



# **BUILDING BRIDGES**

## GUIDE FOR DIALOGUE AMBASSADORS



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Note for readers

This reference document is the main reference material for the Dialogue for Peace programme. For information about the Dialogue for Peace facilitators and trainers as well as the Dialogue for Peace badge, please visit the Dialogue for Peace dedicated page at [scout.org/dialogue4peace](http://scout.org/dialogue4peace) or write to [dialogueforpeace@scout.org](mailto:dialogueforpeace@scout.org).

# **BUILDING BRIDGES**

GUIDE FOR DIALOGUE  
AMBASSADORS



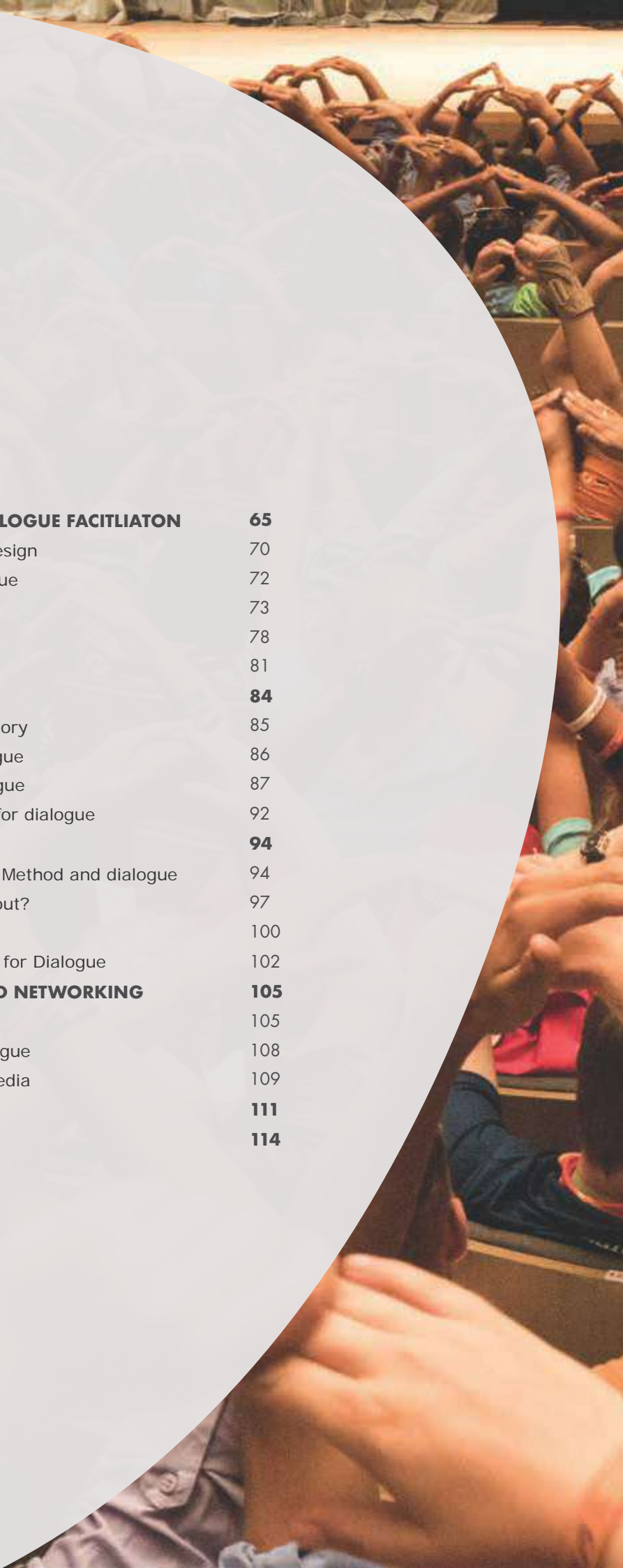


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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guide is the result of the collaboration between the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and the International Dialogue Centre (KAICIID).

WOSM is an independent, non-political and non-governmental organisation made up of 169 National Scout Organizations (NSOs) from six Scout Regions around the world: Africa, Arab, Asia-Pacific, Eurasia, Europe and Interamerica. As one of the largest youth movements in the world, WOSM counts over 50 million Scouts in more than 224 countries and territories.

The Mission of Scouting is to contribute to the education of young people, through a values system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society.

KAICIID is an intergovernmental organisation that promotes the use of dialogue globally to prevent and resolve conflict, and to enhance understanding and cooperation. The centre was founded by the governments of Austria, Saudi Arabia and Spain with the Holy See as its Founding Observer. Its Board of Directors comprises prominent representatives from five major world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism).

KAICIID's mandate and structure were designed to foster dialogue among people of different faiths and cultures that bridges animosities, reduces fear and instils mutual respect. Intercultural and interreligious dialogue helps to build communities' resistance against prejudice, strengthens social cohesion, supports conflict prevention and transformation, and preserve peace.

The Dialogue for Peace programme team members – Hany Abdulmonem, Cynthia Marquez and Mohamed Omar from WOSM, and Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Anas Alabbadi, Patrice Brodeur and Katerina Khareyn from KAICIID extend their sincere thanks to all collaborators and staff members who provided their expertise, hard work and energy throughout the production of this document and made its publication a reality.







## FOREWORD

By the Secretaries General of the World Organization of the Scout Movement and the International Dialogue Centre

The world today is filled with misconceptions and stereotyping that often lead to hatred and conflicts. In view of this, education in dialogue has become increasingly urgent and relevant as a tool to address intolerance, exclusion, division and violence – tangible expressions of misguided fear.

It is definitely a challenging endeavour to set oneself on the path of transforming individuals and societies to embrace new ways of understanding the world, ways that are different from the ones they are accustomed to. For sure, it will not be a smooth journey, and will require personal commitment and sometimes, sacrifices. Nevertheless, with a firm purpose in mind and with the conviction that the vision in mind is way more transcendental and relevant than any difficulty or obstacle, it is not an impossible mission.

While doing what is right is not always easy, we are nevertheless emboldened by our strong faith in humanity and the promise of a fruitful journey to take the first step. Hence, WOSM and KAICIID have chosen to embark on this path together.

Lord Baden-Powell, the founder of the Scout Movement, started what is now a worldwide movement believing that young people are capable of assuming great responsibilities and of doing good for others when empowered with trust and provided with guidance and support. The core principle of his educational thinking was educating through love, being a friend to all and respecting others regardless of their background. He envisioned a universal kinship of brothers and sisters working hand in hand for the common good.



For over six years the Messengers of Peace programme developed by WOSM and supported generously by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia inspires the Scouts around the world to cultivate mutual understanding among nations, faith, cultures and people and further motivates them to promote dialogue today.

Dialogue is vital in keeping peaceful societies, and our communities can count on World Scouting and KAICIID to start the dialogue. The Dialogue for Peace programme is the result of a genuine dialogue process between two organisations that aspire to strengthen efforts to enrich their members by helping them to prepare for dialogue and to value dialogue as a way of living.

Co-creating this guide has been a positive learning experience. This guide is one of the many tools that we have prepared for young people and adults who are motivated to build bridges among individuals and communities.

We are confident that it will encourage Scouts and non-Scouts to learn from each other as well as to share perspectives, knowledge and goals, turning commonalities into strengths and helping them to craft a shared vision for the creation of more peaceful societies. But most importantly, we look forward to building generations of 'dialogue ambassadors' who will contribute to our mission of creating a better world.



**Ahmad Alhendawi**

Secretary General, WOSM



**Faisal bin Abdulrahman bin  
Muaammar**

Secretary General, KAICIID



*'If you make listening and observation your occupation, you will gain much more than you can by talk.'*

**Baden-Powell<sup>1</sup>**

## INTRODUCTION TO DIALOGUE FOR PEACE PROGRAMME

The world in which we live is very diverse. In fact, diversity is everywhere: in nature, in animal life and in humanity. When we look at humanity as a whole, we notice how much diversity there is: cultures, languages, ethnicities, religions, etc. Often, these differences are understood and valued as a richness. The diversity of foods and cuisines worldwide is a good example. But too often, some differences are perceived as so problematic that many people fight over them.

Today, around the world, we find many different kinds of violence linked to social conflicts. In many cases, people justify violence by citing irreconcilable cultural, religious or ethnical differences, among others. Causes of conflict can be clustered in either competition over resources, differences in perceptions or misperceptions. One can argue that we value resources in different ways and therefore, we perceive resources differently.

Whatever the cause of the conflict, a good part of the problem comes from misperceptions and negative feelings of one group about another. Such misperceptions can easily turn into stereotypes following which they can justify discrimination against one or more persons. Discrimination immediately creates tensions because it is based on unfair behaviour of one person or group against another. If a fair solution is not found quickly, these tensions rise and eventually erupt into violent social conflicts.

There are many people who are part of communities that are subjected to discrimination based on intercultural and interreligious misunderstandings and misperceptions. When social conflicts emerge, sometimes millions of people are affected. Many may start to hate each other to a point where they no longer want to live together. Divisions grow and make communication more and more difficult.

So how can we overcome such communication problems? How can we participate in overcoming these tensions and conflicts? How can we transform conflicts into opportunities for new collaborations?



Through dialogue, we can learn to find similarities unnoticed before, and even come to respect and sometimes appreciate differences. Through dialogue, we come together as human beings first to find inclusive solutions to the challenges we face today. We aim to empower young people with the skills and competencies that enable them to actively participate in the decision making and resolution of community issues for a sustainable development.



As Scouts, we also share a common identity that transcends national boundaries and other differences. For more than a century, our Movement has become a living proof that we can live together harmoniously by balancing both our similarities and differences. We are even learning to value the complementarity of some of our differences, making us stronger and better at finding inclusive solutions to a variety of problems, tensions and conflicts at local and global levels. How are we achieving this?

Since the very beginning of our Movement, the Scout values that were developed by Lord Baden-Powell have been centred on the Scout Promise and Law. Every single member in our Movement has promised to help others in all circumstances, regardless of nationality, faith, religion, ethnicity, language, gender, age, ability, race, etc. Scouts obey the law that requires them to be helpful and friendly, as well as to smile and be trustworthy at all times. How can this be implemented in today's world if there is no openness towards others?

In Scouting, openness to all is essential in the practice of dialogue. Lord Baden-Powell once said that 'a Scout is a friend to all and a brother to every other Scout'. This is not just a saying, it is a way of life. Being a friend to all and a brother or sister to every Scout has a universal quality that emphasizes this common Scout identity and avoids highlighting differences. This is directly mentioned in the constitutional definition of the Scout Movement.

This openness makes the practice of dialogue a daily reality in Scouting. For example, WOSM is one of the few international movements that has gathered members of all religions since its early days. Since its inception, it has held true to Lord Baden-Powell's words by neither discriminating against nor highlighting faith and belief as a distinguishing characteristic.

In 1996, at the 34<sup>th</sup> World Scout Conference in Oslo, the delegates recommended to the World Scout Committee and to the religious families existing within the Scout Movement to convene religious representatives through the organisation of forums under Resolution 1996-10 Inter-Religious Dialogue. The Resolution called for 'interreligious dialogue' within Scouting as a whole. For more than 20 years now, there have been regular gatherings of all religious organisations recognised in WOSM, under a structure known as the Interreligious Forum of World Scouting.

Through this forum more recently, all its religious organisations have been promoting Scouting's values and its many programmes, especially those on spiritual development. They have also been active in running Faith and Belief Zones at many World Scouting events. They show how dialogue is helping to concretise what Lord Baden-Powell once said 'In the Scouts, each form of religion is respected, and its active practice encouraged and through the spread of our brotherhood in all countries, we have the opportunity in developing the spirit of mutual good will and understanding.'

In 2013, WOSM and KAICIID signed a memorandum of understanding to work together in this field of dialogue. Since then, KAICIID has become one of WOSM's key partners, developing many joint activities at many events within and outside of Scouting. This started with the provision of an insightful and effective training for the Interreligious Forum of World Scouting on how organisations and individuals from different backgrounds, beliefs, cultures, ethnicities and nationalities can better communicate and work together. This document is one of the outcomes of this collaboration, which we hope will spread the practice of dialogue worldwide.

In this document, we explore the many roots and manifestations of dialogue, always with the aim of instilling an attitude of peace and of respect towards others in the hearts of all young people. Indeed, as indicated in 2000 by Koïchiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO in declaring the year of Culture and Peace:

'Peace cannot be guaranteed exclusively by political, economic or military agreements. In the final analysis, it depends upon the unanimous, sincere and sustained engagement of peoples. Each one of us, no matter what our age, sex, social position, religious affiliation or cultural origin is called upon to create a peaceful world [...] Peace can only be achieved through our behaviour, attitudes and everyday acts. The Culture of Peace is the universal culture that all peoples, all human beings must share. The culture of peace [...] is essential to our common humanity.'<sup>2</sup>

This document provides guidance to NSOs and NSAs on how to instil dialogue in our hearts and minds as a value, rather than just a skill. It builds a foundation for dialogue in our Movement and strengthens the Scouting value system. Through this document, we offer a clear path to any young person wanting to become what we call, a dialogical Scout. This is one of the ways to create a better world, and to achieve global peace.

The Dialogue for Peace Programme is part of the Better World Framework and the Scouts Global Network, working in close collaboration with the Scout World Programmes, Regional and national level initiatives.





# How to use this guide

This Book of Knowledge is one of the Dialogue for Peace programme's set of documents. Its purpose is to provide basic knowledge of the concepts, skills and competences required for the dialogue and peacebuilding education of young people. It also serves as an educational tool for the explicit integration of the value and practice of dialogue in the Youth Programme offered at the national level.

- This Building Bridges-Guide for Dialogue ambassadors is your main source of information and reference document for the concepts you learned in the Dialogue for Peace programme.
- Use this document and the Dialogue Badge Booklet when implementing the elements of dialogue at the local level in fulfilment of the requirements of the dialogue badge.
- Use this document and the Dialogue Facilitators and Trainers Manual when facilitating a dialogue process. When coordinating the execution of a learning experience to develop capacities related to dialogue with a Dialogue for Peace training courses/workshops at any level.

## Icons used in this document



### Did you know?

Facts and stories that help us to understand the different aspects of dialogue education.



### Remember

Definitions and concepts that become relevant in the adoption of dialogue as way of life and in the practice of dialogue as a vehicle for mutual understanding.



### Dialogical reflections

Readings and activities for the readers to understand/experience the introspective dimension of dialogue as the first step to become a dialogical person.



### Dialogue with others

Readings and activities to discuss and share with others to learn different perspectives.



### Thoughts related to dialogue

Quotes and excerpts that are related to dialogue.



### Recommended readings

Relevant titles and documents that are related to each chapter to explore for further reference.



### Frequently asked questions

A specific topic that becomes of most interest across cultures, religions and audiences.

# DIALOGUE FOR PEACE

If we were to start a journey on how to promote dialogue and cultivate a culture of peace, it is necessary to have a common understanding of global views and general understanding of the culture of peace. Only then and starting from that awareness, will we be able to contribute to its development in collaboration with others.



Adapted from UN Culture of Peace.

## A Culture of Peace

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly agreed that a culture of peace 'consists of values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society...'

The development of a culture of peace in communities is possible when its members respect specific values and rights like freedom of expression or cultural diversity, promote and practise certain habits like dialogue, non-violence, cooperation and engage all social and civil actors to actively participate, in order to educate community members.

*Peace cannot be secured entirely by commercial interests, military alliances, general disarmament or mutual treaties, unless the spirit for peace is there in the minds and will of the peoples. This is a matter of education.'*

### **Baden-Powell**

On September 1999, the UN adopted Resolution 53/243 Declaration on a Culture of Peace to provide guidance for governments, international organisations and civil society in promoting and strengthening the culture of peace.

#### **UN's Definition of a Culture of Peace (1999)<sup>3</sup>**

A culture of peace is a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behaviour and ways of life based on:

- a. Respect for life, ending of violence and promotion and practice of non-violence through education, dialogue and cooperation
- b. Full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States and non-intervention in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law
- c. Full respect for and promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms
- d. Commitment to peaceful settlement of conflicts
- e. Efforts to meet the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations
- f. Respect for and promotion of the right to development
- g. Respect for and promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women and men
- h. Respect for and promotion of the right of everyone to freedom of expression, opinion and information
- i. Adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations; and fostered by an enabling national and international environment conducive to peace



REMEMBER

The declaration also emphasizes on the importance of promoting democracy, the observance of human rights and the rights of children, eradication of all forms of discrimination and poverty, and the promotion of sustainable economic and social development. It also calls for governments and civil society to assume an active role in the development of a culture of peace.<sup>4</sup>



DIALOGICAL REFLECTIONS

- Are these values and rights observed and respected in your community or your country?
- Do you practise any of these habits in your daily actions?
- How are you promoting and educating people around you about the culture of peace?



### **A culture of peace according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**

In 1997, the UN General Assembly mandated UNESCO to develop a programme to develop a culture of peace. More recently, since the launch of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022), UNESCO has been developing several aspects to this culture of peace and non-violence, which it defines as 'The culture of peace and non-violence is a commitment to peace-building, mediation, conflict prevention and resolution, peace education, education for non-violence, tolerance, acceptance, mutual respect, intercultural and interfaith dialogue and reconciliation'.<sup>5</sup>

It makes sense that this document, therefore, be understood as a tool that will strengthen Scouting's capacity to contribute to this culture of peace and non-violence worldwide. At the heart of learning how to promote a culture of peace is the knowledge about and the practice of intercultural and interfaith or interreligious dialogue.

## **Why dialogue?**

### **A culture of respecting and appreciating differences**

The existence of similarities and differences between human beings and across the whole of humanity is part of the natural diversity of our world. Making sense of similarities is easy. Making sense of differences is often more challenging. Yet, learning to deal positively with differences is one of the most important values a human being can acquire, the earlier the better. Differences exist everywhere: at home, in the family among siblings and cousins, in school, in our neighbourhood and town as well as in society in general.

Coping with differences in our own homes and communities may seem less challenging than facing differences from afar, such as those we perceive through media coverage of distant places and peoples. Yet, in both cases, the challenges of learning to respect differences is an educational process that is best started in the early years of our childhood. For Scouts, it starts with our Cubs. As we move further from our immediate surroundings, this process appear to be more difficult or even impossible, creating tension.

Dialogue is necessary to spread the culture of peace, starting with the minimum, tolerance. From there, one grows to respect differences and even better still, appreciate them. The culture of dialogue prevents violence. It also helps reduce tensions and transform conflicts. In fact, dialogue is an effective tool to cope with the tensions that the inability to deal with differences might produce. In short, dialogue is a valuable skill for future young leaders; an essential value to cultivate throughout our lives.

Respect for differences, whether in opinions, cultures or beliefs, for example, does not necessarily mean accepting or agreeing with positive or negative values associated with them. Rather, it means acknowledging their right to exist. For example, a person's identity must be respected, with all of its various components (or sub-identities) such as nationality, culture, social class, language, gender, ideology, religion (if any), age and ability.



Diversity is part of the laws of the universe. Denying this principle is going against what is natural in life. The whole world is built on the diversity of its ecosystem; without such diversity, there would be no life. We must think of such diversity as a whole made up of many parts that complement each other. Diversity is not limited to the physical and functional aspects of life; there is also diversity in belief and ways of life.

Interreligious and intercultural dialogue are the means to deal with such diversity. They are the means to promote better coexistence and cooperation between people from different cultural or religious backgrounds. Such dialogue fosters the discovery of both what is shared and what is different in our respective cultural and religious worldviews.

It also promotes the exchange of experiences through which we learn to improve our ways of serving each other. These dialogues spread the values of good behaviour and governance, ultimately contributing to our sustainability on earth.

To reach these goals, we have to work to integrate diversity as part of our cultural and religious understandings of reality, recognising that there is diversity both across and within cultures and religions (as in all other aspects of our lives).



Despite often noticing our differences more than our similarities, we should never let the fears that may come up from such differences take over our behaviour; differences need not lead to discord or division, let alone violent conflicts and war. Instead, we must learn to respect and appreciate the deep wisdom and potential of diversity. Let us celebrate diversity!

Through dialogue, we come to discover and respect our deeper similarities and differences. Dialogue can also be a means to better identify the common grounds from which we can begin to prevent as well as transform tensions and conflicts. In continuing to dialogue, we strengthen our collaborations.

In this dialogical process, we learn to fully engage with each other, thus increasing our mutual trust levels. We consolidate our relationships, making them and our relationship with the environment more sustainable. This is how dialogue contributes to a culture of peace. This is why the Dialogue for Peace programme now exists, for each one of us to make the culture of peace our very own.

## Diversity and Inclusion in Scouting<sup>6</sup>



REMEMBER

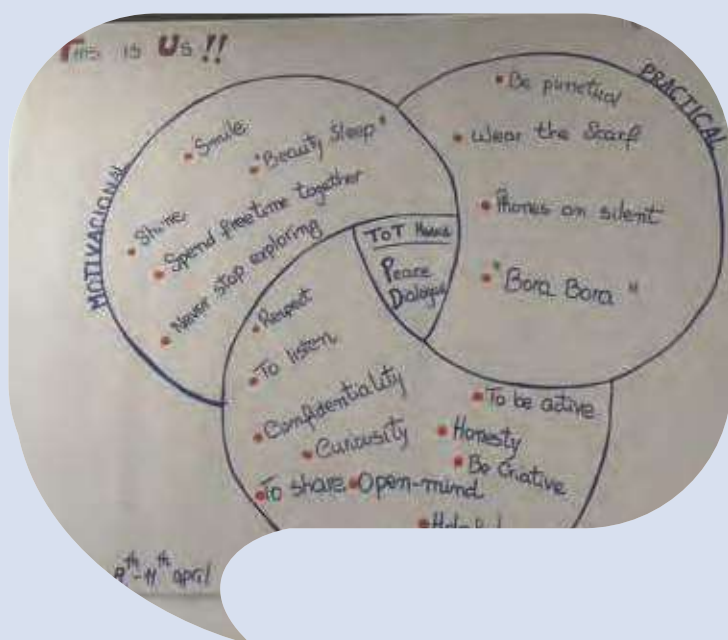
Diversity encompasses recognising people as individual, understanding that each one of us is unique, and respecting our individual differences. Recognising diversity in Scouting involves valuing and having regard for everyone, and using those differences to create cohesive and diverse local, national and global communities.

Inclusion implies valuing the diversity of individuals, giving equal access and opportunities to all, and having each person involved and participating in activities to the greatest extent possible.



DIALOGICAL  
REFLECTIONS

- How do you think diversity is reflected in your family, your community or your country?
- Is inclusion widely practised by the people you frequently meet with or in the places you often visit?



### **What do the Great Barrier Reef and a World Scout Jamboree have in common?**

Cultural diversity surrounds us in our daily lives through different forms of food, music, art, language, religion, spirituality, ways of interacting with the environment, etc. Our world is constantly changing because of globalisation, modernisation and migration. Our cultural landscapes are changing as well, making it extremely important to understand the richness of such diversity for both individuals and groups as well as societies in general, from local to global levels.

Natural ecosystems present us with many examples of diversity through their richness. For example, the Great Barrier Reef is internationally recognised for its outstanding biodiversity. Biodiversity is the term which is often used to describe the variety of life on our planet at all levels from genes to ecosystems. It encompasses all living things in a given habitat and all their natural variations, from genetic differences within one species to variations across a whole ecosystem.

The Great Barrier Reef's extraordinary and unique biodiversity and the interconnectedness of species and habitats within it make this area one of the most complex natural systems on earth.



### **The Great Barrier Reef in numbers**

- Over 1,625 species of fish swim among more than 450 species of hard coral
- More than 2,900 separate coral reefs make it the world's largest coral reef ecosystem
- 70 different bio habitats
- More than 2,000 sq km of mangroves, with species representing 54% of the world's mangrove diversity
- 1,050 islands ranging from small coral cays to large continental islands

In Scouting, our best example showcasing the richness of diversity is a Jamboree. These interactive events are designed to promote a greater appreciation for different cultures through a variety of activities allowing Scouts to discover the wealth of world cultures in many of their manifestations which include food, music, games, dance, etc.

