



A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING

**Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner
DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMME**

FIELD GUIDE



**Academy of Professional Dialogue
Focus 1: Dialogue in the Room**



DIALOGUE PUBLICATIONS

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DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMME**

**Academy of Professional Dialogue
Focus 1: Dialogue in the Room**

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INTRODUCTION

Why Dialogue?

The object of a dialogue is not to analyze things, or to win an argument, or to exchange opinions. Rather, it is to suspend your opinions and to look at the opinions – to listen to everybody's opinions, to suspend them, and to see what it all means. If we can see what our opinions mean, then we are sharing a common content, even if we don't agree entirely. It may turn out that the opinions are not really very important – they are all assumptions. And if we can see them all, we may then move more creatively in a different direction. We can just simply share the appreciation of the many meanings; and out of this whole thing, truth emerges unannounced – not that we have chosen it.

David Bohm
On Dialogue, 1996

Every day we have first-hand encounters, and we read and hear about things from others. To make sense of what is coming to us from disparate sources, a kind of story emerges in our thinking. We create a story about the situation to make meaningful sense of what we perceive, individually and collectively. This story-making is so automatic we hardly notice that it is going on all the time. It seems we are just observing things, but we seldom observe our own creation of story as we do so. These stories accumulate in memory and shape our perception and what we choose to notice about things that are happening now. In this way our many stories not only contain information about what is happening around us - they also reveal much about us as the authors, and our identity, disposition, intention and capability.

Peter Garrett
The World Needs Dialogue! Five: Dialogue as Story, 2023





Aims of A Different Way of Working

Professional Dialogue is integral to managing everyday interactions and challenges at work and at home in an inclusive and effective way. *A Different Way of Working* (ADWOW) provides the awareness and skills that help you recognize what is happening, and how to contribute and intervene helpfully in any situation. The programme teaches you how to get people engaged with each other, even if individuals strongly disagree or do not want to be in the meeting.

You will learn the practices and skills that get groups of people beyond a disjointed or fragmented experience, and into a way of talking and thinking together in a common inquiry and understanding of one another. The consequent sense of inter-relatedness and the generative thinking helps to provide a common purpose and the context for better decision making.

You will deepen your own understanding of any situation and learn how to change the way people talk together when it is apparent they are not getting the outcomes they need. You do this by using the various skills you will learn in the programme – trying them out and practicing with the other participants and faculty during each set and then applying them in your own situation and workplace following each set.

The Between-Sets Work outlines activities to help you to practice the skills and to incorporate them into your life as a different way of working. You will deepen your learning from ongoing cycles of first-hand experience and reflection, supplemented by relevant reading.

This is an accreditation programme for practitioners and evidence is required of the use of the skills. Towards the end of each of the eight Sets you will meet in a Reflective Practice Trio to prepare your Between-Sets Work with the support and challenge of two of your peers. Before the subsequent set, you will then make a record of your activities and learnings that you post in the Learning Centre for review by your trio colleagues and the faculty – then in the next Set you will meet again in the same trio to reflect on your experience and discovery.

The trios change each Set, so you get a chance to work with all of the other participants through this reflective learning cycle.



The Benefits of Professional Dialogue

Some of the things you will learn to do during the ADWOW programme:

- Use **Enquiry and Advocacy** skills to discover how people's stories differ and what they have in common, and to understand how they are informing the thinking and understanding of the group.
- Add structure and meaning to your meetings by using **Check-ins** to encourage people to listen to each other and to focus on their thoughts, perspectives, and experiences - and **Check-outs** to anchor what people experienced in the meeting.
- Discover the basic structure and process of making good decisions together using **Dialogic Actions** and patterns of social engagement.
- Recognize how **Expressive Languages** and **Organizing Paradigms** can help you to identify patterns and to intervene when individuals talk at cross purposes and unintentionally confuse each other.
- Help groups of people talk together in different ways to achieve what they are trying to do, including making good quality decisions together, using the **Modes of Talking and Thinking Together**.
- Elevate the quality of how people relate to each other genuinely and authentically by using the **Dialogic Practices** both inter-personally and for working teams.
- Create a good **Container** or spacious atmosphere in which to explore what people mean and intend, so that people can more easily add their voice, explain their understanding and be heard by others.
- Use the **Leading Energies** to provide a distinctive focus for different perspectives of how people are thinking about the situation, and to help them to generate new thinking about what may be needed.
- Track the significance of what is happening in the interactions between a group of people, and intervene in real-time, by using the **Locus of Attention** to enhance your facilitation skills.
- Become a highly skilful Professional Dialogue Practitioner by using the **Dialogic Intentions** to transfer the dialogic skills to others for the benefit of all.
- Ignite the collective intelligence of the group through the **Dialogic Principles** to create a living experience of working and making new meaning together, in a way that cannot be done individually.





Faculty

The programme is delivered by Dialogue Associates Ltd, an international dialogic consulting firm founded in 2003. The lead faculty members are Jane Ball and Peter Garrett, Directors of Dialogue Associates, and they are both formally registered by the Academy of Professional Dialogue as Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner Accreditors (APDPAs) for this programme. They are also Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners (APDPs) and belong to the growing community of APDPs. Between them they have decades of continuous experience with Dialogue reaching back to 1984 and including work with David Bohm, Patrick de Maré, David Kantor, Peter Senge, Bill Isaacs and many others. They have applied their knowledge and skills in a myriad of organizational situations and contexts. The third member of the faculty is Parvin Daeipour from the Endless Path of Dialogue Institute who has extensive experience developing practitioners using Professional Dialogue and leads a growing community of APDPs in Asia.

How to Use the Field Guide

This field guide is an all-in-one resource to accompany you through the ADWOW programme. It is also a rich reference for your ongoing professional development. The following pages are filled with descriptions of dialogic skills, the theoretical underpinnings, and the practice requirements to become a skilful Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner. There are Resources sections for each Set linking to detailed papers, as well as an extensive reading list, and glossary, that can be found in both the [Appendix](#) and Learning Centre library.

The Field Guide is organized according to the eight Sets of the programme, and the Developmental Framework for becoming an accredited practitioner ([Appendix C](#)). The Learning and Development Objectives and the content of each set are listed. At the end of each set section, you will find the Between-Sets Work that guides the development of your practice through the syllabus.

[Appendix C](#) contains the background and information you will need to complete your Developmental Framework. The Developmental Framework enables you to assess your progress during the programme; to determine the steps you need to take to improve and grow as a Dialogue practitioner; and helps you to design the best Between-Sets Work to stretch yourself.



Of note, Set 7 provides an overview of the accreditation process and timeline, and the expectations of the professional relationship between the Academy and Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners.

Please use the Field Guide alongside the Learning Centre where we will meet in the online Set sessions together, and where in the library you will find the uploaded recordings of those sessions plus reference materials and your Between-Sets Work.

RELEVANT BOOKS to read over the coming years

1980	Wholeness and the Implicate Order - David Bohm
1985	Unfolding Meaning - A Weekend of Dialogue with David Bohm - Don Factor
1985	The Ending of Time - J Krishnamurti and David Bohm
1990	The Fifth Discipline - Peter Senge
1991	Koinonia: From Hate through Dialogue to Culture in the Larger Group - Patrick de Maré
1996	On Dialogue - David Bohm
1998	Dialogue: Rediscover the transforming Power of Conversation - Glenna Gerard & L Ellinor
1999	Dialogue - The Art of Thinking Together - William Isaacs
1999	My Lover, Myself - David Kantor
2012	Reading the Room - David Kantor
2015	Healing Corrections - Chris Innes
2019	The Spirit of Dialogue in a Digital Age - Marie-Eve Marchand
2021	A New Kind of Dialogue - Peter Garrett

The World Needs Dialogue!

From the Academy of Professional Dialogue Annual Conferences

2019	One: Gathering the Field
2020	Two: Setting the Bearings
2021	Three: Shaping the Profession
2022	Four: Putting Dialogue to Work
2023	Five: Dialogue as Story
2024	Six: Your Organization Needs Dialogue
2025	Seven: Your Team Needs Dialogue





Related Papers in the Academy website

1991	Dialogue - A Proposal - David Bohm, Donald Factor, Peter Garrett
2020	David Bohm's Ontology: The Implicate Order - Peter Garrett
2022	Dialogue as Story - Peter Garrett

