

APPLYING BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS TO DIALOGUE FACILITATION



About

These cards have been designed for facilitators who carry out dialogue sessions in the community. Facilitators can use these activities to help participants communicate more effectively, and improve mutual understanding. They are based on a behavioural insights approach, which applies evidence about human behaviour to solve social problems.

The cards should be used as a supplement to the guide, 'Applying Behavioural Insights to Dialogue Facilitation', created for the Smart Peace programme. We recommend that you read the guide beforehand, and bring the cards to the dialogue session as a reference to support the delivery of each activity.

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How to use the cards

Each card provides instructions for how to facilitate an activity. The situation in which you could facilitate the activity is outlined on one side, and instructions are outlined on the other. Choose an activity from the list, and find the relevant card to find out more.

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SMART PEACE



CONCILIATION RESOURCES



1 Encourage participants to create their own ground rules

Situation

The dialogue is about to start, and you notice participants:

- do not understand the purpose of the dialogue;
- are not engaged; or
- do not know how to communicate.



25–30 min



1 Introduce the idea of ground rules.

- “It can be helpful to set some ground rules together. This means we all agree on how we should behave during the session.”

2 Ask participants to consider the purpose of the dialogue, and values they share.

- “What is the purpose of the dialogue?”
- “What are our common values?”

2 Ask participants questions to guide the creation of ground rules.

- “How should we talk with one another?”
- “What should happen to the things we share in the dialogue?”
- “How should we stop ourselves from being distracted?”

4 Encourage the group to discuss their suggestions among themselves and come to a mutual agreement about what happens when the rules are broken.

5 Once the rules are agreed, repeat them to the group.

- Write the ground rules on the board in words, or draw them (if participants cannot read)
- Throughout the session, remind participants of the rules.

2 Give everyone the chance to speak

Situation

Participants struggle to speak openly about their experiences.



25–40 min



- 1 Introduce an activity that gives each person in the group the opportunity to speak.**
 - “We want to make sure everyone feels valued, and has the chance to share their opinions.”
 - “I would like one person in the group to share their thoughts on a theme of their choosing. We can then go round the group, person by person, and each person can share their thoughts on a topic of their choice.”

- 2 Ask one participant to suggest a subject they want to talk about.**
 - If the participant cannot think of a topic to talk about, ask them a question:
 - “What do you want to achieve through dialogue?”
 - “Why are you here today?”
 - “How do you feel about the things we have discussed so far?”

- 3 Let the participant speak for a set time period (at least two minutes) before moving to the next person.**

- 4 Once the last person has spoken, give time for reflection and questions.**
 - “Thank you for sharing. Does anyone have any questions about what they have heard?”

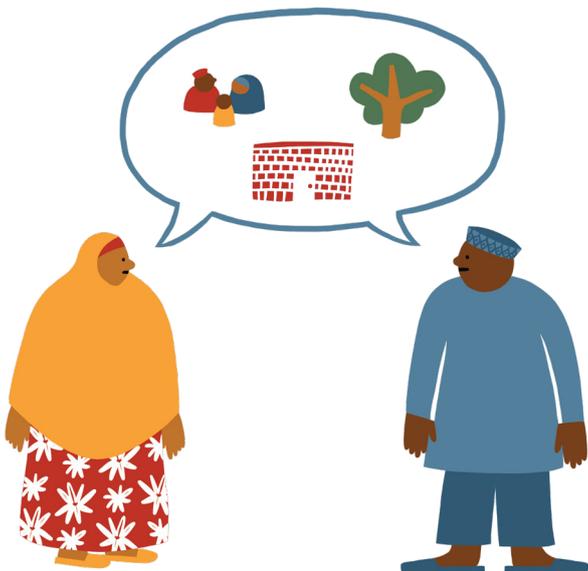
3 Emphasise the things people share

Situation

Participants struggle to communicate with people who are different from them.