Every World Scout Jamboree unites young people to promote peace and mutual understanding. It provides many opportunities to immerse oneself in diverse cultures worldwide through features such as the Global Development Village, the Faith and Beliefs Zone as well as numerous opportunities for socialising with new friends from around the globe.

# What is dialogue?



REMEMBER

Dialogue is a secure means of communication between individuals or groups aimed at the exchange of views, knowledge, understandings, impressions and perceptions to reach a common understanding of the subject matter at the heart of a given dialogue.

The aim of dialogue is to overcome misunderstandings and dispel stereotypes so as to increase mutual understanding. The practice of dialogue requires one to develop better listening skills to understand another person's point of view correctly. This better understanding, however, never means that one must necessarily agree with that point of view.

In the same way that we want to be understood correctly, we must strive to understand others correctly. Once this level of better mutual understanding is reached, it then becomes possible to clarify how much we agree on and how far we disagree, mutually recognising and respecting both.

So, dialogue is not necessarily about finding common agreement; it is about developing mutual respect so as to build sustainable relationships. In this dialogical process, it becomes possible to find where the common grounds are and where the differences lie.

By focusing on clarifying both the similarities and the differences on any topic between two persons or groups of people, dialogue builds bridges of communication among those who are more or less different. It transforms human relations from a state of ignorance or intolerance to a state of deeper understanding and respect for what is shared and what is not.

The dialogue process is greatly helped when there is a dialogue facilitator who helps to foster a safe environment between the two or more persons gathered in one dialogical space. The facilitator supports equal and fair participation among all participants in order to increase mutual understanding about similarities and differences. Dialogue creates a safe space or 'container' for people to surface their assumptions and to question their previous perceptions and judgments.



It emphasizes questioning, listening and co-creating for mutual understanding. To make the space safe, the facilitator ensures that all participants do their best to suspend their judgments and take the risk of sharing their feelings and perceptions as well as surface their deeper questions, without losing sight of the aim of dialogue: to collectively reach mutual understanding on one or more issues, possibly even finding some common grounds.

By emphasizing mutual understanding, dialogue fosters an attitude of openness and of wanting to learn more about others as well as about oneself. In the process, dialogue raises better awareness, which reduces fears; it helps build and strengthen relationships. They are essential to create and sustain collaborations. These elements of dialogue contribute to the decreasing of misunderstandings and the dispelling of stereotypes. By doing so, dialogue helps to prevent, reduce and possibly even transform tensions and conflicts.

Dialogue is a transformative peacebuilding method. It is transformative because it changes the individual perception of the other and therefore, of the conflict. When these changes are mutual, the dialogue transforms the relations between the parties from adversarial to respectful, opening the way to create new relationships. Dialogue helps the participant to separate the person from the problem; it also helps to see the person as an individual within a larger group that is perceived initially as adversary.



**Dialogue**, [...] is a conversation with a centre, not sides. It is a way of taking the energy of our differences and channelling it toward something that has never been created before. It lifts us out of polarisation and into a greater common sense and is thereby a means for accessing the intelligence and coordinated power of groups of people.

Dialogue fulfils deeper, more widespread needs than simply 'getting to yes.' The aim of a negotiation is to reach agreement among parties who differ. The intention of dialogue is to reach new understanding and, in doing so, to form a totally new basis from which to think and act. In dialogue, one not only reach agreement, we try to create context from which many new agreements might come. And we seek to uncover a base of shared meaning that can greatly help coordinate and align our actions with our values.

**William Isaacs,  
Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together**

## What dialogue is not

Recently, dialogue has been increasingly mentioned as a non-violent method that people can utilise in resolving conflicts and in building peace. However, the term is often overused or misused to describe any efforts toward solving disagreements non-violently. Therefore, while it is important to define what dialogue is, it is equally important to understand what dialogue is not:

- **Dialogue is not a 'conversation':** in a conversation, the persons engaged are simply talking with each other in a longer exchange of words, often focused on a particular topic, but open to change. There is no objective of any kind.
- **Dialogue is not a 'discussion' nor a 'salon':** in a discussion or a salon, participants explore a topic with the intention to learn more about the topic, with less emphasis on the participants. In dialogue, the participants and their relationships are in the centre of the process.
- **Dialogue is not a 'conference':** in a conference, people come to share their theories and statements in a formal setting. Dialogue is less formal and definitely not a forum for sharing theories and make general statements. In dialogue, participants are encouraged to share the personal understandings and questions about each other. At the same time, a conference may include elements of dialogue and nowadays, many conferences benefit from using dialogue methodology in some, if not all, sessions.



- **Dialogue is not 'advocacy':** in advocacy, the objective is to rally support for your idea or a certain idea or action in general. Therefore, the intention is to convince others that your own idea and perception is the best. In dialogue, there is no intention or pressure to convince anyone about anything, in any direction. It is all about increased mutual understanding for better learning about each other firstly, and possibly about a given topic secondarily, if the dialogue includes a specific one.
- **Dialogue is not a 'consultation':** in a consultation, the organisers get the participants to share their feedback or opinions on certain topics, sometimes to identify their needs or to come up with solutions. Dialogue is not a relationship between a beneficiary and a service provider where feedback is needed in one direction only.
- **Dialogue is not a 'negotiation':** in a negotiation, the parties come with the aim (and pressure) of reaching an agreement. In dialogue, the intention is to learn about another person or party's perceptions and understandings of a topic without the pressure of reaching a solution.
- **Dialogue is not a 'debate':** in a debate, each party comes to prove that their ideas are the right ones and disqualify the other party's ideas. In dialogue, participants come to learn about each other, rather than teaching each other or prove each other wrong.

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A DEBATE AND A DIALOGUE

Debate	Dialogue
Oppositional approach	Collaborative approach
Each party is trying to prove one's own point or prove the other wrong.	The parties are working together towards a common understanding.
One assumes that there is one right answer.	One assumes there are possibly more than one 'right answer' and that each person may therefore, only have 'part of the answer' or a perspective on it.
Winning is the goal; a win-lose approach.	Finding a common ground is the goal.
One communicates through a pre-determined position.	One communicates at the levels of interests, needs, feelings and values.
One listens to the other side in order to find flaws and to counter its arguments.	One listens to the other side in order to understand.
Defends assumptions as the truth	Reveals assumptions for re-evaluation
Causes critique of the other position	Causes introspection of one's own position
Defends one's own positions as the best solution and excludes other solutions	Opens the possibility of reaching a better solution than any of the originally imagined solutions
Creates a closed-minded attitude, a determination to be right	Creates an open-minded attitude, an openness to being wrong and to change
Prompts a search for glaring differences	Prompts a search for basic agreements
Involves a countering of the other position without focusing on feelings or relationship and often belittles or deprecates the other person	Involves a real concern for the other person and does not seek to alienate or offend



There are many definitions of the concept of dialogue. These definitions often mirror the objectives and styles that underpin various approaches to dialogue, each one being potentially valid within that particular context. Yet, in general, most activists agree that dialogue is used as a means to build peace.

What generally distinguishes dialogue from other means of resolving conflict is that dialogue constitutes a mechanism to transform a given conflict (thus the expression 'conflict transformation') from a state of competitive relations to one of cooperative relationships, by focusing on ensuring that these relationships become sustainable in the long term. This explains why the expression 'conflict transformation' is preferred, when using dialogue as a transformative mechanism, to the concept 'conflict resolution', even though the latter remains more well-known.

## What is interreligious dialogue?

KAICIID's definition of interreligious dialogue<sup>7</sup> is:

While the word 'dialogue' can often refer to a conversation between different people, KAICIID understands 'dialogue' - whether inter- or intra-religious, intercultural or intercivilisational - as a form of interaction between two or more persons of different identities that emphasizes self-expression and reciprocal listening without passing judgment, in an intellectual and compassionate spirit of openness to mutual learning with deep transformative potential.

Interreligious dialogue, also often referred to as interfaith dialogue, is about people of different religious identities seeking and coming to mutual understanding and respect that allow them to live and cooperate with each other in spite of their differences.



REMEMBER

The exponential growth in the practice of dialogue in the past 50 years, especially interreligious dialogue, has led to deep transformations in both theological perceptions and interreligious collaborations for justice and peace. Both interreligious and intercultural dialogue contribute to a paradigm shift away from winning arguments to controlling results, towards collective and inclusive decision-making for a sustainable common good.

Dialogue is at the heart of positive peacebuilding, its processes are in all phases, from prevention of conflicts to peace-making and post-conflict rebuilding. At KAICIID, dialogue is both a means and an end, from conception of strategy and delivery of programmes, to impact assessment [...].

Before going deeper into dialogue as a peacebuilding method as well as its principles, models and design, we need to understand more about how conflicts arise. The next chapter starts by introducing the concepts of cultures, identities and worldviews, and how they contribute to constructing our perceptions and misperceptions of each other.



↔  
DIALOGICAL  
REFLECTIONS

- Have you ever participated in a debate or a dialogue process before?
- Do you think you practice dialogue when interacting with other people?

RECOMMENDED  
READINGS

Bohm, D. (2013). *On Dialogue*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Isaacs, W. (1999). *Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together*. New York: Doubleday.

Helde, M. L. (2013). *The Dialogue Handbook – The art of conducting a dialogue and facilitating dialogue workshops*. Danish Youth Council

Abu-Nimer, M., Khoury, A. and Welty, E. (2007). *Unity in Diversity: Interfaith Dialogue in the Middle East*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Baden-Powell, R. (1922). *Education in Love in Place of Fear*. Geneva: World Scout Bureau.





## IDENTITY, CULTURE AND WORLDVIEW

Identity, culture and worldview are three concepts that are closely related. Before understanding the impact of dialogue in the construction of mutual understanding, it is relevant to be aware that we as social beings have a unique collection of thoughts, habits and beliefs that have been imprinted in us throughout our life by a series of events and contexts.

These thoughts and beliefs make us what we are and provide us with different perspectives on how we experience the world. This unique and individual point of view, the way we share it with others and how we interact among each other, contribute to the fostering of a peaceful or conflictive environment.

### Identity

If belonging is a basic human need, then identity is 'a compass by which we orientate ourselves.' It is 'where we feel that we belong and where we are recognised and accepted as who we are'<sup>8</sup>.



REMEMBER

Identity incorporates the ideas, beliefs, qualities and expressions that make a person who he/she is. This self-perception is modelled by relation with others and with our own context in time.

This means, in a life time, one individual can experience many identities, some overlapping in time and age, some related to a specific context or associated with a group of people he/she interacts with as well as the institutions he/she is related to.

Some identities last a lifetime, while others can change, appear or disappear over time. Ethnicity, race, sex, gender, age, language, nationality, education, social status, religion, spirituality, ideology and professions are only a few examples of identities. There are numerous types of identities.

Identity is often referred to as what constitutes the inner core of a person, his/her own personhood, as in the expression 'my identity', meaning my 'personal identity.' A person's identity is made up of a unique combination of elements which are also referred to as 'identities': nationality, language, ethnicity, culture, age, education level, social class, possibly religion and many others. In this latter sense, 'identities' are shared by a group of people.

So, there is a distinction to be made between 'my personal identity' in the psychological sense of what makes me unique as a person, and various 'identities' in the sociological sense of what represents various ways human beings coalesce into meaningful group entities.

In the modern world, the personal quest for meaning has given more weight to the individual construction of what constitute 'my personal identity'. In many pre-modern societies, collective group identities are dominant, with the personal self often being subsumed under one more important group identity. In both cases, however, every person connects to other human beings through a variety of collective identities that are more or less conscious to each person or to a group of persons.

This diversity of collective identities constitutes the infinite ways through which all human beings connect with each other through those identities they share with at least some others. Those are then called 'similarities', in contrast to the identity elements that they do not share: those are 'differences.'

One broad collective form of identity is that of culture. Cultures are related to one another, to a greater or lesser extent. While each culture may be more or less different from other cultures, one thing they all share in common is that a culture contributes to fulfilling one of the main basic human needs, the sense of belonging.

Humans, in general, strive for the recognition of their own personal identity as the fulfilment of this basic need to belong to one or more broader collective identities.<sup>9</sup>

One of the most general identity all humans connect to is that of culture. Every human being functions within at least one cultural identity. This cultural identity often overlaps with language and ethnicity, and sometimes religion. But at times, a religion may itself include several cultures. That is why the relation between culture and religion is sometimes complicated: both overlapping with each other most of the time.

A human being's personal identity includes a number of collective identities through which he/she enters into a social relation with others, producing a sense of meaning as one then belongs to this group. A human being needs to feel part of a group, and often, many are part of more than one group.

Most human beings belong to a family, which can sometimes be part of a clan, which can in turn be part of a tribe, which can be part of a nation, which may or not be part of a linguistic-cultural-regional group and so on. This is why each human being is connected to several identity groups on a sociological level. His/her own unique combination of such collective identities is what makes up his/her personal and unique identity.

How one determines belonging to an identity group occurs through both self-identification (i.e. I choose to belong to group x, which reflects an agency, a conscious choice) and/or through other-identification (i.e. others assign a group identity to me, rightly or wrongly). Each social group has its own way of life, traditions and many other traits, sometimes conveniently regrouped into what is called a culture.

From birth and throughout life, humans belong to different social groups and adopt the ways of these social groups. This models an individual's identity and has an influence on how each person relates to others. In the process of interacting with others, people perceive and are perceived through the lenses of both 'personal identity' as well as 'collective identities'. The larger ones are often referred to as culture.

Most of the time, the persons sharing a culture behave in normative ways that are not explicit or even conscious to most of them. Often, it is when entering into contact with people of 'other cultures' that the differences emerge, suddenly making conscious certain forms of behaviour. In these exchanges across cultures, it is possible that words, actions and intentions might be mutually misperceived or misunderstood, sometimes leading to tensions or conflict situations.

If we want to avoid or reduce such tensions and conflicts, it becomes imperative to understand better the relations between identity, culture and worldview. At the heart of those relations are perceptions of reality, often the result of projecting on to others or on to situations what we perceive as right and normal for us, not realising how much of these perceptions and understandings are directly related to the identities and cultures we are part of.

How our numerous identities and sub-identities relate to each other is essential to our understanding of what enables human beings to communicate with each other, at the same time as it can also be the source of differences, some of which may lead to tensions and conflicts.

How some of these identities mingle into becoming a culture that shapes many people's behaviours, thoughts and feelings, and how all of these identities, and at times several cultures, relate to each other within each person is what constitutes the heart of a worldview, will be elaborated in the following section on culture.

# Culture

The definition of culture has long been a controversy and the term have been used in a variety of ways. One commonly used definition is by Edward Taylor and was published in 1871 which says '[Culture] is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by [a human] as a member of society.' The term sub-culture is used to refer to minority cultures within a larger dominant culture'.<sup>10</sup>

Another definition emphasises on perception: 'Culture is how people perceive the world; it is their social and cognitive dynamic frame that shapes their experience and behaviour, consciously and subconsciously. It is socially transmitted to the individual to construct the group common views and meanings – it is the collective knowledge, values, and behaviour that distinguish a group of people from another'.<sup>11</sup>

Another way to understand culture, especially in our age of information technology, is to say that culture is the 'software of the mind'<sup>12</sup>. As defining culture has many angles, it might be better to learn about its features, elements and characteristics; and even the mistakes that we too often make when trying to understand culture.



## Three key features about culture<sup>13,14</sup>

1. It is a quality not of individuals as such, but of the society in which they are part of.
2. It is acquired - through acculturation or socialisation - of the individual within that society.
3. Each culture is a unique complex of attributes subsuming every area of social life.

Defining elements of a culture include the norms, values and beliefs that keep the group together. The way we express this culture is through communication that uses language, symbols and many forms of art. The way we entertain ourselves and how we spend our free time is also a part of our culture, as are our eating habits and the ways we prepare food as well as the ways in which we select our leaders and build social institutions and organisations of different kinds.





THOUGHTS  
RELATED TO  
DIALOGUE

Cultural diversity: the common heritage of humanity culture takes diverse forms across time and space. This diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind. As a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature. In this sense, it is the common heritage of humanity and should be recognised and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations.<sup>15</sup>

Today, in our highly interactive world, cultural diversity and interrelatedness has become increasingly the source of both greater human creativity as well as increased isolation sometimes leading to extreme violence. For this reason, soon after the 2001 September 11 attacks in the United States, UNESCO adopted a Declaration on Cultural Diversity, in which the first article reads:

In summary, our many diverse identities and cultures help us give meaning to what surrounds us. In other words, it shapes our worldviews; it adds meaning to the words we use and the rituals we perform; it is the 'software' that helps us give meaning and value to the different things we see and experience.

However, since there are so many different cultures around the world as well as different identities, it is no surprise that sometimes we might give different meanings and values to the same things, thereby creating misunderstandings, tensions and conflicts.

### Common misconceptions about culture<sup>16</sup>

- **Homogenous:** members of one culture are not all the same, of the same ethnicity, have the same religion, or share the same values, etc.
- **A thing:** culture is not something that you can see and touch, remove or disable.
- **Uniformly distributed among members of the group:** members of the same culture do not necessarily share the exact same values or have the exact same understanding of its norms, values and rituals.
- **An individual possesses a single culture:** we all possess a number of cultures in the same way as we have multiple identities. We acquire an endless number of cross-cutting circles of groups and identities throughout our lives.
- **A custom (what you see is what you get):** often people reduce culture to rituals and behaviour. Culture goes deeper and includes values and meanings.
- **Timeless:** culture is not static, it changes overtime. Societies construct new behaviours, norms and acquire new values as they mix with other cultures and as they face new challenges over the time, 'it is the way by which they [groups] explain and overcome their challenges' overtime.<sup>17</sup>

Since culture is a way of life that identifies a certain group of people, this may lead us to overgeneralise when perceiving individuals identified with their particular culture, causing us to make some mistakes in our view, such as misperceptions, stereotyping, labelling, all of which may lead to discrimination and possibly even to various forms of violent behaviour towards others.

When an individual falls victim of any of those behaviours, this person will tend to hide or suppress some elements of his/her identity, in an attempt to fit-in, if that is possible. This is why not every cultural aspect is necessarily visible, nor does every person behaving within a cultural norm feel necessarily part of that culture.

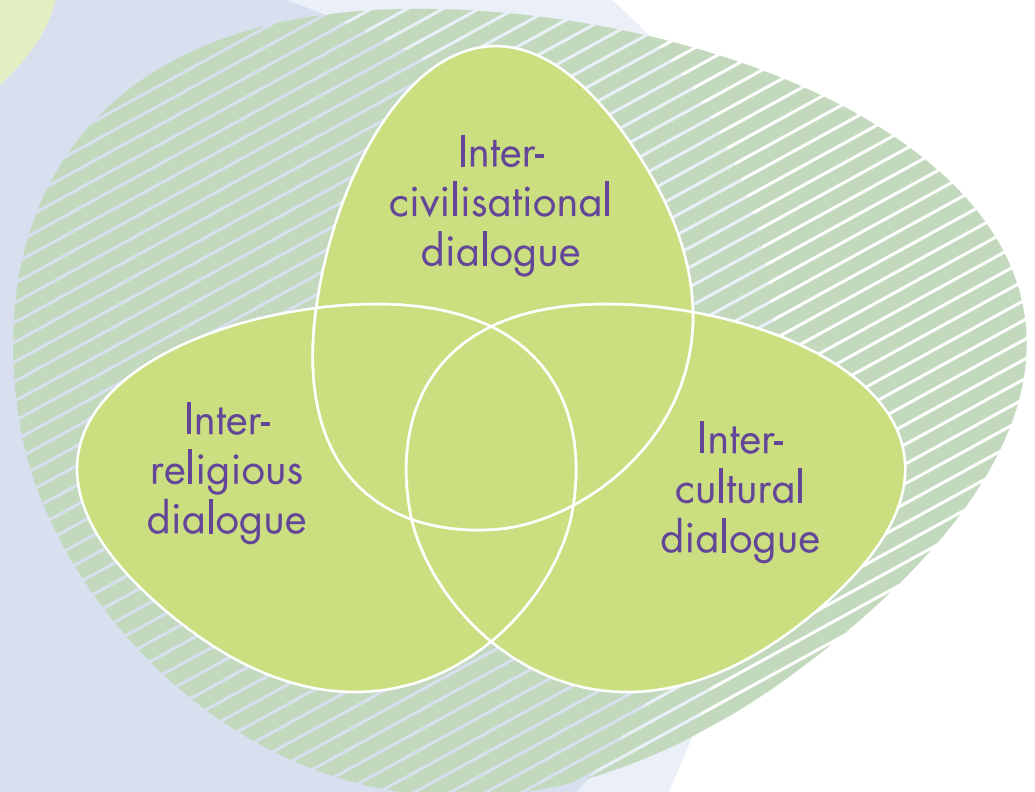
# Worldview

A worldview simply means how a person views the world. It is a simple word that includes all the conscious and unconscious elements that form how a person understand the reality of the world, from his/her own perspective, whatever the limits of this perception might be for each human being. A worldview is thus the result of a person's integration of hundreds of elements, many of which are identities or sub-identities, including culture(s), which a person finds important in constructing their own personal identity.

When a dialogue is called 'interworldview dialogue', it means that the goal is to improve mutual understanding about each other's worldview, with everything that it includes of multiple identities and sub-identities. The rich complexity of all the parts that make up who a person is have their place in a worldview.

At times, a person may be fully conscious of many of those elements that constitute the most important aspects of his/her worldview; sometimes, the same person may not be aware of other elements that also influence their worldview. In fact, for each person, there are degrees of consciousness associated to each element that contribute to forming a worldview. Finally, the unique combination of elements may change over time, making a worldview something always dynamic.

## Interworldview Dialogue





So why would it be useful to have this new concept of interworldview dialogue in addition to intercultural and interreligious dialogues, or intercivlisational dialogue? The reason is simple. When a person engages in intercultural dialogue, the focus often remains on the various cultures that are represented by the participants, sometimes at the expense of other forms of identity.

When a person engages in interreligious dialogue or interfaith dialogue, the focus often remains on the various religious identities that each participant brings to the dialogue circle. But what happens when a person does not have any religious identity? A person may think of himself/herself as atheist, agnostic, humanist or may not want to assign to himself/herself any such identity.

This may be because a person is in a process of searching what the meaning of life might be, in which case he/she does not want to be forced into any 'identity box'. Or a person may not be interested in self-identifying through any such religious or non-religious 'identity boxes' preferring not to self-identify with any of the above identity categories, leaving their worldview completely open and free of any assigned identity that relates to an ultimate meaning of life.

Because these last two approaches are often found among many Scouts in different parts of the world, it stands to reason that interworldview dialogue has also become a necessary form of dialogue within Scouting, in complementarity to intercultural and interreligious dialogues. Where both may unintentionally lead to feelings of exclusion, interworldview dialogue 'allows for a more inclusive language in which all human beings can find their place'.<sup>18</sup>



Based on the exercise above, what can we conclude about identities, allegiances or elements, as Amin Maalouf<sup>19</sup> calls them in his book, 'In the Name of Identity; Violence and the Need to Belong' ? Here are some of Maalouf's conclusions, organised and added on by Brodeur:

1. Each individual's identity is made up of several sub-identities.
2. These allegiances or sub-identities are not equally strong.
3. These sub-identities are found separately in many individuals; however, the combination is unique to each of us.
4. There is a certain hierarchy among these sub-identities in each individual, however, this hierarchy changes over time.
5. The changes in the hierarchy also influence the changes in behaviour.
6. The identity(ies) that a person often claims 'is often based, in reverse, on that of his enemy.'
7. The 'mechanism' of identity is complex.

Additionally, Brodeur<sup>20</sup> describes identities through a variety of angles:

1. Identities are fluid, they intersect with implicit boundaries.
2. Identities, in general, function similarly.
3. Identities are real, and live through language, customs and behaviour.
4. Identities are communal or relational, rather than individual.
5. Identities have roots and history.
6. Identities have vision, scenario thinking and worldview.
7. Identities have hierarchies of importance.
8. Identities have power implications.