Other Resources

Academy of Professional Dialogue: aofpd.org

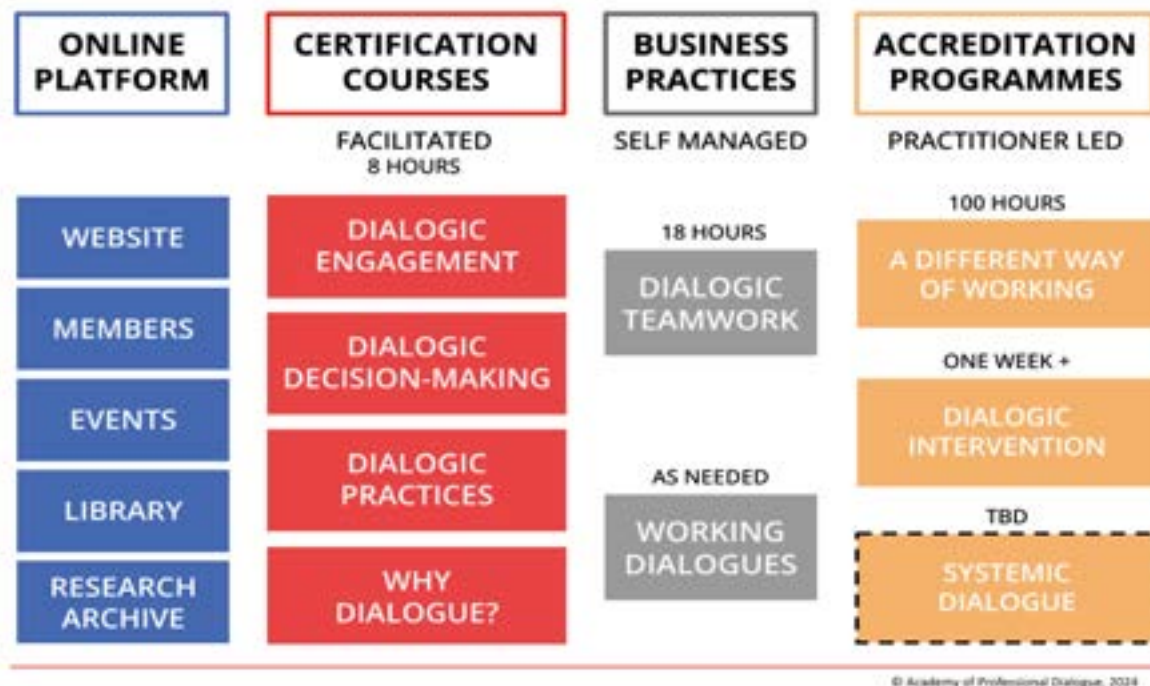
Podcast: A New Kind of Dialogue

Dialogic Teamwork: dialogicteamwork.com

Dialogue Associates: dialogue-associates.com



ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS



Accreditation Programmes

The Academy has three accredited Professional Dialogue™ programmes, each with a different focus, competencies, and accreditation process.

- **Focus One: A Different Way of Working** (100 hrs tuition). Successful completion leads to acknowledgement of the practitioner's capability to bring Dialogue into any grouping of participants and formal recognition as an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner (APDP).
- **Focus Two: Dialogic Intervention** (One week face-to-face plus a minimum of one year's field work). Pre-requisite is Focus One or equivalent. Formal recognition as a Professional Dialogue Consultant.
- **Focus Three: Whole-System Dialogic Change** (Programme to be determined). Formal recognition as a Professional Dialogue Architect.





Business Practices

- **Dialogic Teamwork™** (18 hrs). Online certificated programme to introduce Professional Dialogue™ into any working team. Self-managed, whole-team online facilitated learning.
- **Working Dialogue** (3 hrs plus). Structured and facilitated programme for multi-stakeholder change process.

Certification Courses

Courses (8 hrs plus) are delivered by APDPs and provide a Certificate of Completion:

- **Dialogic Engagement:** Start here! A Dynamic Introduction to Professional Dialogue™.
- **Dialogic Decision-Making:** The follow-up session for all organizational teams.
- **Dialogic Practices:** To deepen the quality of human interactions and build relationships.
- **Why Dialogue?** To discover the roots and intrinsic principles of Professional Dialogue™.

Online Platform

The website enables Members of the Academy to engage with one another, and to participate in a wide variety of activities. There is a distinct area for the Community of APDPs to continue their professional development, and they have the right to use Academy copyrighted materials. The library and research archive are an extensive and unique resource. The Academy has designed its own Learning Centres to deliver its programmes and courses, and a Conference Centre for its annual international online conference.

What is an APDP?

An Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner, or APDP, is a formally recognised practitioner who has completed the Focus One programme *A Different Way of Working* and is entitled to use the Academy logo and the initials APDP. These professionals take pride in making Professional Dialogue™ increasingly available for the benefit of society and seek to grow the influence of the Academy through educational offerings and research programmes. They deliver an international



conference each year that attracts new members and provides the content for an annual publication under the title *The World Needs Dialogue!* APDPs are entitled to use Academy copyrighted materials and provide financial or other support for the Academy.





PROGRAMME OUTLINE SETS 1 TO 8

Set 1 – Who’s in the Room?

- Meeting each other and introducing our practice fields.
- Understanding, wholeness and fragmentation.
- How are we going to work together?

Learning and Development Objectives

1. Gain knowledge, understanding and experience in engaging other people by drawing on the dialogic skills from Set 1:
 - Advocacy and Enquiry
 - Check-in and Check-out
 - Container Development Process: Realising Yourself, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground, Affecting the Field
 - Reflective Practice
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of one’s identity.
3. Identify a practical and realistic plan to apply learnings in practice as a different way of working before the next Set, based on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work

Set 2 – Functional Communication

- Why do we keep getting confused and into a dysfunctional mess?
- What does successful communication look like?
- Skilful communication and reflective practice trios.

Learning and Development Objectives

1. Gain knowledge, understanding and experience of the structure and dynamics of interactions between people by drawing on the dialogic skills from Set 2:
 - Expressive Languages
 - Organizing Paradigms
 - Dialogic Actions
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of one’s habitual patterns of behaviour.



3. Identify a practical and realistic plan to apply learnings in practice as a different way of working before the next Set, based on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work

Set 3 – Patterns of Social Engagement

- How to recognise different Modes of talking and thinking together?
- What does each Mode enable? And prevent?
- The art of changing from one Mode to another.

Learning and Development Objectives

1. Gain knowledge, understanding and experience of the structure and dynamics of interactions between people by drawing on the dialogic skills from Set 3:
 - Modes of Engagement
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of the structure and dynamics in your own thinking (your inner modes).
3. Identify a practical and realistic plan to apply learnings in practice as a different way of working before the next Set, based on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work

Set 4 – Quality of Understanding

- What is the practice of Dialogue?
- Inner experience, dynamics in the room and the container?
- How do you change a situation from within?

Learning and Development Objectives

1. Gain knowledge, understanding and experience of the how to affect the quality of any exchange between people, people by drawing on the Set 4 dialogic skills:
 - The Dialogue Practices
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of the way you make sense of the world around you.
3. Identify a practical and realistic plan to apply the Set 4 learnings, along with your learnings from earlier Sets, to build a different way of working. Base the plan on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work





Set 5 – The Focus of Attention and Organizational Decision-making

- Leading from where you are.
- How do they differ – data, information, and knowledge?
- What is the journey of a good decision?

Learning and Development Objectives

1. Gain knowledge, understanding and experience of how to get work done, by drawing on the dialogic skills from Set 5:
 - The Leading Energies to focus the attention of an exchange between people
 - Dialogic Decision-Making
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of your internal identities and how you move between them.
3. Identify a practical and realistic plan to apply the Set 5 learnings, along with your learnings from earlier Sets, to build a different way of working. Basing the plan on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work

Set 6 – Dialogic Facilitation and becoming a Dialogue Practitioner

- Why are things now happening in the way they are?
- What is trying to happen? How can I help?

Learning and Development Objectives

1. Gain knowledge, understanding, and experience of how to bring together the multiple factors present in any group of people, into a developmental process, by drawing on the dialogic skills from Set 6:
 - Facilitation: Locus of Attention
2. Development as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner through consideration of your disposition towards your work, drawing on:
 - Practitioner: Dialogic Intention
3. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of your identity as it is affected by the sub-cultural groupings you belong to.
4. Identify a practical and realistic plan to apply the Set 6 learnings, along with your



learnings from earlier Sets, to build a different way of working. Basing the plan on:

- Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
- Between Sets Work

Set 7 – Putting it all together

- Review and integration of the curriculum.
- From learning to using skills.
- From trainer, facilitator, and coach to Dialogue Practitioner.

Learning and Development Objectives

1. Gain knowledge and understanding of the generative process of Dialogue, and the role of a Dialogue Practitioner in bringing about a generative process among a group of people, based on:
 - The Dialogue Principles
 - Review of the ADWOW dialogue skills from Sets 1-6
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of your changing identity as you become a professional dialogue practitioner.
3. Have the confidence and understanding to complete your self-assessment and developmental plan as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner, drawing on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work
 - Accreditation process and timeline

Set 8 – Becoming an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner (APDP)

- Enfolding the experience of the A Different Way of Working Programme.
- What do I need next and why?
- Joining the professional community.

Learning and Development Objectives:

1. Consolidate your knowledge, understanding, and experience of how to bring the multiple factors present in any group of people together into a developmental process, by drawing on the dialogic skills from all the previous Sets.
2. Clarify the distinction between being a:





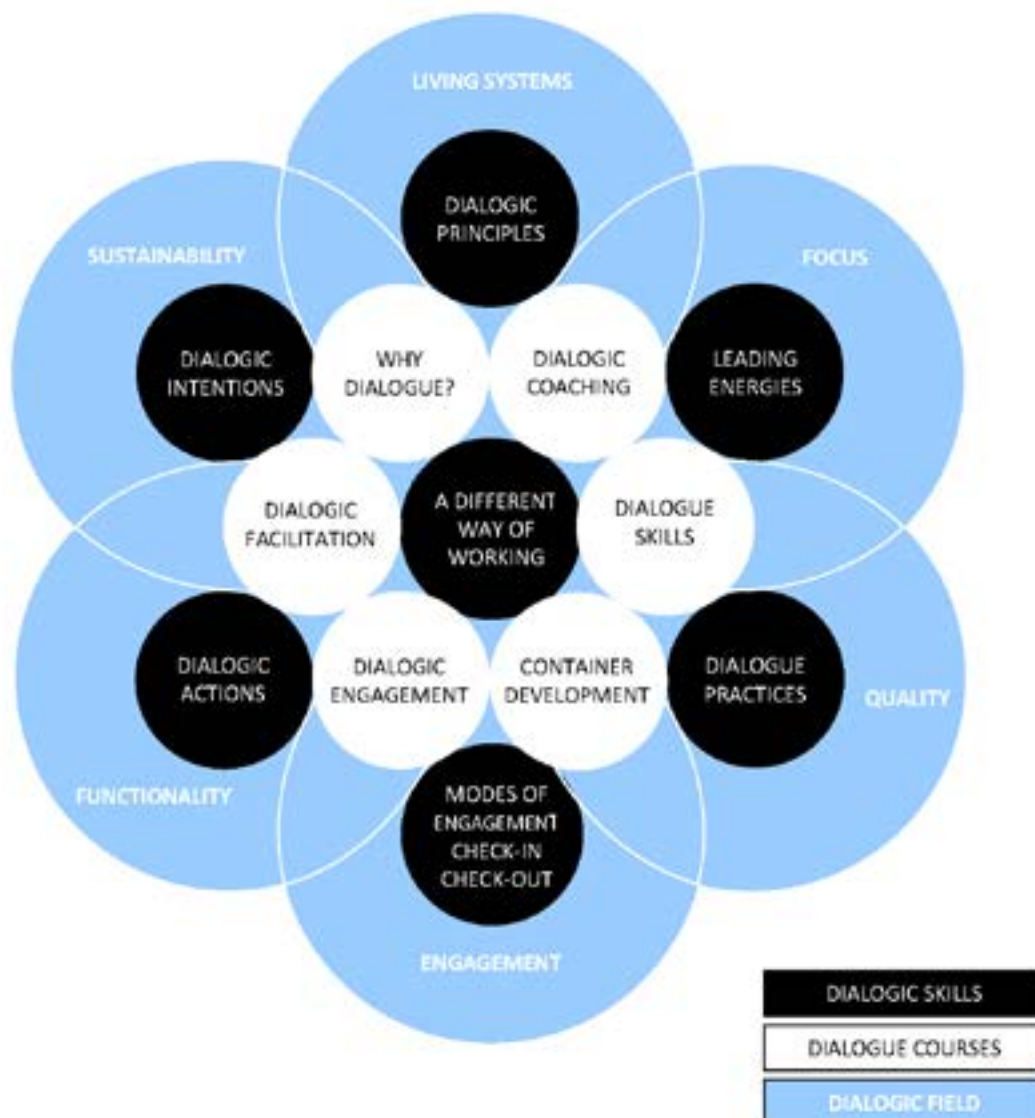
- Facilitator, including using the Locus of Attention
 - Practitioner, embodying the Dialogic Intentions
3. Understand the way all the skills are differentiations, at basic and more subtle levels, of the Dialogue Principles.
 4. Commit to continuing to give attention to your Personal Development which is the source of your effectiveness as a Practitioner.
 5. Check and refine your own Development Plan, based on your Self-Assessment using the Developmental Framework, to take you beyond the end of this programme.



PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE PRACTITIONERS FOCUS 1: BRINGING DIALOGUE INTO THE ROOM

PROGRAMME MANDALA - A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING

for the constructive alignment of individuals, teams, departments and organisations and resolution of organisational and social fragmentation



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Becoming an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner

Your notes and reflections



SET 1 – WHO'S IN THE ROOM?

Genuine dialogue is important as a means of mutual understanding and collaboration. Dialogue should be about engagement rather than simply exchanging information, focusing on creating spaces where individuals listen to each other and engage in shared meaning-making. Dialogue is not just about speaking but involves co-creating understanding with others, often through a non-hierarchical, open exchange where all participants contribute equally.

Patrick de Maré

Koinonia, 1991

From Hate through Dialogue to Culture in the Large Group

Dialogue is a skilful way of talking and thinking together that establishes a common meaning amongst a group of people. The spirit of Dialogue is to understand rather than to convince and the process changes the ground out of which the various relationships arise. Professional Dialogue is a transparent way of learning together and humanising an organisation or community. Through Professional Dialogue organisations and communities are able to engage the collective intelligence of the participants to make better decisions and to realise the creative opportunities inherent in any problem. The ongoing practice of Professional Dialogue at a systemic level generates sustainable strategic and operational change. In a Dialogic Organisation or a Dialogic Community this is underwritten by the ongoing regeneration of the culture, including shifting historically-stuck patterns of behaviour for the constructive benefit of the whole.

Peter Garrett

What is Dialogue? 2019

Academy of Professional Dialogue Consultation
to establish criteria for the recognition of a Dialogic Organisation





Outline:

- Meeting each other and introducing our practice fields.
- Understanding, wholeness and fragmentation.
- How are we going to work together?

Learning and Development Objectives:

1. Gain knowledge, understanding and experience in engaging other people by drawing on the dialogic skills from Set 1:
 - Advocacy and Enquiry
 - Check-in and Check-out
 - Container Development Process: Realising Yourself, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground, Affecting the Field
 - Reflective practice
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of one's identity.
3. Identify a practical and realistic plan to apply learnings in practice as a different way of working before the next Set, based on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work



Advocacy and Enquiry

As a basic distinction, advocacy is telling, and enquiry is asking. More specifically, advocating involves proposing something whereas enquiry is concerned with finding something out. When you advocate you are giving voice to a view or opinion, and this is most clearly done when you explain why you are making your proposal. The same is true of enquiry, where an explanation of why you are enquiring will help others understand what you are trying to find out. In Dialogue, enquiry is helpful when it reveals the different dispositions, views, and opinions of the participants.

The quality of advocacy and enquiry depends on the level of attention given. For example, listening to yourself speaking, when you do, and following the movements of your own thinking as well as the response in the room, deepens the experience significantly. In this way you become a part of the live flow – rather than separating yourself from others, who are then more like your audience listening to tape recordings of your past thoughts. In this spirit, good enquiry requires the curiosity to get behind the initial understanding, the skill to formulate effective questions, and the courage to reveal what is found. Good advocacy, on the other hand, requires the wisdom to weigh up what lies behind a position, and the resilience to stand still to discover its value to others as what you have said lands with them. Inquiry is about understanding, whilst advocacy is concerned with being understood.





Check-in

Most meetings start with advocacy. When you use a Check-in, however, you start the meeting with enquiry. A Check-in is a pattern designed to enhance the engagement of people in the room at the outset of a meeting. The intention of the Check-in is to draw people's awareness into the room so that they give their attention to what they are now doing and engage one another. Check-ins provide direction to the consideration, encouraging participants to head in that direction. They offer an opportunity to enquire into what you don't know, and the open participation means what is said is common knowledge to all the participants, rather than private information held by some and not others.

The Form of a Check-in

To introduce a Check-in, the facilitator poses a question (or more than one question) that each person in turn, including the facilitator, is invited to answer to the whole group. As a result of everyone having spoken in response to the question, people will be more attentively engaged, and the participants will have a more productive meeting. Designing an effective Check-in question is a skill that enables the facilitator and participants to understand each other's views better, as well as revealing the reasoning behind those views and what people are feeling.

What the Check-in reveals

The Check-in informs everyone, including the facilitators, about the disposition of those in the room at the outset of the meeting. It can reveal things about the overall atmosphere, the levels of ease and tension, levels of awareness, specific issues that interest and concern people, and about their willingness to participate.

Designing a Check-In

Intention:

There are numerous possible intentions behind an effective Check-in question, you may for example:

- Introduce a different dynamic to develop the group/team's vision, risk-taking or confidence, or create the opportunity for participants to share what they appreciate about each other or their common situation.
- Open an enquiry that may have begun privately but has not been taken up



- openly by everyone in the room.
- Concentrate on the progress of a piece of work and the risks to its successful completion on time and within budget.

The intent of the Check-in is to reveal something about the current state and situation for those in the room. The facilitator makes this explicit by stepping back at the end of the Check-in to reflect or make some observations about what was said during the check-in.

Direction:

In preparing for a meeting, it is helpful to consider what you aim to achieve through holding the meeting. This will determine the direction you choose to go with your Check-in. Are you primarily concerned with expanding the thinking, or bringing it to a sharper focus? Do you want to relax people or wake them up? Are you more interested in the opportunity, the delivery, the risks, the ethics, the participation, the alternatives, the learning, the emotions, or something else? This gives you a sense of the kind of thinking and feeling you need to engender or evoke at the outset of the meeting.

Structure:

The basic structure is that the facilitator poses a question, (or perhaps a two-part question) and invites everyone in turn to give their response to the whole room. An open-ended question will elicit a wider range of responses, while a closed question (where the answer is this or that, or yes or no) will require people to take a position. If someone chooses not to speak, they should be respected as having some good reason for holding back. Speaking in turn clearly means there is only one speaker at a time, and guidance needs to be given on what sequence is expected. Here are four common forms of sequence:

1. Free-form (where people speak when they feel it is their turn).
2. Around the Circle (clockwise or anti-clockwise).
3. Tagged (where on completion of their contribution, the speaker chooses the next speaker).
4. Reverse-tagged (where the next speaker volunteers to speak about the previous speaker before adding their own response).





Starting the Check-in

This is important to consider because the starting comment can set the pattern for everyone else.

- If the facilitator speaks first in response to their own question, they will have prepared their answer, so that will define things most strongly and probably shape the information revealed by others.
- A somewhat looser approach is for the facilitator to ask someone whom they know already understands how a Check-in works – perhaps turning to their co-facilitator or someone else with experience. That may help people to know what to do, or more likely it may again set people's interpretation of what they are expected to say.
- The more energetic way is for the facilitator to look around for a bright and willing face, and to invite them to start given they seem ready.
- The least controlled approach is to let anyone offer to speak first. This may reveal who has more confidence or likes to be the first mover.
- The facilitator is also a participant in the Check-in and like everyone else they should offer their response to the Check-in question/s at what feels to them to be an appropriate time.