20–25 min



- 1 Introduce an activity to encourage people to get to know one another better.**
 - “There is always time to get to know one another better, even if you live in the same community.”
 - “To help you get to know one another better, we can do a short activity together.”

- 2 Split participants into small groups. If possible, make sure there is a range of opinions in each group.**
 - “What similarities can you find between the people in your group?”
 - “To start, I suggest you take turns to talk about your lives, what you like and dislike, your interests, your family, and life experiences.”

- 3 After ten minutes, ask one person to give feedback to the whole group.**
 - “Can you summarise the similarities you found in your group?”
 - “What did you learn about one another?”

- 4 Encourage participants to reflect on what they share throughout the dialogue.**
 - “As you talk to one another during the dialogue, it can be good to think about the things you share.”

4 Encourage participants to imagine contact with others

Situation

Participants struggle to communicate with people who are different from them.



25 min



1 Encourage participants to reflect on what it might be like to interact with someone from a different background, group, religion or region.

- “You have been speaking about your concerns [communicating/working/shopping] with [person/group]. Let us take a moment to think about that.”

2 Ask them to imagine meeting this person. Participants should not say their answers aloud. Rather, encourage them to reflect silently on their own.

- “I would like you to try to imagine what it would be like to actually spend time with this person. Where would you meet them? What would you say/do? What would they say/do?”

3 Encourage participants to imagine what they might share with this person.

- Ask questions to prompt your participants: “What might you both value?” or “What do you have in common?”
- Example answers could include: “We both value peace.” or “We are both fathers.”

4 Close the activity and ask those who feel comfortable to share their thoughts with the group.

5 Encourage active listening

Situation

Participants struggle to consider another person’s point of view.



25–40 min



1 Introduce an active listening activity.

- “We are here to communicate with one another. Good communication is made up of speaking and listening. We are going to practise something called ‘active listening’.”

2 Explain the three main behaviours that you want participants to practice.

- 1 Listening very carefully to the other person — to understand them, not to prepare for what you will say next.
- 2 Using body language to show interest — avoid crossing your arms, and sit facing them.
- 3 Showing interest in what the speaker is saying, encouraging them to continue, and asking questions to check your understanding, e.g. ‘What I’m hearing is _____, is that right?’”

3 Split the group into pairs and ask one person to speak for three minutes about a topic of their choosing, while the other practices active listening.

4 When time is up, ask one or two participants to share how they found the experience with the rest of the group.

- “How did you find that?”
- “What was easy/hard about that?”

5 Ask the participants to swap over, and start the three minutes again.

6 Help participants build empathy towards others

Situation

Participants struggle to consider another person's point of view.



20–25 min



- 1 Introduce an activity to help participants understand other people better.**
 - “I want to help you to understand other people better. To do this, I am going to ask you a few questions, and I would like you to pause and think about your answer.”

- 2 Ask the participant to reflect on a time they were judged for being different.**

- “Can you think of a time when you were treated badly, or judged, for being different?”
- “How did the situation make you feel?”

- 3 Ask the participant to reflect on another group who are judged for being different, and how that might feel for them.**

- “What group can you think of?”
- “How are they treated poorly?”
- “Now, how do you think people from this group feel when they are judged or treated poorly?”

- 4 Encourage them to think about how their experience, and that of the group they have named, are similar.**

- “Thinking about your experience, and that of the other group you mentioned to me, how are their experiences similar to yours?”
- “Does your experience help you to understand what it might be like for a person from another group? How?”

7 Introduce participants to constructive disagreement

Situation

Participants struggle to consider another person's point of view.



10–15 min



- 1 Encourage participants to rethink how they see a disagreement.**

- “I see you disagree on this. That is okay. Disagreeing is not always bad.”
- “Disagreements are a chance to learn new information and see things in a different light.”

- 2 Encourage each participant to share their perspective.**

- “What is your perspective on this issue?”