In our own perception of what constitutes the most important elements of who I am, of my 'self', we give value to some identities more than others, whose importance may also vary depending on the context, time and people with whom we relate to at any given point in time.

In other words, we carry our identities, front or back, whether by our choice or under the pressure of others. There are power dynamics that occur both within how the personal identity gets constantly constructed and reconstructed (through personal agency) as well as how others may impose of us certain identities more than others, sometimes beyond our own will.

## THE POWER DYNAMICS OF IDENTITIES<sup>21</sup>

1. Societies have a hierarchy of identities: this hierarchy differs from one society to another. Different societies put different values to these allegiances. While in some societies, education level or age gets you privileges, while in others, privilege might be gained through cast, political status or socioeconomic status.
2. Similar to any communal group, identities protect their interests, whether through institutions, norms, rituals or values.
3. Identities are fluid, have implicit boundaries, and many are often interconnected: it is almost impossible to identify a boundary between two sub-identities within a person. It is hard to isolate one single identity that influences the attitude or behaviour of an individual.
4. Identities can bring privileges in some context and not in others. Indeed, as these identities have hierarchy, this hierarchy changes from one society to another. In some societies, being from a certain race or holding a certain profession can open many doors, while this same race or profession in another context, can be irrelevant or bring disadvantages.
5. Some identities are subconscious; actually, a person can hardly recognise which identity is influencing a certain attitude or behaviour. Additionally, since identities also include how others identify us, we might not be aware of such identities being attached to us or that they are relevant to us, until they are communicated or experienced. Similar to culture, we cannot determine which actions of an individual are mostly influenced by which identity. Alabbadi wrote, '...especially that culture [same for identity] often affects the individual's attitude or behaviour subconsciously'.<sup>22</sup>
6. While identity similarities attract and identity differences tend to divide; identities can also clash. However, we develop mechanisms to balance these clashes within us. Furthermore, it goes beyond the individual to the interpersonal and the intergroup. Communal values and sense of belonging are often defined in relationship to those who are different, 'the others'. Therefore, groups with similar values, behaviours or belief systems tend to come closer and detach themselves from those who differ.
7. Divisions often lead to exclusions, which in turn can lead to radicalisation and various forms of violence. This point comes as a result of differences. As defined above, identity is 'where we feel that we belong and where we are recognised and accepted as who we are'.<sup>23</sup> And since identities protect their interest through institutions, those who don't belong to the mainstream can easily be marginalised. A marginalised person is more vulnerable to being attracted to or pushed towards radicalisation and/or violent extremism.

**Prejudice  
and  
Discrimination**

Categorisation



Stereotype



Prejudice



Discrimination





## **SUPPRESSED IDENTITIES**

When individuals don't feel acknowledged, receive negative feedback or experience negative reactions to their own identities, the suppression of identities happens. One would find any way to suppress, hide or reduce that identity in such contexts. A suppressed identity is a source of frustration and deprivation. Humans who experience such a situation develop stories and narratives to cope with it.

The good news is that the same is true in the reverse: when identities are recognised and affirmed, human beings also develop stories and narratives about them. Though, when the former happens (stories to cope with the negative), such stories can be utilised to justify violence against those whom we think or perceive as the source of such negative judgment about one (or more) of our identity or sub-identities. This is an unfortunate, often unconscious form of revenge.

Often, our stories which were developed initially to explain the emergence and development of an identity (or sub-identity) become the basis for evaluating another person or groups of people, fostering either further exclusion or an inclusion of only those with whom we share that particular identity.

These stories directly affect how we go about interacting with others. They shape those with whom we build relationship and those we avoid. We keep repeating to ourselves these stories as a protective mechanism. Thus, when we have a single story that has been developed and built upon negative images and stereotypical perceptions of those who are different from us, we can easily become prone towards prejudice and discrimination against others.

## The Danger of a Single Story

**Time:** This activity requires 40-60 minutes.

**Purpose:** This activity is meant to help participants reflect on the issue of stereotyping and labelling, and how this often leads to discrimination. It also helps participants to recognise the importance of hearing the narrative of the other and to understand their perceptions.

**Preparation:** Play 'The Danger of a Single Story' video at YouTube or the TED Talks website. Please bare in mind that the video is 19 minutes and 16 seconds long.

**Instructions:** Show the video to the participants. After watching it together, begin a debrief. The following are some of the questions you might consider asking:

1. What is your general reaction to this speech?
2. Has anyone experienced a similar situation?
3. Have you ever felt stereotyped or judged based on your culture or identity?
4. How did you feel? What did you do? What would you do differently next time?
5. Have you ever stereotyped or judged someone based on their culture or any other aspect of their identity?
6. How did you feel? What did you do? What would you do differently next time?
7. What are categorisation, stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination? How do you differentiate between those four concepts?
8. How can we break stereotypes?
9. How can we avoid falling into prejudice and stop discrimination?<sup>24</sup>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9Ihs241zeg>



The single story approach to making sense of what happens to us personally or collectively indeed provides security and a sense of belonging to an inner group. However, it is also often acts as a mechanism to exclude and discriminate against those whom we believe are our enemies, strangers or simply not like us.

Self-examination of our own stories, narratives and established identities can effectively be done through a dialogical process. When such stories are shared within a context of dialogue, where a safe space has been created, participants learn more about each other's stories and narratives. Through careful listening, they can begin to discover the foundations and assumptions that underlie and support the validity and cohesion of his/her story.

For example, in justifying slavery in the context of American history, a narrative full of value judgments was developed about the purity of one race over others, differentiating between one supposedly 'good' race and all other races being supposedly 'bad', to different degrees. The single story of dividing the world into racial categories was developed and created on the foundational idea that the lighter the skin, the more intelligent or beautiful a person was.

This obviously erroneous single story has caused not only stereotypes and prejudices, but centuries of discrimination. In fact, many of the assumptions that underlie this racist story still live on today, in various segments of different cultures around the world, often strengthened by what is called 'structural racism.' To complicate matters, over the last several centuries, even teachings in several religious communities have been manipulated to justify this single racist story.



### Structural racism

Structural racism is the normalisation and legitimisation of a range of public policies, institutional practices and attitudes that allow for a gradual system of social structures that produces and reproduces cumulative race-based inequalities. As implied by the term itself, structural racism is not something which a few people or institutions tend to practise; rather it has been a feature which is deeply rooted in the social, economic and political sphere of society

**The Aspen Institute  
Roundtable on Community Change<sup>25</sup>**



Justifying slavery or any other type of discrimination against those who are different, succeeds when there is ignorance about the 'other' and also where there is competing interests over who is to benefit most from profits linked to exploitation.

Through personal human encounters, especially when they happen in a dialogue setting, shared stories are heard and transformation of perceptions and understandings can begin. Human contact is a crucial means in learning about those who are different. Often through dialogue, the participants become capable of unpacking their own stories and critically examining the history of their own identities and their constructed perceptions, as well as those of others they listen to.

This deeper understanding of one's own and the other's identities constitutes the base for building new relationships based on similarities often newly-understood. It also contributes to promoting respect for differences, at times finding new appreciation for such differences, and at other times simply 'agreeing to disagree' in a tolerant and non-violent way.

Dialogue is an effective tool that helps us to develop more informed perceptions about each other's multiple identities as well as to correct our misperceptions and stereotypes. As Professor Abu-Nimer, the Senior Advisor at KAICIID and Professor of Peacebuilding at the American University in Washington DC stated during one of the Dialogue for Peace trainings, dialogue is not about correcting the other; rather, it is about correcting our own perceptions of the other.



## Perceptions and Misperceptions

Our 'software' as human beings, which includes our cultures and identities, determines a significant part of the meanings we give to the world.<sup>26</sup> This 'software' helps us to construct our perceptions and misperceptions about other human beings.

### WHAT IS PERCEPTION?

By perception we mean the way we view, interpret, understand and experience things and situations with our senses, the meanings we give to things or experiences. Individuals taking part in same activities will have different and very specific experiences and impressions from each other. This individual way of collecting the information we receive from our surroundings results in numerous perceptions that we build about the reality that surrounds us.

For example, what do you see in Figure 1 - Mother-in-law (1915)<sup>27</sup>? What do friends or colleagues see? The answers will vary, as some would see an old woman while others might see a young woman. It will take us a while to see both images, or someone will have to actually show us both. In the next section, we will explain the causes of partisan perceptions, how and why our perceptions differ, and what are the mechanisms we apply to defend them.



Figure 1: Mother - in - law



Perceptions are captured by our senses and are interpreted through the lenses of our past and present experiences. Our different identities also become lenses through which we see the world. This is the reason why some situations are very pleasant for some people and not for others. It all depends on how we perceive a situation.

Though perceptions are subjective points of view captured through the lenses of individual experiences, they are real and most of the time considered to be true. How we see the world is subject to the limited number of experiences each individual experience in life as well as the amount of information he/she may have about any given topic.

On any subject, a person can be anywhere on the continuum between ignorance and expertise. In most cases, we are closer to the ignorance side of this continuum; in a few areas, we can find ourselves at the other end, having gained an expertise on a specific topic. But at all times, it is good to remind ourselves that wherever we are on the continuum, there is always space to learn more and grow in our understanding of the different perspectives and experiences that people bring to any topic.

Perceptions become lenses or filters based on individual experiences. In time, lenses or filters change; such changes occur due to many reasons. Some are kept because they are verified by numerous experiences and they provide us with a sense of orientation; some are discarded because they are no longer useful, or they become outdated. Finally, some are changed because of an experience or encounter. Dialogue contributes directly to much of these latter changes.



# Causes of partisan perceptions

Individuals tend to be more comfortable when their prior perceptions are confirmed. This leads to the tendency to want to confirm, as often as possible, those experiences or data because they create a sense of comfort. This helps to prevent non-conforming experiences or data that create discomfort.<sup>28</sup>

In 1957, Leon Festinger proposed the cognitive dissonance theory, which states that a powerful motive to maintain cognitive consistency can give rise to irrational and sometimes maladaptive behaviour. The theory states that in situations of conflicting attitudes, beliefs or behaviours, a feeling of discomfort arise that leads to an alteration in one of the attitudes, beliefs or behaviours to reduce the discomfort and restore balance. In other words, 'we have an inner drive to hold all our attitudes and beliefs in harmony and avoid disharmony (or dissonance)'.<sup>29</sup>

The following are some dynamics that contribute to the construction of our perceptions. They are also strategies that individuals employ, consciously or subconsciously, to avoid cognitive dissonance and/or to preserve cognitive balance:

## **We are simply different**

Humans are different by nature. We were created to be different. In fact, our universe is based on the principle of complementarity in diversity. Any attempt in our life to challenge this principle by imposing rules to prevent or prohibit diversity in our surroundings causes damage and, both nature and human beings fall out of balance. In fact, many of our environmental disasters have been caused as a result of policies that have ignored the biodiversity rule of nature, including that of human nature.

## **We experience and observe different data**

We live in different locations, we go to different schools, we go through different experiences and encounters, we might pass through the same places but at different times, etc. Therefore, we are exposed to different levels and types of data and personal experiences that contribute to our knowledge and feelings about our surroundings and the universe as a whole.

It can be as simple as passing down the same street at different times. One person would experience the traffic and therefore build his/her judgement upon bad traffic, while the other who happened to pass during a holiday or at the low traffic hour might not even consider traffic as a characteristic factor to make a note of in describing that same street. This person might build his/her reflection about how nice or bad the buildings or the street decorations are.

## **We are interested in different things**

Since we are different then we are obviously interested in different things, thus we seek different paths to accomplish what we prefer or desire – as our abilities are different. Pursuing our own preferences is also a normal and natural tendency.

This is also a basic feature of the diversity noticed in human personalities. The same two individuals passing down the same street; the one interested in architecture would focus more on the surrounding buildings, while the one who is interested in the social aspect, will mainly notice and focus on the manner and behaviour of the people around.



## **We collect evidence to support prior views**

Much of a person's views are formed at an early age (up to six years old). The foundations for dealing with our surrounding, with all of its challenges and stimulations, are primarily set during this period. Other identity components are also developed later and in different stages of adolescence. Nevertheless, early formation of perceptions is proven to be very influential in later stages of life as well.

Once a person has formed a view and established it (both cognitively and emotionally), the process of collecting data and information to support and sustain this view becomes an automatic habit. If the view about another person or culture, religion, gender, etc. is negative, then we train our senses to collect the evidence that supports such negative views (the same can apply to positive views). We pick up clues from our surroundings to maintain these negative (or positive) views to preserve our cognitive balance.

A process which social psychologists have documented over many decades is Confirmation Bias, which is the tendency to process information by looking for, or interpreting, information that is consistent with one's existing beliefs.<sup>30</sup>

This phenomenon can be seen in our prior example; this person who observed the locals driving during traffic time might have developed a judgement that drivers in that country do not respect traffic laws. The next time this person drives in the same country and sees anyone breaking the traffic law, this will confirm his/her opinion ('You see, no one follows the rules in this country') ignoring all the others who are driving according to the rules. Moreover, this gets compounded when the same person does not notice how many people may be breaking the traffic rules in his/her country.

### **We ignore or dismiss non-conforming data**

Ignoring non-conforming data is a form of defence mechanism that a person develops to maintain the comfort of having a view that applies to all situations – to preserve the cognitive balance. There is indeed no need to change one's views if the new data is dismissed because the messenger or the carrier of the data is not reliable or the message itself is vague, unclear, false, an exception, etc.

The tourist who was observing the traffic and developed his/her negative judgement about the locals' behaviour, not only dismissed the fact that the majority drove according to the rules, but if confronted with studies and statistics that in his/her own country that the situation is worse, this person might very well raise questions about the validity of the data, the integrity or professionalism of the researcher or publisher and so on.

### **We selectively filter incoming data**

Selectively filtering data is another technique people use in order not to challenge their prior views. There are so many sources of data that we are exposed to every day; and we do have the power to choose among these sources. Therefore, we select the sources that fit with our political, cultural or social views, which becomes a mechanism for filtering the data we want to expose ourselves to.

For example, with the hundreds of social media sources that offer ways to explain an ongoing conflict, we filter the incoming data by selecting the sources based on our own prior views about this conflict and its parties. In the United States, the news outlet you follow is mostly related to your political orientation. Therefore, we tend to view certain TV channels, read certain publications, listen to certain presenters and so on.

### **We selectively remember and selectively recall what we want**

History is filled with examples of war and peace, competition and cooperation, violent and non-violent struggles, hatred and compassion, etc. Depending on our view of any particular conflict and its dynamics, we choose to remember certain events that support our prior views about which side is more correct, just, etc.

The tourist observing the traffic in the country he/she was visiting might dig back into history to find an accident or an incident that occurred with traffic violation, just to confirm his/her current point of view, ignoring years and hundreds of other positive encounters.

Research has shown how during the Balkan Wars in the 1990s, the Serbian regime referenced an incident in history that had occurred 600 years before the conflict (the battle of Kosovo) to mobilise one party against the others, ignoring hundreds of years of coexistence and harmony between the different ethnicities and religious communities.

*"The main task that members of a large group share is to maintain, protect, and repair their group identity. A 'chosen trauma' is one component of this identity. The term 'chosen trauma' refers to the shared mental representation of a massive trauma that the group's ancestors suffered at the hands of an enemy. When a large group regresses, its chosen trauma is reactivated in order to support the group's threatened identity."*

**Vamik Volkan**

In other words, in the relationship between two neighbouring groups or societies, there are always, on the one hand, many examples of cooperation and mutual learning and, on the other, many examples of violence and war. In the interaction between members of these cultures, all its members decide what to selectively highlight from their collective memory.

While this is a 'decision-making process', it is hardly ever the result of free individual choice. All members of a group are influenced by a combination of various elements from family members and friends to selected media outlets and particular ideological leanings, to mention some. Moreover, each one of these elements may play a more or less important role in influencing personal choice in selecting memories, depending on a person's personal identity.

Recalling these memories selectively is another technique to resist changing prior views. Developing a rationale for why the person or group only recalls these memories is also part of the construction of the single story. This is especially true in collective decision-making when a society decides to either include or exclude certain elements from what will become a history textbook for public schools. For example, that same tourist when writing about his/her experience in the traffic in that country on a blog, will likely only selectively remember traffic incidents that confirms and supports the argument he/she is trying to make.

### **We revise our memories to fit our preferences**

Individuals and groups ignore certain parts of their history and revise individual and collective memories in order to fit current preferences. Thus, if the person wants to express love and sympathy towards a certain group, he/she revises the memories of the relationships with the other to allow such preference of love to be expressed.

For example, the American (i.e. the United States) collective memory towards the Chinese was revised to suit the national preference after the immigration laws were changed in 1965. Similarly, collective memories of this society and many others around the world have been revised to confirm the preference of equality between races and gender especially from the late 1960s onwards.

### **Our memories form the basis for the formation and confirmation of perceptions**

The way in which we view our history and its associated memories constitutes the base for forming individual and national aspirations for the future. In addition, these memories are essential in confirming existing negative or positive perceptions regarding others. If our memories are selectively filtered to focus on violence, war or negative depictions of those we have disputes with, then such memories will not only provide evidence to confirm our already existing misperceptions, but will also shape and construct our new perceptions or misperceptions.

Given all of the above nine strategies, how can we better inform our perceptions so as to improve our understandings of the reality in which we all live?

Without gaining new skills and learning new information about the other, it is difficult to change or challenge our misperceptions. Dialogue allows participants to zoom into their own processes of forming their perceptions and rethink and reconsider negative assumptions and misperceptions, especially one's own.

Here are eight tips for creating a better and mutually responsible cultural understanding about each other:

## 1. Listen

Listening is the most essential skill in communication. Listening does not only mean remaining quiet to really hear the words of the other; there is more to it. It should be holistic, that is, one can not only listen to the intended meaning of the words shared, but also notice the emotions that are expressed as well as the values that often underlie them.

There are also the non-verbal expressions that carry meaning, although they often vary tremendously from one culture to another, and even between sub-groups within each culture. Finally, to make things a little more complicated, there is a continuum from low and high personalities and cultures, depending on whether what is said actually matches what is being intended, or not – this is called low-context and high-context communication.

A good listener is able to decipher all of these nuances, at least those that are present within his/her own living context. But most importantly, it is the attitude that comes with careful or active or compassionate listening which matters most, especially in dialogue; one should listen to understand and learn, rather than to advocate one's own position or counter-argue against another person's position.



## 2. Become aware of your assumptions

Self-awareness is indeed essential. We should be aware of all of the causes of biased perceptions, because this can also help us understand how we have reached conclusions in interpreting reality on the basis of our own, often limited and biased, observations. It is important to be able to differentiate between what is an observation, an assumption or a judgement.

An observation is something a person has personally noticed or come to understand. An assumption is something a person thinks is true, but without any observation or facts to back it up. Finally, a judgment is when a person decides to assign a negative or positive value to an observation or an assumption.

So, it might be good to ask ourselves such questions as: Are my assumptions confirmed, or not, by factual knowledge? If not, they are merely assumptions and carry very little, if any, truth per se.



### **3. Avoid your own existing labelling**

Language is essential here, but also it is important to be aware of your existing stereotypes and labels, because these can blind us from seeing the person behind the label or the group.

### **4. Suspend judgment and bias**

Give the person in front of you a chance, try to see that person as they are, not as you think they are. Remember that one of the main mistakes about cultures (and other forms of identity) is that people think culture is equally distributed or homogeneous, when this is never the case.

Actually, there are no two persons who are identical when it comes to the combination of identities (or sub-identities) and how much, or how little, their culture affects the other identities that make up the complex person they are.

### **5. Discover the function – Ask why? What is the function?**

If a culture has existed over decades, centuries or millennia, it has definitely found a way to address and resolve its own internal challenges, tensions and conflicts. Finding out how this took place and especially why this culture has developed this or that particular mechanism to do so is one of the aims of intercultural dialogue.

Indeed, many beliefs, rituals, linguistic expressions, etc. exist in a culture to help its members communicate better and find solutions to their challenges. Each cultural element somehow complements the others, giving it a meaning, a reason for its existence within a logical, coherent whole. In short, it should have a function.

Therefore, it is important to take the time to discover what the function of each cultural element might be by asking how it works and what its function might be. Why do people act in this manner? Taking the time to ask and trying to put aside a value judgment one might already have about a given culture or cultural practice is essential to enter into a healthy dialogue.

The answers to such a question needs to come from members of that particular culture. The answers given by them are to be considered as perspectives on the matter at hand. They are more informative than your own or others' assumptions about this culture because they come from people living within that very culture.

### **6. Empathise**

Try to put yourself in the place of the person in front of you to understand and feel what the other person is experiencing from his/her own perspective. In other words, try to see the situation as they see it. What does it mean for them? How does it feel? This is an important skill and competence everyone needs to develop and eventually master through dialogue.

### **7. Ask yourself if this is cultural or individual behaviour?**

We often attribute what is individual (or even a small group) behaviour to group culture. This may or not be the case. How do we know the difference? The larger the pool of answers, the easier it is to determine whether it is only an individual behaviour or a group behaviour. We can also evaluate and check if our observation of a person from a different culture is contextual or part of a regular group practice or belief that has therefore meaning and value for the culture as whole or at least a majority of its members.

### **8. How does my society deal with this issue? Do we have something similar?**

After analysing such an encounter with someone from a different culture, one needs to look at one's own society and culture. Do we have similar rituals or traditions? While they might sometimes be externally different, they might serve the same purpose. As one learns to ask these two questions in particular, the quality of our understanding on any issue improves.



Mutual cultural understanding and better communication not only creates peaceful interaction, but also creates a path for personal development and growth as well as better human relationships. When interacting with people from other cultures, we not only learn about theirs, but also become more aware of ourselves and our own culture.

An example of a simple and useful tool for illustrating and improving self-awareness and mutual understanding between individuals is the Johari Window. The Johari Window can illustrate how we can become more aware about ourselves. It can also help us to become aware about our group or culture and how it is perceived by others.

In facilitating dialogue, the Johari Window can be used to encourage participants to share their perceptions and assumptions about each other to become better informed.



## Contact Theory and dialogue

Without gaining new skills and learning new information about the other, it is difficult to change or challenge our misperceptions, which may lead to prejudice. Thus, the Inter-Group Contact Theory or Contact Hypothesis states, 'that under appropriate conditions, interpersonal contact is one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice between majority and minority group members'.<sup>31</sup>

The art of dialogue is based on the capacity of the facilitator and his/her agency to design a process and structure with the appropriate conditions to allow change.

Most modern dialogue and peacebuilding methods are based upon this theory where the change of perceptions and/or behaviours is the goal of dialogue processes. Dialogue allows us to focus on our own processes of forming our perceptions and, to rethink and reconsider our negative assumptions.

Since 1954, much work has been conducted based on the Contact Theory and directed towards changing relationships by peacebuilding advocates, social scientists and others. As a result, work based on the theory has developed further to include defining different types of intergroup contact<sup>32</sup> as well as how best to create the appropriate conditions to develop a constructive dialogue, which we will be discussing later.



