

Introduction to this Resource

This resource is a collaborative work-in-progress, initially developed to help inform workshops that Sandy Heierbacher presented in 10/05 with Tonya Gonzalez (at Study Circles' national conference) and Jan Elliott (at the Canadian Conference on Dialogue & Deliberation), and a beginner's toolkit that NCDD is in the process of developing. Feel free to use this data, and to contribute to this effort.

The framework depicted in these charts is designed to help those who are new to D&D navigate the range of options that are available to them and make design choices that are appropriate for their circumstance and resources. We expect that these charts will also help more seasoned D&D practitioners gain a better understanding of where their own experience resides on the continuum, and what methods they may want to learn more about depending on the needs of their clients and communities.

This framework is based in part on much of the work that was already out there and available that had to do with categorizing the field and diagnosing what method was most appropriate for different circumstances. All of the scholars and practitioners whose work was utilized to develop this framework (Barnett Pearce, Hal Saunders, Patricia Wilson, Tom Atlee, Matt Leighninger, Archon Fung, etc.) have been contacted for their feedback on the charts. Many of them have been providing ongoing feedback as we develop and rework these charts.

If you glance below you'll notice that there are four pages making up two charts. The first chart ("streams") offers one way to classify the D&D field based on the organizer's intent or purpose. Many successful public engagement efforts need to pursue more than one of these streams, and some models can be successfully used to address more than one of the four purposes. But for the sake of clarity and simplicity for those new to this work, we are making distinctions based on a project's primary purpose. These charts aren't meant to cover all of the nuances that D&D organizers need to consider, but to introduce them to the range of possibilities out there and send them in a better direction than they may have gone without the charts. We hear too many stories about people using the first method they learn about when the community really needed a different type of process, and we hope this kind of tool can help people make more informed design decisions.

The second chart ("processes") lists some of the most well-known dialogue and deliberation methods and, first, identifies which of the 4 streams the method focuses significantly on (many models focus on more than one stream), and then provides details that are helpful for people considering which type of method may be right for them--size of group, how participants are selected, etc.

When we present the charts we also provide a handout that lists the methods included on the processes chart and directs people to the best place online for finding out more about the model, getting assistance, or obtaining training in the method. We're happy to share that Word document with you as well, if we haven't already.

We would appreciate any feedback you have for us on these charts--which, due to the enormously positive feedback we have received so far from people at all levels of D&D experience, we plan to distribute widely. Do you disagree with anything in the charts, or find that anything is missing that should be there? What would make the charts more useful to you, or to others who do similar work?

Please send feedback and questions to Sandy Heierbacher, Convenor of the National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation, at sandy@thataway.org.

Dialogue & Deliberation Streams

| Primary Intention/Purpose | Name of Engagement Stream | Key Features | Important When... | Examples of Issues | Organizer's Strategy | Appropriate D&D Processes | Key Design Questions for Organizers |
|---|--------------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| To encourage people and groups to learn more about themselves, their community, or an issue, and possibly discover innovative solutions | Exploration | Suspending assumptions, creating a space that encourages a different kind of conversation, using ritual and symbolism to encourage openness, emphasis on listening | A group or community seems stuck or muddled and needs to reflect on their circumstance in depth and gain collective insight | Strengthening democracy, understanding a community of practice, planning for the future | To invite wisdom into the room by hearing from both the heart and the mind. | Bohman Dialogue, World Café, Conversation Café, Intergroup Dialogue in the classroom, Wisdom Circles, Open Space | How can we ensure that people feel safe expressing their heart/spirit (what inspires and touches them)? What kind of rituals will stimulate listening and sharing, without making people uncomfortable? |
| To resolve conflicts, to foster personal healing and growth, and to improve relations among groups | Conflict Transformation | Creating a safe space, hearing from everyone, building trust, sharing personal stories and views | Relationships among participants are poor or not yet established and need to be. Issue can only be resolved when people change their behavior or attitude, expand their perspective, or take time to reflect and heal. | Political polarization, Jewish-Muslim relations, race relations, value-based conflicts, healing after crises or trauma | To create a safe space for people with different views to talk about their personal experiences and feel heard. Often, to set the groundwork for deliberation and action. | Sustained Dialogue, Intergroup Dialogue in communities, Victim-Offender Mediation, Public Conversations Project, Web Lab's Small Group Dialogue | How can the issue be framed so that all sides are brought to - and feel welcomed at - the table? What are people's needs relating to this issue, and how can divergent needs (healing, action, respect) be met effectively? If a conflict exists, how overt and volatile is it? How, if at all, will you transition people to "what's next"? |
| To influence public decisions and public policy and improve public knowledge | Decision-Making | Naming and framing, weighing all options, considering different positions (deliberation), revealing public values, brainstorming solutions | The issue is within government's (or any single entity's) sphere of influence | Budgeting, land use, health care, social security | To involve a representative group of citizens in thorough conversations about complicated policy issues. Ideally, the group is empowered by governance. | National Issues Forums, Citizens Juries, Deliberative Polling, 21st Century Town Meeting, Citizen Choicework, Consensus Conference | How can we best represent the public (random selection, active recruitment, involving large numbers of people)? Should/can public officials participate in the process side-by-side with citizens? What kinds of materials need to be developed or obtained? How can we ensure that this process influences policy? |
| To empower people and groups to solve complicated problems and take responsibility for the solution. | Collaborative Action | Using D&D to generate ideas for community action, developing and implementing action plans collaboratively | The issue/dispute requires intervention across multiple public and private entities, and anytime community action is important | Regional sprawl, institutional racism, youth violence, responding to crises | To encourage integrated efforts among diverse stakeholders, sectors, organizations, etc. involved in the problem | Study Circles, Future Search, Appreciative Inquiry | Who needs to be at the table? What kind of power dynamics exist already? What group/leader/institution is most resistant to change? What group tends not to be at the table, although they're affected? |