- 3 Prompt participants to ask one another why they feel the way they do.**

- “Now, I encourage you to find out more about one another's opinions. I am going to take a step back for a moment, and give you some time to ask one another:
 - when you first came to feel this way;
 - why this issue is important to you; and
 - if there was ever a time you felt differently.”

- 4 After participants have finished discussing, ask what they have learnt from one another.**

- 5 Reiterate the importance of learning from diverse opinions, and remind them that a disagreement is an opportunity to learn rather than to be 'right'.**

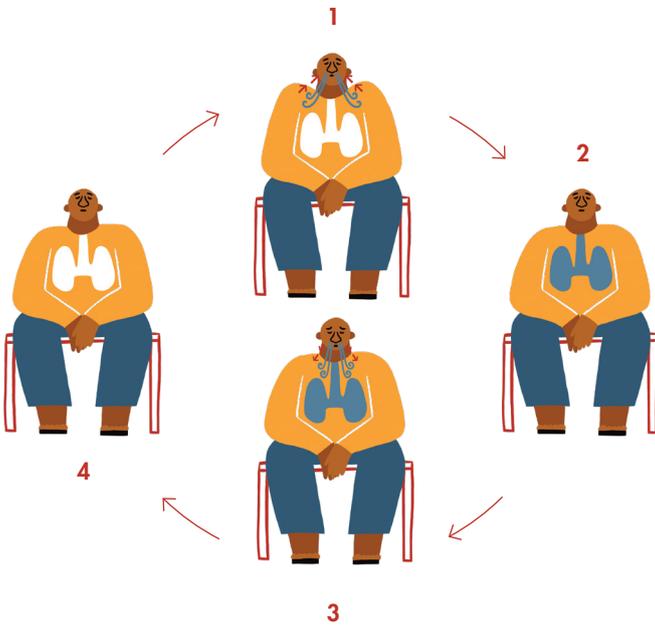
8 Do a breathing exercise

Situation

Participants are too upset to engage in the dialogue.



15–20 min



1 Begin by acknowledging strong feelings, rather than ignoring them.

– “I can see why this might be upsetting for you right now. It is normal to feel [upset/angry/stressed]. I understand.”

2 Explain that you would like participants to take a mindful break to focus on breath.

– “When we are anxious, concentrating on our breath and allowing it to become deeper can help calm us down.”

– “If you feel uncomfortable at any time, you can stop and breathe as you usually would.”

3 Ask everyone to sit down, close their eyes and take notice how they feel.

– “Notice the feeling of your clothes, the weight of your shoes on your feet, and the texture of the chair.”

4 Start the breathing exercise: inhale for 4 counts, pause for 2, exhale for 6, pause for 2 and repeat for a few minutes.

When participants inhale, the belly expands, when they exhale, the belly contracts.

1 “Inhale with me for 1... 2... 3... 4...”

2 “Hold your breath for 1... 2...”

3 “Exhale slowly with me for 1... 2... 3... 4... 5... 6...”

4 “Now hold your breath for 1... 2...”

5 Repeat steps 1 to 4 with your participants.

9 Discuss how societies and groups can change

Situation

Participants are not open to social change happening in their community.



25 min



1 Introduce the idea of two mindsets: fixed, and growth.

– “When someone thinks with a fixed mindset, they believe that they cannot change over time. For instance, they might say ‘I am not good at praying’. When someone thinks with a growth mindset, they believe that it is possible to change over time. ‘I am not good at praying... yet.’”

2 Describe how people with a growth mindset think about society as growing and changing over time.

– “People with a growth mindset believe in society’s ability to change over time. People who think with a fixed mindset do not believe in society’s ability to change over time.”

– “Just as individuals are able to change over time, society can change over time too.”

3 Share a relevant example of social change in the community in which you are facilitating the dialogue.

4 Prompt quiet reflection on social change, and then encourage people to share their thoughts with the rest of the group.

– “Can you think of a positive change you have witnessed in your community?”

– “How did people’s openness help make this change happen?”

– “How do you think society will change during your lifetime?”