### Johari Window

The Johari Window is a psychological tool that was first created by Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham in 1955. A useful tool for training and facilitation, it is mainly used to increase individuals' perception of themselves and vice versa by focusing on their 'soft skills' such as behaviour, empathy, intergroup and interpersonal development. The model is based on two key points:

1. Trust is gained by revealing information about yourself to others.
2. Learning more about yourself through others' feedback of you. As described in further detail in the diagram below, each quadrant represents the information of the individual, that is, their feelings and motivation, and whether these are or are not known to himself/herself and the others around him/her.<sup>33</sup>

# Johari Window

**Known to Self**  
(What I see in myself)

**Unknown to Self**  
(What I don't see in myself)

Known to others  
(what you see in me)

**The Public Self**  
(part of ourselves that we are happy to share with others and discuss openly)

**The Blind Self**  
(the views that others have of us which may be different from those we have of ourselves)

Not known to Others  
(what you don't see in me)

**The Private (or hidden) Self**  
(parts of ourselves that are too private to share with others)

**The Undiscovered Self**  
(parts of ourselves which neither us or nor other people see)

(Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham, 1955)



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Habitual Behaviour  
[http://www.cres.gr/behave/framework\\_theory\\_2.html](http://www.cres.gr/behave/framework_theory_2.html)







## PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

For societies to be peaceful societies, they need to develop a culture of peace: a set of values, attitudes, traditions and modes of behaviour and ways of life based on equal respect of men and women, promotion of human rights and freedom in its diverse ways of expression, commitment to the peaceful resolution of conflicts, providing the developmental and environmental needs of future generations, adopting principles of 'freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations; and fostered by an enabling national and international environment conducive to peace [...] Therefore, promoting the idea of peace is as important in a war environment as it is in our everyday life, to ensure those values get imprinted in our culture'.<sup>34</sup>

Civil society needs to be fully engaged in a fuller development of a culture of peace.<sup>35</sup> In pursuing such a society, we need to work on the attitudes of persons toward each other and about conflicts. In this chapter, we will learn about the concept of peacebuilding, and most importantly, one of its transformative tools, dialogue. Before going into peacebuilding and dialogue, we need to learn about conflicts, their causes and people's behaviour in and around conflict.

### What is conflict?



REMEMBER

It is a natural disagreement resulting from individuals or groups that differ in attitudes, beliefs, values or needs. It can also originate from past rivalries and personality differences. It is important to know that conflict does not necessarily mean violence. However, violence can sometimes be used in conflict. Abu-Nimer defines it as 'a relationship between two or more parties (individuals or groups) who have, or think they have, incompatible goals or may have compatible goals but different means, processes, [and] approaches.'

## CAUSES OF CONFLICT

By evaluating a conflict according to the following five categories: relationship, data, interest, structure and value, we can begin to determine the causes of a conflict and design resolution strategies that will have a higher probability of success.

When asking people about the causes of conflict, they can provide you with an endless list of potential causes. The following list (organised randomly) was developed during a training that was implemented by KAICIID with a group of scholars:

- Misconception and misperception
- Power struggle
- Competition for resources
- Greed and the human ego
- Identity
- Incompatible goals
- Lack of dialogue
- Prejudice
- Competing interests
- Lack tolerance
- Stereotyping
- Injustice
- Lack of knowledge
- Historical burden (grievances)
- Exclusive theology

This list could be expanded extensively, however, what's more important is to look at what the abovementioned causes of conflict have in common. In fact, all of the above (perceived) causes can be divided into two simple categories: resources and perceptions.

Resources	Perceptions
Power	Values
Money	Prejudice
Poverty	Ego
Time	Ignorance
Places	Identity
Interest	Grievances
	Human nature
	Exclusive theology

It is important to note that perceptions are the means through which we view reality; perceptions act as our lens. Perceptions are a product of our surroundings, the environment in which we grow up. Causes of conflict can either be resource-based or perception-based. Conflict over resources might be also the product of a perception as well as the reverse.

Perception shapes how we perceive resources – some objects are more valuable for some people than others (i.e. water from a certain spring or river can be holy for some, while it is a source for drinking or agriculture for others. The same applies to geographical places, artefacts, animals, money, etc.). In analysing conflict, it is difficult to identify if the causes are either perception or resources without listening to the needs and interests of the parties involved. This is where dialogue comes in.

There are some common beliefs that conflict is something negative, it is destructive, and it causes pain and grievances. While this can be true for violent conflicts, our attitude toward conflict should change. Conflict is a natural and normal human experience that can also be seen as a source of what needs to be changed. When people of opposing parties in a conflict begin to see their conflict in this new light, they are ready to deal with their differences.



*Violence can be attitudes, structures or systems that cause physical, psychological, social or environmental damage and/or prevent people from reaching their full human potential*

**Fisher et al. 2000**

### **A new attitude toward conflict**

- Conflict is not necessarily bad or a failure of an existing system
- Conflict can often be transformed into a creative force that generates new alternative outcomes and solutions
- Conflict is a natural process that can have either constructive or destructive outcomes or both, a normal function of the human experience<sup>36</sup>
- Confronting conflict in ourselves and others can lead to new levels of self-discovery
- Managing conflict wisely can lead to enhanced mutual trust, improved teamwork and greater levels of productivity
- Real creativity is not possible without some degree of conflict

# Five conflict management styles and tactics

Here are the five conflict management styles according to Thomas, K.W. and Kilmann R.H.<sup>37</sup>:

- 1. Accommodation:** This is when you cooperate to a high degree, and it may be at your own expense (win-lose scenario), and actually work against your own goals, objectives and desired outcomes. This approach is effective when the other party is the expert or has a better solution. It can also be effective for preserving future relations with the other party.

<b>Accommodation:</b>	<b>Whatever you want is OK with me</b>
Strategies:	Agree, appease, flatter
Often appropriate when	Issue is not important to you, the realisation of being wrong, taking turns, something larger is at stake
Often inappropriate when	You are likely to resent it, used habitually to gain acceptance

- 2. Avoidance:** It is a 'lose-lose' scenario, when you simply avoid the issue or sidestep it; this includes postponing an issue until a 'better' time or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation. You aren't helping the other party reach their goals and you aren't assertively pursuing your own.

This works when the issue is trivial or when you have no chance of winning. It can also be effective when the issue would be very costly, as well as when the atmosphere is emotionally charged, and you need to create some space. Sometimes issues will resolve themselves, but hope is not a strategy and in general, avoiding is not a good long-term strategy.

<b>Avoidance:</b>	<b>Conflict? What conflict?</b>
Strategies:	Flee, deny, ignore, withdraw, wish, hope
Often appropriate when	The issue is trivial, time is short and a decision is not necessary, to arrange timing
Often inappropriate when	Negative feelings may linger, you care about the issues, used habitually

- 3. Competition:** This is the 'win-lose' approach. You act in a very assertive way to achieve your goals, without seeking to cooperate with the other party, and it may be at the expense of the other party. This approach may be appropriate for emergencies when time is of the essence or when you need quick, decisive action and, people are aware of and support this approach.

<b>Competition:</b>	<b>My way or the highway</b>
Strategies:	Compete, control, outwit, coerce, fight
Often appropriate when	An emergency looms, others don't really care what happens, acknowledged competition (i.e. athletics)
Often inappropriate when	Cooperation from others is important, others' self-respect is diminished needlessly

- 4. Compromise:** This is another 'lose-lose' scenario where neither party really achieves what they want. This requires a moderate level of assertiveness and cooperation. It may be appropriate for scenarios where you need a temporary solution or where both sides have equally important goals. The trap is to fall into compromising as an easy way out, when collaborating would produce a better solution.

<b>Compromise:</b>	<b>Let us split the difference</b>
Strategies:	Bargain, reduce expectations, a little something for everyone
Often appropriate when	Finding a solution is better than a stalemate, cooperation is important, but time or resources are limited
Often inappropriate when	You can't live with the consequences, finding the most creative solution is essential

- 5. Collaboration:** This is where you partner or pair up with the other party to achieve both of your goals. This is how you break free of the 'win-lose' paradigm and seek the 'win-win.' This can be effective for complex scenarios where you need to find a novel solution.

This can also mean re-framing the challenge to create a bigger space and room for everybody's ideas. The downside is that it requires a high degree of trust and reaching a consensus can require a lot of time and effort to get everybody on board and to synthesise all the ideas.

<b>Collaboration:</b>	<b>How can 'we' solve this problem?</b>
Strategies:	Gather information, look for alternatives, dialogue, welcome disagreement
Often appropriate when	The issues and relationship are both significant, cooperation is important, reasonable hope to address all concerns
Often inappropriate when	Time is short, the issues are unimportant



By knowing your own default patterns, you improve your self-awareness. Once you are aware of your own patterns, you can pay attention to whether they are working for you and whether you can explore alternatives.



Most of us have a perspective or approach from which we generally approach conflict. We're not limited to a single approach and our approach may change depending upon our mood, our setting and the specific conflict – it is about context and what is at stake.

That being said, generally we have a preference. No style of approaching conflict is inherently good or inherently bad; each has moments in which its application will be very successful and moments in which its application will not be helpful.

**DIALOGICAL REFLECTIONS**

- What is your conflict management style? (refer to annex 4)
- Do you identify with the style indicated in your score?
- What are situations where you used any of the styles? Was it helpful? What would have happened if you used a different style to address the same situation?

# Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding aims at creating the tangible and intangible conditions to enable a conflict-habituated system to be transformed into a peace system. Peacebuilding processes are often aimed at creating change in the power relationships among the conflicting parties and transforming it into a constructive and more sustainable one. Its processes ‘infuse hope and help the conflict parties construct a new vision for future relationship’.<sup>38</sup>

## SOME DEFINITIONS

### Peacebuilding

An umbrella term that relates to actions that bring closure to conflict, distinct from actions that occur after a peace agreement is signed.

### Peace-making

A broad term referring to all diplomatic efforts that bring parties together to establish peace through integrated activities performed by both professional diplomats and non-diplomats alike.

### Conflict management

A term developed in the 1960s and 1970s to refer to activities often involving a third-party actor, which are intended to provide a temporary resolution to a conflict so as to reduce tensions in the short-term.

### Conflict resolution

A term coined in the mid-1980s to define long-term solutions that address the root causes of conflict.

### Conflict transformation

A term developed at Eastern Mennonite University to address the structural aspect of conflict and incorporate a preventative element that focuses on relationships.



REMEMBER

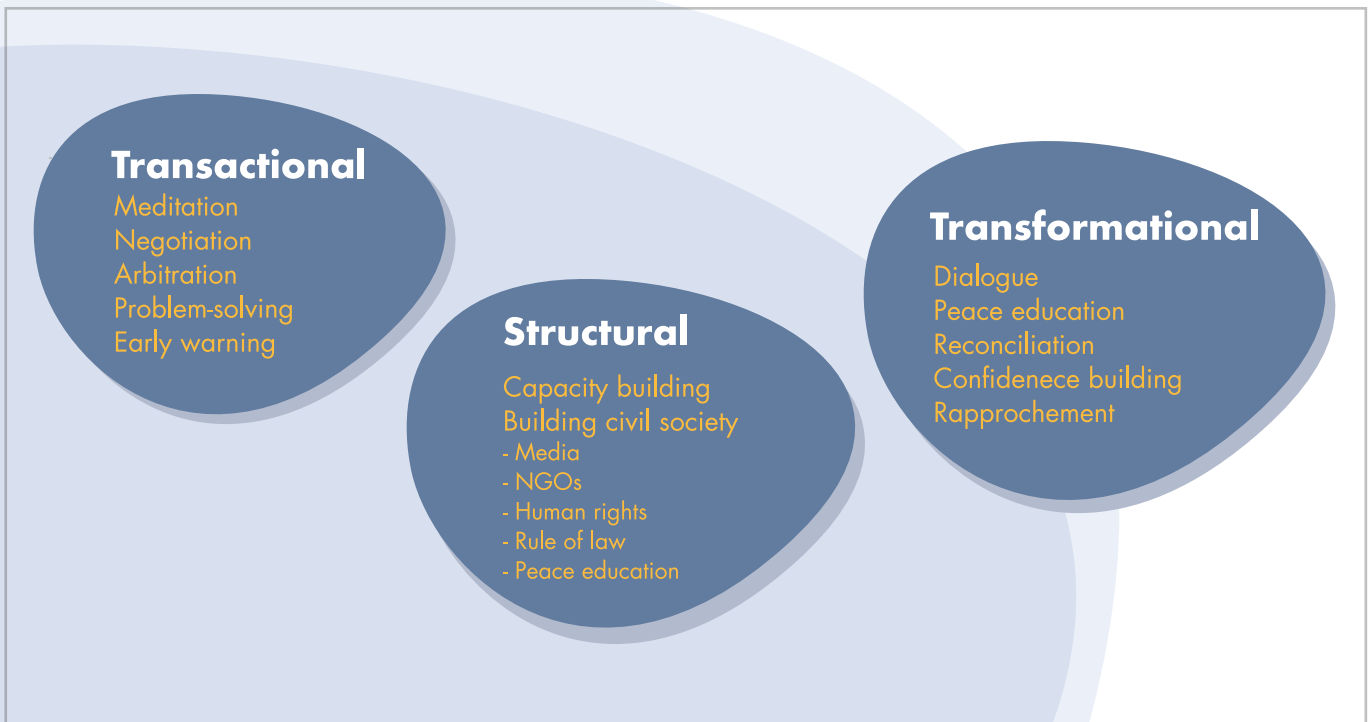
# Peacebuilding activities<sup>39</sup>

There are three types of peacebuilding approaches, all of which are necessary for a successful transformation into a peace system:

- Political peacebuilding - agreements
- Structural peacebuilding - activities
- Social peacebuilding - relationships

## These activities can be classified as:

- 1. Transactional:** These activities lead to some kind of an agreement, a contract or a transaction that the parties agree upon.
- 2. Structural:** These activities target the structures that habituate the conflict and/or can sustain the peace. Such activities mainly include capacity building for the different systems and institutions in the society (governmental and non-governmental).
- 3. Transformational:** These activities mainly target the people in the society and their relationships. They mainly aim at restoring relationships or transforming them from conflictual to peaceful ones. Activities here aim at reconciliation and trust building. Dialogue is a major activity here.



Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy (IMTD), 1998



## Social peacebuilding

12 elements for system transformation<sup>40</sup>

For a conflict-habituated system to be transformed into a peace system, it is essential to treat in these systems the elements that cause and sustain the conflict; additionally, stimulate or introduce elements which can transform habitual patterns into peaceful ones. Therefore, such activities should address the four basic needs of identity, security, community and vitality and compose the twelve elements of social peacebuilding.

These transcending elements include: hope, trust, nourishment, power, community, learning, healing, creativity, will, diversity, complexity and myth deconstruction.

Peacebuilding activities emphasize social relationships. They reveal the complexity of the situation, infuse hope and build trust across the divide and emphasize the possibility for innovative change by transforming the current ways of perceiving the problem and the other into a constructive peaceful relationship.

### Twelve Elements for Social Peacebuilding<sup>41</sup>

1. Hope	[Dialogue] gives hope to a situation that seems hopeless
2. Trust	[Dialogue] builds trust among people from different sides
3. Nourishment	[Dialogue] provides psychological sustenance
4. Power	The power of the people was seized by corrupt political leaders during a conflict; [Dialogue] restores power to individuals and civil society groups
5. Community	Regimes control people by disconnecting them during conflict; [Dialogue] connects people with each other
6. Learning	[Dialogue] provides space to humanise and learn from the other
7. Healing	Everyone is injured during conflict; [Dialogue] acknowledges the need for repair and rehabilitation, and facilitates healing
8. Creativity	Training is a catalyst for the creative management of conflicts in a situation of deadlock
9. Will	People have lost will and have given up during conflict; [Dialogue] provides techniques that increase their ability to seek possibilities for change
10. Diversity	[Dialogue] exposes participants to diversity of opinions
11. Complexity	[Dialogue] removes the blinders of tunnel vision and shows a bigger picture instead of polarised view of reality
12. Demythologising	In conflict, demonising is an activity ingrained in individuals so that they are not aware of their accepted myths; [Dialogue] challenges and replaces myths and deconstructs familiar ways of perceiving the other



## NAVIGATING PEACEBUILDING THE ESCALATION AND DE-ESCALATION PYRAMID

Peacebuilding activities can also be organised into five categories depending on the stage or time in relation to the conflict:

- conflict prevention (before the conflict arise)
- conflict management (during the escalation of the conflict for containment or reducing casualties in the short-term)
- conflict settlement
- conflict resolution
- conflict transformation

Abu-Nimer and Diamond<sup>42</sup> designed a diagram in the form of a 11-step pyramid to explain the different stages of the conflict in its escalation and de-escalation process (Figure 2). They argue that we all have differences, whether physical, psychological or social.

Such differences will often turn into disagreements as we encounter each other through sharing the same space or while pursuing our objectives. When resources are limited (space, time, etc.) and we need to make decisions, disagreements evolve into a problem and then into a conflict.

It is a conflict when at least one of the parties decides to take action for a settlement (at this point, the conflict is not necessarily violent and therefore, not a bad thing so far). The challenge is when the conflict escalates to the use of violence (one or more of the parties decides to solve the conflict through the use of violence) – and violence might escalate into war (here the complexity of the violent conflict escalates).

After the war (the top point between escalation and de-escalation of the conflict), whether by themselves or through the intervention of a third party, the disputing parties decide to declare a ceasefire. The parties might decide on a ceasefire for different reasons: they are tired; the costs are high; they have run out of resources; third parties pressure; or to start negotiation and resolve the conflict peacefully.

However, ceasing fire does not mean that the conflict has been resolved. Therefore, through mediation, negotiation, arbitration or other means of conflict resolution, the parties can reach an agreement.

It is important to mention that signing a peace agreement does not mean that peace is sustainable. There is negative peace and positive peace.



REMEMBER

### Negative peace

is simply the absence of war; 'we don't fight, but we don't like each other and even we don't talk'

### Positive peace

is active peace; it is when the relationship is multifaceted with positive social, cultural, economic and political interactions among others

# Peacebuilding A Map<sup>42</sup>

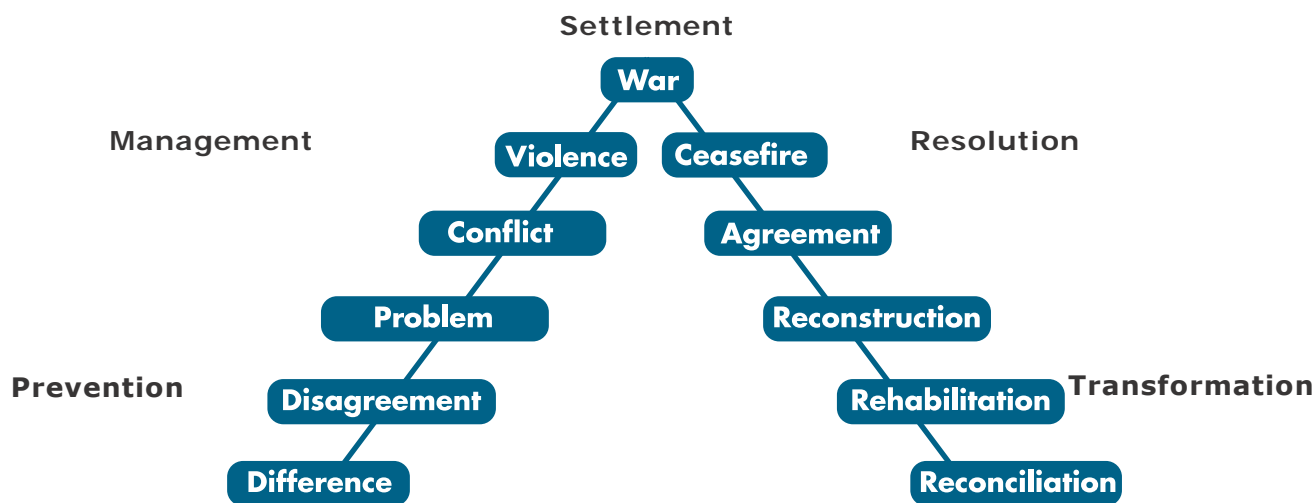


Figure 2: 11-step pyramid

Often after war and the settlement of the conflict, reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation follow. Reconstruction simply deals with rebuilding infrastructures and institutions that were damaged during the conflict. Rehabilitation deals with the human whether physical or psychological rehabilitation (dealing with trauma is also included).

Nevertheless, a conflict is not yet transformed into a positive peace until reconciliation is made (or at least started, as it is a process). Reconciliation is not only restoring the relationship to the status prior to the conflict; it goes further into understanding and accepting the differences and finding mutual mechanisms to accommodate such differences. As a result, the parties will acknowledge that they have differences and will develop a common understanding on how to deal with these differences.

Differences are inherent, and therefore, we will always have disagreements on different levels and to different degrees. Disagreements become problems and problems can escalate into conflicts. Conflicts are not necessarily evil; what can be evil is the way or the methods we employ to solve them, especially in such cases where violence is invoked.

However, we always have the choice to move directly from conflict to agreement through employing any of the peaceful conflict resolution methods. To do so, dialogue is an effective tool that can help us understand our differences and therefore prevent violent conflicts.

→  
←  
**DIALOGICAL  
REFLECTIONS**

### Conflict analyses - escalation and de-escalation

**Time:** This activity requires 15-30 minutes.

**Purpose:** This activity helps participants to understand the escalation and de-escalation of the different stages of conflict. It also helps them to understand and analyse conflict dynamics, and the roles that identities, perceptions and resources play at various stages in the escalation or de-escalation of a conflict. This exercise makes it easier to determine what options are available in dealing with different stages in any conflict.

**DIALOGUE  
WITH OTHERS**

**Instructions:** Ask the participants (in small groups) to select a conflict that was solved or that is in the process of being solved. If they cannot readily come up with one, suggest to them a familiar conflict and ask them to analyse it, by asking questions such as: How did this conflict escalate? When did it start to de-escalate? What were the roles of identities, perceptions and resources at various stages of this conflict? How was the conflict solved? What were the conditions that helped the conflict to be resolved and/or transformed?



## Peacebuilding in Scouting

The origin of Scouting is undeniably related to the main purpose of building peace among individuals. Our founder envisioned the Movement to be a way to influence people of different nationalities to establish strong bonds of friendship during international exchange activities that could in time, cross borders.

This works in parallel with Scouting's idea of an active citizen as an individual who strives to build a better society with tools that are democratic and non-violent, and respectful of the opinions and differences of others; committed and assuming responsibility to take action with critical thought, who does not passively accept reality as defined by others, Scouts have been shaping in both small and wider scale, a variety of peacebuilding efforts.

From a transactional perspective, Scouting has been contributing to peacebuilding for decades, especially through its practice of problem-solving and early warning. From a structural perspective, Scouting has been raising awareness and promoting respect for human rights, the rule of law and peace education. From a transformational perspective, Scouting has been implementing dialogue, peace education, confidence building and rapprochement.



DID YOU KNOW

So, in many ways, Scouting has been directly contributing to peace and reconciliation processes. 'A key role in the promotion of a culture of peace belongs to parents, teachers, politicians, journalists, religious bodies and groups, intellectuals, those engaged in scientific, philosophical and creative and artistic activities, health and humanitarian workers, social workers, managers at various levels as well as to non-governmental organizations'.<sup>43</sup>

From a Scouting perspective, peace is related to the nature and purpose of Scouting since Scouting supports young people to become active citizens and artisans of peace.



RECOMMENDED READINGS

Lederach, J.P. (1997). *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.

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Abu-Nimer, M., Lieber, C., Sampson, C. and Whitney, D. (2010). *Positive Approaches to Peacebuilding: A Resource for Innovators*. Chagrin Falls, OH: Taos Institute Publication.

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# DIALOGUE DESIGN AND DIALOGUE FACILITATION

## Concept of Dialogue design

Although it has general similarity to general projects planning and design, dialogue has its own particularity and emphasizes certain aspects. In this chapter, we introduce a general framework for dialogue design, with more emphasis on the elements of the context and the facilitators.

The following framework, introduces the general elements of dialogue design.<sup>44,45</sup>

<b>Context</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	
	<b>Participants and participation</b>	<b>Facilitator(s)</b>
	<b>Process/structure</b>	
	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>Physical space</b>

**Purpose:**

Dialogue requires clarity with regard to its purpose. What is the purpose of a dialogue? What do we want to achieve? What questions do we aim to answer? In general, the purpose of dialogue falls within one or more of the following three categories:

1. Generating awareness
2. Problem-solving
3. Building relationships

Within these categories, the purpose of dialogue can vary from sharing knowledge, finding innovative solutions, developing a shared vision, building capacity, developing persons or leaders', dealing with conflict, building a strategy, planning an action or making decisions, among others.

