

**DAYS OF  
DIALOGUE** PRESENTS



**GUN VIOLENCE  
PREVENTION: A LEADERSHIP  
DIALOGUE  
TRAINING**

# Facilitator's Handbook

Quick Tips for Dialogue Facilitators

The background of the central section is a collage of images. At the top right, there is a target with a silhouette of a person in the center. Below the target, several hands are raised in a classroom setting. In the foreground, there is a yellow and black "POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS" tape. To the left, there is a "STOP NRA" sign. At the bottom right, there is a "No Guns" sign with a red gun icon crossed out. The text "PREVENTING GUN VIOLENCE" is overlaid on the collage. "PREVENTING" is in red, "GUN" is in white, and "VIOLENCE" is in yellow. The background also features faint text from the US Constitution, including "RESOLVED" and "ARTICLES".

**PREVENTING  
GUN  
VIOLENCE**

Days of  
Dialogue



**STOP  
NRA**



# QUICK TIPS FOR DIALOGUE FACILITATORS

Facilitator's Handbook - The following are quick tips for facilitators and are adapted and excerpted from the National Coalition on Dialogue and Deliberation and the Study Circles Resource Center, now Everyday Democracy.

[www.ncdd.org](http://www.ncdd.org) and [www.Everyday-Democracy.org](http://www.Everyday-Democracy.org)

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## Comparison of Dialogue and Debate

- Dialogue is collaborative: two or more sides work together toward common understanding. *Debate is oppositional: two sides oppose each other and attempt to prove each other wrong.*
- Dialogue enlarges and possibly changes a participant's point of view. *Debate affirms a participant's own point of view.*
- Dialogue reveals assumptions for reevaluation. *Debate defends assumptions as truth.*
- Dialogue causes introspection on one's own position. *Debate causes critique of the other position.*
- Dialogue opens the possibility of reaching a better solution than any of the original solutions. *Debate defends one's own positions as the best solution and excludes other solutions.*

- Dialogue creates an open-minded attitude: an openness to being wrong and openness to change. *Debate creates a closed-minded attitude, a determination to be right.*
- Dialogue calls for temporarily suspending one's beliefs. *Debate calls for investing wholeheartedly in one's beliefs.*
- In dialogue, one searches for basic agreements. *In debate, one searches for glaring differences.*
- In dialogue, one searches for strengths in the other positions. *In debate, one searches for flaws and weaknesses in the other position.*
- Dialogue involves a real concern for the other person and seeks to not alienate or offend. *Debate involves a countering of the other position without focusing on feelings or relationship and often belittles or deprecates the other person.*
- Dialogue assumes that many people have pieces of the answer and that together they can put them into a workable solution. *Debate assumes that there is a right answer and that someone has it.*
- Dialogue remains open-ended. *Debate implies a conclusion.*

# QUICK TIPS FOR DIALOGUE FACILITATORS

## A Great Facilitator

- **Makes the opinions of participants the primary focus of the discussion.**
- **Helps the group set its ground rules and keep to them.**
- **Helps group members grapple with the content by asking probing questions.**
- **Helps group members identify areas of agreement and disagreement.**
- **Brings in points of view that haven't been talked about.**
- **Creates opportunities for everyone to participate.**
- **Focuses and helps to clarify the discussion.**
- **Summarizes key points in the discussion and asks others to do so.**
- *Practices* neutrality.
- **Encourages and affirms each person.**
- **Is aware of “unconscious” behaviors.**
- **Resists the temptation to step out of the role of facilitator.**

## The Role of the Participant

- **Listens carefully to others.**
- **“Take your turn and pass it on.”** Gives others a chance to speak. It is important for everyone to be heard.
- **Helps keep the discussion on topic.**
- **Addresses remarks primarily to the group and not exclusively to the facilitator.**
- **Takes an active part in the discussion.**
- **Engages in friendly disagreement.**
- **Respects the position of those with whom you disagree.**
- **Strives to understand other’s points of view.**
- **Keeps an open mind.**

# QUICK TIPS FOR DIALOGUE FACILITATORS

## Sample Ground Rules for Dialogue & Deliberation Processes

(Excerpted National Coalition on Dialogue and Deliberation compilation)

### **The World Café – *Café Etiquette***

- Focus on what matters.
- Contribute your thinking and experience.
- Speak from the heart.
- Listen to understand.
- Link and connect ideas.
- Listen together for deeper themes, insights and questions.
- Play, Doodle, Draw – writing on the tablecloths is encouraged.

### **Talking Circle Rules**

The University of New Mexico – Education Outreach Online Training

The three main rules of the Talking Circle are:

- speak honestly and truthfully from the heart
- be brief
- listen attentively

Each Circle develops its own rules during the first meeting, and everyone in the group agrees to abide by them. Some typical rules are:

- One person talks at a time. Everyone listens to the person talking, without interrupting.
- Be supportive of each other and encourage each other.
- If you say you will do something, do it.
- Be willing to try things you have never tried before.

## **Everyday Democracy Ground Rules**

- Listen carefully and with respect.
- Each person gets a chance to talk.
- One person talks at a time. Don't cut people off.
- Speak for yourself, not as the representative of any group. Remember that others are speaking for themselves, too.
- If something someone says hurts or bothers you, say so, and say why.
- It's okay to disagree, but be sure to show respect for one another.
- Help the facilitator keep things on track.
- Some of the things we will say in the study circle will be private (personal). We will not tell these stories to other people, unless we all agree that it is okay.
- If you know of relevant online references, please include them in your postings; be sure to provide the complete Web site address (URL) and explain why the material is valuable.
- Do not use this forum to sell your products and services.



# History of Days of Dialogue

In 1995, Los Angeles' deeply divided reaction to the verdict in the O.J. Simpson trial underscored how far apart the diverse communities of Los Angeles and the nation stand on some basic issues. As a result, then-Los Angeles City Councilman Mark Ridley-Thomas called a meeting with 20 civic leaders and community activists to defuse escalating tensions. Out of this was born an innovative nonpartisan initiative, Los Angeles' first citywide discussion—A Day of Dialogue.

Since then, thousands of people, both locally and nationally, have participated in Days of Dialogue programs; from political Town Hall forums in large civic auditoriums, to small group meetings in neighborhood libraries, churches, and fire stations.