



Resource Guide on Public Engagement

National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation

The National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (NCDD) is an active network and community of practice centered around conflict resolution and public engagement practices. Our 1,300+ members help people work together across partisan, ethnic and other divides to address today's toughest problems, and NCDD provides them with much-needed support, connections, and resources.

In fall 2010, NCDD members are hosting regional events in Austin, Boston, Denver, Portland and the San Francisco Bay Area. The events are designed to connect practitioners, public managers and community leaders to build local capacity in quality public engagement.

We compiled this Guidebook on Public Engagement as a companion to the fall regional events. We hope it is a rich resource for attendees and others. It features some of the best resources developed collaboratively by the NCDD community, and guides you to many others.

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Most contents of this guidebook were written by Sandy Heierbacher, Director of NCDD, with considerable support and input from the National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation community. Guidebook design by Andy Fluke. Learn more or join at www.ncdd.org. This is the second version of this guidebook, prepared for distribution online October 11, 2010.

What is Public Engagement?

A quick introduction.

Dozens of effective public engagement techniques have been developed to enable citizens to have authentic, civil, productive discussions at public meetings—even on highly contentious issues. These techniques have names like *National Issues Forums*, *Study Circles*, *21st Century Town Meetings*, *Open Space Technology*, and *World Café*, to name just a few.

When done well, these techniques create the space for real **dialogue**, so everyone who shows up can tell their story and share their perspective on the topic at hand. Dialogue builds trust and enables people to be open to listening to perspectives that are very different from their own. **Deliberation** is key to public engagement work as well, enabling people to discuss the consequences, costs, and trade-offs of various policy options, and to work through the emotions that tough public decisions raise.

Almost all dialogue and deliberation techniques involve:

- utilizing facilitators and ground rules to create a safe atmosphere for honest, productive discussion
- framing the issue, questions and discussion material in a balanced and accurate manner
- having citizens and decision-makers on all sides of the issue talk to each other face-to-face in multiple small groups
- using the input and outcomes generated to inform the decision-making process

These engagement techniques strengthen the traditionally distant relationship between citizens and government, mitigate conflict between groups, improve the quality of and buy-in for public decisions, and tap into community assets and citizen potential.

Resources to Get You Started

Some of the very best resources out there.

Best-of-the-Best Resources

Visit www.ncdd.org/rc/best-of-the-best-resources for a more complete list of what we consider the very best resources available to help people understand and build skills in dialogue, deliberation and public engagement.

Best Compendiums

The Change Handbook

Peggy Holman, Tom Devane and Steve Cady

Democratic Dialogue: A Handbook for Practitioners

Bettye Pruitt and Philip Thomas/UNDP

The Deliberative Democracy Handbook

John Gastil and Peter Levine

The Handbook of Large Group Methods

Barbara Bunker and Billie Alban

Creating a Culture of Collaboration: The IAF Handbook

Sandy Schuman

Best Books for Facilitators

Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making

Sam Kaner

The Skilled Facilitator

Roger Schwarz

IAF Handbook of Group Facilitation

Sandy Schuman

Best How-to Guides and Manuals

Fostering Dialogue Across Divides: A Nuts and Bolts Guide from the Public Conversations Project

www.publicconversations.org

Organizing Community-Wide Dialogue for Action & Change

Everyday Democracy

www.everyday-democracy.org/en/Resource.39.aspx

Café to Go! A Quick Reference Guide for Putting Conversations to Work, World Café

www.theworldcafe.com/hosting.htm

Best Handy Little Tools for D&D Facilitators

Sample Ground Rules for D&D Processes

NCDD compilation

www.ncdd.org/rc/item/1505

YouTube Playlists of Dialogue & Deliberation Videos

www.youtube.com/profile?user=sheierbacher#g/p

What is Deliberation? and What is Dialogue?

NCDD compilations of quotes

www.ncdd.org/rc/item/1572 & www.ncdd.org/rc/item/1501

Upgrading the Way We Do Politics

Article & flier from NCDD

www.ncdd.org/rc/item/3172

Let's Talk America Wallet Card

Basic dialogue principles & rules

www.ncdd.org/rc/item/2398

Best How-to Guides for Public Managers and Government Agencies

Public Deliberation: A Manager's Guide to Citizen Engagement

Carolyn Lukensmeyer and Lars Hasselblad Torres
www.ncdd.org/rc/item/1273

Planning Public Forums: Questions to Guide Local Officials

Institute for Local Government
www.ca-ilg.org/publicforums

A Practical Guide to Consensus

Policy Consensus Initiative
www.policyconsensus.org/publications/index.html

Public Dialogue: A Tool for Citizen Engagement

A Manual for Federal Departments and Agencies (CPRN)
www.ncdd.org/rc/item/254

People & Participation: How to Put Citizens at the Heart of Decision-making (Involve)

www.involve.org.uk/assets/Uploads/People-and-Participation.pdf

Millions of Voices: A Blueprint for Engaging the American Public in National Policy-Making

AmericaSpeaks
www.ncdd.org/rc/item/1206

Best Articles on Public Engagement

Deliberative Dialogue to Expand Civic Engagement: What Kind of Talk Does Democracy Need?

Martha McCoy & Pat Scully
www.ncdd.org/rc/item/2078

Citizens at the Center: A New Approach to Civic Engagement

Cynthia Gibson
www.casefoundation.org/spotlight/civic_engagement/summary

Beginning with the End in Mind: A Call for Goal-Driven Deliberative Practice

Martin Carcasson
www.publicagenda.org/cape

Democracy, Growing Up: The Shifts that Reshaped Local Politics and Foreshadowed the 2008 Presidential Election

Matt Leighninger
www.publicagenda.org/cape

Deterring Fake Public Participation

Jim Snider
www.ncdd.org/rc/item/4076

Collaborations That Work

A few resources we recommend.

How can engagement practitioners work effectively with public administrators, and vice versa? How can we embed or institutionalize participatory practices in our communities, so our work is sustained and strengthened over time?