**Participants and participation:**

Based on the purpose of dialogue, we decide on who will be invited to the dialogue. Who needs to be involved and how? In other words, who are the participants and what kind of participation or involvement do we expect from them?

In identifying the participants, we also ask the following questions: What do we hope to do and achieve with the participants? What will each of them bring and what do they want to gain? How do we best involve and engage them? We have to also ask ourselves: who is not present and should be included?

**The dialogue facilitator(s):**

An essential element or actor in the dialogue is the facilitator. Who is the facilitator and what is his/her role in dialogue?

If we imagine any dialogue process as a journey, the dialogue facilitator becomes the guide. No one can walk the path for another person but the guide can make the journey meaningful and enjoyable, despite the challenges and rocky areas along the way. The guide does not direct.

The word 'facilitate' means to make a process easy. In other words, the facilitator plans and manages the group to ensure that the purpose and the objectives of the group are effectively met (effective here means timeliness, inclusive participation and full ownership by the group).

Facilitators should be impartial. As everyone has his/her own interests or biases, successful facilitators are aware of their reality and they develop skills in neutralising their own biases. The facilitator learns to put their personal beliefs and opinions aside and to focus on the dialogue process – the group's interest and objectives.



The dialogue process is the responsibility of the facilitator. It needs to be designed in a way that suits the group and the objectives to be reached in the most successful and effective way.

In short, facilitators are individuals who are acceptable to the group, stand the same distance from everyone and lead the group without taking control. They work hard to provide a safe environment for all the participants, allowing them to take the lead and the ownership of the dialogue process.



### IMPORTANT SKILLS FOR DIALOGUE FACILITATORS

- **Strong listening skills:** Active listening is the most important skill a facilitator must have. A facilitator is someone who practices inquiry rather than advocacy. In other words, a facilitator is there to help the participants listen to each other and share – allowing their concerns to surface – listening not only to what is said, but also to feelings, emotions and values.
- **Personal awareness:** It is important for the facilitator not only to be aware of his/her own biases and perceptions, but also of how he/she is perceived. The participants look at the facilitator as a person with a culture, identity and a religion; all of these become significant for the participants, regardless of how good the facilitator is at neutralising his/her own biases and identity background.
- **Authenticity:** The facilitator needs to be authentic, 'walk the talk' and be natural about what he/she believes. That does not mean sharing his/her opinion on the subject matter, but rather believing in the process and the potential of the process.
- **Asking good questions:** After listening, asking questions is the art that all facilitators need to master. A facilitator is someone who leads the group towards its objective without directing it and, while assuring that the group has the full ownership, asks good questions that can help achieve the latter.
- **A holistic approach:** The facilitator is the facilitator for the whole group. A successful facilitator is someone who is holistic in his/her approach. He/she pays attention and listens to what is said, is aware of feelings as well as what the different dynamics are among the participants. He/she sees the individual, the group and the subgroups in their different dynamics.

However, there are some tensions that a facilitator or a dialogue designer needs to be aware of. When selecting a facilitator or when designing sessions, one must decide how to balance the following factors that are presented here in a binary combination for each of the five continuums:

- **Content knowledge vs. Process knowledge**

In every dialogue, there is the process (how do we get there?) and the content (what are we talking about? Where do we want to go?). In different contexts and for different purposes, the facilitator might need to have a certain level of understanding and knowledge about the topic at hand. In other circumstances, the facilitator needs to pay more attention and have more experience in the process of the dialogue and how to manage the group.

In some cases, it is a blessing that the facilitator doesn't have much knowledge about the topic, because some would argue that the less he/she knows about the topic, the more natural he/she will be toward the discussions and its outcomes. When a facilitator is an expert on the topic, it is difficult for him/her not to steer the group in a particular direction due to his/her expertise.

The following table explains what each type of facilitator focuses on:

Process facilitator	Content facilitator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The programme agenda and activities</li> <li>• The methods and tools being used</li> <li>• The ground rules</li> <li>• The group dynamics and relationships</li> <li>• The environment of the dialogue</li> <li>• The time and the destination</li> <li>• Focus on getting there</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The topic or the subject at hand</li> <li>• What are the issues being discussed?</li> <li>• What type of conclusions and decisions are being made?</li> <li>• What are the agenda items?</li> <li>• What are the objectives?</li> <li>• What do we want to achieve?</li> </ul>

- **Width vs. Depth**

Another tension is the number of topics we want to cover (width) versus the depth we want to go into each topic (depth). Do we want to survey all the challenges and issues? Or do we prefer taking the time necessary to cover one topic in more depth? We often have only a limited time, and since participants come to dialogue with different needs and interests, the facilitators need to be aware of such tensions.

- **Directive and structured vs. Going with the flow**

Another tension is balancing how much the facilitator needs to direct or structure the dialogue, versus how much the dialogue should be fluid and the extent he/she is prepared to 'go with the flow'. It mainly depends on the objective of the dialogue first, followed by the participants and the context. Other factors include time, urgency, the size of the group, its complexity and the expected outcome.

- **No psychological expertise vs. Strong psychological expertise**

What is the level of skill and experience that the facilitator needs to have to deal with psychological aspects and traumas? Again the answer to this question needs to be guided by the purpose and objectives of the dialogue, its particular set of participants as well as its unique context.

- **Team worker vs. Solo worker**

Should the facilitator be more independent or should he/she be a team player? In some dialogues, especially where there are two opposing groups, it is important to have two facilitators, one identifying with each of the groups – identifying with one group does not mean becoming the advocate for that group. The main idea is to create a safe environment for all the participants.

All of the above tensions are governed by purpose and context, and the latter has the upper hand when it comes to making any choice regarding the dialogue process. In the next sections, we will explain more about the context element.

**The role of the facilitator can be summarised in the main points below.**

A facilitator needs to:

- Develop a safe and inclusive environment that encourages participation
- Set a positive and constructive tone for the dialogue
- Build trust in the group and in the process
- Remain impartial and objective to both the issues and people (suspend judgment)
- Keep the group focused
- Ask good questions
- Keep track of time
- Develop the process and provide methods and procedures that can help the group achieve the expected outcomes and work better together
- Encourage equal participation by everyone
- Inform and remind participants about the process and its objectives
- Ensure that ideas, information and outcomes are documented and summarised
- Help the people involved to go through the different dialogue phases
- Implement and encourage the use of ground rules among the participants in order for them to overcome their identity biases
- Keep the group focused on and inspired by the purpose of learning and increasing understanding

The dialogue facilitator needs to put aside his/her own biases and serve the purpose, the process and the people involved who trusted him/her in the first place. He/she must also make appropriate use of his/her personal skills to achieve the objectives (key listening and responding skills).



## Characteristics of good facilitation

### **Guide and represent the process**

As a facilitator you will contribute so that participants feel validated, confident and trustful about the process and outcomes. Remember, participants will develop a sense of ownership of the process and outcomes based on how they feel. Identifying and acknowledging their feelings enable them to transcend initial formalities towards personal openness and meaningful dialogue. This includes developing the ground rules or the guidelines for the interaction within the group; making sure that these guidelines are clear and followed.

### **Be present**

Be aware of your own feelings, ideas, attitudes and possible judgments. It is important to put aside your own agendas, so that you can dedicate your attention to your participants' involvement, to benefit the purpose of the process. Listening is a key skill here.

### **Be aware of the purpose**

Get to know the origin of the conflict, get information about the background of the group and the context. This will help you to lead the group through the dialogue phases so that the difficult and real issues can be disclosed for the sake of the group. Most importantly, you should be aware of the reason you are conducting this dialogue and the participants' role in it. What are their needs and expectations vis-à-vis the organiser's needs and expectations?

### **Imagine the process**

Have a plan, imagine the steps and different phases of the process, be clear about the questions or techniques you might use and make sure that you can instruct/explain in simple and easy understand language. Be flexible (though having a general plan is helpful), the development of the process and how the group evolves to a dialogue state will tell you when to take the next step or adjust the use of techniques, tools or the process.

### **Be conscious of time**

One way to build trust among the group is good time management. Dialogue processes sometimes need more than one session to have an impact on participants. Summarise and recap in order for the group to have the big picture. Inform participants how much time they have for the session and for their own participation, and continuously reinforce the fact that the facilitator is paying attention to them.

### **Be able to read the group**

As a facilitator you have to be holistic and able to 'read' the group's dynamics. Encourage constructive behaviour and discourage negative ones. However, be careful about killing creativity or suppressing emotions, let the group go through the hard places.

### **Use silence wisely**

Silence is one of the most powerful tools at the disposal of the facilitators, if used wisely. Sometimes, it is better to not intervene, which can help in building the group's tension and assist it to evolve more naturally. It is also helpful in cooling things down, especially after an emotional exchange. Silence is a great moment for reflection; the key question is how much silence we should allow (contextually and culturally) as facilitators.



### **Summarise and draw conclusions**

Participants come with different agendas and conversations, and may go in many directions. A good facilitator can keep track of any conversation and bring it back to topic or to the purpose of the dialogue. Other skills might be useful here and in managing the dialogue in general, include reframing, paraphrasing and mirroring.

### **Ask for feedback**

Always ask for feedback and keep checking with the group. Feedback about the process, the content, the organisation and feelings are always helpful for your engagement with a group or your learning as a facilitator. A skilled facilitator always takes the holistic approach.

A skilled facilitator is one who is able to view the dialogue not from his/her own perspective but rather from the participants' point of view. They can understand the perception of the other, which is why empathy is an essential skill for any facilitator.



# Skills related to dialogue facilitation

Many skills are related to good dialogue facilitation, but it narrows down to being empathetic and to develop the ability to understand an issue from the perspective of the speaker.

If a facilitator is able to express empathy for group members, a sense of connectedness develops which allows each participant to feel valued, validated and safe to interact. Therefore, participants will engage with bridging and understanding rather than individual positions.

## FACILITATION TIPS

- **Use of eye contact** – a way to express openness, project your engagement and show that you are paying attention to the one speaking. Also, you can use eye contact to encourage others to participate, you can give a signal when time is up and/or when opening up the space for new reactions from the group. Avoid staring to prevent people from feeling scrutinised rather than listened to.
- **Use of body language** – Body language tells a lot about your facilitation style, has an impact on the participants and on the space where you are having the session. If your posture projects openness, confidence and trust, it can help the group move from a state of being defensive to being more relaxed. Showing your interest in the person talking, making them feel validated and empathising with them can also be projected through body language.
- **Use of active listening**– Be aware of mood, words, emotions, body language and reactions of participants to make the best use of your skills as facilitator for the sake of the group.
- **Be culturally (identity) sensitive** – The facilitator needs to be aware that any skill or technique is useful in some cultural contexts and not so much in others. Be informed about the cultural customs that may be at play during the dialogue process.
- **Use inquiry questions** – use open-ended questions that cannot be answered with a simple word or short statements to encourage opinion sharing.
- **Use cognitive statements** – Use descriptive statements to help the process of discussion and sharing. Give examples or paraphrase to clarify and check if participants understand.
- **Use discretion** – Be aware of time, what's happening in the process and how the participants are engaged. Inform them about time, give them the opportunity to decide if you will go over the first agreed time or stop. Give more time when needed to make a point clear. Use closed questions when you need to send the message to move on. Take short breaks if needed.
- **Use reflection of feelings** – Identify any recurring feelings the participants express and acknowledge the existence of it to build trust and bond with participants. This helps the process to become more open as time progresses.



# Facilitation challenges

Since facilitators work with diverse groups of people from different backgrounds, it is very likely that they face different types of challenges. The following is a basic list of the challenges that a facilitator might face with a group:

- **Quiet groups:** Whether it is one participant or the whole group, it is the role of the facilitator to encourage participation. However, while some individuals are naturally shy, others are quiet because they are suspicious about the whole process.

A good facilitator makes sure everyone feels safe to participate. Nevertheless, small silences that often occur after asking a question are not a bad thing. Such moments of silence can be an opportunity for participants to reflect more before answering the question.

- **Groups that talk too much:** You need to encourage participation, but you don't want one or a few participants to monopolise the dialogue time and content.
- **Groups with conflict(s) and/or trauma(s):** You need to be aware and acknowledge the context and the background of the participants. Traumatized participants and groups coming from current heated conflicts can create a serious challenge in the dialogical process.
- **Very polite, 'politically correct' groups:** This happens mostly because they are not ready to share or they don't trust the process yet. They are worried that they will be judged or hurt others. You need to invest in building trust and encouraging the participants to allow their feelings and perceptions to surface.
- **Disengaged groups:** This can happen either because they are not interested or are distracted. Try to identify their interests or the distractions.
- **Groups with power asymmetry:** It is the facilitator's duty to establish equality in the group. Power dynamics can harm and affect the openness.
- **Groups with cultural and religious dynamics:** Good facilitators are aware of the cultural and religious diversity and backgrounds of each participant, including their relations across the group.
- **Context:** Whether conflictual or peaceful, context plays an essential role in dialogue and the facilitator should be aware and up-to-date with the current situation and issues.



## PROCESS AND STRUCTURE

Any dialogue activity has a general underlying flow designed by the organiser(s) and the facilitator(s). This flow aims at achieving the objectives of the dialogue; it is designed to make the journey smooth and effective. Using the journey metaphor:

If dialogue is a journey, the purpose is the destination, the participants are the passengers (participation is about their role in the journey), and the facilitator is the guide who will make sure that everyone will arrive safely (including the goal that everyone will have participated according to his/her role), then the process and the structure are simply the route that will be taken.<sup>45</sup>

The process and structure of a dialogue is the answer to the question: How will we get there? Do we go directly to the destination? Or do we need to select a different route that might be longer but safer? In dialogue, we want everyone to arrive, therefore, we need to select the route that prepares everyone to arrive. There are many ways and routes that can be taken. Sometimes we need to divert from the topic, so we can invest more in the relationship. Sometimes we need to provoke or create frustration. Despite the different techniques there is one goal: reaching the destination safely.

## METHODOLOGY

Now that we have a destination, we know our passengers, their needs and what we need from them. With our guide on board, we know what route we have to take. It is now time to select the vehicle and any other tools needed for the journey.

The facilitator, governed by the context, needs to set a methodology that suites the participants and leads to the purpose. In other words, there are three elements that complement a successful dialogue and make a learning opportunity effective. The first two inform the facilitator in selecting a successful methodology:

- The purpose or the goal to be achieved (the learning objectives)
- The target group (the participants)
- The methodology and the tools used (the medium used)



A facilitator should evaluate each tool by asking these two questions: Does this tool lead to the purpose? Does it suit the target group? In selecting any tool or method, the facilitator should ask him/herself, if there will be any cultural or religious reservations by the participants? Does it serve the objective or will it distract the participants from the theme? Is it necessary and why? Do we have the resources? And finally, do we have the adequate time for processing and debriefing?

In general, the following are important tips for the facilitator when it comes to tools and methodologies<sup>46</sup>:

- Build your plan around the topics or concepts; do not build your plan around the activities. In other words, it is true that there are some tools that are nice and enjoyable, but our main guidance is the purpose and the target group. All tools and methodologies are means to achieve the goal, not vice versa.
- The key for intergroup dialogue is dialogue; do not fill the time with activities that you do not have the time to process.
- Processing and debriefing are as important as the activity itself, if not even more important.
- Think about how the activity will affect the different groups: psychologically, culturally, religiously and so on.
- Whenever appropriate, model by participating in the activities, especially when they are about story-sharing or personal narratives.
- Simulations can be effective, engaging and fun, but they should be balanced with activities that are drawn from the actual lived experiences of the participants.
- Films can provide excellent illustrations of concepts, leading to rich dialogue. However, avoid long films that take up too much dialogue time. It is also sometimes possible to schedule longer films in the evening, with time to discuss the next morning.

### **PHYSICAL SPACE**

The physical space is as important as any of the other elements of the design. Because dialogue is about safe environment, the physical space is quite significant. In selecting the physical space, the organiser(s) and facilitator(s) must ask the following questions<sup>47</sup>:

- Does the dialogue space identify with one group more than others? (For example, if the dialogue space takes place in a hall linked to a religious community, are the symbols/icons of that religion potentially overbearing to some of the participants from other religious traditions?)
- Where is the space located? How far do the participants have to travel to reach it? Are there potential imbalances in how much time (and costs) some participants will take to reach the place in comparison to others? If the extra time (and cost) falls mostly on one group rather than the others, then there is power imbalance even before the dialogue starts.
- Does the space allow for true interaction and participation? Think ahead about the direction of sunrays throughout the day, to avoid some participants being possibly distracted by the sunrays. This may require moving chairs at different times of the day. If there is no choice, and you are conducting an outdoor activity, then the facilitator needs to be the one directly facing the sunrays, making it easier on everybody else for the sake of the group's well-being.
- Is the space a good size for the number of participants? Not only in terms of chairs/benches/mats to sit on, but also in terms of whether some of the activities will require moving, in which case more space is needed, and chairs/benches need to be easily moved.

- Will they feel comfortable? Check in advance the room temperature and ventilation as well as which windows may be opened or left closed during the activities, so as to bring fresh air, but without causing any draft.
- Will the space make participants feel relaxed, yet allow them to stay awake and alert?
- How can participants meet in this space? Is it large enough to form a circle that would include all participants? Is it possible to sit theatre-style?
- Is it better to meet outside in nature? Is that outdoor space public or private? Public space may mean that other people not involved in the dialogue activity might show up; private space requires seeking permission to use it in advance of the activity.
- Logistics? What are the materials/resources needed for each activity? Can they be shared over different activities or re-used such as flip chart paper used on both sides?
- Accessibility? From the outset, it is important to know the answers to the two following questions: Is the place physically accessible to all? Are there potential participants in need of full physical accessibility? The answer to the second question may have direct implication on the choice of the location for the dialogue.
- Food? In advance, every participant needs to be asked by the organiser(s) whether or not he/she has any specific dietary needs. Of course, labelling the food during the serving of the meals becomes essential to avoid confusion and feelings of exclusion.
- Distractions? Visit the place where you intend to hold the dialogue session at least once beforehand. Notice what could be visual and audio distractions. For example, depending on the time of the day, could noises from the outside be distracting if the windows are left open, or even if they are closed?  
  
If there is a school next-door, at what time do the children play outside? If possible, it might be a good idea to schedule the dialogue breaks to coincide as much as possible with the school breaks to avoid noise distraction.
- What might the place signify? Beyond the location of the room(s) where the dialogue will be held, is the place in more general terms linked to a particular history, i.e. building and/or community location and/or neighbourhood and/or town/city, region, country, etc.? How can such signification, if any, be used as part of the dialogue? Can it be a potential challenge to the quality of your dialogue session or, on the contrary, a potential enhancer?

All of the above lead us to the next and most important element, context.



## CONTEXT

Context is the most important factor in designing dialogue, especially for organisers and facilitators. All that we do needs to be grounded within the particular context that is unique to each dialogue encounter, session, activity or process. As early as possible in the design stage, we must ask ourselves the following questions about context:

- How is the general atmosphere, e.g. political situation, holiday period, time of the day or year, etc.?
- What is the situation's level of complexity?
- Is it in a conflict or peaceful situation?
- What about the participants?
- Are they mostly from one homogenous identity group, from two opposing groups or from a variety of groups?
- Are they peers or is there are hierarchy between them?
- Is the group small or large?
- What might be the power dynamics between them?
- Do all participants understand and speak, to the same degree, the main language used during the dialogue? If not, would translation/ interpretation be needed?
- What are the various identity (sub-identities) present among the participants (gender, age, language, ethnicity, nationality, cultural, etc.)?
- Who is/are funding the dialogue? A variety of sources of funding is always preferable; more importantly, how is the funder(s) constructively participating in the dialogue?

In summary, when planning a dialogue, it is crucial to take all the above aspects into consideration: the purpose, the participants and their roles, who the facilitators are, what the underlining processes and methodology are, and the physical space. All of these factors are informed or governed by the context that is surrounding the dialogue and the participants.





## Creating a safe space - Stepping out of the comfort zone

For real dialogue to happen, participants have to step out of their comfort zone and trust that the group will respect their thoughts and perceptions.<sup>48</sup> As in the Learning Zone Model that was developed by Senninger<sup>49</sup>, individuals are advised to step out of their comfort zone, to what is called the stretching or learning zone, but without stepping too far into what is a totally strange area for them, which is called the panic zone.



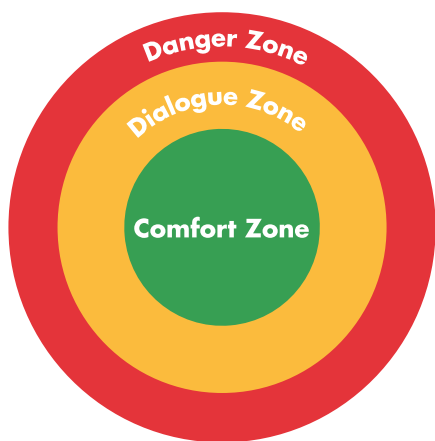
The comfort zone is described as the area where the individual is not only feeling safe, but everything looks familiar – there is no risk. On the other end, the panic zone is where the person steps into an unfamiliar place, with no familiarity at all, no one to trust, and the person feels unsafe to even move a centimetre.

It is believed that there is no learning in the comfort zone as there is nothing new. There is also no learning that can take place in the panic zone because the person is threatened by the situation. In the panic zone, people become defensive and/or offensive; they might even shutdown.

According to this theory, learning happens in the zone that exists in between the comfort and panic zones; it is called the stretching zone. In this zone, the individual feels challenged. Yet, he/she trusts in the dialogue process or the company of the people surrounding him/her. This allows him/her to take further steps in this new area.

In the stretching zone (also called the learning zone), people take risks but up to an extent that is manageable for them. It is in this stretching zone that learning becomes possible. This is why Neale Donald Walsh said, 'Life begins at the end of your comfort zone.' That is, when a person enters the stretching or learning zone, human growth happens, enriching his/her life.





We believe this model fits the dialogue process perfectly. If the dialogue participants stay in their comfort zone, there will hardly be any dialogue. Since interaction in this zone is shallow, people are too polite or dishonest to express their feelings or address the hard issues – as one could say ‘playing it safe.’ Therefore, we call it the safety or comfort zone.

On the other hand, if the participants are pushed too quickly to address the hard issues, or they come with strong grievances and immediately start the confrontation, they will be pushed to their panic zone, the danger zone. In the panic zone there is no dialogue; interaction will either turn into a debate, probably with the use of offensive and defensive arguments. In some cases, the tension might even turn into a violent conflict.

In short, there is no dialogue in the comfort zone, as people are not challenged to tackle the real issues; they don’t allow what is hidden to surface – mostly because they don’t feel safe enough to step out. Similarly, there is no dialogue in the danger zone, as the participants feel unsafe to share their feelings and opinions.

So, dialogue happens in the stretching or learning zone. This is why we can also call this middle zone the dialogue zone. This model with three overlapping circles thus represents very well the challenges of dialogue: avoid the red and green and promote the yellow.

## PLANNED OR UNPLANNED DIALOGUE

Dialogue can occur as a planned experience or as a result of an individual intentionally applying the principles of dialogue in any given circumstance, seeking better understanding.

<b>DIALOGUE AS A PLANNED ACTIVITY</b>	<b>APPLYING DIALOGUE PRINCIPLES IN ANY SITUATION</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A dialogue process is requested</li><li>• A purpose is defined and communicated</li><li>• A place and time is defined for each session</li><li>• A facilitator is assigned to run the dialogue session</li><li>• Specific people are notified about the dialogue activity and invited to participate</li><li>• All participants are committed to the process</li><li>• The people involved are aware about the purpose</li><li>• Specific methodology is defined in advance</li><li>• Follow-up is planned</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dialogue principles are applied</li><li>• Intention of dialogue is applied and communicated, the defining of the purpose might occur</li><li>• Place and time is defined according to the activity needs, rather than dialogue</li><li>• One of those present assumes the role of a facilitator</li><li>• Dialogue process is carried out with the ones present</li><li>• Not all participants will be committed to the process</li><li>• People involved are not aware about the purpose but could reach consensus</li><li>• Methodology is applied during the session</li><li>• Follow-up might be defined as a next step</li></ul>

Needless to say, the results between a planned dialogue session might vary from an unplanned dialogue opportunity, especially when sensitive topics are discussed. If the topic is very sensitive and the dialogue opportunity arises in any given situation, a follow-up should be planned whenever the participants are willing to do so to promote understanding.