Length of the Check-in

Typically, five minutes may be appropriate for a one-hour meeting, whereas 10 or 15 minutes might suit a three-hour meeting. Naming the total time to be taken for the Check-in enables the facilitator to speed up or slow down the speakers if needed, and to complete the Check-in in the time available.

Reflecting on the Check-in

The Check-in will always reveal something about the current state and situation for those in the room. It is the facilitator's responsibility to make this somewhat explicit by stepping back at the end of the Check-in and reflecting. The observations may include what was said and not said, how the atmosphere or container changed, what was discovered that may not previously have been obvious or noticed, and what is of concern or interest to many present.

Check-ins with Large Groups

For 20 or more people, the group could be divided into smaller sub-groupings of 3 to 5 people. Once people have checked in with a few of their colleagues in the



subgroupings, the whole group could then hear a comment from some or all the smaller groupings.

When there are 50 or more, Cocktail Check-ins may be more effective. Here people are standing, not seated, and there is a sequence of Check-ins, each with a different partner. Everyone gets to meet several other participants, whilst the sequence of Check-in questions draws people into the room and the purpose of being together.





Check-out

A Check-out is a deliberate way of closing a meeting, providing an opportunity to give orderly attention to the progress that has been made (or not made), and to note what still needs to be done.

Design of a Check-out

The facilitator or chairperson needs to determine how soon before the end of the meeting to introduce the Check-out. This depends on the length of the meeting and the number of participants. For an hour-long meeting with 10 people, five minutes should be adequate. A day-long meeting with 20 people may, for example, require 25 minutes. The Check-out generally takes the form of a question posed by the facilitator that is answered by everyone, including the facilitator themselves. The archetypal question is 'How have we done in this meeting?' Other questions may be an invitation to reflect on the content, the dynamic in the room, and perhaps the contributions of different people. Reflecting on the content includes noticing what was covered successfully or remains unclear, and what still needs to be considered. The dynamic includes noting the way people participated, the changing awareness and how the atmosphere or container developed. This may also be a time to recognise the contributions of different people or subgroupings of participants.

Structure of a Check-out

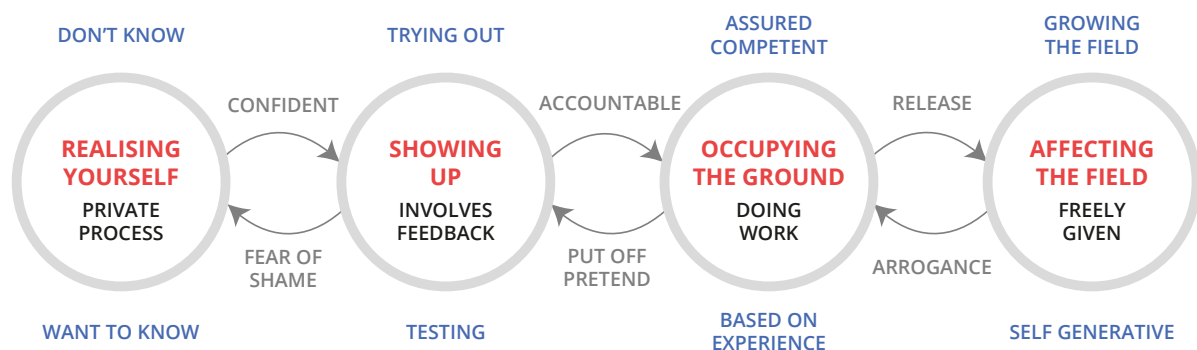
People take turns to answer the Check-out question, meaning only one person speaks at a time. People could be invited to speak when they choose (which may be helpful if the subject or dynamic has been difficult and some are still processing what has happened), or any speaker could tag the next one (that generally speeds up the process and adds energy). Any of the Check-in sequences could be used - the skill is to learn which is the most helpful in the circumstance, and why.



Container Development: Realising Yourself, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground, and Affecting the Field

The Container Development Model is the basis for practitioner development in the ADWOW programme. It was conceived by Peter Garrett around 2010 and has been extensively used by Peter and Jane, and increasingly others since then. The phases in the model emerged empirically from personal and professional experiences coaching and consulting to clients and client systems. The predictable sequence of steps from naivety to wisdom involves shifts of relationship, responsibility and identity in individuals, as it does in groups, organisations, and communities.

Container Development Process



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Acknowledgement: P Garrett

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You are invited to assess your own progress during this programme, and beyond it, by reflecting on your experience of understanding and using each of the skills and becoming a practitioner. The Container Development Model is the basis of the developmental self-assessment, called the Developmental Framework in [Appendix C](#). Starting with Realising Yourself, initially you are more privately working to get a feel of the skill so that you could write or talk about it easily and accurately. Showing



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up means trying out the skill in a group of people and being seen by others as you do so. This is a different phase because they may respond or react to what you do, providing a different level of learning if you receive it as feedback. As you continue to practice the skill in increasingly challenging situations, you find that you are Occupying the Ground. Your grounded experience and your stories of successes and failures provide a foundation of first-hand experience to draw on as you encounter different situations. You may not reach the final stage of Affecting the Field in just a few months, so this is largely outside the scope of this six-month programme. That will come later, as you further mature as a practitioner and your influence reaches further afield.



Resources

The Set 1 resources are located in [Appendix D](#), and in the Learning Centre Library.

- Programme Mandala for A Different Way of Working
- The Check In - a different way to start a meeting...
- The Check Out - a different way to close a meeting...
- Advocacy & Enquiry
- The Container Development Model by Peter Garrett The World Needs Dialogue! Three
- Reflective Practice 1
- Why Are Organisations Inherently Fragmented

You will also find the Professional Dialogue Practitioner Developmental Framework relevant, in [Appendix C](#).

Reflective Practice Notes are in the Learning Centre Library, to record your Set 1 Between-Sets work and read notes from other participants.





BETWEEN-SETS WORK

Each Set provides learnings that are essential for Dialogue Practitioners. These learnings build on each other from set to set, growing an overall capability with dialogic skills. Participants track their developmental progress themselves by using the Developmental Framework in [Appendix C](#). Part of the learning process is to embrace the skills considered in each set and to start putting them into practice before the next set. Between-Sets Work is provided for this purpose. Participants are expected to undertake the Between-Sets Work and make a record in their Reflective Practice Notes, in the Learning Centre Library, for review by colleagues and the faculty before the subsequent set. The Between-Sets Work involves exercises and activities to help participants to understand and practice the skills introduced in each Set. At the outset of the next set, these are reviewed with other participants in reflective practice trios. The trios change each set, so that participants get the chance to work in a smaller grouping with all the other participants.

Reading

Read the Set 1 materials in the ADWOW Field Guide.

Additional resources for Set 1 are available in [Appendix D](#).

Design

Design your Between-Sets learning activities using the two skills: 1) Check-ins and Check-outs, and 2) Enquiry and Advocacy, as a different way of working. What will you do or try, where and with whom? Choose the level of work that will help you most and identify your practice field opportunities:

Check-in and Check-out

Level 1

- Design your check-in (a different one each time).
- Introduce the check-in and facilitate it with a group of people.
- Later deliberately reflect on what happened and what you discovered about the group and about yourself.

Level 2

- What 'work' do you anticipate is needed for the progress of the group, and therefore what Check-in would be most helpful?
- How will you introduce the Check-in, what will you be attending to during the



Check-in, and how will you present your observations at the end of the Check-in?

- Later deliberately reflect on what happened overall, and what you discovered about the group, about the work to be done, and about yourself. How effective was your check-in?

Advocacy and Enquiry

Level 1

- During meetings with others, notice the balance of enquiry and advocacy in the room, and the balance of enquiry and advocacy in what you yourself say. Try recording your own and others enquiry and advocacy during (or straight after) the meeting.
- Practice saying why you are enquiring before you enquire - and saying why you are advocating before you advocate.
- Reflect on what you are learning about enquiry and advocacy.

Level 2

- Try shifting your own normal patterns of participation.
- Try advocating when you would normally (typically) enquire - and then encourage others to enquire into your advocacy.
- Try enquiring when you would normally (typically) advocate - and then encourage others to advocate in response to your enquiry.
- Reflect on what you are now learning about enquiry and advocacy.

Personal Development

Reflect on your introduction during the first day of the programme where you were asked to describe an object to reveal something of your character and spirit.

- What did you learn about yourself? Which aspect of your identity did you bring into the room and make available to others?
- What other objects could you have chosen, and what other aspects of your identity might they have brought into the room?

Preparation for the Next Set

Add notes of your Between-Sets Work to your **Reflective Practice Notes** in the Learning Centre Library on the Friday that falls **four days before the start of the next Set**. Posting them then gives others the chance to see what you are doing and learning, and where your Between-Sets Work is taking you. Include your activities





(what did you do or try to do?) and your ongoing learning (including, What questions are you now asking yourself?). Failure can provide as much learning as success! This enables your Reflective Practice Trio colleagues to think with you more helpfully in the next set.

Becoming an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner

Your notes and reflections



SET 2 – FUNCTIONAL COMMUNICATION

Dialogue, as we are choosing to use the word, is a way of exploring the roots of the many crises that face humanity today. It enables inquiry into, and understanding of, the sorts of processes that fragment and interfere with real communication between individuals, nations and even different parts of the same organization. In our modern culture men and women are able to interact with one another in many ways: they can sing, dance or play together with little difficulty, but their ability to talk together about subjects that matter deeply to them seems invariably to lead to dispute, division and often to violence. In our view this condition points to a deep and pervasive defect in the process of human thought.