The Engagement Streams and Process Distinctions framework is being developed collaboratively by the **National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation**. Your feedback on this work-in-progress is welcome and appreciated. Please email Sandy Heierbacher, NCDD's Director, at sandy@thataway.org, with your comments and ideas. And go to NCDD's website, at www.thataway.org, for many more resources and tips.

Characteristics of Well-Known Dialogue & Deliberation Processes

a project of the National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (NCDD)

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Focuses significantly on

| Processes | Focuses significantly on | | | | Size of Group | Type of Session (excluding preparatory sessions) | Participant Selection | Mini-Description |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------------|---|--|---|--|
| | Exploration | Conflict Transformation | Decision- Making | Collaborative Action | | | | |
| AmericaSpeaks' 21st Century Town Meeting | | | X | | Hundreds to thousands in 1 room at small tables | all-day meeting | Open; recruit for representativeness | 21st Century Town Meetings enable the general public to give those in leadership positions direct, substantive feedback on key issues. Each meeting engages hundreds or thousands of general interest citizens at a time, utilizing innovative technology to effectively and quickly summarize citizen input. |
| Appreciative Inquiry | X | | | X | From 20 to 2,000 | 4 to 6-day summit | Internal and external stakeholders | Appreciative Inquiry is a change method that encourages stakeholders to explore the best of the past and present in their organizations and communities. AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. |
| Bohmian Dialogue | X | | X | | Small group | no set length or number of meetings | Open or invitation | Created by late physicist David Bohm, Bohmian Dialogue is focused on attending to and discussing individual internal dynamics--assumptions, beliefs, motivations, etc. The idea is not to eliminate them from happening, but to surface them in the conversation in a way that furthers the dialogue. |
| Citizen Choicework | | | X | | Multiple small groups | 1 session, ranging from 2 hours to all day | Open; recruit for representativeness | Public Agenda's Citizen Choicework helps citizens confront tough choices in productive ways. Participants work through values conflicts and practical tradeoffs, and develop a sense of priorities and direction. Key principles include nonpartisan local leadership, inclusive participation, and unbiased discussion materials that "start where the public starts." |
| Citizens Juries | | | X | | Small group | five-day meeting | Random selection | The Citizens Jury process is a method for gathering a microcosm of the public, having them attend five days of hearings, deliberate among themselves and then issue findings and recommendations on the issue they have discussed. |
| Consensus Conference | | | X | | Large group | 2 weekends for participants to prepare, 2-4 day conference | Random selection | Consensus Conferences, developed in Denmark, are used in a variety of settings and typically involve a group of citizens with varied backgrounds who meet to discuss issues of a scientific or technical nature. The conference has two stages: the first involves small group meetings with experts to discuss the issues and work towards consensus. The second stage assembles experts, media and the public where the conferences main observations and conclusions are presented. |
| Conversation Café | X | x | | | Single or multiple small groups | 1 90-minute session | Open; publicize to encourage representativeness | Conversation Cafés are hosted conversations which are usually held in a public setting like a coffee shop or bookstore, where anyone is welcome to join. A simple format helps people feel at ease and gives everyone who wants to a chance to speak. |

Characteristics of Well-Known Dialogue & Deliberation Processes (page 2)