In the process of incorporating the skills and principles into our practice, we need to prepare the optimal conditions for a proper dialogue to occur.

# Tips for a successful dialogue session

Any dialogue can last one or more sessions. In general, the facilitator must come prepared for any dialogue session being mindful of the following points:

## BEFORE

- Learn and prepare yourself for the facilitation session
- Days ahead of the session, visit and get familiar with the space and check: the temperature, furniture, lighting and tools needed (board, markers, etc.)
- Check the surroundings, is it quiet and allocated for your use only? By when should the sessions end?
- Prepare the space for the session by arranging the chairs in a circle
- Get a list of participants
- Try to learn about the participants' backgrounds and relationships (group dynamics)
- Prepare name tags with relevant information (name, country, the organisations they represent, etc.)



## DURING THE SESSION (WHEN STARTING)

- Welcome the participants, introduce yourself and have them introduce themselves
- Manage their expectations, find out what they are most excited about during this process and what makes them more anxious. They should answer briefly (1 to 1½ minutes).
- Share the purpose
- Allow time for questions and answers
- Set the ground rules with the participants
- Share the principles of dialogue
- Let the participants know how much time they have for each intervention (1-1½ minutes)
- Describe the process to the participants

## DURING THE SESSION

- Prepare and share clear starting questions
- Allocate time for participants to reflect in silence about what they would like to share with the group
- Make sure that all participants voice their perspective
- Use open/closed questions discretionally
- Keep participants connected to the purpose
- Create a safe space
- Implement and manage the dialogue's basic rules throughout the session
- Be aware of participants' behaviour, reactions and support them to be active in the process
- Close the session with a recap and tell participants what will happen next or, check on expectations met
- Close the session by inviting participants to express their feelings about the experience

## AFTER

- Follow-up on what has been agreed
- Keep the participants informed about future sessions and outcomes
- Reflect and be prepared for the next session

## WHAT IS A SAFE SPACE?

A safe space can describe a physical space where people feel that there is no risk, they are sheltered and at ease. Our house would be a safe space. But this expression also describes a state of mind and mood where people feel comfortable, trusting and willing to open themselves.

When defining their own identities and throughout their lives, people adopt daily routines, cultural traditions, personal paradigms or perceptions about people, situations, contexts and the world in general. The situations we are familiar with become part of our comfort zone.

When interacting with new people, ideas or situations, this experience, becomes a learning experience. However, when ideas, people or situations are different to what people are used to, they might start to feel outside of their element and not at ease. They are leaving the comfort zone and getting into a stretching zone, where preconceived ideas are shaped and widened. Mood can be affected but people are still willing to participate in the situation.

It can happen that a particular situation is too different and makes people feel extremely uncomfortable, or the situation is opposite to our principles and values. This brings people into the panic zone where trust is gone, willingness to participate stops and the attitude becomes defensive or offensive.



- What contributes to making you feel safe in the Scouting context, bodies or levels that you participate in?
- How do you help your Scout community to feel safe when interacting with you?

## PURPOSE

To achieve our objectives when designing dialogue, we need to focus on the main purpose, which is for people to learn from themselves and the others for common understanding and personal growth.

## BRAINSTORM WITHIN YOUR GROUP TO DEFINE THE PURPOSE

The process itself requires for each person to open themselves, tear down the barriers and defences.

## ELEMENTS INTERACTING WHEN DESIGNING DIALOGUE

- **Origin/cause:** Is the apparent cause that originated the need of having a dialogue session. When engaging in any conversation it is very important to be aware of the origin and stay connected to it. In this way, we can turn any interaction into a dialogue opportunity.

This will give the tone to the conversation and help to identify ways to combine the rest of elements. It is important to bear in mind what we would like to achieve, before the conversation starts. What caused this conversation to occur? Is everybody aware? What are the expectations of the participants?

- **Environment/physical space:** the dialogue process starts even before the conversation itself, because the physical space becomes part of the experience. The space helps people to feel welcomed, comfortable and has a direct effect on the mood and emotions that might arise during the process. It includes the walls, windows, colours, ventilation, facilities, etc.

## APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

Appreciative Inquiry is a methodology and process that focuses on identifying the best of what is already there in a system, and finding ways to grow and support that, thus engaging 'possibility thinking' instead of 'deficit thinking'.

The Appreciative Inquiry work can be used in shorter- or longer-term interventions. It includes specific methods for stakeholder interviewing, conference designs and community organising. It is particularly powerful in situations where people are focusing too much on deficiencies and need to wake up to their strengths and potential (<http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu>)<sup>50</sup>.

DIALOGUE  
WITH OTHERS

RECOMMENDED  
READINGS

Bojer, M. M., Knuth, M., Magner, C. and Roehl, H. (2008). Mapping Dialogue: Essential Tools for Social Change. Chagrin Falls, OH: The TAOS Institute Publications.



## DIALOGUE IN PRACTICE

Whether transactional, structural or transformational, as defined in the previous chapter, it is important to emphasize how the peacebuilding approach is a holistic approach to transform a conflict-habituated system to become a peace system.<sup>51</sup>

We need to address the political, the structural and the social. Dialogue is a transformational method that deals with the individual and collective transformation with the aim of a social relational change. Therefore, dialogue is the right tool for addressing the social and relational aspect of a conflict.

As defined in the first chapter, dialogue is a conversation with a common subject between two or more persons. The main purpose is for each person to learn from the other. It is not advocacy, rather it is an inquiry.

Dialogue is not a debate to win or lose, nor a negotiation to reach an agreement, it is an opportunity for learning and self-reflection, with the aim of developing a better understanding and awareness of self-assumptions and those of others.



# Intergroup Contact Theory

The Intergroup Contact Theory or Contact Hypothesis states that 'under appropriate conditions interpersonal contact is one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice between majority and minority group members'.<sup>52</sup>



Most modern dialogue and peacebuilding methods are based on this theory where the change of perceptions and/or behaviours is the goal of dialogue processes. Dialogue allows us to focus on our own processes of forming our perceptions and to rethink and reconsider our negative assumptions.

Since 1954, there has been much emphasis on the Intergroup Contact Theory in terms of changing relationships by peacebuilding advocates, social scientists and others. Much has been built upon this theory including the defining of the different types of intergroup contact<sup>53</sup> as well as how best to create the appropriate conditions to develop a constructive dialogue, which we will be discussing in subsequent chapters.

There are several models that are based on group contact that are applicable to dialogue. The following model explains the six phases of a 'Face to Face Meeting of the Other'<sup>54</sup>:

- **Phase one: Knowing each other.**  
Knowing yourself and opening yourself to others. Be willing to listen to other people's identity and point of view.
- **Phase two: Discovering our biases, fears and taboos.**  
Acknowledge the issues, points or topics where you find a different perception, perspective or understanding. Seek for more information, ask questions to find out the sources of each other's way of thinking.
- **Phase three: Outlining commonalities and agreements.**  
Identify the common purpose. Distance yourself from biases and talk about each person's goals and find out the ones that are common to all, find a common purpose.
- **Phase four: What can we do together?**  
Starting from a common purpose, plan your next steps. How can we reach our common goal? What are the steps needed? Are other people involved? How can we share this common purpose with the rest?
- **Phase five: Maintaining our dialogue relationship.**  
We have reached a place where we can work together. Our support is the common cause. We have agreed to take joint actions. How do we keep the dialogue active? How can we engage others?

# Ten Principles of Dialogue<sup>55</sup>



1. Establishing the safe space
2. To agree that the main purpose of the dialogue is learning
3. Use of appropriate communication skills
4. Set the proper ground rules
5. Take risk, express feelings and confront perceptions (honesty)
6. The relationship comes first
7. Gradually address the hard questions and gradually depart from them
8. Do not quit or avoid the difficult issues
9. Expect to be changed: once participating in the dialogue, expect to be changed
10. Bring the change to others

One can conclude from the earlier model and the definitions of the concept, that there are several essential elements for dialogue to be successful. The easiest way to collect those key elements is to call them principles of dialogue.

In 1993, the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy introduced the seven basic principles of dialogue. Our work over the past two decades, has led us to expand these principles up to ten, which we call the Ten Principles of Dialogue.

Some of the following responsibilities belong to the participants, while others belong essentially to the organiser(s) and the facilitator(s).

## 1. Establishing a safe space

A safe space means an environment that stimulates the participants in the dialogue to express their feelings, their ideas and even their negative perceptions of the other – to allow their stereotypes to surface comfortably and safely.

The safe space or safe environment, includes, but is not limited to, a physical space with all its components and its implications (For example, respecting different cultural and religious customs as well as gender needs of participants, external pressures such as media and security agencies, etc.).

The safe space is an inclusive environment where everyone (or every group of people) is treated equally, despite the power asymmetry that might be due to an imbalance in numbers of one identity group in comparison to another group(s), or social class differences, or those who speak the official language of communication very well versus those who do not, etc.

A safe space or environment also includes the fair sharing of time and space among all participants without any type of discrimination. While the organiser(s) of a dialogue and the facilitator(s) have a special responsibility to ensure that the dialogue space is as safe as possible, it is also the responsibility of the participants, once they are aware of the guidelines and rules associated to creating a space safe.

## **2. To agree that the main purpose of the dialogue is learning**

The participants should approach the dialogue with the intention and attitude of learning about the others as well as about their perceptions of the topic. This attitude towards learning is essential for the success of any dialogue on any topic.

Dialogue is all about learning, in opposition to a debate, for example, where the main goal is to prove oneself right, and the other(s) wrong. The attitude of learning allows one to establish positive relations that may lead to long-term relationships.

## **3. Use of appropriate communication skills**

Listening and talking with respect, and learning how to deliver basic ideas or ask questions constructively are all very important and essential skills for building a safe environment that can pave the way for a successful dialogue. Therefore, the participants need to agree on some common ground and communication rules for the dialogue.

## **4. Set the proper ground rules**

It is important to establish a set of communication and ground rules with the participants. This will help in facilitating the dialogue and ensure a safe environment in a constructive atmosphere. The group needs to take ownership of such rules. For this to happen, it is best to brainstorm and develop those rules with the participants. In the next section, a sample of such ground rules is provided.

## **5. Take risk, express feelings and confront perceptions**

Dialogue also aims to build confidence and provide a safe environment that helps and encourages participants to talk openly and transparently, using appropriate communication skills. Participants share the responsibility of opening their hearts to express their minds as well as to absorb the thoughts and feelings of the others.

Since participants in any dialogue agree that the purpose is to learn, if what is said appears to be an insult, then it needs to be taken with an open heart and mind, as it probably comes from good intention and/or it might be built on a simple misunderstanding or the lack of information.

So, it is equally important for all participants to confront patiently such perceptions if they think it is mistaken or said in a way that can lead to participants feeling insulted. It is also possible to ask someone to rephrase what he/she means to say, in a way that avoids causing negative feelings.

## **6. The relationship comes first**

Dialogue is a transformative peacebuilding process. It is based on building relationships and trust between different personalities to overcome misunderstandings and differences. Therefore, we should not put the problem in the middle and consider the other as our rival, but rather the problem is our common rival and the other party is our partner in solving the problem – it is a matter of attitude.

It is the task of the facilitators as well as the participants, to put the building of the relationship at the centre of the dialogue. Investing in team building activities and activities that develop respect and better understanding are vital in achieving such a goal.

## **7. Gradually address the hard questions and gradually depart from them**

Since investing in the relationship is vital for the success of the dialogue, we need to gradually approach the problematic topic(s) or question(s). The more we invest in building the relationship, the easier it will become to address the hard questions.

At the end of a dialogue session, we should also depart from these hard topics gradually. Addressing the hard questions often makes the participants emotional. Therefore, we need to descend slowly from these 'deeper' topics, by addressing lighter ones at both the beginning and toward the end of any dialogue.

## **8. Do not quit or avoid the difficult issues**

Dialogue cannot remain superficial, otherwise it should be called a simple conversation or discussion. Because dialogue aims to go deeper, it is vital that participants not give up when they start encountering internal resistance to what is being shared. Participants must challenge themselves and trust the spirit of the community participating in this dialogue. It is normal for the dialogue to go through some difficult stages.

These stages are evidence that participants are not avoiding difficult issues; they are sharing their deeper thoughts and feelings because they feel safe in this dialogue community. When we are engaged, we express our points of contention to get to know as well as to realise and understand them, not in order to prove that we are right, or that the other party is wrong, but rather to learn from them with each other.

By taking the time to address the difficult issues, participants come to understand the meaning and importance of these issues for themselves and others. Quitting in the middle of the hard topics can create more damage than healing. So, once participants open up, it is vital to go through the dialogue process, let the differences and disagreements emerge, so that deeper understanding can happen and eventually even healing.



### **9. Expect to be changed**

As dialogue addresses perceptions and misperceptions, it provides the opportunity to walk in the shoes of those who differ from us – it provides us with a new and broader set of perceptions (even if we do not necessarily agree with them). As one's understanding of different perspectives and perceptions expands, it becomes easier to not be so hard-lined about one's own opinion. It leads to letting go of the thought or feeling that 'I must be right'.

As this happens, it becomes possible for participants to expand their understandings and be ready to possibly change their own point of view and stereotypes about another person, group of persons or topic. Over time, through the practice of good dialogue, participants learn to not be afraid of change, but to welcome it as a sign of growth and greater richness in understanding.

If we hope that the dialogue will yield a sustainable transformative relationship, then we need to expect to be transformed. What will be transformed is not our values or our principles, but rather how we perceive the others and the issues being discussed.

### **10. Bring the change to others**

In other words, take action. Now that you have a new perspective on the topic and the other party(ies), try to think together about how to bring this new perspective to your community and that of others. Dialogue needs to be sustained. The best way to be sustainable in the long-term is to follow the dialogue with actions, from simple ones to more complex ones over time.

It is important to raise the consciousness of participants as to their responsibility to take action together, without creating unnecessary pressure. What is important is to think about how we can bring such dialogical experiences to others.



## Ground rules for dialogue

For any dialogue to be conducted in a safe space and to be effective, certain ground rules apply. They are the result of thousands of dialogical experiences.

It should be noted that these rules may change depending on the context and the needs of the group, which is why it is preferable to develop them from scratch with the participants through brainstorming. When this is done at the beginning of a dialogue, the participants can more easily take ownership of those common ground rules more easily.

Examples of these rules might include but are not limited to:

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

What is meant by confidentiality is to respect the privacy of each participant, allowing them to share at their own pace and to the degree they feel comfortable doing so. This means that it is important to avoid asking probing questions directly at a person, whether in group sessions or in private conversations. Over time, all participants will come to realise that this dialogue is a safe space, a safe environment where they can begin to open up.

As the confidentiality is kept within the dialogue group, participants feel more confident and share more deeply, allowing what is hidden to surface. They will often share personal and private stories, but only if they feel secure that these views and sensitive stories will not leave the group or be used against them later, within the group or worse yet, outside of it.

For this confidentiality to work, participants need to learn that if they need to refer to something that was shared in the dialogue with an outsider, it must be done in a way that the outsider will never be able to recognise who said or did what during the dialogue.



## **RESPECT DIFFERENCES**

We are talking here about respecting the many personal identities that are made up of even more numerous sub-identities that differentiates us from one person to another such as intellectual, ideological, cultural, religious, linguistic, social class or physical differences. This respect for differences of all kinds fosters sincere participation and transparency.

## **NO INTERRUPTION**

When a participant is talking, it is important to let them finish their thought by allowing as much time as required. Of course, at times, some people speak more easily and for longer periods than others. This is not fair and does not promote a safe space.

That is why a facilitator is so important, especially among participants who are new to practising dialogue. The facilitator can help set the limit to how long a person speaks. Over time, participants at both ends of the continuum will learn together and control themselves. Those who have the tendency to speak too much will learn to reduce the length of time they speak, while those who have the tendency to never speak begin to speak more often.

Whatever kind of person you may be, it is clear that good communication skills include both avoiding interrupting others as well as self-controlling how long and how often we speak. Practising these two skills will turn you into an active listener, without which there is no successful dialogue.

## **FAIRNESS IN TIME AND PLACE**

No one individual or particular group can dominate the dialogue. The role of a facilitator is to organise time and place so as to ensure a safe space.

## **TALKING THROUGH PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND AVOIDING GENERALISATION**

When someone uses 'I' when talking about a topic or sharing an experience, the listeners understand immediately that this is a personal perception or story. It is the view that a person holds at any point in time about a topic or an experience. It needs to be respected as part of the dialogue, even if other participants disagree with it.

If the same person uses 'we' or 'you' (plural), any other participant can think or feel that this 'we' or 'you' does not include them, making them react negatively to what is being said. So, in dialogue, participants learn to speak from the 'I' perspective, so as to avoid possibly antagonising others in the group.

Let us remember that dialogue is fundamentally a transformative activity, and therefore, greater space should be allocated for the individual experience. In addition, because dialogue is about mutual learning, it puts the emphasis on expressing personal opinions rather than sharing general opinions.

At times, a facilitator might allow a short 'general knowledge' time in case the group feels that it is needed. However, such time needs to be limited so as not to dominate the dialogue as a whole.

## **TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DIALOGUE PROCESS**

The dialogue will be successful if all the participants support its process and take the responsibility to ensure its success through following the above dialogue rules, among others.



## Different applications for dialogue

Dialogue can be applied as a tool for conflict resolution or prevention in any inter- or intra-group relation.

### **INTERGROUP DIALOGUE**

A dialogue conducted among participants who come from different identity groups (different cultures, religions, nationalities, gender, generations, etc.)

### **INTRAGROUP DIALOGUE**

A dialogue conducted among participants who come from the same identity group.

The following are examples of the different dialogues that can be organised:

### **INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE**

When participants come from different cultural backgrounds and gather to talk from their various cultural identity backgrounds to create a better understanding of certain challenges they need to dialogue about. If the dialogue occurs among people who identify with the same culture, then it is called intracultural dialogue.

## **INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE**

When participants come from different religious backgrounds and gather to talk from their various religious identity lenses to create a better understanding of certain challenges they need to dialogue about. If the dialogue occurs among people who identify with the same religion, then it is called intrareligious dialogue. In many areas around the world, the expression 'interfaith dialogue' is used interchangeably with that of 'interreligious dialogue'.

## **INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE**

When participants are from different generations (age groups) and gather to talk from their various generational identity lenses to create a better understanding of certain challenges they need to dialogue about. If the dialogue occurs among people who identify with the same generation, then it is called intra-generational dialogue.

## **INTERGENDER DIALOGUE**

When participants have different genders and gather to talk from their gender identity lenses to create a better understanding of certain challenges they need to dialogue about. If the dialogue occurs among people who identify with the same gender, then it is called intragender dialogue.

## **INTERWORLDVIEW DIALOGUE**

When participants are from different worldviews and gather to talk from their various worldview perspectives to create a better understanding of certain challenges they need to dialogue about. If the dialogue occurs among people who identify with the same worldview, then it is called intraworldview dialogue.

This form of dialogue is particularly useful for dialogues that want to be inclusive of all persons, seeking to better understand people across different religious and non-religious (i.e. popularly known as 'secular') perspectives or worldviews.

Since there are endless types of identity groups, dialogue can be applied among and within any of these groups. The dialogue can be named according to the lens or the identity by which the participants are identified with in the dialogue. However, the content of the dialogue is not necessarily about such identity.

For example, people from different religions can come together to address social, economic, environmental or other issues without talking about their religious or theological beliefs. This is called the Dialogue of Life. In contrast, there is the theological dialogue (which may be either interreligious or intrareligious), where the participants come together to dialogue about their religious similarities and differences.



## DIALOGUE FOR PEACE PROGRAMME

### What are the elements of the Scout Method that are related to dialogue?

Implicitly, many elements of World Scouting are already helping to keep a dialogical environment and are aligned with the basic principles of dialogue.

The Dialogue for Peace programme aims to address, prevent and reduce the increasing issues of discrimination, exclusion, migration, poverty, inequality and religious persecution, which are affecting young people's opportunities to develop to their full potential.

With the support of KAICIID, WOSM have designed a dialogue programme that will cultivate dialogue skills in Scouts, creating positive impacts in local communities where the Youth Programme is delivered. As mentioned before with this initiative, WOSM and KAICIID are responding to the call of action from the United Nation Security Council's Resolution 2250 to 'ensure the participation and views of youth, recognising that their marginalisation is detrimental to building sustainable peace..., to take measures to empower youth in peacebuilding and conflict resolution; to promote a culture of peace, tolerance, intercultural and interreligious dialogue that involve youth and discourage their participation in acts of violence, terrorism, xenophobia, and all forms of discrimination.'<sup>56</sup>

This is a tool to bring awareness among Scouts and invite them to become advocates who will take action by using dialogue to construct a culture of peace. Embedded in the Scout values and integrated into the framework of the Scout Method, the Dialogue For Peace programme enables young people to embrace the dialogical way of life.

## World Scouting elements aligned with dialogue

<b>Scout Principles (WOSM, 2017)<sup>57</sup></b>	Duty to Self, Duty to God, Duty to Others	Established from the fundamentals of Scouting, the importance of caring for oneself and others. The others in Scouting are not only members of our own community, culture or religion; the others are all human beings, despite their religion, culture or colour.
<b>Active Citizen (WOSM, 2014)<sup>58</sup></b>	Autonomous, supportive, responsible, committed and culturally sensitive	Sets the ideal persona that we would like to develop through Scouting. Being active citizens implies our responsibility toward an inclusive society. Dialogue does promote 'common citizenship' that is inclusive for all components of society.
<b>Scout Method (WOSM, 2017)<sup>59</sup></b>	The Scout Law and Promise	Sets a common code of values in many ways connected with dialogue principles
	Team system	Empowers young people to practise peer-to-peer dialogue across cultures, identities and backgrounds, interpersonal communication
	Learning by doing	Enables young people to take a participatory and practical approach, dialogue is about participation
	Personal progression <sup>60</sup>	Promotes permanent self-assessment to build character and self-leadership
	Adult support	Supporting young people applying an intergeneration dialogue dynamic, through mentoring
<b>Mission of Scouting</b>	'A value system based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world where people ... play a constructive role in society.'	Provides a common value-based framework among 50 million Scouts, regardless of their identity, cultural traditions, spiritual beliefs and context
<b>Vision of Scouting</b>	'...100 million young people to be active citizens creating positive change in their communities...'	Sets up a common purpose for all our joint effort

## WHEN DOES DIALOGUE OCCURS?

Dialogue is present in Scouting by nature and is permanently promoted through its practices, the implementation of the basic principles and the Scout Method. It is implicit and tangible in a variety of contexts and dimensions.

(As stated before) Dialogue is a process with the sole purpose of mutual learning and understanding. The value of dialogue relies on each individual's willingness to stay open and receptive during the process and to seek a deeper understanding of the other.

The opportunity to establish meaningful and constructive dialogue is offered to us each time we interact with another individual or more, in a direct exchange or as part of a collective activity. The ideal scenario would be for this to become a relevant and positive experience between two or more people. In Scouting, these opportunity or moments take place:

- **With peers**, during a spontaneous or planned conversation between two or more Scouts
- **When the pack/patrol/team gathers** to discuss a topic, plan activities or share experiences
- **Between Scouts and Scout Leader** while discussing personal progression, personal issues or just having a conversation about a particular activity or topic
- **Within collaborative teams** in our Scout group or institutional bodies
- **During international exchanges** online or when people gather during Jamborees, conferences, etc.
- **During the locally organised activities** executed in our programmes
- **Permanently with ourselves** before, during and after activities

The potential for these interactions to foster mutual understanding increases when at least one of the parties is able to implement the dialogue principles or skills in the process.