David Bohm, Donald Factor and Peter Garrett
Dialogue - A Proposal, 1991

Outline:

- Why do we keep getting confused and into a dysfunctional mess?
- What does successful communication look like?
- Skilful communication and reflective practice trios.

Learning and Development Objectives:

1. Gain knowledge, understanding and experience of the structure and dynamics of interactions between people by drawing on the dialogic skills from Set 2:
 - Dialogic Actions
 - Expressive Languages
 - Organizing Paradigms
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of one's habitual patterns of behaviour.
3. Identify a feasible plan to apply learnings in practice as a different way of working before the next Set, based on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work

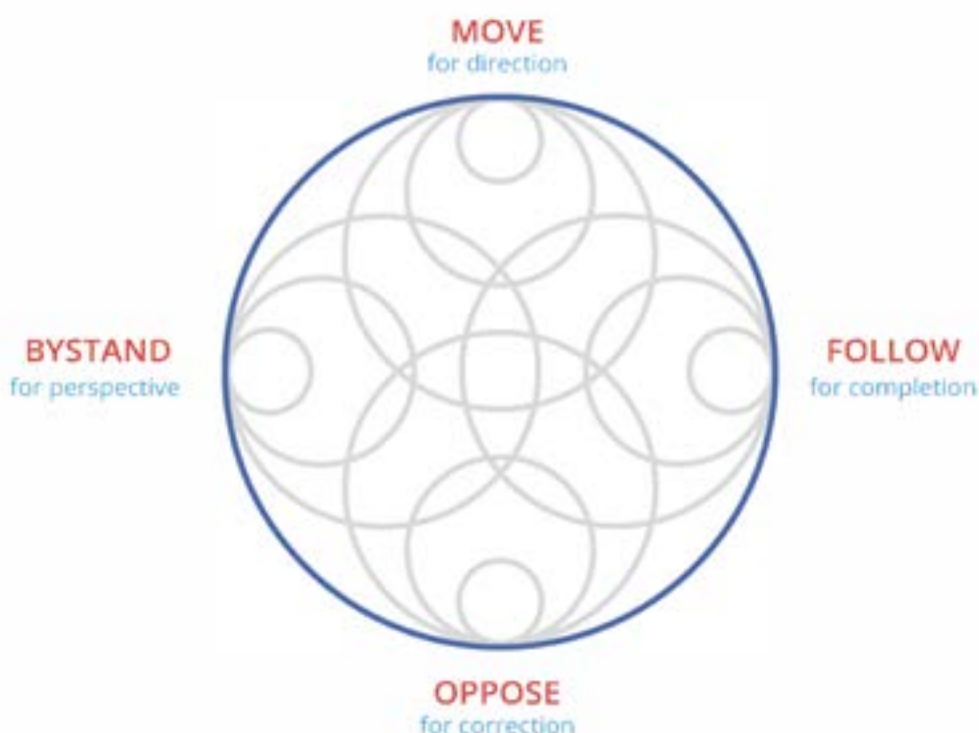




The Dialogic Actions

The Dialogic Actions are derived from the Structural Dynamics work of David Kantor, who was a systemic family therapist and organizational consultant, and a colleague of Peter and Jane's until he died in 2021. Understanding how to use the Dialogic Actions enables you to address the kind of dysfunctionality that interferes with high quality interactions between people. It is the sequences in which the Actions are made that determines the dynamics in any exchange and therein lies the skill. The four Dialogic Actions are Move, Follow, Oppose and Bystand. All four are needed in successful communication.

- **Move** - Gives direction, to initiate action.
- **Follow** - Completes, by going in the same direction as the Move.
- **Oppose** - Provides correction, by resisting the direction and thereby altering it.
- **Bystand** - Adds perspective, by stating an observation about the sequence of actions.



Acknowledgement: D Kantor, P Garrett & J Ball

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The Dialogic Actions only become effective when they are spoken. Thinking and feeling the impulse to make one of the actions but not saying it, and thereby not making it available to others, is one of the causes of dysfunctional exchanges. Functionality occurs when any of the four Actions could be made, giving the space for an appropriate sequence of actions to emerge. Becoming stuck in a repetitive use of only one or two of the Actions results in dysfunctionality.

Compound Actions

Skilful use of the Dialogic Actions may include a compound sequence of actions, where a speaker contributes several actions at a time. For example, they might say “I fully support your proposal, but I do not think your method is the best way to achieve it”. That is a Follow then an Oppose. Similarly, one might Bystand then Move by saying “For some time, we have been talking about three proposals at the same time, and we are not making much progress. I suggest we concentrate on them one at a time”.

Defective Actions

Ideally, each of the four Actions are delivered cleanly and in a straightforward manner for an effective flow. At times, any of the Actions can become deficient in the following ways:

- **Weak** – The Action is not made clearly or strongly enough to make the intended impact.
- **Stuck** - Participants keep repeating the same Actions, thereby limiting progress.
- **Disabled** - People are unable to make one or more of the Actions leading to repetitive ineffective sequences.
- **Spin** - The Action is deliberately disguised (like a passive aggressive Oppose that is worded like a Follow) to make it hard for others to respond cleanly.





Confused Exchanges

Sometimes confusion arises when people are talking together, and it is unclear why. The Expressive Languages and the Organising Paradigms can be particularly helpful in this regard. They are derived from further levels of David Kantor's Structural Dynamics that aim to reveal two common problems, and to clarify the interactions.



The Expressive Languages

The Expressive Languages are the means through which people express themselves. At any time, people can express themselves in one of three dominant ways: through the language of the heart (or emotions), the language of the hands (or the practicality of doing), or the language of the mind (or the intellect). All three are needed for healthy communication. These are very different expressive languages and people cannot always speak all three of them or translate easily from one to another. That can result first in confusion, then misunderstanding and perhaps finally in conflict or the inability to communicate with each other at all.

David Kantor provocatively called the three Expressive Languages Affect, Power and Meaning to highlight how the languages may be experienced by others who are speaking a different language. When someone speaks from the heart they may be heard as being affected; when they speak from the practicality of doing, they may be heard as forcefully using power; and when they speak intellectually, they may be heard as being lost in meaning. Therein lies the confusion and dysfunctionality.

- **Affect** - Speaking about what is felt - expressing emotions (from the heart)
- **Power** - Speaking about what needs to be done - from an interest in action (the hands)
- **Meaning** - Speaking about what it means - from an enquiry into why (the mind)

The way through this disconnect is to join the other person by speaking in their language, and having connected, to then encourage them to join you in speaking your preferred language. A Dialogue Practitioner develops the skills to:

- Recognise and distinguish between the Expressive Languages in use at any time.
- Understand each of the three Expressive Languages and develop the ability to speak all three of them when needed.
- Bridge the gap in understanding, when confusion is occurring, by joining others in the language they are speaking, and then inviting them into also speaking one of the other languages in use that they had been less attentive to.
- Be able to make a Bystand about how the Expressive Languages are being used, to raise everyone's awareness of the problem and perhaps to make a Move to help dissolve the confusion.





The Organising Paradigms

The Paradigms describe the way people are inclined to organise things, and how they prefer to think about sequencing things as they make plans and carry them out. People have different dispositions in this regard, each of which is effective. When a group of people work together to achieve something, the clash of Organising Paradigms can easily disrupt proceedings. An approach that is obvious to some is alien to others. This can lead into heated debates about the best way to proceed to get things done. In this framework there are three Organising Paradigms:

- **Open** - inclusive - keen to hear from all involved before deciding the way forward.
- **Closed** - structured - giving greater weight to those in authority and inclined to do what they propose.
- **Random** - energetic - drawn by the interest, passion and contributions wherever they emerge.

Once again David Kantor's naming is intentionally provocative. As seen from the other Organising Paradigms, Open could imply being *open to almost everything* and that takes a lot of our time and could be very inefficient, Closed could imply being blinkered and *closed to almost anything* other than what those in authority want, and random could imply being undisciplined, unreliable and having *no plan at all* but hoping it will all work out.

In fact, all three methods are effective, and each has its strengths and weaknesses. In an organisational context people are usually obliged to go with the leader's preferred Organising Paradigm. When everyone is obliged to work one way, those who prefer the that paradigm will flourish, and others may feel frustrated. With a developed skill it is possible for the leader to recognise the Organising Paradigm preferred by each of those involved, and to create pockets of activity where they can manage things in their own way.

The Dialogue Practitioner aims to be able to:

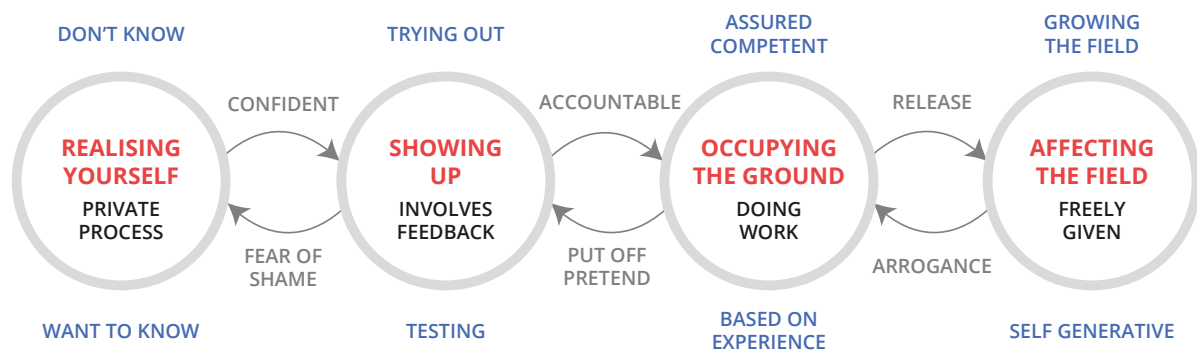
- Recognise and use all three Organising Paradigms
- Bystand by naming and explaining the clashes between paradigms in a way that makes them evident to everyone involved
- Help those involved to work together without being confused by the dominant Organising Paradigm in use.