GovLoop

GovLoop is the leading social network for public servants and people supporting government. As of October 2010, GovLoop has over 35,000 registered users.
www.govloop.com

ILG Public Engagement and Collaborative Governance Program

This Institute for Local Government program provides some of the best information and resources we've seen to help local officials in California (and other states!) make good decisions about the design and use of public engagement in their cities and counties.
www.ca-ilg.org/engagement

Views of NCDD 2008 Conference Participants on Democratic Governance and Two of our Field's Greatest Challenges

This 2009 Kettering Foundation report by NCDD director Sandy Heierbacher reviews developments in the D&D community, focusing particularly on institutionalizing public engagement in governance.
www.ncdd.org/rc/item/3424

Sustaining Public Engagement: Embedded Deliberation in Local Communities

This 2009 Everyday Democracy and Kettering Foundation report by Archon Fung and Elena Fagotto provides insights on how public engagement activities can grow into a diverse, ongoing practice in communities, supplemented with concrete examples of sustained community-led dialogue and problem solving efforts.
www.everyday-democracy.org/en/Resource.136.aspx

Aligning the Work of Government to Strengthen the Work of Citizens: A Study of Public Administrators in Local and Regional Government

This 2010 Kettering Foundation report by Barnett and Kim Pearce surveys administrative leaders in California about their changing views of "public engagement" in an attempt to answer the question "What do public administrators need to know and to do in order to promote and respond constructively to an engaged community?"
www.ncdd.org/rc/item/3177

Legislation Supporting Citizen Participation

NCDD's homebase for resources overviewing legislation that supports citizen engagement in governance and decision-making.
www.ncdd.org/rc/item/4341

Core Principles for Public Engagement

Created collaboratively by the dialogue & deliberation community.

These seven recommendations reflect the *common* beliefs and understandings of those working in the fields of public engagement, conflict resolution, and collaboration. In practice, people apply these and additional principles in many different ways.

1

Careful Planning and Preparation

Through adequate and inclusive planning, ensure that the design, organization, and convening of the process serve both a clearly defined purpose and the needs of the participants.

2

Inclusion and Demographic Diversity

Equitably incorporate diverse people, voices, ideas, and information to lay the groundwork for quality outcomes and democratic legitimacy.

3

Collaboration and Shared Purpose

Support and encourage participants, government and community institutions, and others to work together to advance the common good.

4

Openness and Learning

Help all involved listen to each other, explore new ideas unconstrained by predetermined outcomes, learn and apply information in ways that generate new options, and rigorously evaluate the process.

5

Transparency and Trust

Be clear and open about the process, and provide a public record of the organizers, sponsors, outcomes, and range of views and ideas expressed.

6

Impact and Action

Ensure each participatory effort has real potential to make a difference, and that participants are aware of that potential.

7

Sustained Engagement and Participatory Culture

Promote a culture of participation with programs and institutions that support ongoing quality public engagement.

In spring 2009, the **National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation** (NCDD), the **International Association of Public Participation** (IAP2), and the **Co-Intelligence Institute** engaged practitioners and scholars in the creation of these *7 Core Principles for Public Engagement*, aimed at creating clarity for practitioners, public managers, and community leaders about the fundamental components of quality public engagement. Visit www.ncdd.org/pep to download the full 12-page Principles document, which details what each principle looks like in practice and what practitioners and leaders should avoid.

Online Engagement

Making sense of a rapidly-changing arena.

Online technology is becoming more and more essential in our efforts to engage people around today's most challenging issues. Though our field is still learning how best to engage people online and grappling with what currently can and cannot be accomplished online, there are myriad tools for us to experiment with and many projects to learn from.

As with face-to-face engagement efforts, the best tactic is to design your program with your goals, audience, and resources in mind. For each engagement program you design, ask yourself what can be accomplished online, and what can be accomplished face-to-face. Often, online technology like email, Facebook, and forums are used simply to publicize, build buy-in, and generate ideas that feed into face-to-face efforts. Increasingly, web-based tools like **CivicEvolution**, **Zilino**, **Collaborize** and **IdeaScale** are being designed to simulate aspects of face-to-face dialogue, deliberation, and decision-making.

Engagement professionals are struggling with questions such as "How can we develop & sustain a meaningful online community?", "How can we leverage social media sites like Facebook & Twitter?", "How can we create online spaces for quality discussion, and efficiently handle bots, flammers, trolls, and other disruptive online characters?", and "Should I design a platform that's more aligned with my needs, or go where the people are and adapt?"

On the NCDD listserv, forum and Confab calls, we've been scratching the surface of these questions. To join in the conversation going forward, visit the "effective online engagement" category on the NCDD forum at www.ncdd.org/forum.

Here are some great places to help you learn more about tools, techniques and strategies for online engagement...

Find tools at ParticipateDB

ParticipateDB is a collaborative catalogue for online tools for public participation and related forms of citizen engagement -- large and small, commercial and open source, mature and experimental. As of September 2010, you will find details here about 160 online tools and 202 online engagement projects.

www.participatedb.com

E-Democracy.org

E-Democracy.org promotes local online civic engagement everywhere and hosts an online town hall model that works. Launched in 1994 with an early election info website in Minnesota, E-Democracy.org now hosts over 30 local Issues Forums in 15 communities across the U.S. And in the U.K. And New Zealand.

www.e-democracy.org

Promising Practices in Online Engagement

Public Agenda's 2009 report examines a selection of online engagement practices, from high-level national politics to our most immediate public realms, our neighborhoods.

www.publicagenda.org/cape

The Online Dialogue Brainstorm Guide

This publication from the **National Academy of Public Administration** outlines a step-by-step list of questions for public managers to consider when engaging the public in an online dialogue.

www.ncdd.org/rc/item/4375

Open Policy Making 101: 10 Questions To Ask Before Launching Your Online Public Consultation

This 2009 publication by Joe Goldman and Joseph Peters outlines ten key questions for public managers to consider when planning an online public dialogue, helping them to develop a deeper understanding of online engagement.