## What is a dialogical person?

A dialogical person is someone who has integrated the dialogue principles in his/her daily practice and is permanently fostering an attitude of curiosity and understanding of what is behind the words, behaviour or attitude of others. A dialogical person is someone who approaches those who are different with an open mind and with two main objectives in mind: learning and mutual understanding.

The person has worked to develop certain skills that contribute to an open and flexible approach when managing a conflict situation and gives priority to mutual understanding.

It is well-known that Scouts are inspired and committed to a common set of values stated in the Scout Promise and Law including being a friend to all and brother to every Scout. This means that we acknowledge the existence of diversity in everybody and celebrate the richness of our pluralistic and inclusive culture of multiple identities.

Acknowledging that people do come from different cultures and background means that we can perceive or observe that we have the different ways of thinking, different traditions and do not behave the same way in similar circumstances. Still, when two or more Scouts are together, our specific identity doesn't prevent us from being friendly, open to witness the variety of behaviours and stay curious to understand and learn where this difference come from.

Scouts experience the 'group life' and by participating in Scout activities, have incorporated certain skills, attitudes and knowledge that allow one to be open to understand others and celebrate differences.

Scouting is an inclusive community. It welcomes Scouts from all backgrounds and celebrates their cultural, religious, geographical, professional, gender or age differences. To be an active citizen in such a pluralistic community, and to be able to provide a safe environment of understanding and respect for all, one should develop a set of competences. One should become, a dialogical Scout.



Let one of the participants lay on a big sheet of paper, draw his/her silhouette, and ask the participants to write on the silhouette the skills, attitudes and values that a dialogue facilitator should have.

Having stated that we already have most of what is needed, and if we integrate the dialogue principles into our personal way of communication and interaction with others, and if we put efforts in our daily interactions with others, we will have more opportunities to understand each other.

Making efforts means that Scouts need to activate and become aware of our already incorporated skills and combine them with the dialogue principles in a conscious way. We need to practise dialogue actively and to inspire others to do so. We should make efforts to intentionally engage with those who are different.

**Ask questions to validate perceptions**

**Permanently seeking new knowledge and information**

**Provide a safe space for others to express themselves**

**Actively promoting dialogu.**

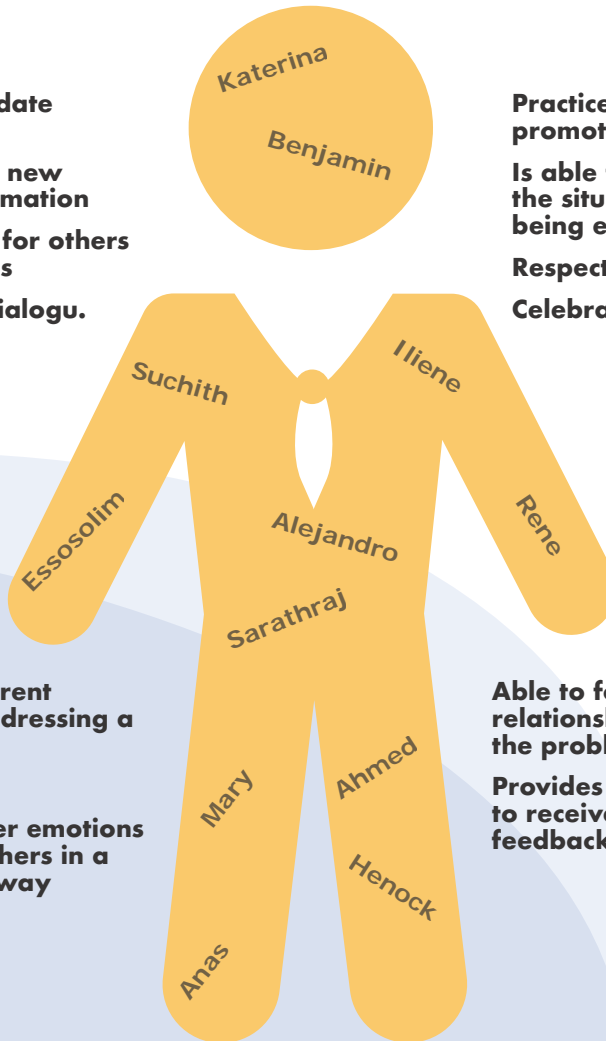
**Active listener**

**Practice Scout values to promote dialogue**

**Is able to put himself/herself in the situation of others without being emotionally involved**

**Respects differences**

**Celebrates diversity**



**Keen to consider different perspectives when addressing a situation**

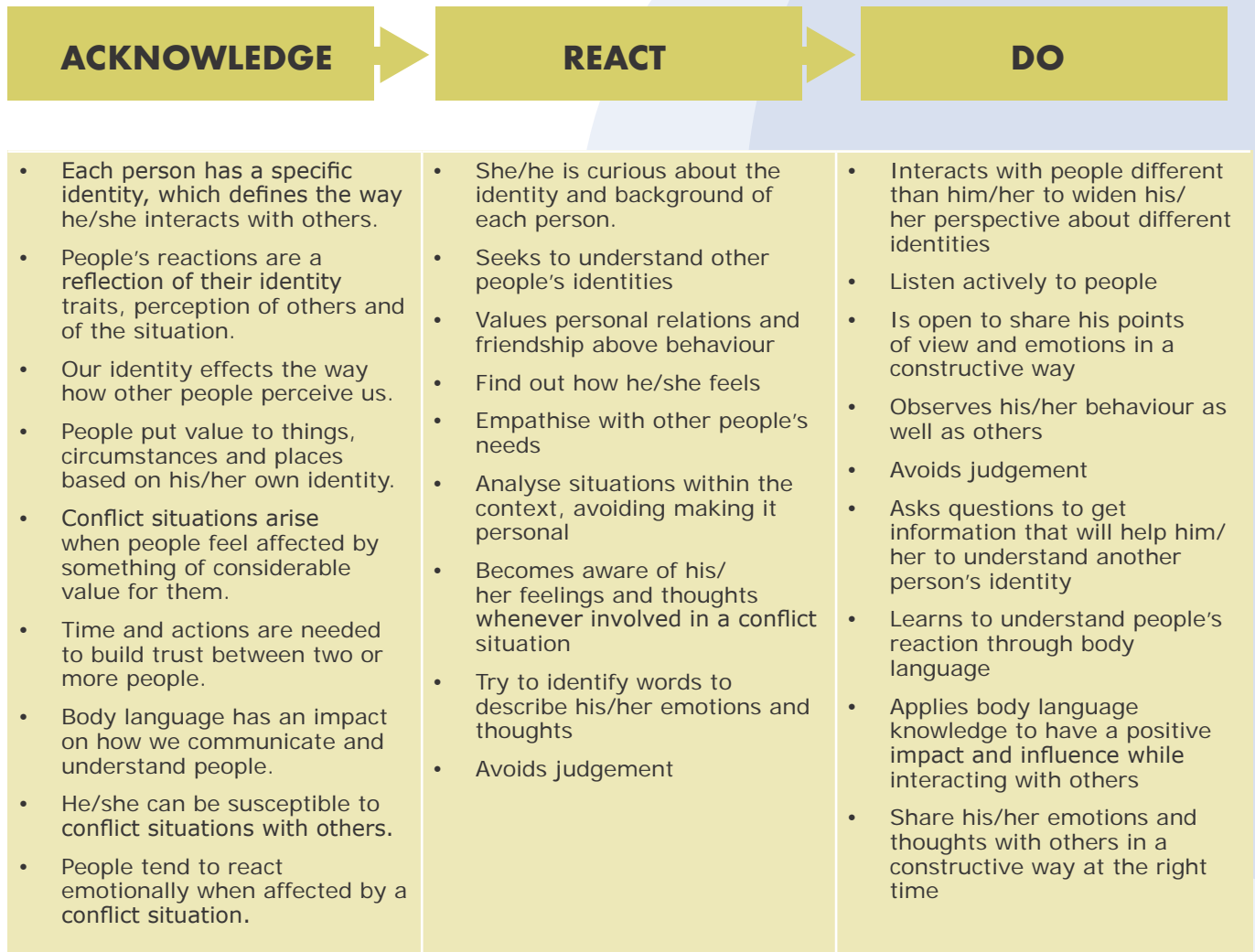
**Able to be self-critical**

**Able to identify his/her emotions to share them with others in a positive/constructive way**

**Able to focus on the relationship rather than the problem**

**Provides and is open to receive constructive feedback**

- **Acknowledge** – Observe and analyse the situation and try to acknowledge what is happening in any given situation. Trying to stay detached from the situation and identifying the underlying reason.
- **React** – Is our first impulse in any given situation and most of the time it is emotional. We can change the way we react based on our personal values and adopted principles.
- **Do** – The action you would take to tackle the situation you are in, the intention to have a positive influence on the situation and the people involved.



# The dialogue badge

## Recognition and support

In the next few lines, you will understand how any Scout can get the dialogue badge. It is easy for young people to apply the principles of dialogue through different learning opportunities.

### A. OVERALL EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

At the end of this learning process, a Scout of any age will be able to:

- Promote dialogue (interreligious, intercultural, intergenerational, gender, etc.) among his/her peers and community as an essential value toward creating a better world and global peace
- Respect everyone regardless of their faith, race, ethnic background, gender or age; and is able to conduct a constructive dialogue with them
- Apply the principles of dialogue as part of one's value system
- Value the need for peace and dialogue in today's world

### B. DIALOGUE BADGE

The framework for the dialogue badge in Scouting is based on the Ten Principles of Dialogue explained earlier and the fundamental values of Scouting (which universally gathered in the Scout Promise and Law). It can be used as a tool for NSOs/NSAs to provide dialogue and peace education at any age section.

The framework provides a clear structure for Scouts, and is intended to refocus on the challenges faced, which are often the lack of tolerance and misperception of others. The badge provides a learning opportunity to young people who aspire to be dialogical Scouts.

Any young person will choose according to their age range a range of activities that suits him/her to achieve the different levels of the badge. The trained trainers and facilitators can play a constructive role in helping them to achieve this.

#### PERSONAL

1 BADGE FOR EACH AGE SECTION  
IMPLEMENTED BY UNIT LEADER



#### FACILITATOR

ROVERS AND SCOUT LEADERS  
IMPLEMENTED BY NSO/REGION



#### TRAINER

ROVERS AND SCOUT LEADERS  
IMPLEMENTED BY NSO/REGION



- For the first stage (learn), each learning objective is explored through a variety of experiential activities that enable the participant to connect with concept of dialogue, learn about it and think of ways to promote and apply it.
- For the second stage (do), a need to take action is identified and a small scale project is planned and executed. This should be related to the learning achieved in the learning stage.

The badge system is based on three age ranges: under 11, 11 to 14 and above 15. The learning objectives table below provides guidance that can help with the development and delivery of the dialogue badge. This is just a framework that should be used by NSOs/NSAs to develop requirements and activities for the badge that are applicable to their local community, using the following process:

1. NSO/NSA reads the manual content, educational objectives and proposed learning objectives for dialogue education in Scouting
2. NSO/NSA reviews current national Scout education programme against this framework
3. NSO/NSA develops suitable badge requirements for their age sections in accordance with the proposed learning objectives for each stage and age section
4. NSO/NSA communicates with all stakeholders about the availability of the badge. This includes:
  - a. National and local structures
  - b. Individual members and leaders
  - c. World Scout Bureau (for record purposes)
5. NSO/NSA provides leader training and provide materials (and badges) as well as ongoing programme support and review for the delivery of the dialogue badge

The purpose of the badge is for the Scouts to identify personal responsibility toward their community and create a peaceful environment built on the dialogue principles.

This should not stop once they have received the badge. It is hoped that achieving the dialogue badge is the first step in awakening enthusiasm for world peace and creating generations of Scouts who care about creating a better world.

The badge can be the first step to start looking for different ways to achieve the same purpose. The Better World framework offers a variety of programmes that work together to create active citizens.

# Educational objectives for dialogue

Stages	Under 11
<p><b>Learn</b></p> <p>Experience dialogue by learning about the principles, knowledge and skills that can help you in 'doing' dialogue</p>	<p>Choose five learning objectives (objectives 1 and 2 are mandatory):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate knowledge of the Ten Principles of Dialogue</li> <li>2. Understand that all people are different but equal</li> <li>3. Explore why people are different and how they complement each other</li> <li>4. Discover some of the differences between members of the local communities and family members</li> <li>5. Understand that differences imply different needs and seeing things differently</li> <li>6. Be aware of harmful effect of conflict/misunderstanding between people in the communities</li> <li>7. Explain how dialogue can reduce the risk of conflict/ correct misunderstanding between people</li> <li>8. Show examples of tolerance and living in harmony by sharing relevant news or historical events</li> <li>9. Be able to recognise different safe dialogue environments</li> </ol>
<p><b>Do</b></p> <p>Organise an activity or project that is related to the previous learning and relevant to the local community</p>	<p>Choose one activity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participate in a local dialogue event (debate, meeting, etc.)</li> <li>2. Initiate a dialogue session between two different individuals</li> <li>3. Present to your troop/group the benefits of dialogue</li> </ol>



11 to 15 years	Above 15	Leaders guidance
<p>Choose six learning objectives (objectives 1, 2 and 3 are mandatory):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain to others the Ten Principles of Dialogue</li> <li>2. Attend a learning session on dialogue</li> <li>3. Understand and demonstrate that all people are equal and unique</li> <li>4. Understand that differences imply different needs and perceiving things differently</li> <li>5. Identify threats of conflict/ misunderstanding between community members</li> <li>6. Be aware of the different ways of conducting a good dialogue session</li> <li>7. Explore a local area of different with a different group of people (minority, ethnic group, etc.)</li> <li>8. Understand the need for a safe environment for dialogue</li> <li>9. Be aware of national issues that were caused by the lack of dialogue and the reason behind it</li> <li>10. Demonstrate what personal action can be taken to be a dialogical person/Scout</li> <li>11. Recognise how people are connected with each other and there is no escape from communicating and having dialogues with each other, whatever the distance</li> <li>12. Identify a local area with a conflict and discuss how the conflict came about</li> <li>13. Demonstrate how to help other people to be prepared to respond to conflicts/ misunderstanding caused by the lack of dialogue</li> </ol>	<p>Choose seven learning objectives (objectives 1 and 2 are mandatory):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Present to others the Ten Principles of Dialogue</li> <li>2. Attend a learning session on dialogue</li> <li>3. Explain to others that all people are equal and unique</li> <li>4. Demonstrate how personal actions can cause conflicts and misunderstanding</li> <li>5. Identify and explore a local area with a problem caused by the lack of dialogue</li> <li>6. Understand the demographic differences in your country</li> <li>7. Be aware of global issues caused by the lack of dialogue between different nations</li> <li>8. Explain the local impact of the harmful effects of conflict/ misunderstanding between people in the communities</li> <li>9. Explain how our choice of action and responsibility as an individual, group, community and country can affect world peace</li> <li>10. Understand how we can take actions to improve our impact on the society through dialogue</li> <li>11. Demonstrate the different types and applications of dialogues, safe environments and techniques</li> <li>12. Demonstrate how one can help others to be dialogical persons</li> <li>13. Explain how some incidents can change the dialogue dynamic in the community from positive to negative</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply the Scout Method while learning to create a fun learning environment with unstructured exploration that encourages inquisitiveness and generates awareness</li> <li>• The sharing of life experiences is strongly encouraged because this will create a great learning experience for young people</li> <li>• Prepare for experience-based activities that encourage critical thinking on why dialogue is important and on ways to resolve conflict and misunderstanding. This will lead to shared awareness and a deeper understanding of individuals' responsibility</li> <li>• Where possible, activities should encourage thinking about how the Seven Principles of Dialogue can be applied</li> </ul>
<p>Choose one activity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participate in a national dialogue-related project</li> <li>2. Plan and execute a dialogue event</li> <li>3. Write a paper on dialogue, its importance in your local community and present it to your peers (in school, local non-governmental organisation, etc.)</li> </ol>	<p>Choose two activity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participate in a national long-term dialogue-related project</li> <li>2. Plan and execute a dialogue event (debate between different groups, problem-solving session, etc.)</li> <li>3. Write a paper on dialogue and its importance in your local community and present it to others</li> <li>4. Evaluate the impact of a dialogue project run by the Scouts in the community and present the outcomes</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply the Scout Method while doing the reflection on actions as it is very crucial to the learning process</li> <li>• Help in analysing situations, identify local issues and understand the link between local, national and global issues</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate plans, and the implementation process of projects and events</li> <li>• Facilitate the learning opportunities according to age</li> </ul>



After completing the requirements, the leader in charge can assess the work that has been done and grant the Scout the badge and certificate of achievement (see the template below).

### **CAN WE INTEGRATE DIALOGUE WITHIN SCOUTING ACTIVITIES?**

Similar to any educative experience and Scouting activity, dialogue can and should be designed carefully if we want to benefit fully from it. A variety of elements contribute to make dialogue experiences successful, constructive and productive.

As mentioned before, dialogue is integrated in the Scouting dynamics and activities. Most Scouts practise and implement some or most of its elements without being aware of it. Becoming aware of the dialogue practice is a next step to transform the way of thinking in young people, adult leaders and communities.

An additional benefit is that we can use dialogue to enrich the delivery of the Youth Programme, the set up of educational objectives and the planning of activities to provide a more meaningful experience for young people.



# DIALOGUE PROMOTION AND NETWORKING

## Networking in practice

By now, you should know what dialogue is and what we mean by becoming a dialogical Scout. You should also know that you can become a dialogical Scout, a facilitator of dialogue or a dialogue trainer, depending on the level of commitment and responsibility you want to assume in the dialogue way of life.

In any case, if you want to have a relevant impact on those around you, you need to take some action to help them to discover the benefits of dialogue and the efforts required.

### WHERE CAN WE PROMOTE DIALOGUE?

We have endless opportunities to promote dialogue in our everyday activities. As we mentioned before, some can be planned, while others can be spontaneous.

- **Scouts events:** There's a variety of Scout event and activities where dialogue can be promoted through games and interactive activities.
- **Community event:** You can organise a session or training with local partners to talk about the importance of dialogue in the creation of a culture of peace. This could be organised with the help of teachers, colleagues, family or community representatives.
- **Supporting a dialogue process:** If you have the skills and proper knowledge to facilitate a dialogue process, we encourage you to offer your help to support your family, friends, colleagues or any other context that you interact in.

# Who can help you?

Anybody willing to advocate for dialogue can help in the task of promoting it. Remember, promoting is not the same as actually facilitating a dialogue process or engaging in dialogue. But when it comes to raising awareness, you can ask for support from:



Family



Friends



Scout leaders



Colleagues



Study mates



Community leaders  
and representatives



Media  
professionals



Teachers



Influencers



Religious  
Leaders

## TEAM UP AND ORGANISE A NETWORK

You can promote and practise dialogue and bring positive changes to the ones around you and your community. Though, if you want to go beyond this and have a greater impact, you might need to organise your efforts a little bit.

You can slowly build a network with different people who are interested to support you in your efforts to share/spread dialogue practices.

By network, we mean an organised system that will enhance and encourage a deeper interaction between you and your collaborators. To keep this system going and alive, time, resources, willing hands and creative ideas are required.

Subsequently, you can rely and share efforts with a team or small group of people willing to exchange ideas and resources, to invest time to come up with simple but focused plans.



### SOME TIPS TO KEEP YOUR TEAM AND NETWORK GOING:

- **Be the inspiring force** - Everything good starts with examples and concrete actions. The best way to inspire people to engage in your cause is to become a testimony of what you stand for. Stronger networks result from people engaged with people, finding and building helpful relationships and connecting with others. Keep yourself positive and optimistic.
- **Help and offer help** - You can start small and with the resources that you have at hand. This will open doors for others to do the same and create additional resources that can be made available not only for your cause, but also for others.
- **Be trustworthy** - If people know that they can rely on you, they will come back for more. Also, this practice will spread among the ones working around you and your team if you focus effort on cultivating it.
- **Have a clear message and goals** - Anybody you approach for support or help will be more interested in your cause if you are able to clearly state what you want to achieve and how you want to achieve it. Practise a verbal statement and have some written material at hand. Don't forget to have an elevator speech for spontaneous encounters.
- **Set a plan and goals** - Work them out with your team so that they feel part of it and be more engaged with the effort.
- **Follow up** - It is crucial to keep the efforts going and to keep people motivated. It requires a bit of planing and consistent monitoring on the progress of the tasks or steps agreed. This monitoring allow you to assess if you are keeping up with the original plan or if you need to make adjustments. In terms of keeping the dialogue open, it helps you to maintain the bridge of communication between parties and use the momentum of positive achievements to build stronger relationships.<sup>61</sup>

# Ways to promote dialogue

The aim of promoting dialogue is to raise awareness about the importance of understanding each other in the creation of a peaceful society. Capacity building becomes very relevant for people to change their mindset.

- **Presentation session:** Basic presentation or inspirational speech at events emphasizing the importance of dialogue in our daily life. If the opportunity comes, you can also use other presentation tools or equipment, if available, to present the Ten Principles of Dialogue and create a meaningful and inspiring experience.
- **Workshop:** This format involves more content preparation and interactive exercises. More time would be needed (at least two hours).
- **Training:** As this involves content preparation and interactive exercises, more time would be needed. Through workshops or trainings, participants will have the chance to not only to listen to experts and people with knowledge about dialogue, but also to experience specific situations, take part in live exercises and put into practice some of the lessons learnt, with the opportunity to debrief and get feedback on the spot.

Integrating dialogue skills in our natural behaviour is a matter of practice. Therefore, creating this kind of learning experiences can teach people ways to address conflict situations from a dialogical perspective. We suggest that you divide your training into sessions, using different methodologies to share your knowledge and ensure that they have the opportunity to practise. Debriefing is very relevant to promote mutual understanding and improve open communication.

- **Supporting a dialogue process:** Among your family and friends, at school, work or any other context that you interact in. If you have the skills and proper knowledge to facilitate a dialogue process, we encourage you to offer your help.



# Dialogue and social media

Social media is a modern tool interlaced in our interactions with people, our perception of the world and in the way we communicate what we do and feel. Social media is now used by almost all sectors in society to promote ideas, share knowledge and create trends as well as identify and learn how society perceives the world.

By definition, social media is a dynamic organism, based on user-generated content, designed and maintained, facilitating the development of social media networks<sup>62</sup>, helping in the process to stimulate specific behaviour, to develop perspectives and to strengthen local efforts and initiatives.



## DIALOGUE CAN BE PROMOTED IN SOCIAL MEDIA THROUGH:

- **Personal accounts** – each individual can become and advocate of certain topics, extending his actions to social media. Content published becomes a personal opinion and perspective.
  - Social media networks, blogs, YouTube channels
- **Dedicated accounts** – created with the purpose of promoting a specific agenda based on defined strategies and clear objectives. This content would be of public opinion and might be considered official if the account is related to institutions or organisations.
  - Websites, discussion groups on social media platforms, YouTube channels
- **Contributor/writer** – an individual expresses his/her opinion and points of view about certain topic, which is then endorsed by a publisher.



## BLOGS

There are strong and relevant examples of how social media has been used to influence people's way of thinking and behaviour with its extensive reach, creating a relevant and positive impact. If the educative and informative role of the media contributes to the promotion of a culture of peace, it can also be used to promote and educate people to embrace the principles of dialogue under certain considerations:

- Social media is as powerful a tool to create positive change as it is to create conflict.
- To create positive impact, social media spaces need to be moderated by a team with specific responsibilities. To enrich and ensure a wider impact, members taking part in the platform need to feel a sense of ownership, fostered by the manager's team.
- The Ten Principles of Dialogue have to be applied whenever using the different formats of communication.
- Users need to be empowered to express their opinions and thoughts in a constructive way.
- Content needs to be reviewed before posting or sharing (post, content, video, images, articles, etc.).
- A safe space needs to be provided for all users of the networks.
- It facilitates the exchange of perceptions, thoughts and emotions but it would never replace a face-to-face dialogue process.
- Conflict might arise from social media interactions and should be managed accordingly.
- The culture and identities of audience need to be strongly considered whenever sharing any kind of content.
- While social media is powerful, it's also limited by the internet accessibility of your audience. So, don't limit yourself to the use of social media for the promotion of dialogue. Traditional media and other SMS based services can also be used to promote dialogue.



