

(two readers: A and B)

1. A. The dialog you will lead is not an academic exercise. Rather it moves toward profound living through intellectual, social and spirit tools to call your group together and lead them on a voyage of discovery. Consultation with other experienced group leaders by telephone is available when you are ready.

There are four leadership roles to be considered in your relationship with the group:

- A. The Guide
- B. The Motivator
- C. The Orchestrator
- D. The Sustainer

(reader B says:)

Part A. The Guide

The Initiator and Elicitor of Profound Dialogue

2. B. As Guide, your first and most powerful tool is the basic discussion method. This disciplined step by step way of talking together about a mundane situation or statement is not used in our schools or public discussions. Your job as leader is to practice the method yourself, insist that your group follow the four steps exactly, and look for the surprising depth insights in ordinary disciplined simple talking together. Lead your group in listening for the profound in the mundane.

3. A. Your task in the basic discussion is that of leading your group in the exercise of the poet: short simple words, visual images, hidden and often profound meaning. ENCOURAGE each person to speak at least once to each set of questions; INSIST that each response be in a single, short, thoughtful sentence. Insist that each answer be to the question you have asked. Interrupt those who talk too much. (You may want to explain at the beginning that you will do this.) "We will come back to you, Ed. Now, someone else please, in one sentence?"

6. B. The first question, which for many highly schooled persons is difficult to answer at first, asks them to recall OBJECTIVE DATA, facts, from what they just heard or participated in. "What words or phrases caught your attention?" Try to get each person to answer in five words or less.

7. A. There are good theoretical reasons for following this order of questioning precisely. It is a LIFE METHOD that follows the basic ways our human mind operates. But do not explain these things to your group. Lead them to experience the method. Later they can talk about the experience.

8. A. The second level question, after each person has answered your first objective recall question, is the REFLECTIVE recollection question(s), which calls for the hearer to take a subjective relationship to what has been going on. "What feelings did you experience?", "What experiences or memories came to your mind?" Allow several persons to speak briefly. (Interrupt any long answers: "That's helpful. Someone else.")

9. B. Only after the group has gone through the objective recall and subjective reflection are they prepared to deal with the meaning or values in what they have heard or experienced through the INTERPRETIVE question: "What key insight did you get from this?" or "What meaning does this have for us?" Do not be afraid of silence in the group at this level.

10. B. Never forget the fourth and last question, so offensive and so releasing in serious search for profound living. This is the DECISIONAL stance question: "How will you use this quote today?" or, "What steps do we take now?" Be sure some person in the group answers this question. Accept the answer without comment, as you have all answers of the group to earlier questions.

11. A. The first application of the basic discussion method is immediately following the taped context for the workshop, and before you begin the brainstorm. Appropriate questions for reviewing the tape are:

Objective: What words or images caught your attention? What scenes do you remember?

Reflective: What surprised you? What feelings did the tape stir up?

Interpretive: How is this approach different from ones that you know? What insights did you gain?

Decisional: What practical use could we make of this approach?

(Reader B. says:)

Part B. The Motivator The Surveyor of Interest, Motivator of Dialogue

12. B. Motivation is released when a group's images of time, space, and relations are expanded. You have four good tools to move on this source of human energy in your first dialog:

1. INTENTIONAL USE OF SPACE;
2. EXPANSION OF TIME;
3. CREATIVE PARTICIPATION; and
4. The SOCIAL IMPACT of the activity.

Each of these four is better experienced than discussed, so let's talk about how you prepare for the first dialog.

13. B. First, INTENTIONAL USE OF SPACE AND GLOBAL/LOCAL DECOR. If your group walks into a room with a center table ready for conference, you have honored their commitment to serious talk. Line up the chairs precisely; the care you take honors the group. Posters or art from major world cultures and from your own community reminds them that their work is set in a global village, with many varied interests and resources. A center table object of wonder deepens the freedom and power of the inquiry. Have paper and sharp pencils at each place.