<http://tinyurl.com/2aby7pe>

Making the Most of Social Media: 7 Lessons from Successful Cities

This 28-page guidebook from the **Fels Institute of Government at Penn** is written for local governments—cities, counties, townships and their affiliates—that are beginning to experiment with social media and would like to get more out of them. Its emphasis is on the use of specific applications, such as Facebook and Twitter, by government managers and communications directors for the purpose of engaging and informing the public.

www.fels.upenn.edu/news/making-most-social-media

Government by Collaboration

The spring 2010 issue of **GSA's Intergovernmental Solutions Newsletter** explores some of the many ways technology is expanding opportunities for governments to collaborate on public-policy decision-making--and ways collaboration is increasing the range and power of technology to dramatically alter the accepted ways of doing business. Features 22 contributions from key players in governments and other organizations around the world.

www.ncdd.org/rc/item/4450

For many more reports and resources, check out the "online D&D" tag in NCDD's Resource Center, at www.ncdd.org/rc/item/tag/online-dd (you can use the advanced search in the sidebar to hone in further).

Upgrading the Way We Do Politics

Alternatives to the typical public meeting.

This article was written at the request of Yes! Magazine in August 2009 during the contentious town hall meetings on health care that year. Created for public officials, this text is based on insights and tips shared by NCDD members during this controversial time.

Town hall meetings being held on health care legislation across the country are exploding with emotion, frustration, and conflict. Citizens are showing up in throngs to speak out about health care as well as dozens of other topics, but it seems the louder voices get, the less people are actually heard.

The meetings have become a vivid demonstration of what's missing in American democracy.

Why is this happening?

Members of the **National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation**—a network of people who bring together Americans of all stripes to discuss, decide and act together on today's toughest issues—have outlined some ideas to help us understand what has evolved.

There is a lack of trust between government and citizens.

While Americans' distrust of government is playing out in obvious ways at town hall meetings across the country, another level of distrust is less frequently acknowledged: government officials' lack of trust in citizens' ability to grapple with complicated issues and trade-offs. Government officials often don't see citizens as peers who, when given the opportunity, can talk reasonably together across partisan and other divides and come to agreement on elements of highly divisive issues like health care, gay marriage, and abortion.

The typical "town hall meeting" format isn't working.

Today's typical "town hall meetings" don't live up to the traditional New England Town Meetings they're named after. They don't allow citizens to feel they've been truly heard, or to discuss issues in any depth. The current town hall design sets the stage for activist groups and special interest groups to try to 'game' the system and sideline

Provide balanced & detailed information about the issue at hand, and put a fairly-framed spectrum of possible policy choices on the table for attendees to discuss. Consider co-hosting the public meeting with a legislator from another party.

Use a facilitator. Take yourself out of front and center. Skilled facilitators are neutral and know how to translate conflict and anger into specific interests, needs and concerns—so what's behind the emotion can actually be understood and addressed.

Use "ground rules" or "agreements" to establish a kind of golden rule for everyone present. With these agreements, participants are more likely to hear each other and communicate civilly.

other concerned citizens in the process. As one NCDD member said, "the loudest voices are the ones that get heard."

The issue is in crisis mode.

Another NCDD member observed that when people are only invited in when there is a final battle between proposals, "this fact alone invites polarization." When an issue is in crisis mode, it is easier to manipulate people; there is less time to get information and issues clarified; there is less patience on all sides to delve into the actual complexities; and nonpartisans get the sense they are being sold false alternatives.

What to do?

So how can officials hold more effective open-to-the-public meetings with their constituents? Dozens of effective public engagement techniques have been developed to enable citizens to have authentic, civil, productive discussions at public meetings—even on highly contentious issues. These techniques have names like **National Issues Forums, Study Circles, 21st Century Town Meetings, Open Space Technology, and World Café**, to name just a few.

When done well, these techniques create the space for real dialogue, so everyone who shows up can tell their story and share their perspective on the topic at hand. Dialogue builds trust and enables people to be open to listening to perspectives that are very different from their own. Deliberation is often key to public engagement work as well, enabling people to discuss the consequences, costs, and trade-offs of various policy options, and to work through the emotions and values inherent in tough public decisions.

Though it may not seem like it when we watch clips from recent healthcare town halls, people *can* come together to have a positive impact on national policy—not only in spite of our differences, but because working through those differences allows us to make better decisions. Citizens have higher expectations than ever for a government that is of, by and for the people, and it's high time for an upgrade in the way we do politics.

Tips for political leaders.

Get different interests to talk to each other through a structured process. There are many ways to accomplish this. For example, organize participants into smaller groups to ensure each person gets the chance to speak and to make it unlikely that one person or interest group will dominate the meeting.

Diligently record what citizens say, and be clear about how you plan to use their input. Throughout the meeting, "reflect back" the concerns, values and desires you are hearing.

The Yes! Magazine article is online at:

yesmagazine.org/democracy/upgrading-the-way-we-do-politics/

NCDD's Engagement Streams Framework

Making sense of the methods.

First developed in 2005, NCDD's popular Engagement Streams Framework helps people navigate the range of dialogue and deliberation approaches available to them. The framework depicted on the following comic and subsequent "Engagement Streams" and "Process Distinctions" charts is designed to help people decide which types of approaches are the best fit for their circumstances.

No method works in all situations, yet too often people become overly attached to the first D&D process they learn about -- and end up with less-than-satisfying results. Although it was designed for beginners, the framework also helps more seasoned practitioners place their own work on the continuum.

The framework is a series of two charts that categorize engagement techniques into four "streams" based on your primary intention or purpose, and show which of the best-known methods have proven to be effective in each stream. The second chart goes into detail about two dozen dialogue and deliberation methods, including information on group size, meeting type and participant selection.

A few ways people are using the framework...

"I've used the Framework for several years with the Leadership Austin classes, to help them understand where dialogue fits into the continuum. Because so few of them have any experience with dialogue, this approachable, easy to understand visual helps them 'get it' and differentiates dialogue from other processes. It also quickly gives them several models of dialogue, so they understand that there are many ways to approach it."

- **Juli Fellows**

"We built the Streams of Engagement framework into our online Issue Guide Exchange. When someone uploads a guide to the tool we give them the option of identifying which streams of practice the guide addresses. Then, when someone is searching for guides, the streams of practice provide them with another way to figure out which guides will best meet their needs."

- **Carrie Boron**, *Everyday Democracy*

Some other great tools for understanding the field...