Practitioner Development: Realising Yourself, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground, and Affecting the Field

The Practitioner Development Model was designed by Peter Garrett over 15 years ago and has been used extensively by Peter and Jane. The phases in the model emerged empirically from Peter's personal and professional experiences coaching and consulting to clients and client systems. The predictable sequence of steps from naivety to wisdom involves shifts of relationship, responsibility and identity for individuals, as well as for groups, organisations, and communities.

Container Development Process



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The Container Development process above was introduced in Set 1. In Sets 2 through 8, you will be applying this framework to track your development as a Professional Dialogic Practitioner. More details can be found in [Appendix C](#). You assess your own progress by regularly reflecting on your experience with each of the skills. During the phase of Realising Yourself, you are enquiring to understand the nature of the skill so that you could write or talk about it easily and accurately. In the Showing Up phase you try out the new skill in a group of people and learn



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first-hand from your experience of how it works in, and from the reactions and responses you receive from others that provide feedback. You are Occupying the Ground when you have a reserve of past experiences and your own stories of success and failure to draw on, and you are unlikely to be Affecting the Field in just a few months, so this is largely outside of the scope of this programme. It will come later when you mature as a practitioner and your influence widens.

It should be noted that the container of interest, activity and impact grows steadily through the four phases of this framework. Realising Yourself is a private and more local enquiry, involving reading, noticing and talking with a few people. Showing Up broadens the reach as it directly impacts the whole group present. Occupying the Ground has the reach and reserve of many applications of the skill covering a wide range of people and situations, and Affecting the Field has an impact beyond your direct awareness, as people try what they hear about what you do.

All the phases continue, despite the dominant phase progressively changing. So, you are still Realising Yourself in some ways whilst you are Showing Up or Occupying the Ground. You cannot drift from one dominant phase to the next, however. It requires deliberate shifts of confidence, accountability and release - as depicted in the graphic.



Accreditation

ADWOW Accreditation requires that participants learn from second-hand accounts - but primarily through first-hand experience – to work with Dialogue as a mode, as a practice, as a process, and as story. The practitioner learns how to use the Professional Dialogue™ foundational skills to facilitate generative outcomes and to reach sustainable decisions. The intention of Professional Dialogue™ is to transfer skills from the Practitioner to other participants, thereby making their facilitative role redundant. This requires the additional competencies of:

- introducing Professional Dialogue™ to new groupings using an experiential and participatory process,
- using facilitated learning to enable people to take Professional Dialogue™ foundational skills in their practice as a different way of working, and
- coaching others to put Professional Dialogue™ to work.

The Academy of Professional Dialogue is responsible for conferring accreditation status on participants who have successfully demonstrated the skills and competencies outlined in this programme and are recommended for accreditation by the faculty. Once the ADWOW programme ends, the participants will meet with the faculty to determine their eligibility for accreditation, and to draw up a plan to achieve any further development still required. They will also agree the timing of their future accreditation. The Academy meets once a quarter throughout the year, so the earliest a participant will be accredited is at the next quarterly meeting of the APDP Continuing Professional Development meeting.





Resources

The Set 2 resources are located in [Appendix E](#), and in the Learning Centre Library.

- Functional Communication 1: Advocacy & Enquiry, Expressive Languages and Organising Paradigms
- Functional Communication 2: The Dialogic Actions

In [Appendix C](#) you will find:

- The Professional Dialogue Practitioner Developmental Framework
- An interactive version of the Self-Assessment form for the Developmental Framework

Reflective Practice Notes are in the Learning Centre Library, to record your Set 2 Between-Sets work and read notes from other participants.



Between-Sets Work

Each Set provides learnings that are essential for Dialogue Practitioners. These learnings build on each other from set to set, growing an overall capability with dialogic skills. Participants track their developmental progress themselves by using the Developmental Framework in [Appendix C](#). Part of the learning process is to embrace the skills considered in each set and to start putting them into practice before the next set. Between-Sets Work is provided for this purpose. Participants are expected to undertake the Between-Sets Work and make a record in their Reflective Practice Notes, in the Learning Centre Library, for review by colleagues and the faculty before the subsequent set. The Between-Sets Work involves exercises and activities to help participants to understand and practice the skills introduced in each Set. At the outset of the next set, these are reviewed with other participants in reflective practice trios. The trios change each set, so that participants get the chance to work in a smaller grouping with all the other participants.

Reading

Read the Set 2 materials in the ADWOW Field Guide.

Additional resources for Set 2 are available in the [Appendix E](#).

Design

Design your Between-Sets learning activities, using a) the Dialogic Actions, b) the Expressive Languages and c) the Organising Paradigms as a different way of working. What will you do, and where will you do it? Choose the level of work that will help you most and identify your practice field opportunities:

Dialogic Actions

The Dialogic Actions are useful to address dysfunctional communication. In any situation where people are talking and thinking together, when the situation becomes dysfunctional and people are unable to do what they intend to do, try:

Level 1:

- *Realising Yourself:* Work out what is happening by checking the sequences of the actions, and identifying which ones are missing.

Level 2:

- *Showing up:* Try intervening to reduce the dysfunctionality by a) using the missing action/s yourself, or b) inducing others to bring in the missing actions.





Expressive Languages and Organising Paradigms

When people are talking and thinking together and you notice they are speaking different languages and therefore not connecting with each other, or advocating different ways of organising and doing things, and are starting to become confused or irritated, try:

Level 1:

- *Realising Yourself:* Work out what is happening by noticing any clashes of languages and paradigms, and how they are contributing to the confusion.

Level 2:

- *Showing up:* Try intervening to reduce the disconnections by speaking each of the competing languages to ensure connection, or by openly describing the competing paradigms to help people choose the best way to proceed.

Check-in and Check-out

Continue the Practice from Set 1: Use the Developmental Framework to work out how you are progressing (an interactive version of the Self-Assessment form in [Appendix C](#)).

Level 1:

- *Realising Yourself:* When participating in a Check-in, notice what Expressive Languages (affect, power and meaning), Organising Paradigms (open, closed and random) and Dialogic Actions (move, follow, oppose or bystand) were encouraged in the check-in question, and how they played out in the responses from other participants, and your own response.

Level 2:

- *Showing up:* When designing and facilitating a Check-ins to help the development of the participants, choose the Dialogic Action, Expressive Language and Organising Paradigm you wish to emphasise. At the close of the check-in, deliberately by-stand the work done by the check-in, by saying what became evident through the check-in.



A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING: BRINGING DIALOGUE INTO THE ROOM

DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK

FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION

	SELF DEVELOPMENT					SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS				
	RY		SU		OG	RY		SU		OG
CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT										
LANGUAGES & PARADIGMS										
DIALOGIC ACTIONS										
MODES OF TALKING & THINKING TOGETHER										
DIALOGUE PRACTICES										
LEADING ENERGIES										
PRACTITIONER FACILITATION										
PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT										

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Personal Development

Reflect on your own habitual behaviour, and how the actions, languages and paradigms play out in your way of working.

Level 1:

- Try to describe your own propensity or inclination in terms of the actions, languages and paradigms. Which Actions are you most and least comfortable with and when? Which Languages and Paradigms are you least and most comfortable with and when? Why do you think that is?

Level 2:

- Try to describe (to yourself not to them) the propensity or inclination of a close working colleague and/or family member. Try respecting their preferences by changing your own typical response to support their habitual actions, language and/or paradigm. Notice what difference it makes, and what that tells you about yourself.



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Your confidence and competence as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner will depend on how well you know yourself, and how versatile you can be in different situations.

Preparation for the next set

Add notes of your Between-Sets Work to your **Reflective Practice Notes** in the Learning Centre Library on the Friday that falls **four days before the start of the next Set**. Posting them then gives others the chance to see what you are doing and learning, and where your Between-Sets Work is taking you. Include your activities (what did you do or try to do?) and your ongoing learning (including, What questions are you now asking yourself?). Failure can provide as much learning as success! This enables your Reflective Practice Trio colleagues to think with you more helpfully in the next set.

Becoming an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner

Your notes and reflections



SET 3 – PATTERNS OF SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

You might ask why I would spend so much time on the other modes - of monologue, debate, discussion, conversation and skilful conversation - given I wanted to introduce Dialogue. There were several reasons. Firstly, I wanted to start where people were and they understood monologue, debate, discussion and conversation easily. They would use these modes often at work, and they needed to learn more about how to use them well and change between them easily. Secondly, what they needed for good decision-making was skilful conversation, and what they lacked but needed to lead their organisation was Dialogue and Generative Dialogue. Thirdly, they needed to understand the structure and process of Dialogue so that they understood when it would be helpful or even necessary, and when it would not. Lastly, I wanted them to understand that they would need to commit to skill development. If they saw this was needed in the modes with which they were already familiar, they would recognise that it would also be required with the new modes of Dialogue and Generative Dialogue.

Peter Garrett

A New Kind of Dialogue, 2021, Ch 16 Dialogue as a Mode

Outline:

- How to recognise different Modes of talking and thinking together.
- What does each Mode enable? And prevent?
- The art of changing from one Mode to another.
- The Field Guide and Facilitation Guide for the Academy course *Dialogic Engagement*.