| Processes | Focuses significantly on | | | | Size of Group | Type of Session (excluding preparatory sessions) | Participant Selection | Mini-Description |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------------|---|---|---|--|
| | Exploration | Conflict Transformation | Decision- Making | Collaborative Action | | | | |
| Deliberative Polling | | | X | | Up to several hundred people in small groups in 1 room | weekend-long meeting | Random selection | Deliberative Polling combines deliberation in small group discussions with scientific random sampling to provide public consultation for public policy and for electoral issues. Members of a random sample are polled, and then some members are invited to gather at a single place to discuss the issues after they have examined balanced briefing materials. Participants engage in dialogue with competing experts and political leaders based on questions they develop in small group discussions with trained moderators. |
| Future Search | | x | x | X | 60 to 80 people | 3 days | All inclusive (attempts to bring in all involved) | Future Search is an interactive planning process which helps a group of people discover a set of shared values or themes (common ground) and agree on a plan of action for implementing them. |
| Intergroup Dialogue | X | X | | | Single or multiple small groups | Regular weekly meetings of 2-3 hours | Open; recruit for representativeness | Intergroup dialogues are face-to-face meetings of people from at least two different social identity groups. They are designed to offer an open and inclusive space where participants can foster a deeper understanding of diversity and justice issues through participation in experiential activities, individual and small group reflections, and dialogues. |
| National Issues Forums | | | X | | Up to hundreds in 1 room at small tables | 1 two-hour meeting | Open; recruit for representativeness | National Issues Forums offer citizens the opportunity to join together to deliberate, to make choices with others about ways to approach difficult issues and to work toward creating reasoned public judgment. |
| Open Space Technology | X | | | x | Up to hundreds in 1 room, then break up in interest groups multiple times | 3 days | Varies | Open Space Technology is a self-organizing practice that invites people to take responsibility for what they care about. In Open Space, a marketplace of inquiry is created where people offer topics they are passionate about and reflect and learn from one another. It is an innovative approach to creating whole systems change and inspiring creativity and leadership among participants. |
| Public Conversations Project dialogue | | X | | | Small group | Multiple 2-hour sessions | Involves all sides of an existing conflict | The Public Conversations Project helps people with fundamental disagreements over divisive issues develop the mutual understanding and trust essential for strong communities and positive action. Their dialogue model is characterized by a careful preparatory phase in which all stakeholders/sides are interviewed and prepared for the dialogue process. |
| Study Circles | X | x | X | X | Up to hundreds meeting in separate small groups; come together later for Action Forum | 4-6 2-hour sessions | Open; recruit for representativeness | Study Circles enable communities to strengthen their own ability to solve problems by bringing large numbers of people together in dialogue across divides of race, income, age, and political viewpoints. Study Circles combine dialogue, deliberation, and community organizing techniques, enabling public talk to build understanding, explore a range of solutions, and serve as a catalyst for social, political, and policy change. |

Characteristics of Well-Known Dialogue & Deliberation Processes (page 3)

| Processes | Focuses significantly on | | | | Size of Group | Type of Session (excluding preparatory sessions) | Participant Selection | Mini-Description |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------------|---|---|---|--|
| | Exploration | Conflict Transformation | Decision- Making | Collaborative Action | | | | |
| Sustained Dialogue | | X | X | X | Small group | Numerous 2- to 3-hour sessions | Open; recruit for representativeness among conflicting groups | Sustained Dialogue is a process for transforming and building the relationships that are essential to democratic political and economic practice. SD is not a problem-solving workshop; it is a sustained interaction to transform and build relationships among members of deeply conflicted groups so that they may effectively deal with practical problems. As a process that develops over time through a sequence of meetings, SD seems to move through a series of recognizable phases including a deliberative "scenario-building" stage and an "acting together" stage. |
| Victim Offender Mediation | | X | | | Small group | Multiple 2- to 3-hour sessions | All inclusive (attempts to bring in all involved) | Victim Offender Mediation is a restorative justice process that allows the victim of a crime and the person who committed that crime to talk to each other about what happened, the effects of the crime on their lives, and their feelings about it. They may choose to create a mutually agreeable plan to repair any damages that occurred as a result of the crime. In some practices, the victim and the offender are joined by family and community members or others. |
| Web Lab's Small Group Dialogue | X | X | | | Up to hundreds working in small groups online | Participants can post and read posts anytime during set duration (such as 3 weeks) for each group | Open | SGD is a unique discussion tool that fosters intimate, high-quality online exchanges. By limiting group size and lifespan, each member's value is visible, encouraging a sense of belonging and an investment in frequent visits. Web Lab's SGD process stands apart from most conventional tools for online dialogue, offering participants the ability to genuinely connect with one another rather than creating a collection of people with no sense of accountability who leave a series of drive-by postings. |
| Wisdom Circle | X | | | | Small group (3-12 people) | One or more sessions lasting 1-3 hours; ongoing monthly sessions are ideal | Usually used with an existing group | A Wisdom Circle is a small group dialogue designed to encourage people to listen and speak from the heart in a spirit of inquiry. By opening and closing the circle with a simple ritual of the group's choosing, using a talking object, and inviting silence to enter the circle, a safe space is created where participants can be trusting, authentic, caring, and open to change. Also referred to as Council process and Listening Circles. |
| World Café | X | | | | Up to hundreds in 1 room at tables of four | Single event ranging from 90 minutes to 3 days | Often held at conferences, involving all attendees; otherwise, invitations boost representativeness | World Cafés enable groups of people to participate together in evolving rounds of dialogue with three or four others while at the same time remaining part of a single, larger, connected conversation. Small, intimate conversations link and build on each other as people move between groups, cross-pollinate ideas, and discover new insights into questions or issues that really matter in their life, work, or community. |