Public Participation Spectrum

International Association for Public Participation
www.iap2.org

Public Participation Toolbox

International Association for Public Participation
www.iap2.org

Core Principles for Public Engagement

NCDD, IAP2, Co-Intelligence Institute
www.ncdd.org/pep

Sandy Heierbacher, NCDD's Director, initially developed this resource to help inform workshops she presented on selecting dialogue and deliberation techniques. The framework built on a number of previous efforts to categorize or describe the public engagement and conflict transformation fields. All of the scholars and practitioners whose work was utilized to develop this framework (Barnett Pearce, Harold Saunders, Patricia Wilson, Tom Atlee, Matt Leighninger, Archon Fung, and others) were contacted for their feedback on the charts. Many of them provided ongoing feedback as we developed the charts.

The streams framework has since been featured in many articles, books, conference workshops and community presentations.

The framework is most similar to and borrows most heavily from the four "social technologies for civic engagement" identified by Patricia Wilson in the article "Deep Democracy: The Inner Practice of Civic Engagement" (*Fieldnotes: A Newsletter of the Shambhala Institute*, Issue No. 2, February 2004).

"I just discovered the framework and am using it in a group facilitation workshop I'm teaching to AmeriCorps interns. My intent is to get them to think about what type of facilitation they are attempting and what outcomes they are looking for and then looking at what methods make the most sense, given the desired outcomes."

- **Marty Jacobs**, *Systems In Sync*

"I've used the engagement streams cartoon mostly, since it's a great tool for introducing people to the ideas of different uses for the methods. I've used it and prepared it for Carolyn [Lukensmeyer] to use at presentations for United Way leadership, state elected officials, and college classrooms."

- **Susanna Haas Lyons**, *AmericaSpeaks*

Spectrum of Processes for Collaboration and Consensus-Building in Public Decisions

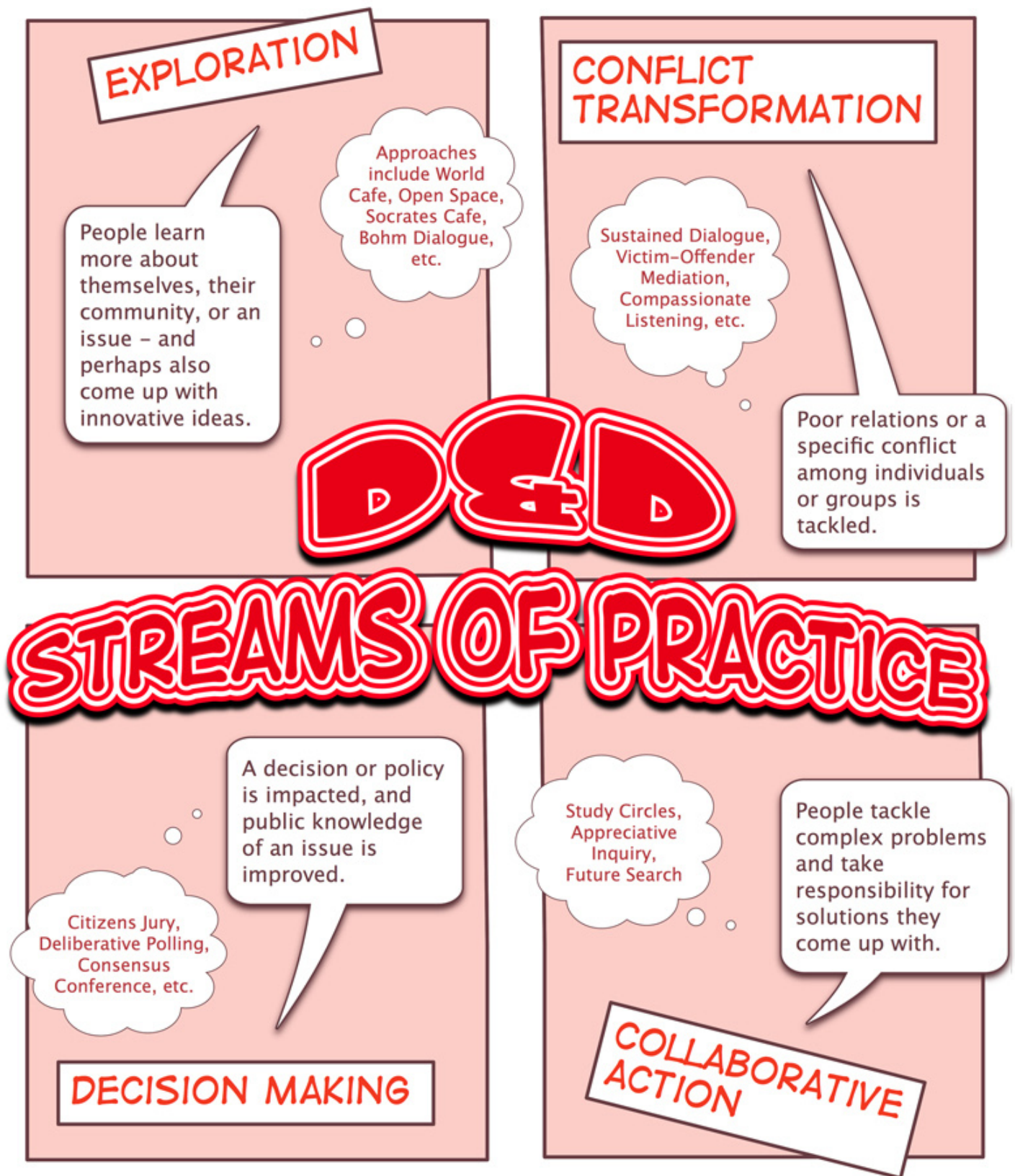
Suzanne Orenstein, Lucy Moore and Susan Sherry
www.ncdd.org/rc/item/4441

People and Participation.net website

Involve
www.peopleandparticipation.net

Goals of Dialogue & Deliberation Graphic

Martin Carcasson and Sandy Heierbacher
www.ncdd.org/rc/item/3636



This is a snapshot of the **Engagement Streams Framework** developed by Sandy Heierbacher and members of the National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (NCDD) in 2005. The framework helps people decide which methods of dialogue and deliberation best fit their goals and resources. For the full framework, go to www.ncdd.org/streams.

Engagement Streams

A Matrix of Proven Practices.