Learning and Development Objectives:

1. Gain knowledge, understanding and experience of the structure and dynamics of interactions between people by drawing on the dialogic skills from Set 3:
 - Modes of Engagement
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of the structure and dynamics in your own thinking (your inner modes).
3. Identify a feasible and realistic plan to apply learnings in practice as a different way of working before the next Set, based on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work





Modes of Talking and Thinking Together

The Modes describe how we engage when we talk and think together with others. They describe the nature of the exchange or discourse, not the content of what is said or being talked about. When people are talking and thinking with others, one of these Modes, or patterns of engagement, is always in use. All of them are needed at different times for different outcomes. None is better than any other, although one will always be the most helpful to use in any particular situation.



Structure and Dynamics

Each Mode has a distinctive structure and dynamic that leads to a different pattern of engagement between those involved and, depending on how well they are used, to different potential outcomes. The skill is to recognise each of the Modes, learn how to engage others well in each Mode, experience what they achieve, and discover how to switch from one Mode to another when needed or helpful to the group.



MODE	STRUCTURE	DYNAMIC
MONOLOGUE	One person holds the floor	One-way delivery
DEBATE	Us and them	We are right - You are wrong!
DISCUSSION	Loose	Anyone can speak about anything
CONVERSATION	Temporary and interpersonal	Pursuit of common interests
SKILLFUL CONVERSATION	Rigorous enquiry	Support and challenge
DIALOGUE	Common topic Each speaks to all	Understanding not persuading Incorporating all voices
GENERATIVE DIALOGUE	Emergent Containing not constraining	Unfolding and enfolding

Acknowledgement: P Garrett & J Ball

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Monologue

Monologue is the most rudimentary and commonly used Mode for running meetings. It requires everyone to follow one speaker's thoughts. Typically, Monologues are technical, explanatory, instructional or directive, and the audience may try to appear to be attentive even if they have little interest in what is being said.

- **Structure** - one person holds the floor
- **Dynamic** - one way delivery
- **Engagement** - transactional
- **Outcome** - the speaker knew, and now the audience has been told
- **Usage** - announcements, speeches, marking symbolic change, instructions and expounding a particular point of view.





Debate

Debate is generally more energetic and more engaging than Monologue. It is more complex because as well as advocating their views, the speaker also disputes and rebuts the opposing views. The speaker is therefore required to have their own line of thinking as well as following the arguments of the opposition. Debate provides due process for single-outcome decision-making, with the more convincing arguments (or number of votes) winning the favour of the decision-maker.

- **Structure** - us and them.
- **Dynamic** - we are right, you are wrong.
- **Engagement** - combative, definitive.
- **Outcome** - winners and losers.
- **Usage** - ideal for decisions where there is only one outcome. It gets all the thinking out on the table.

Discussion

This is the Mode where people are batting ideas back and forth as if playing table tennis, and it is fast, superficial, enjoyable, and inconsequential. A loose discussion or chat is an efficient and participatory way of canvassing views and making a prompt call on which way to proceed. You can reach a decision without going into depth, like checking whether or not to include an item on an agenda. The strength of Discussion is its lightness and speed, and the weakness is that it does not particularly achieve alignment or commitment.

- **Structure** - loose.
- **Dynamic** - anyone can speak about anything.
- **Engagement** - temporary, superficial.
- **Outcome** - non-binding decisions.
- **Usage** - ideal for social engagements that are highly participative and inclusive.

Conversation

This is the most versatile Mode, with a root meaning to “turn things over together”. In Conversation people turn over their experiences, ideas and memories together. This is an informal, participatory, engaging and undemanding activity that can yield surprising pleasure and meaningful outcomes in a short space of time. All you need to start a conversation is to find something you have in common. Because Conversation is naturally flowing and adaptable, it makes it possible for people to



bridge differences of age and culture easily. Conversation last as long as they are of interest. They are inherently suited to recognising, being recognised and building relationships. Without conversation, do not develop, and old people become senile.

- **Structure** - temporary and impersonal.
- **Dynamic** - pursuit of common interests.
- **Engagement** - relationship building.
- **Outcome** - personal connection.
- **Usage** - develop rapport and greater understanding.

Skilful Conversation

Skilful Conversation has a more defined structure than the free-flowing Mode of Conversation. In this Mode participants reveal and explore why they hold the views they do. There is a rigour to recalling what you have seen, read, heard and been told – and what assumptions you made about the situation, the context and the implications. It pushes on the framework underlying your past and future decisions. This is the essential Mode for clarity in sense-making and decision-making.

- **Structure** - rigorous enquiry.
- **Dynamic** - support and challenge.
- **Engagement** - intensive.
- **Outcome** - in-depth understanding.
- **Usage** – for participants to reveal what is behind their thoughts, feeling, words and actions; to discover the inherent assumptions and assumed implications each participant brings; and to clarify one's thinking before deciding how to act.

Dialogue

The aim of Dialogue is the inclusion of the views and experiences of others in a way that creates a common understanding. The root meaning is derived from logos, that is 'meaning', and dia that is 'through' – so Dialogue seeks to find a common meaning through or amongst a group of people. Participants think together and sense what is happening as they do so. What emerges is generated or co-created and by everyone present. Dialogue requires people to listen, rather than dismissing other's views out of hand, to be genuine without being certain they are right, and to respect each other's intentions. This leads to a larger sense of common identity and purposeful stewardship of the individual and collective worlds.

- **Structure** - common topic, each speaks to all.





- **Dynamic** - understanding not persuading, incorporating all voices.
- **Engagement** - inclusive and transparent.
- **Outcome** - common understanding.
- **Usage** - understand rather than to convince, enabling an idea or proposal to be worked on together, with everyone's contribution being incorporated into the developing thinking, resulting in collectively owned outcomes.

Generative Dialogue

Although the Mode of Dialogue usually has a topic to explore and aims to find a common understanding amongst those involved, Generative Dialogue is different. In Generative Dialogue anything can be considered (there is no fixed topic to talk about), and the intention is to step back and to recognise and explore the context within which we find ourselves, and the resulting situation and behaviour of people individually and collectively. It is a way expanding conscious understanding and allowing new meaning to emerge. This is ideal for generating the kind of flow that enables whatever needs to take form to do so, and it can shift whole paradigms. Generative Dialogue requires collective presence (being fully present) and attention to the potential inherent in the moment. Generative Dialogue is the least structured of the Modes, requiring the greatest discipline to notice and help to articulate what is emerging in its own unique way. To the degree that people free themselves from their personal and collective agendas (their opinions, wants and ambitions), they can enter a different free-form space, a pool of common meaning which is capable of constant development and change.

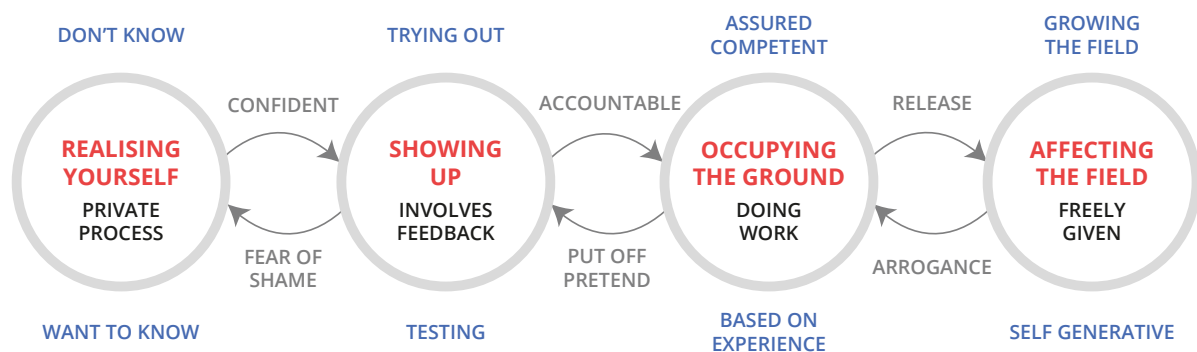
- **Structure** - emergent - containing not restraining.
- **Dynamic** - unfolding and enfolding.
- **Engagement** - generative.
- **Outcome** - collective potential.
- **Usage** - participate in a pool of common meaning that is also changing and developing, enabling a common stewardship of the world.



Practitioner Development: Realising Yourself, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground, and Affecting the Field

The Practitioner Development Model was designed by Peter Garrett over 15 years ago and has been used extensively by Peter and Jane. The phases in the model emerged empirically from Peter's personal and professional experiences coaching and consulting to clients and client systems. The predictable sequence of steps from naivety to wisdom involves shifts of relationship, responsibility and identity for individuals, as well as for groups, organisations, and communities.

Container Development Process



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Acknowledgement: P Garrett

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The Container Development process above was introduced in Set 1. In Sets 2 through 8, you will be applying this framework to track your development as a Professional Dialogic Practitioner. More details can be found in [Appendix C](#). You assess your own progress by regularly reflecting on your experience with each of the skills. During the phase of Realising Yourself, you are enquiring to understand the nature of the skill so that you could write or talk about it easily and accurately. In the Showing Up phase you try out the new skill in a group of people and learn



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first-hand from your experience of how it works in, and from the reactions and responses you receive from others that provide feedback. You are Occupying the Ground when you have a reserve of past experiences and your own stories of success and failure to draw on, and you are unlikely to be Affecting the Field in just a few months, so this is largely outside of the scope of this programme. It will come later when you mature as a practitioner and your influence widens.

It should be noted that the container of interest, activity and impact grows steadily through the four phases of this framework. Realising Yourself is a private and more local enquiry, involving reading, noticing and talking with a few people. Showing Up broadens the reach as it directly impacts the whole group present. Occupying the Ground has the reach and reserve of many applications of the skill covering a wide range of people and situations, and Affecting the Field has an impact beyond your direct awareness, as people try what they hear about what you do.

