

Moving from Debate to Dialogue.

In an already divided world, we need a way of talking about ideas that don't drive us further apart. Debate and discussion position us as adversaries, where dialogue centers community and humanity. Practicing dialogue and improving our ability to do so can bring us together.

| DEBATE | DISCUSSION | DIALOGUE |
|---|---|--|
| Succeed / Win | Present ideas | Broaden our own perspective |
| Look for weakness | Seek answers and solutions | Look for shared meaning |
| Stress Disagreement | Persuade others | Find places of agreement |
| Defend out opinion | Enlist others | Express paradox and ambiguity |
| Focus on right and wrong | Share information | Bring out areas of ambivalence |
| Advocate for a single perspective | Solve our own and others' problems | Allow for and invite differences of opinion |
| Search for flaws in logic | Give answers | Discover collective meaning |
| Judge other's viewpoints as inferior, invalid, or distorted | Achieve preset goals | Challenge ourselves and others' preconceived notions |
| Deny other's feelings | Discount feelings as inappropriate | Explore thoughts and feelings |
| Listen with a view of countering | Listen for places of disagreement | Listen to understand, without judgment |
| Discount the validity of feelings | Avoid feelings | Validate others' experiences and feelings |
| Focus on conflict and difference as advantage | Avoid areas of strong conflict and difference | Articulate areas of conflict and difference |
| Disregard relationships | Retain relationships | Build relationships |
| Use silence to gain advantage | Avoid silence | Honor silence |

Table adapted by Tanya Kachwaha (2002) from Huang-Nissan (1999) and Consultant/Trainers Southwest (1992) from the National Intergroup Dialogue Institute | The Program on Intergroup Relations | University of Michigan.