Primary Purpose	Name of Engagement Stream	Key Features	Important When...
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.
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 yet 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.
To influence public decisions and public policy and improve public knowledge	Decision Making	Naming and framing the issue fairly, weighing all options, considering different positions (i.e. deliberation), revealing public values, brainstorming solutions	The issue is within government's (or any single entity's) sphere of influence.
To empower people and groups to solve complicated problems and take responsibility for the solution	Collaborative Action	Using dialogue and deliberation 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.

The Engagement Streams Framework (2005) was developed by Sandy Heierbacher and members of the National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (NCDD). Visit www.ncdd.org/streams for various downloadable formats of this resource, and see NCDD's website, at www.ncdd.org, for many more resources and tips.

Examples of Issues	Organizer's Strategy	Appropriate D&D Processes	Key Design Questions for Organizers
Strengthening democracy, understanding a community of practice	To encourage new insights and connections to emerge by creating a space for people to share their thoughts, feelings and perspectives.	Conversation Café, Intergroup Dialogue in the classroom, Wisdom Council, Wisdom Circles, Socrates Café, World Café, Open Space, Appreciative Inquiry, Bohm Dialogue	How can we ensure that people feel safe expressing what inspires and touches them? What kind of techniques or rituals will stimulate listening and sharing, without making people uncomfortable?
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, PCP dialogue, Compassionate Listening	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"?
Budgeting, land use, health care, social security	To involve a representative group of citizens in thorough discussions about complicated policy issues. Ideally, the process is linked to policy making.	National Issues Forums, Citizens Jury, Deliberative Polling, 21st Century Town Meeting, Charrettes, Citizen Choicework, Consensus Conference	How can we best represent the public (random selection, stakeholder representation, recruiting a critical mass)? 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?
Regional sprawl, institutional racism, youth violence, responding to crises	To encourage integrated efforts among diverse stakeholders, sectors, organizations, etc. involved in the issue.	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?

Process Distinctions

Processes	Focuses significantly on...				Size of Group	Type of Session (excluding prep sessions)	Participant Selection
	Exploration	Conflict Transformation	Decision Making	Collaborative Action			
21st Century Town Meeting			X		Hundreds to thousands in 1 room at small tables	All-day meeting	Open; recruit for representativeness
Appreciative Inquiry Summit	X			X	From 20 to 2,000	4 to 6-day summit	Internal and external stakeholders
Bohm Dialogue	X		x		Small group	No set length or number of meetings	Open or invitation
Charrettes			X	x	A small team of professionals and a much larger group of stakeholders	Intense work sessions last 1-3 days typically; some last 1-2 weeks	Participants represent a range of organized groups, but others with a stake in the issue are encouraged to attend
Citizen Choicework			X		Multiple small groups	1 session, ranging from 2 hours to all day	Open; recruit for representativeness
Citizens Jury			X		Small group	5-day meeting	Random selection
Compassionate Listening	x	X			2 to 200 people; usually fewer than 30	Varies between 30 min and 3 days, depending on how many people are involved	Open to whoever is drawn; often listeners are brought in to hear the stories of oppressed or oppressors
Consensus Conference			X		Large group	2 weekends for participants to prepare, 2-4 day conference	Random selection
Conversation Café	X	x			Single or multiple small groups	1 90-minute session	Open; publicize to encourage representativeness
Deliberative Polling			X		Up to several hundred people in small groups in 1 room	Weekend-long meeting	Random selection
Future Search		x	x	X	60 to 80 people	3 days	All inclusive (attempts to bring in all involved)

The Engagement Streams Framework (in Excel, PDF, and comic!) can always be downloaded from www.ncdd.org/streams.

Descriptions of Processes

AmericaSpeaks' 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.

www.americaspeaks.org

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.

www.appreciativeinquiry.cwru.edu

Created by late physicist David Bohm, **Bohm (or 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.

www.david-bohm.net/dialogue

A **Charrette** is a collaborative and consensus-building design methodology that incorporates input from all stakeholders (the developer, relevant government agencies, and the community). A "charrette team" of experts uses stakeholder input in an continual "feedback loop" to prepare and refine a plan for development with the goal of reaching consensus among stakeholders. Charrettes, which combine modern design studio and town meeting, help overcome inertia and create meaningful master plans.

www.charretteinstitute.org

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."

www.publicagenda.org

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.

www.jefferson-center.org

In **Compassionate Listening**, listeners use reflection and skilled inquiry to help speakers deepen their own understanding and awareness. CL engenders generative listening which is non-judgmental, questions that are non-adversarial, and an ability to remain open when witnessing strong feelings and divergent viewpoints. The process can help create the safety necessary for honest, respectful dialogue and sustainable solutions.

www.compassionatelisting.org

Developed in Denmark, **Consensus Conferences** 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 conference's main observations and conclusions are presented.

www.ncdd.org/rc/item/1492

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.

www.conversationcafe.org

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.

<http://cdd.stanford.edu>

Used by communities and organizations, **Future Search** is a unique planning method which enables large, diverse groups to validate a common mission, take responsibility for action, and develop commitment to implementation. The method, which allows the entire group to be in dialogue when necessary, is especially useful in uncertain, fast-changing situations when it is important that everyone have the same large picture in order to act responsibly.

www.futuresearch.net

Process Distinctions (continued)

Processes	Focuses significantly on...				Size of Group	Type of Session (excluding prep sessions)	Participant Selection
	Exploration	Conflict Transformation	Decision Making	Collaborative Action			
Intergroup Dialogue	X	X		x	Single or multiple small groups	Regular weekly meetings of 2-3 hours	Open; recruit for representativeness
National Issues Forums			X		Up to hundreds in 1 room at small tables	1 two-hour meeting	Open; recruit for representativeness
Open Space Technology	X			x	Up to hundreds in 1 room, then break up in interest groups multiple times	3 days	Varies
Public Conversations Project dialogue		X			Small group	Multiple 2-hour sessions	Involves all sides of an existing conflict
Socrates Café	X				3 to 30 people	1-2 hours	Whoever is in the class or at the meeting, or whoever responds to the flyers or articles
Study Circles	x		x	X	Up to hundreds meeting in separate small groups; all come together later for Action Forum	4 to 6 2-hour sessions	Open; recruit for representativeness
Sustained Dialogue		X	x	x	Small group	Numerous 2- to 3-hour sessions	Open; recruit for representativeness among conflicting groups
Victim Offender Mediation		X			Small group	Multiple 2- to 3-hour sessions	All inclusive (attempts to bring in all involved)
Wisdom Circle	X				Small group (3-12 people)	One or more sessions lasting 1-3 hours; ongoing sessions are ideal	Usually used with an existing group
Wisdom Council	X		x	x	10-12 people initially (and sometimes periodically), then entire community	Several-day session with group of 12, followed by informal large-scale dialogue	Initial 10-12 are randomly selected from community; broader segment is open to everyone
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 events, involving all attendees; otherwise, invitations boost representativeness

The Engagement Streams Framework (in Excel, PDF, and comic!) can always be downloaded from www.nccd.org/streams.