14. A. Second, EXPANDED TIME. A wall chart of the 2 hour flow of the dialog heightens consciousness of time, encourages all to use the 2 hours well. Another wall chart of the 20 year or 200 year history of the local community would link the group's present activity to the archaic past, the open future. (The space decor helps this, also.) A calendar for future planning should be at hand.

15. B. Third, CREATIVE PARTICIPATION: Each person has a unique standing point from which to interpret the situation. The leader should state the importance of everyone's participation. The group should be encouraged to listen to each other. The leader honors each one's input. In this context, all answers are "right" , and accepted.

16. A. The fourth motivating factor is the firm belief that what we are doing will have SOCIETAL IMPACT. The whole world needs to share in any discoveries you make of approaches that work. Your labors will be on behalf of many persons your group will never see. Because of the experimental nature of this work you should plan carefully to document and publish your learnings. The first step in the documentation is to have a scribe take notes of your meeting, complete the questionnaire in the packet, and return it to the NEIGHBORHOOD CARETAKER.

(reader B:)

Part C. The ORCHESTRATOR

17. B. As the person in charge of coordinating the process of planning and implementation, which begins with this meeting, you will use the following tools:

i) the BRAINSTORM, the group listing of what they want to see happen in the next 2-5 years, relative to the subject at hand.

ii) organizing the arena of the brainstorm into a PRACTICAL VISION of the group in their own words.

iii) naming and writing in their own words the underlying hindrance or CHALLENGES, which if not addressed will prevent realization of their vision; and

iv) creating locally designed STRATEGIES, with tactics for each put on a calendar for effective timing of implementation. Let's look at these four activities in turn.

18. A. First, after using the basic discussion questions to review the taped context, ask the group to think 2 years ahead. In a 3 minute silent individual think time, ask each person to list 5-10 concerns or activities they want to see happen relative to the subject at hand. Ask each person to star his best item. Write on a chalk board or easel each person's ideas in his own 3 to 5 word summaries. Get at least one or two suggestions from each person, until there are at least 20 items on the board.

19. B. Second, WRITE THE PRACTICAL VISION of the group. Look at all of the data. Have the group intuit and voice the 3 or 4 largest categories of data in the brainstorm list. Ask them to name the categories and hold the intent of each with a sentence or two. All together they make up the vision statements, which are put up on the wall.

20. A. Third, WRITE THE UNDERLYING CHALLENGES to the group's practical vision, which goes on the wall opposite the Practical Vision. To get the challenge statement in the group's own words, ask 4 questions:

i) what blocks or difficulties would keep this vision from happening? Accept all answers, asking only questions of clarity, and write each on the chalk board or wall chart. Get 20 or more items. Try to get each person to give one or more for this list. Then ask:

ii) Which of these are similar?

iii) Which 3-5 are the most important, the most powerful issues blocking the way? Ask what is the underlying cause of each of these, which if fixed would lead to success. State each of these as a challenge rather than a problem, and write it on the wall chart.

iv) Help the group to probe beyond "apathy" or "sin", or the lack of money or troops. A challenge is something the group should be able to do something about.

21. B. If time is short, ask the group how to proceed. Do not go beyond the time set by the group for departure, and remember that the last 10 minutes is for the important final reflective conversation. In order, the choices you might offer them could include:

a) Extend this first meeting by another 30 minutes

b) Set another day to finish the task

c) Decide to end the exploration. In that case, have a brief reflective conversation, using the basic discussion model, and fill in the questionnaire. (Have enough copies for everyone, or ask the scribe to take notes for the group.)

Part D. The Detailed Business Plan

22. A. If your group chooses to extend this first dialog by another 30 minutes, give them a change of pace with a serenade, group singing, or a Journal quote conversation. The 5 minutes this takes will be repaid generously in new energy and creativity.

If you are returning to the dialog for a second day, begin the second meeting by asking several members of the group in turn to recall the events of the previous meeting. Get out the decor and wall lists from the first meeting. Spend 5 minutes in a Journal quote conversation. (If you have a good co-leader, one of you could take this part of the up front leading).

