate impacts and consequences, it helps us to make better decisions based on predicting how these will play out if they were to be implemented; seeing both the pros and cons of each situation to best evaluate proposed solutions. • Regardless of our best efforts there are almost always some unintended consequences to each decision we make. • How do we prepare ourselves to deal with those? • This is a major consideration and discussion, so that when things go awry, as sometimes they will, finger-pointing and blame do not prevail as these actions do not add favourably to any situation.
<p>Meaningful exchange between participants:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant discussion that moves the conversation forward is the basis to meaningful interactions among the participants. • Sharing of feelings as they relate to the topic being discussed can also be beneficial to understanding one another. • This can reduce confusion and tensions when spoken about openly. This keeps people from making false assumptions about others' motives.
<p>Open & reflective dialogue:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoughtful and upfront discussion create a climate of trust and a willingness to move forward in the conversation. • Curiosity about others' perspectives and exploring these allows for individuals to be self reflective on their own positions as well as developing questions that can further the discussion.
<p>Listen without judgment or defensiveness:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This takes practice. It is hard not to begin to think about our own responses we wish to offer when listening to others- especially when their views are divergent from our own. • Facilitated conversations creates a structure through which differing perspectives can be explored more safely.

Appendix D:

HEALTHY CONVERSATIONS

HEALTHY CONVERSATION GOALS

Setting goals for conversations can be a difficult task if you are not accustomed to planning for conversations in advance.

The following is a list that may be helpful

- Finding the truths
- Building and strengthening relationships
- Reaching a mutual understanding
- Reaching a commitment
- Negotiating or reaching a consensus or agreement
- Transmitting information and letting others know
- Producing results
- Finding solutions
- Opening or re-opening lines of communication
- Set the intentions at the beginning
- Ask others if they have the capacity to listen
- Know when it's time to call off a conversation
- Aim for productive conversations that lead to positive actions
- Any other ideas participants might have to offer

Section 12

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