Descriptions of Processes

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.

[*www.umich.edu/~igr/*](http://www.umich.edu/~igr/) and [*www.depts.washington.edu/ssweb/idea/*](http://www.depts.washington.edu/ssweb/idea/)

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. NIF is known for its careful issue framing and quality issue guides which outline 3 or 4 different viewpoints.

[*www.nifi.org*](http://www.nifi.org)

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.

[*www.openspaceworld.org*](http://www.openspaceworld.org)

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.

[*www.publicconversations.org*](http://www.publicconversations.org)

Socrates Cafés and other forms of Socratic Dialogue encourage groups inside and outside the classroom to engage in robust philosophical inquiry. The Cafés consist of spontaneous yet rigorous dialogue that inspires people to articulate and discover their unique philosophical perspectives and worldview. They don't force consensus or closure, but are open-ended and can be considered a success if there are more questions at the end than there were at the outset.

[*www.philosopher.org*](http://www.philosopher.org)

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.

[*www.everyday-democracy.org*](http://www.everyday-democracy.org)

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.

[*www.sustaineddialogue.org*](http://www.sustaineddialogue.org)

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.

[*www.voma.org*](http://www.voma.org)

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 welcoming silence, 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.

[*www.wisdomcircle.org*](http://www.wisdomcircle.org)

Wisdom Councils are microcosms of larger systems like cities and organizations that engage in a creative, thoughtful exploration of the issues affecting the system. A specialized facilitation process is used called "Dynamic Facilitation" - a nonlinear approach for addressing complex issues that allows shared insights and aligned action to emerge. The outcomes of the Wisdom Council, which are reported back to the community, can catalyze further dialogue, self-organizing action and change throughout the larger system.

[*www.wisedemocracy.org*](http://www.wisedemocracy.org)

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.

[*www.theworldcafe.com*](http://www.theworldcafe.com)

Examples of Public Engagement

A sampling of successful public engagement efforts.

Eugene Decisions: Balancing the Budget in Eugene, Oregon

To address a budget shortfall, the Eugene City Council began working with the Deliberative Democracy Project at the University of Oregon to involve citizens in deciding how to balance the budget. The resulting project, Eugene Decisions, utilized a series of surveys and large forums with facilitated breakout sessions. Groups used a booklet and worksheet to structure their discussion, and made decisions by majority vote.

The city summarized the conclusions and used them to prepare a plan for the budget. A second round of surveys and workshops was held to measure citizens' support for the plan. The process gathered a great deal of input on the city budget and allowed citizens and officials to work through what could have been a highly contentious situation.

Sample outcomes: City council adopted the main recommendations made by the participants, which included efficiency measures, user-fee increases, service reductions, and service expansions.

More: Edward Weeks, *"The Practice of Deliberative Democracy: Results from Four Large-Scale Trials,"* Public Administration Review 60.

A Decade of Public Engagement in Bridgeport, Connecticut

Over the past decade, a culture of problem solving has evolved in Bridgeport in which citizens are viewed as vital resources who must be consulted and involved if challenges are to be addressed effectively. Initially aimed at engaging the public around issues of school reform and education, Bridgeport's public engagement programs have expanded over time to include many local issues. Public discussions have explored a wide range of topics, including achievement gaps, family violence, corruption in city government, housing, economic development and more.

Sample outcomes: New student-mentor volunteers, anti-bullying policy, involvement of business leaders in education reform, and an overall culture of embedded and self-sustaining citizen engagement and community problem-solving.

More: www.publicagenda.org/cape

Pro-Choice / Pro-Life Leaders Dialogue in Boston, Massachusetts

On a December morning in 1994, John Salvi walked into the Planned Parenthood clinic in Brookline, Massachusetts and opened fire with a rifle. He seriously wounded three people and killed the receptionist, Shannon Lowney, as she spoke on the phone. He then ran to his car and drove two miles down Beacon Street to Preterm Health Services, where he began shooting again, injuring two and killing receptionist Lee Ann Nichols.

For six years, Boston leaders on both sides of the abortion debate met in secret in an attempt to better understand each other through dialogue facilitated by the Public Conversations Project. The group, which met together privately for over 150 hours, publicly disclosed their meetings and the impact those meetings had on them in a jointly-authored Boston Globe article on January 28, 2001.

Outcomes: These conversations revealed a deep divide, reflecting two very different world views. Yet participants began to understand and respect those "on the other side." The leaders began to speak differently about each other to the media, toning down their rhetoric and, consequentially, reaching new audiences. At one point, pro-life advocates dissuaded a pro-life activist from Virginia from bringing his message of violence to Massachusetts.

More: www.publicconversations.org/resources/talking-enemy

Our Budget, Our Economy: An AmericaSpeaks National Town Meeting

3,500 Americans from all walks of life came together across 57 sites around the country to discuss the nation's long-term fiscal challenges on June 26, 2010. Participants worked in small groups with skilled facilitators to learn about the issues, weigh trade offs, and express their preferences. Face-to-face meetings at each of the sites took place simultaneously and were linked together by satellite and webcast to create a true National Town Meeting. At 19 of the sites, participants used electronic voting keypads and groupware computers to identify their shared priorities over the course of the day-long meeting. They were joined by participants at 38 volunteer-organized Community Conversations across the country.

