

SUSTAINED DIALOGUE CAMPUS NETWORK

8/19/15

St. Olaf. Incoming Faculty Orientation

What is Sustained Dialogue?

- Sustained Dialogue is a **public peace process** created by US diplomat Hal Saunders from his experience in Arab-Israeli peace process.
- In 1999, Princeton University adapted SD to address **identity-based tension**, transform relationships across lines of difference, and improve campus culture.
- St. Olaf has been doing SD for less than a year, and has weekly dialogues for students, faculty, and staff.

Objectives for our short time together

- Provide an introduction to the SD experience
- Provide some of the key pieces of training for creating inclusive training rooms and classrooms

Goals of Sustained Dialogue

Every Sustained Dialogue program has two main goals:

1. Build relationships in the room
2. Address concrete community issues outside of the room.

Two Fundamental Elements of SD

Sustained Dialogue is supported by two main pillars of thought, conceived of by our wonderful founder Hal Saunders.

1. The Five Stages of Dialogue

- The natural process that all groups go through, reaching from meeting initially to acting together

2. The Relationship Paradigm

- A tool for analyzing relationships, those that are going well and those that are in terrible conflict

What Do We Mean By “Sustained?”

- SD groups are sustained in three ways:
 - ▣ **PEOPLE:** Each group maintains the same 8-15 participants & moderators throughout the retreat or semester.
 - ▣ **TOPIC:** Each dialogue meeting is designed to continue where the last ended.
 - ▣ **STRUCTURE:** Dialogue groups meet consistently at an appointed weekly time for 1.5 hours. Groups also hold events throughout the year to engage the larger community, supported by student leaders and/or advisors.



Introduction to Sustained Dialogue

The State of the World:

- Nationally, **only 54%** of college seniors reported having serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity than their own “quite a bit” or “often”.
- **Just 56%** had serious conversations with students of a different religious belief, political opinion, or personal value “quite a bit” or “often”.

What is Dialogue?

Dialogue is a process of genuine interaction through which human beings listen to each other deeply enough to be changed by what they learn. Each makes a serious effort to take other's concerns into their own picture, even when disagreement persists. No participant gives up their identity, but each recognizes enough of the other's valid human claims so that they will act differently toward the other.

Dr. Hal Saunders

Founder and Board Chair of SDI

Discussion	Debate	Dialogue
Conceptual and/or conversational	Competitive	Collaborative, towards a sense of community understanding
Presents ideas, often in a “clean” or “sophisticated” way	Succeed or win, often by proving others’ logic to be ‘wrong’	Re-evaluate and acknowledge assumptions and biases
Share information, seek ‘neutral’ conclusions	Focus on ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ through evidence	Bring out areas of ambivalence
Seek answers and solutions	Look for weakness	Look for shared meanings
Give answers, often those in accordance with academic standards	Search for flaws in others’ logic; critique their position	Discover collective meaning; reexamine and destabilize long held ideas
Listen to find places of disagreement or to gather rational pieces of an argument	Listen to form counterarguments	Listen without judgment and with a view to understand
Avoid areas of strong conflict and difference	Focus on conflict and difference as an advantage	Articulate areas of conflict and difference
Retain relationships	Disregard relationships	Build relationships
Avoid silence	Use silence to gain advantage	Honor silence
<p>The Dialogue vs. Discussion table was adapted from: <i>Differentiating Dialogue From Discussion: A Working Model</i> (Kardin and Sevig, 1997) and <i>Exploring the Differences Between Dialogue, Discussion, and Debate</i> (Tanva Kachwaha, 2002, adapted from Huang Nissan, 1999).</p>		

Dialogue, Debate, & Discussion



**What types of conversations
are you most comfortable
leading?**

Group Norms

- What rules or norms can we agree on now to create a learning space in which we can ask each other anything?

Creating Learning Spaces Around Identity

Preventions and Interventions

Dimensions of Social Identity Your Students Will Likely Care About

Mental Health

Citizenship

Race & Color

Class & SES

Nationality

Accent

Sexual Orientation

Ethnicity

Sex & Gender

Religion

Ability

Language

What else?

Political Affiliation

Age

The Big 8 Dimensions of Social Identity in the U.S.

Race & Color

Class & SES

Ability

Sexual Orientation

Age

Ethnicity

Religion

What else?

Sex & Gender



Facilitating Inclusive Classroom Environments

Inclusive Language: Vernon Wall's Strategies

1. Stay dumb! Let others lead.
2. Show others you care through your language. Reject the “PC” movement.
3. When you want to correct others' language, use “I” statements.
4. Seek first to understand others' ideas, then to be understood.
5. Check your ego at the door.

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Inclusive Language: Key Points

- Language is constantly evolving alongside society. We need to learn, un-learn, and re-learn identity language as time goes on.
- Language can perpetuate bias, regardless of intent.
- People of any group do NOT think/feel the same way about identity words.

Inclusive Language: Kathy Castania

- **Ethnicity:** Best to refer to people by their specific ethnic group. NEVER GUESS!
- **Gender:** Substitute the universal “he” with “he or she” (SD says: or “they”). Get familiar with the terms “intersex” and “transgender.” Avoid “girl” when referring to adult women.
- **Sexual Orientation:** Instead of “homosexual,” build comfort saying “gay,” “lesbian,” “bisexual,” “asexual,” or “pansexual.” Avoid “sexual preference” to remove the idea of preference.
- **Race:** Though it may feel formal, the term “Caucasian” is imprecise and outdated.
- **Class:** Never refer to someone as “lower class,” instead try “working class.”
- **Ability:** Put the person first. (Ex: person with a disability, person with epilepsy, etc.)

Inclusive Language



How do you want your
language to be
remembered?

Intent vs. Impact

- What is a possible **positive intent**?
- What is a possible **negative impact**?
- What would you do to improve the situation?

Intent vs. Impact

- What would you do to improve the situation?
 1. **Clarify:** “Help me understand what you mean by...”
 2. **Create Comfort for Chiming In:** “How do others feel about what they just heard?”
 3. **Challenge with a credible counterpoint:** “I’ve heard another perspective...”

Strategies

- **Icebreaker**
 - ▣ Purpose: Relationship building and energizer
- **Round Robin**
 - ▣ Purpose: Have every voice and opinion heard
- **Tough Questions in Easy Ways**
 - ▣ Purpose: Get honesty about tough issues in a low-pressure way
- **Anonymous Note Cards**
 - ▣ Purpose: Bring out questions that are hard to ask
- **Caucuses**
 - ▣ Purpose: Surface issues that may be difficult to say in a large group
- **Pair-Shares**
 - ▣ Purpose: Have everyone speaking
- **Relationship Mapping**
 - ▣ Purpose: Analyze power dynamics and focus on the larger community

Next Steps to Begin Dialogue



What next steps do you see for yourself as you begin your course(s)?

Stay in Touch!

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