23. B. Step 4 in the planning process is GROUP WRITING of tactical actions. Ask a member of the group to review the Practical Vision statement, another member to read the Challenge statement. Ask each person in a silent 3 minute brainstorm to write down a list of 5 to 15 feasible actions which alone or together would meet the Challenge. Point out to your group that this instruction differs significantly from pursuing the groups vision directly. The direct Goals & Objectives approach often fails for ignoring the social realities behind the challenge statement.

24. A. Also instruct them to consider indirect approaches to meeting the challenge. (An elephant leaned against the little wooden church, and everyone knew he would destroy the building if he were annoyed. Finally a boy brought some hay and persuaded the elephant to come away and eat. We need indirect approaches to some large and difficult challenges.

25. B. Have teams of 2 to 4 persons each write on a separate wall chart one Major strategy, a list of 3 to 5 actions for that strategy, WHO WILL DO THEM AND WHEN. Each team will report their work to the final gathering of the workshop.

26. A. The work of the meeting is done. It is time to reflect on the work, to pronounce it good, and to assign a group of volunteers to carry forward the plans begun. The group reflection follows the basic discussion design, using the following questions:

What memorable comments do you remember?

What decisions did we make tonight?

Where were you surprised during this workshop?

What does this mean for our community? (family?, etc)

What are our next steps?

And a last question: How shall we celebrate the good work we have done?

(Another option, with suitable advance arrangement is the send out:

"Bill, will you send us out with a word for the road that will allow us to carry the importance of this meeting with us?"

(Reader B. now says:)

Part E. The Sustainer
 the Globalizing Sustainer of Local Groups
 Future Care of this Group

27. B. You as the initiator, surveyor, and hope bringing orchestrator of action may be the best person to see to the further life and work of the people in this group. Whether you or another does it, there are rather clear needs for nurture before this group can find its full power linked in the global renewal of the planet going on self consciously in every continent in this decade.

28. A There are at least four elements necessary to sustain a group over a long period: A regular rhythm of meetings, and celebrations of the group, interchange with colleagues elsewhere in the globe, and rehearsal through story, song and symbol, of the need that the group set out to address and its accomplishments along the way.

Please remember to return the questionnaire so we can share what you are doing with others.

PLEASE ANSWER EVERY QUESTION

within 48 hours of your group dialog

Family Decision by Consensus

(circle which tape)

Health Action

1. How many persons were in your dialog group?

date:

age in years

females

males

0 - 19

20 - 39

40 - 59

60+

TOTAL =

2. Where did you meet (home? office? club?):

What time of day?

How long did you meet?

3. Please rate the usefulness to the group and quality of the dialog, on a scale of 0 to 5 where 0 is not useful at all and 5 is very useful:

please circle one for each question

a. leader's guide (tape & script)

0

1

2

3

4

5

b. group context (tape & script)

0

1

2

3

4

5

c. workshop instructions

0

1

2

3

4

5

d. flip charts

0

1

2

3

4

5

e. two hour time design

0

1

2

3

4

5

f. writing group's brainstorm

0

1

2

3

4

5

g. writing the practical vision

0

1

2

3

4

5

h. writing the contradiction

0

1

2

3

4

5

i. final group reflection

0

1

2

3

4

5

j. the basic discussion method

0

1

2

3

4

5

k. other (what?)

0

1

2

3

4

5

4. How well did you know each other before this meeting?

() not all all; () slight; () some; () well; () very well

please go to other side

5. How well did the group as a whole participate in the dialog? (Where 0 = not at all, and 5 = very well) Please circle your best estimate:

0 1 2 3 4 5

6. What was the outcome of your meeting?

7. What impact will this meeting have in your community?

8. What would you change if you were to have another first meeting like this with a new group?

9. What would you change in the materials:

taped material

flip charts

workshop manual

time design

10. May I phone you for further information about your experience with this project? If so, please write your name, address, and phone.

() yes


() no

11. Who should be added to our Neighborhood Caretaker mailing list?

(attach a list please. Include zip address)

12. Please write or phone any comments that will help make this kind of group dialog more powerful:

Thank you.



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