Participants identified preferred options for reducing spending and increasing revenue that could reduce the deficit in 2025 by \$1.2 trillion. Preferred spending options included reductions in defense spending, non-defense spending, and health care spending, but at different levels for each. Preferred revenue options included raising the cap on payroll taxes, raising income taxes on the most wealthy, establishing a carbon tax and the establishment of a securities-transaction tax.

Outcomes: The National Town Meeting demonstrated that participants from different socio-economic and ideological backgrounds could come together and deal with a complex and controversial issue and identify a workable solution. Preliminary results from before-and-after surveys and interviews indicate that participants from across the ideological spectrum tended to moderate their views on this issue as a result of the deliberation. The results from the National Town Meeting are being presented to dozens of Congressional offices, the President's National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, and the Bi-Partisan Policy Center's Debt Reduction Task Force.

More: www.usabudgetdiscussion.org

Portsmouth Listens: Study Circles in Portsmouth, New Hampshire

Portsmouth Listens – an all-volunteer group of citizens committed to facilitating dialogue in Portsmouth on contentious public issues – has become a trusted, neutral venue for public decision-making in the city. The process allows people of differing interests and backgrounds to identify what is important and what they share in common. Consistently, the benefits have been the development of quality information on important issues for decision makers, and widespread community support for the resulting decisions.

Portsmouth Listens began as an effort to use dialogue, deliberation, and community organizing techniques to mobilize hundreds of parents and students around issues of bullying and violence prevention in the city's middle school. The process was subsequently used in the Portsmouth Schools to develop a plan for redistricting the elementary schools. Having witnessed the success of those efforts, local leaders decided to use study circles to involve residents in the strategic Master Plan review process. Portsmouth Listens has also held roundtable candidate forums for local elections and an informational forum on the city budget.

Sample outcomes on school redistricting: Attempts to redistrict Portsmouth's elementary schools in the early 1990's were so contentious that the school board avoided it for the next 10 years or so. After 115 residents participated in 4-week small-group, facilitated discussions, they reported their findings to the school board. The resulting plan developed by the school board received broad support for increased funding of school renovations, and resulted in only 65 students switching schools.

More: www.everyday-democracy.org/en/Article.141.aspx

Tight Times, Tough Choices: Budget Deliberations in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

At the request of city officials, Penn's Project for Civic Engagement hosted a series of four community forums in various neighborhoods across the city in 2009. The Tight Times, Tough Choices forums were designed to be work sessions where Philadelphians met in small groups to work through some of the actual budget choices facing the city. The deliberative forums were open to all taxpayers in the city, and participants grappled with startling numbers: a projected city deficit of \$108 million in the next six months, and a 5-year shortfall of more than \$1 billion.

The forums were designed to both inform residents about the city budget and the issues involved in developing a balanced budget, and to inform elected officials about what they would and would not support (and why).

Sample outcomes: Participants identified a set of specific budget priorities as well as underlying values to support those priorities so that leaders could respond at both levels. Mayor Nutter and city officials used input from the forums in developing the city's proposed budget for 2010, adopting or adapting seven of the eight principles identified by citizens.

More: www.gse.upenn.edu/node/690

Countywide Community Forums of King County, Washington

The people of King County recognized that many have difficulty participating meaningfully in government processes that rely primarily on traditional public hearings. In order to enhance citizen participation, civic engagement, and citizenship education, King County enacted Initiative 24 – a donation-funded program within the auditor's office, designed to bring democracy to people around kitchen tables, living rooms, and cafés.

Any interested person who lives or works in the county can participate as "citizen councilors," discussing timely public issues with fellow residents at convenient times and places and providing valuable feedback to elected officials, community leaders, and the public. The objective is to improve the paradigm of the traditional public hearing and to scale the process to engage large numbers of people over time and geographic distance, on a tight budget, through online and face-to-face small group meetings.

Outcomes: The most important outcome of long-term projects like this one tends to be increased civic capacity in the region, which can be challenging to measure. Building civic capacity – or the ability for a community to solve its problems more and more effectively over time – is a big-picture goal of all public engagement work.

More: www.communityforums.org

Restorative Listening Project of Portland, Oregon

The Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement's Restorative Listening Project uses dialogue, storytelling and restorative justice to engage residents in the complex racial and economic issues surrounding gentrification. Participants address questions like "How can we know that what we think is in our best interest is also good for our neighbors?"

Restorative justice aims to mend harm by inviting those most impacted to describe the harm. "The one who strikes the blow doesn't know the force of the blow," director Judith Mowry says. "Only the one who has received the blow knows its force." The goal of the project is to have white people better understand the effect gentrification can have on the city's longtime black and other-minority neighborhoods by having minority residents tell what it is like to be on the receiving end.

Outcomes: By encouraging black and white residents to talk honestly about gentrification, Portland has been repairing relationships, building community, and creating space for residents to move forward together.

More: www.portlandonline.com/oni/

Deliberative Dialogues on the Achievement Gap in Central Texas

The Texas state demographer determined that there can be a \$300B annual benefit by 2040 to the state economy if Texas can close the gaps to college while continuing to raise expectations for all students. In 2007 and 2008, in partnership with Austin Voices for Education and Youth, Texas Forums, and the Kettering Foundation, E3 Alliance convened community-wide deliberative forums about the achievement gaps in education in communities across the Central Texas region.

Deliberative dialogues were held in six communities across the region, enabled hundreds of residents – both the usual and unusual suspects – to deliberate on critical issues about education achievement gaps in their communities and develop action plans and recommendations based on their deliberations. Delegates were selected from each community to attend a broader regional event to identify key themes common across the region.

Outcomes: Creation of continued conversations of the communities beyond the discussions. The creation of the Blueprint for Educational Change, which encompasses 35 school districts, 15 charters and seven higher education institutions, totaling over 360,000 students from Kindergarten through post-secondary education.

More: www.e3alliance.org/dialogues08.html

Many More Case Studies...

These and many more case studies on notable efforts to engage the public in contentious issues can be found at:

Participedia.net

participedia.net/wiki/Special:BrowseData/Cases

The Democracy Helpline

helpline.deliberative-democracy.net/case_studies/studies.php

The NCDD Resource Center

www.ncdd.org/rc/item/category/case-studies-stories

A Special Thank You to Boston event planning team member Mark Shoul, Director of Hands Across North Quabbin, for initiating and helping compile this section!