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## ANNEXES

### **Annex 1** **Circles of My Sub-identities<sup>63</sup>**

(facilitator's copy)

**Time:** This activity requires 20-30 minutes.

**Purpose:** The Circles of My Sub-identities activity or the 'identity molecule', engages participants in a process of identifying what they consider to be the most important dimensions of their own identity and sub-identities.

Stereotypes are examined as participants share stories about when they were proud to be part of a particular group (when it was a privilege) and when it was especially hurtful to be associated with a particular group (when it was a disadvantage).

**Preparation:** Distribute copies of the Circles handout (Annex 2).



Instructions: Ask participants to pair up with somebody whom they do not know very well. Invite them to take a minute to introduce each other and follow these steps:

1. Ask participants to write their names in the centre of the circle. They then fill in each satellite circle with a dimension of their identity that they consider to be among the most important in defining themselves (their most important sub-identities). Give participants several examples, such as female or male, nationality, language, culture, religion, brother and/or sister, educator, social class, level of education, etc.
2. In pairs, participants share two stories with each other. First, they share a story about when they felt especially proud to be associated with one of the sub-identities they selected. Next, they share a story about a time it was particularly painful to be associated with the same sub-identity (or another if that is not easy to find).
3. Participants then share a stereotype that they have heard about which is related to one of the sub-identities included in their satellite circles. Ask them to complete the sentence at the bottom of the handout by filling in the blanks: 'I am (a/an) \_\_\_\_\_ but I am NOT (a/an) \_\_\_\_\_.' Provide your own example, 'I may be a teacher, but I do have a social life.'

Note: Instructions for steps 1, 2, and 3 should be given all at once. Allow 8-10 minutes for participants to complete all three steps but remind them in the remaining two minutes that they must fill in the stereotype sentence (step 3).

4. Probe the group for reactions to each other's stories. Ask whether anyone heard a story she/he would like to share with the group (make sure the person who originally told the story has granted permission to share it with the entire group).
5. Advise participants that the next step will involve individuals standing up and reading their stereotype statement. You can simply go around the room in some order, or better still, have people randomly stand up and read their statements as each one feels ready to share.

Make sure that participants are respectful and listening actively for this step, as individuals are making themselves vulnerable when they share their own sentence. Start by reading your own statement.

This part of the activity can be extremely powerful if you introduce it with enthusiasm. It may take a few moments to start the flow of sharing; so, allow for silent moments.

**Several questions can be used to process this activity:**

1. How do your selected sub-identities differ from the sub-identities of those who make judgments about you?
2. Has anybody heard somebody in the group challenge a stereotype that you thought of as true? If so, what happened? Did it change your mind?
3. How did it feel to be able to have your own stereotype challenged?
4. There is usually some laughter when somebody shares common stereotypes such as 'I may be a (teacher, business person, parent, etc.), but I (do have a social life, no time for myself, start a new project, etc.)'. You may say 'I heard several moments of laughter. What was that about?'
5. Where do stereotypes come from?
6. How can we eliminate them?

**(Refer to the additional questions in Annex 2)**

**Facilitator's notes:** The key to this activity is the process of examining one's own identity and sub-identities, and then examine how some of them might be linked to stereotypes. It is important not only to discover stereotypes about some of our own sub-identities, but also to have one's own stereotypes challenged through others' stories and stereotypes.

Encourage participants to think about the stereotypes they apply to people and to make a conscious effort to think more deeply about them, eventually eliminating them.

As with most activities, it can be especially effective if you participate while you facilitate. If you are willing to share your own experiences, participants are more likely to feel open to share their own.

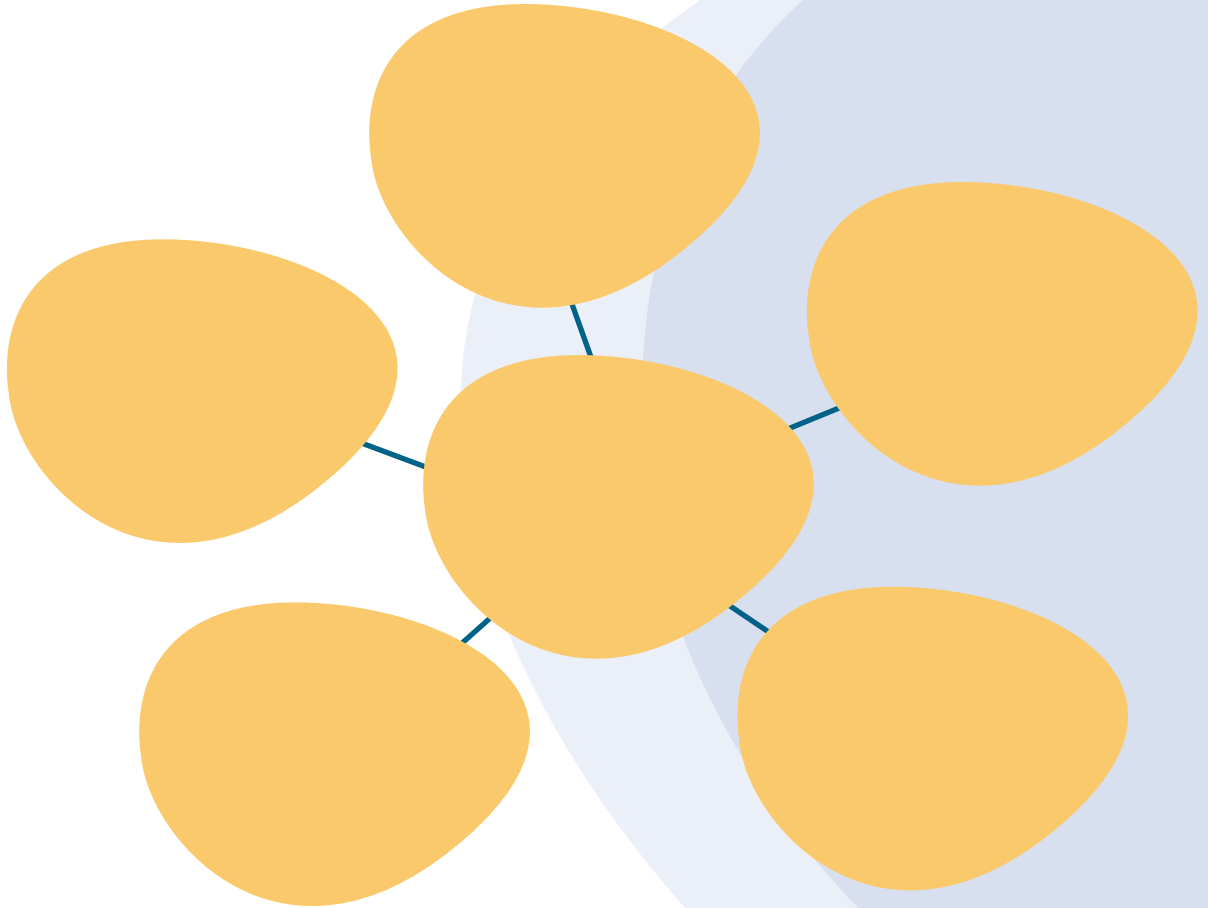
It is crucial, especially for the final part of the activity when participants are sharing their stereotypes, to allow for silence. People will be hesitant to share initially, but once the ball starts rolling, the activity will be filled with energy. Allow time at the end for participants to talk more about whatever stereotype they shared.

After everyone has shared their stereotype challenge, announce that anyone who would like to share another one can do so. Model by sharing another one about yourself.

## Annex 2

# Circles of My Sub-identities<sup>64</sup>

(participant's copy)



'I AM (A/AN) \_\_\_\_\_ BUT I AM NOT (A/AN) \_\_\_\_\_.'

### Additional questions

- How did it feel to do this activity?
- What was easy? What was challenging?
- How do students show that they might be struggling with issues presented by this exercise?
- What similarities and differences emerged?
- What invisible identities (inside/outside identities) became visible as a result of this exercise? Any thoughts about this?
- How/why are these categories helpful or not helpful in describing you or others?
- Which of these identities are socially constructed? Personally constructed? Other constructions?

# Annex 3

## Types of conflict<sup>65</sup>

### **RELATIONSHIP CONFLICTS**

Relationship conflicts occur because of the presence of strong negative emotions, misperceptions or stereotypes, poor communication or miscommunication, or repetitive negative behaviours.

Relationship problems often fuel disputes and lead to an unnecessary escalating spiral of destructive conflict. Supporting the safe and balanced expression of perspectives and emotions for acknowledgment (not agreement) is one effective approach to managing relational conflict.

#### ***Causes of relationship conflicts:***

- Strong emotions
- Misperceptions/stereotypes
- Poor communication
- Miscommunication
- Repetitive negative behaviour

#### ***Ways to address relationship conflicts:***

- Control negative expressions through procedures and ground rules
- Promote process that legitimises feelings
- Clarify perceptions – build positive perceptions
- Improve the quality and quantity of communication
- Block negative repetitive behaviour by changing structure
- Encourage positive problem-solving attitudes

### **DATA CONFLICTS**

Data conflicts occur when people lack information necessary to make wise decisions, are misinformed, disagree on which data is relevant, interpret information differently or have competing assessment procedures.

Some data conflicts may be unnecessary since they are caused by poor communication between the people in conflict. Other data conflicts may be genuine incompatibilities associated with data collection, interpretation or communication. Most data conflicts will have 'data solutions.'

#### ***Causes of data conflicts:***

- Lack of information
- Misinformation
- Differing views on what's relevant
- Different interpretations of data
- Different assessment procedures

#### ***Ways to address data conflict:***

- Reach agreement on what data are important
- Agree on the process to collect data
- Develop common criteria to assess data
- Use third party experts to get outside opinion or break deadlock



### **INTEREST CONFLICTS**

Interest conflicts are caused by competition over perceived incompatible needs. They result when one or more of the parties believe that in order to satisfy his/her needs, the needs and interests of an opponent must be sacrificed. Interest-based conflict will commonly be expressed in positional terms.

A variety of interests and intentions underlie and motivate positions in negotiation and must be addressed for maximised resolution. Interest-based conflicts may occur over substantive issues (such as money, physical resources, time, etc.); procedural issues (the way the dispute is to be resolved) and psychological issues (perceptions of trust, fairness, desire for participation, respect, etc.).

For an interest-based dispute to be resolved, parties must be assisted to define and express their individual interests so that all of these interests may be jointly addressed. Interest-based conflict is best resolved through the maximising the integration of the parties' respective interests, positive intentions and desired experiential outcomes.

#### ***Causes of interest conflicts:***

- Perceived or actual competitive positions/interests
- Content
- Procedures
- Psychological interest

#### ***Ways to address interest conflicts:***

- Focus on interests, not positions
- Look for objective criteria
- Look for solutions that meet needs of all parties
- Search for ways to expand options/resources
- Develop trade-offs to satisfy interests of different strengths



### **STRUCTURAL/ORGANISATIONAL CONFLICTS**

Structural conflicts are caused by forces external to the people in dispute. Limited physical resources or authority, geographic constraints (distance or proximity), time (too little or too much), organisational changes and so on can make structural conflict seem like a crisis.

It can be helpful to assist parties in conflict to appreciate the external forces and constraints bearing upon them. Structural conflicts will often have structural solutions. Parties' appreciation that a conflict has an external source can have the effect of them coming to jointly address the imposed difficulties.

#### ***Causes of structural/organisational conflicts:***

- Destructive patterns of behaviour or interaction
- Unequal control, ownership or distribution of resources
- Unequal power and authority
- Geographical, physical or environmental factors that hinder cooperation
- Time constraints

#### ***Ways to address structural/organisational conflict:***

- Clearly define and change roles
- Replace destructive behavioural patterns
- Reallocate ownership or control of resources
- Establish a fair and mutually acceptable decision-making process
- Change negotiations from positional to interest-based bargaining
- Modify means of parties (less coercion, more persuasion)
- Change physical and environmental relations



## VALUE CONFLICTS

Value conflicts are caused by perceived or actual incompatible belief systems. Values are beliefs that people use to give meaning to their lives. Values explain what is 'good' or 'bad', 'right' or 'wrong', 'just' or 'unjust'. Differing values need not cause conflict. People can live together in harmony with different value systems.

Value disputes arise only when people attempt to force one set of values on others or lay claim to exclusive value systems that do not allow for divergent beliefs. It is of no use to try to change value and belief systems during relatively short and strategic mediation interventions. It can, however, be helpful to support each participant's expression of their values and beliefs for acknowledgment by the other party.

### ***Causes of value conflicts:***

- Different criteria for evaluating ideas or behaviour
- Exclusive intrinsically valuable goals
- Different ways of life, ideology and religion

### ***Ways to address value conflict:***

- Avoid defining problem in terms of values
- Allow parties to agree and disagree
- Create sphere of influence in which one set of values dominates
- Search for subordinate goal that all parties agree to

## UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES OF WORKPLACE TENSION

According to psychologists Art Bell and Brett Hart, there are eight common causes of conflict in the workplace. Bell and Hart identified these common causes in separate articles on workplace conflict in 2000 and 2002.

### ***The eight causes are:***

1. Conflicting resources
2. Conflicting styles
3. Conflicting perceptions
4. Conflicting goals
5. Conflicting pressures
6. Conflicting roles
7. Different personal values
8. Unpredictable policies

You can use this classification to identify possible causes of conflict. Once you've identified these, you can take steps to prevent conflict happening in the first place, or you can tailor your conflict resolution strategy to fit the situation.

# Annex 4

## Measuring your conflict style

\*Adapted from 'Interpersonal Conflict' by Wilmot and Hocker, 2001

Think of a work-related context in which you have had a disagreement with someone.

Then, according to the following scale, fill in your scores for the described situation.

Do not list what you think the 'right' answer is, but rather what you are inclined to do.

1= never    2= seldom    3= sometimes    4= often    5= always

1. \_\_\_ I avoid being put on the spot and I keep conflicts to myself.
2. \_\_\_ I use my influence to get my ideas accepted.
3. \_\_\_ I usually try to split the difference in order to resolve an issue.
4. \_\_\_ I generally try to satisfy the other person's needs.
5. \_\_\_ I investigate an issue to find a mutually acceptable solution.
6. \_\_\_ I usually avoid discussion of my differences with the other person.
7. \_\_\_ I use my authority to make a decision in my favour.
8. \_\_\_ I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse.
9. \_\_\_ I usually accommodate the other person's wishes.
10. \_\_\_ I try to integrate my ideas with the others to come up with a decision jointly.
11. \_\_\_ I try to stay away from disagreement with the other.
12. \_\_\_ I use my knowledge to market a decision that favours me.
13. \_\_\_ I propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks.
14. \_\_\_ I give in to the other's wishes to end a conflict.
15. \_\_\_ I work with the other to find solutions that satisfy both our expectations.
16. \_\_\_ I keep my disagreement to myself in order to avoid hard feelings.
17. \_\_\_ I generally pursue my side of an issue.
18. \_\_\_ I negotiate with the other person to reach a compromise.
19. \_\_\_ I often go with the other person's suggestions.
20. \_\_\_ I exchange accurate information with the other person, so we can solve a problem together.
21. \_\_\_ I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with the other.
22. \_\_\_ I sometimes use my power to win.
23. \_\_\_ I believe everyone has to give and take something to reach resolution.
24. \_\_\_ I try to satisfy the other's expectations.
25. \_\_\_ I try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that they issue can be resolved.



### Scoring

Add up your scores in the table below:

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
16.	17.	18.	19.	20.
21.	22.	23.	24.	25.
<b>A Total:</b>	<b>B Total:</b>	<b>C Total:</b>	<b>D Total:</b>	<b>E total:</b>

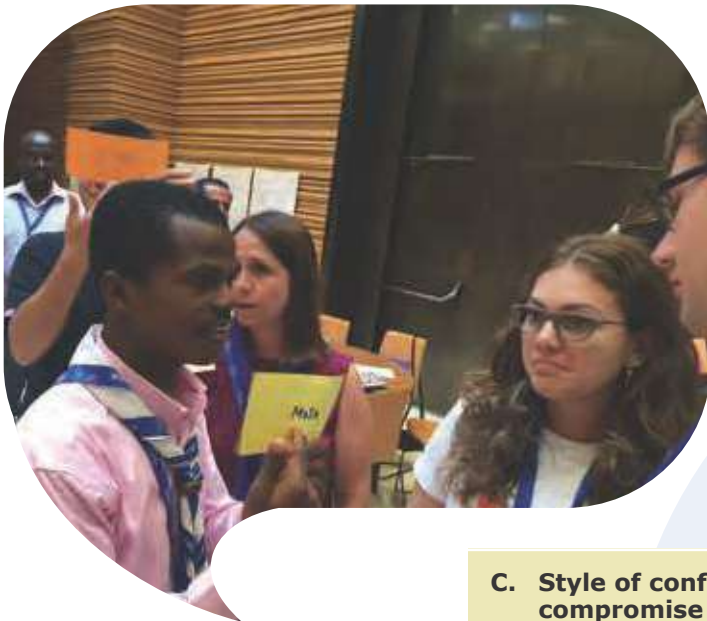
# Annex 5

## Conflict styles and tactics

Most of us have a perspective or approach from which we generally approach conflict. We're not limited to a single approach and our approach may change depending upon our mood, our setting and the specific conflict.

That said, generally we have a preference. No style of approaching conflict is inherently good or inherently bad, but each has moments in which its application will be very successful and moments in which its application will be challenging.

<b>A. Style of conflict: avoidance</b>	<b>Conflict? What conflict?</b>
<p>Strategies:</p> <p>Often appropriate when:</p> <p>Often inappropriate when:</p>	<p>Flee, deny, ignore, withdraw, wish and hope</p> <p>The issue is trivial, time is short and a decision is not necessary, to arrange timing</p> <p>Negative feelings may linger, you care about the issues, used habitually</p>
<b>B. Style of conflict: competition</b>	<b>My way or the highway.</b>
<p>Strategies:</p> <p>Often appropriate when:</p> <p>Often inappropriate when:</p>	<p>Compete, control, outwit, coerce, fight</p> <p>An emergency looms, others don't really care what happens, acknowledged competition (i.e. athletics)</p> <p>Cooperation from others is important, others' self-respect is diminished needlessly</p>



<p><b>C. Style of conflict: compromise</b></p>	<p><b>Let's split the difference.</b></p>
<p>Strategies:</p> <p>Often appropriate when:</p> <p>Often inappropriate when:</p>	<p>Bargain, reduce expectations, a little something for everyone</p> <p>Finding some solutions is better than a stalemate, cooperation is important, but time and resources are limited</p> <p>You can't live with the consequences, finding the most creative solution is essential</p>
<p><b>D. Style of conflict: accommodation</b></p>	<p><b>Whatever you want is OK with me.</b></p>
<p>Strategies:</p> <p>Often appropriate when:</p> <p>Often inappropriate when:</p>	<p>Agree, appease, flatter</p> <p>Issue is not important to you, you realise you are wrong, taking turns</p> <p>You are likely to resent it, used habitually to gain acceptance</p>
<p><b>E. Style of conflict: collaboration</b></p>	<p><b>'How can we solve this problem?'</b></p>
<p>Strategies:</p> <p>Often appropriate when:</p> <p>Often inappropriate when:</p>	<p>Adapted from Moore's 'The Mediation Process', gather information, look for alternatives, dialogue, welcome disagreement</p> <p>The issues and relationship are both significant, cooperation is important, reasonable hope to address all concerns</p> <p>Time is short, the issues are unimportant</p>

# Annex 6

## Defintions used in this document

<b>Comfort zone</b>	Described as the area where the individual is not only feeling safe, but everything looks familiar – there is no risk.
<b>Conflict</b>	It is a natural disagreement resulting from individuals or groups that differ in attitudes, beliefs, values or needs. It can also originate from past rivalries and personality differences, ‘a relationship between two or more parties (individuals or groups) who have, or think they have, incompatible goals or may have compatible goals but different means, processes, [and] approaches’.
<b>Culture</b>	Is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by [a human] as a member of society.
<b>Culture of peace</b>	‘Values, attitudes and behaviours that reflect and inspire social interaction and sharing based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, all human rights, tolerance and solidarity, that reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation and that guarantee the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the development process of their society...’
<b>Cultural diversity</b>	<p>The common heritage of humanity, culture takes diverse forms across time and space. This diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind.</p> <p>As a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature. In this sense, it is the common heritage of humanity and should be recognised and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations.</p>
<b>Dialogical person</b>	Someone who has integrated the dialogue principles in his/her daily practice and is permanently fostering an attitude of curiosity and understanding of what is behind the words, behaviour or attitude of others.
<b>Diversity</b>	Encompasses recognising people as individual, understanding that each one of us is unique and respecting individual differences. Recognising diversity in Scouting involves valuing and having regard for everyone, and using those differences to create cohesive and diverse local, national and global communities.
<b>Dialogue</b>	Is a secure means of communication between individuals or groups aimed at the exchange of views, knowledge, understandings, impressions and perceptions each person carries on any given topic, in order to reach a common understanding of the subject matter at the heart of a given dialogue.
<b>Interreligious dialogue</b>	Often also referred to as interfaith dialogue, is about people of different religious identities seeking and coming to mutual understanding and respect that allows them to live and cooperate with each other in spite of their differences.
<b>Inclusion</b>	Valuing the diversity of individuals, giving equal access and opportunities to all and having each person involved and participating in activities to the greatest extent possible.
<b>Identity</b>	Identity incorporates the ideas, beliefs, qualities and expressions that make a person what he/she is. This self-perception is modelled by the relation with others and the relation with our own context in time.
<b>Negative peace</b>	Is simply the absence of war; ‘we don’t fight, but we don’t like each other and even we don’t talk’
<b>Positive peace</b>	Is active peace; it is when the relationship is multifaceted with positive social, cultural, economic and political interactions among others.



<b>Panic zone</b>	Is where the person steps into an unfamiliar place, with no familiarity at all, no one to trust, and the person feels unsafe to even move a centimetre.
<b>Peacebuilding</b>	An umbrella term that relates to actions that bring closure to conflict, as distinct from actions that occur after a peace agreement is signed.
<b>Peace-making</b>	A broad term referring to all diplomatic efforts that bring parties together to establish peace through integrated activities performed by both professional diplomats and non-diplomats alike.
<b>Conflict management</b>	A term developed in the 1960s and 1970s to refer to activities often involving a third party actor, which are intended to provide a temporary resolution to a conflict so as to reduce tensions in the short-term.
<b>Conflict resolution</b>	A term coined in the mid-1980s to define long-term solutions that address the root causes of conflict.
<b>Conflict transformation</b>	A term developed at Eastern Mennonite University to address the structural aspect of conflict and incorporate a preventative element that focuses on relationships.
<b>Perception</b>	The way we view, interpret, understand and experience things and situations with our senses, the meanings we give to things or experiences. Individuals taking part in same activities will have different and very specific experiences and impressions.
<b>Structural racism</b>	<p>Structural racism is the normalisation and legitimisation of a range of public policies, institutional practices and attitudes that allow for a gradual system of social structures that produces and reproduces cumulative race-based inequalities.</p> <p>As implied by the term itself, structural racism is not something which a few people or institutions tend to practice; rather it has been a feature which is deeply rooted in the social, economic and political sphere of society.</p>
<b>Suppressed identities</b>	When individuals don't feel acknowledged, receive negative feedback, or experience negative reactions to their own identities, the suppression of identities happens; one would find any way to suppress, hide or reduce that identity in such contexts.
<b>Worldview</b>	Refers to how a person views the world. It is a simple word that includes all the conscious and unconscious elements that form how a person understand the reality of the world from his/her own perspective, whatever the limits of this perception might be for each human being



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