More Resources at NCDD.org

A quick guide to what's available on the site.

NCDD Resource Center

Over 2,500 resources... dialogue guides, D&D methods, videos, case studies, evaluation tools, articles, books, and more.

www.ncdd.org/rc

NCDD Members Network

Learn about our extraordinary members (and connect with them) via the NCDD Network directory. Use the advanced search to find skilled professionals near you.

www.thataway.org/ncddnet

Resources for Beginners

Your gateway to our Glossary of Terms, info about what "D&D" are, how to organize a dialogue and deliberation program, where to find help, etc.

www.ncdd.org/rc/beginners-guide

News & Perspectives Blog

Our frequently-updated main blog is designed to keep you in-the-know about happenings and opportunities in dialogue, deliberation and public engagement.

www.thataway.org (soon to be at ncdd.org)

NCDD Member Application

Consider becoming a member of NCDD if you haven't already! Membership is currently \$100/year for organizations or optional \$50/year dues for individuals.

www.thataway.org/join

Listservs and Email Updates

Our monthly e-updates go out to 20,000 people who do public engagement and conflict resolution work. Our active NCDD Discussion list connects over 1,000 practitioners and scholars across the globe, and showcases the know-how and intellectual generosity of our members. About a dozen other listservs connect people regionally or around interest areas like climate change and higher ed.

www.ncdd.org/rc/item/4434

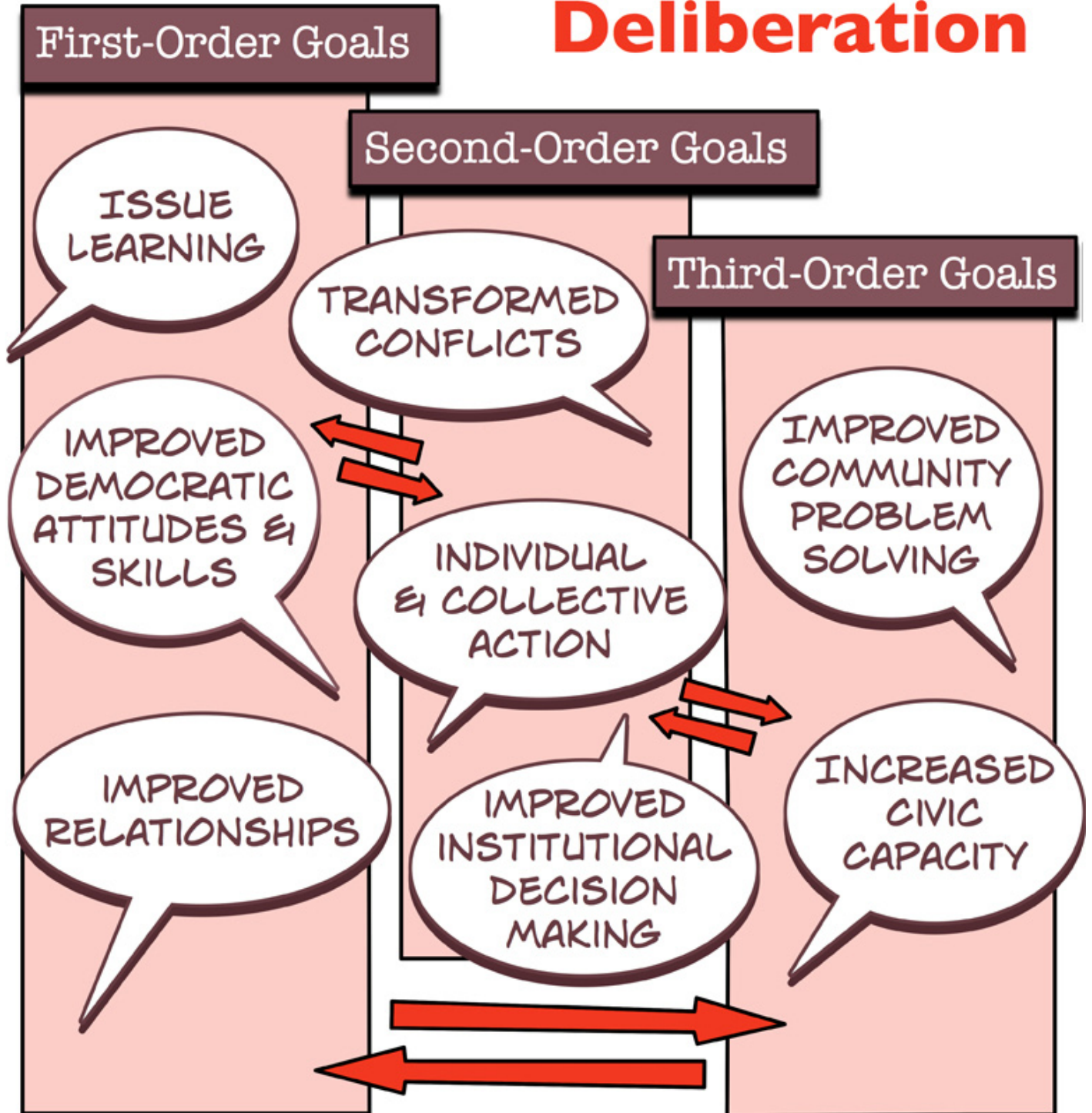
NCDD Forum

An interactive space where you can introduce yourself, post questions, and discuss key issues in our field with other NCDDers.

www.ncdd.org/forum

Please note: As of October 2010, NCDD is in the midst of a website switchover from www.thataway.org to www.ncdd.org. The main page at www.ncdd.org overviews what resources can currently be found on each site.

Goals of Dialogue & Deliberation



Graphic created by Sandy Heierbacher, NCDD (August 2009). Its content is a slightly adapted version of the "Goals of Deliberation" figure in *Beginning with the End in Mind: A Call for Goal-Driven Deliberative Practice* (Summer 2009, Public Agenda's Center for Advances in Public Engagement), by Martin Carcasson of Colorado State University's Center for Public Deliberation, available at www.publicagenda.org/cape.



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