All the phases continue, despite the dominant phase progressively changing. So, you are still Realising Yourself in some ways whilst you are Showing Up or Occupying the Ground. You cannot drift from one dominant phase to the next, however. It requires deliberate shifts of confidence, accountability and release - as depicted in the graphic.



Resources

The Set 3 resources are in [Appendix E](#), and in the Learning Centre Library.

- Dialogic Engagement Field Guide
- Dialogic Engagement Facilitation Guide
- Reflections on the Inner Modes of Talking and Thinking Together
- Reflective Practice 2

In [Appendix C](#):

- The Professional Dialogue Practitioner Developmental Framework.
- Self-Assessment Form for the Developmental Framework

Reflective Practice Notes are in the Learning Centre Library, to record your Set 3 Between-Sets work and read notes from other participants.





Between-Sets Work

Each Set provides learnings that are essential for Dialogue Practitioners. These learnings build on each other from set to set, growing an overall capability with dialogic skills. Participants track their developmental progress themselves by using the Developmental Framework in [Appendix C](#). Part of the learning process is to embrace the skills considered in each set and to start putting them into practice before the next set. Between-Sets Work is provided for this purpose. Participants are expected to undertake the Between-Sets Work and make a record in their Reflective Practice Notes, in the Learning Centre Library, for review by colleagues and the faculty before the subsequent set. The Between-Sets Work involves exercises and activities to help participants to understand and practice the skills introduced in each Set. At the outset of the next set, these are reviewed with other participants in reflective practice trios. The trios change each set, so that participants get the chance to work in a smaller grouping with all the other participants.

Reading

Read the Set 3 materials in the ADWOW Field Guide.

Additional resources for Set 3 are available in the [Appendix F](#).

Self-Assessment

- Use the Developmental Coaching Frameworks to **try a first self-assessment** on Check-ins and Check-outs, Languages, Paradigms and Dialogic Actions.
(Ask yourself, what level of understanding and skill do I have, and what can I do with each of these skills?)
- If you choose, meet with a colleague from the programme to consider your self-assessments together.
(The lounge in the Learning Centre is always available.)
- Keep your self-assessment in mind as you continue your ongoing practice development using Check-ins and Check-outs, Dialogic Actions, Languages and Paradigms.

Design

Design your Between-Sets learning activities, using the additional skill of the Modes of Talking and Thinking Together as a different way of working. What will you do, and where will you do it? Choose the level of work that will help you most and identify your practice field opportunities.



Modes of Engagement

Design your Between-Sets work to move yourself along the developmental framework.

- *Realising Yourself*: notice the Mode in use at any time, how it works, what it achieves and what its limitations are.
- *Showing Up*: Try changing the Mode to a more helpful Mode and discover how to change Modes in practice.
- *Occupying the Ground*: Whilst changing to a more helpful Mode, let people know why you are trying to change the Mode and how that will help everyone to do the work that needs to be done.

A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING: BRINGING DIALOGUE INTO THE ROOM DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION

	SELF DEVELOPMENT					SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS				
	RY		SU		OG	RY		SU		OG
CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT										
LANGUAGES & PARADIGMS										
DIALOGIC ACTIONS										
MODES OF TALKING & THINKING TOGETHER										
DIALOGUE PRACTICES										
LEADING ENERGIES										
PRACTITIONER FACILITATION										
PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT										

Acknowledgement: J Ball

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Personal Development

- At any time in the day, ask yourself: "Which of the seven Modes is currently operating internally in me (whether you are speaking or silent)? For example, am I now internally having a conversation with the world around me, having a debate and trying to win, or perhaps concentrating on a Skilful Conversation?"



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- Try to get the ‘feel’ of the Modes, and what parts of you, your values and your identity they call on.
- Write, or **journal**, to explore when you were most aware of your inner Mode, when it changed (why?), and when it was operating ‘automatically’ without your conscious awareness.
- Notice when your inner Mode is the same as the outer Mode in use in the room - and when you find it is different from the Mode in use in the room.
- Notice what triggers a change in your internal Mode (why?).
- Explore what choices you have with deepening and changing the inner Modes.

Your confidence and competence as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner will depend on how well you know yourself, and how versatile you can be in different situations.

Preparation for the next set

Add notes of your Between-Sets Work to your **Reflective Practice Notes** in the Learning Centre Library on the Friday that falls **four days before the start of the next Set**. Posting them then gives others the chance to see what you are doing and learning, and where your Between-Sets Work is taking you. Include your activities (what did you do or try to do?) and your ongoing learning (including, What questions are you now asking yourself?). Failure can provide as much learning as success! This enables your Reflective Practice Trio colleagues to think with you more helpfully in the next set.

Becoming an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner

Your notes and reflections



SET 4 – QUALITY OF UNDERSTANDING

To cultivate your capacity to speak your voice, you must develop a sense of the unfolding nature of things; to develop your capacity to listen, you must cultivate an appreciation for how you participate in creating your own experience; to develop your capacity to suspend assumptions and certainty, you must develop your awareness, and to develop your capacity for respect, you must cultivate your sense of the underlying coherence of Life.

William Isaacs

Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together, 1999

The invitation is to listen to what the speaker is actually saying, and if you are successful, you will be able to repeat what they said. This is not as easy as it sounds. At first, many groups cannot sustain attention for very long. They listen with great interest to some speakers but switch off their attention when others start talking. In my observation one of the greatest resistances to listening to what another person means is disinterest: “who cares what she thinks or feels?” And listening tends to be stilted when participants actively disagree with the speaker: “who does he think he is?” They find themselves constructing counter arguments instead of listening or simply dismiss what is being said as self-evidently wrong. For me the basic level of respect is to assume that what is said makes sense to the speaker, although it may not to me, and to explore what that sense might be. The starting level with suspension is the request for people not just to give their views, but to explain them. Simple as it sounds, this elementary introduction of the practices can make a significant difference.

Peter Garrett

A New Kind of Dialogue, 2021





Outline:

- What is the practice of Dialogue?
- Inner experience, dynamics in the room and the container?
- How do you change a situation from within?

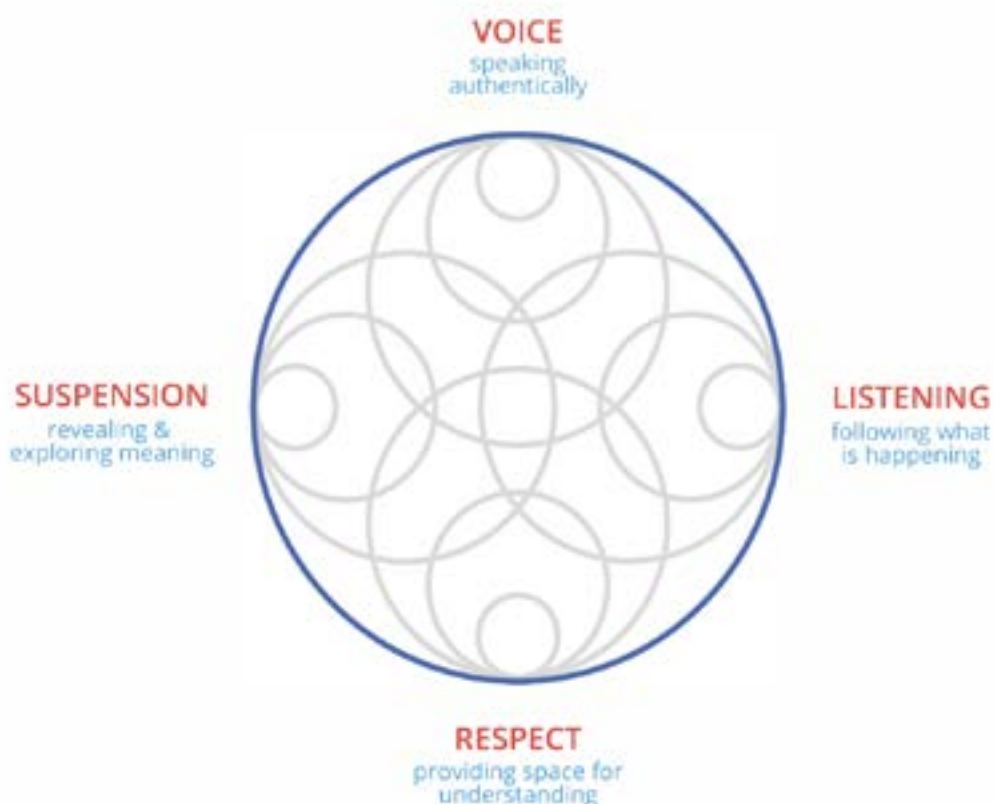
Learning and Development Objectives

1. Gain knowledge, understanding and experience of the how to affect the quality of any exchange between people, people by drawing on the dialogic skills from Set 4:
 - The Dialogue Practices
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of the way you make sense of the world around you.
3. Identify a feasible plan to apply the Set 4 learnings, along with your learnings from earlier Sets, to build a different way of working. Base the plan on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work



Dialogue Practices

The Dialogue Practices are at the heart of any high-quality conversation or Dialogue. They are called Practices because, whatever your level of skill, you can become better through practise. No special forum or occasion is needed to practise because they are relevant to the quality of your interactions every time you talk and think with others. They originated in the late 1990s through the collaboration of Bill Isaacs, Peter Garrett and Michael Jones who were working together as the faculty of a Leadership for Collective Intelligence programme. The innovative blending of organisational leadership theory, high security prison dialogue experience and extemporaneous music performance resulted in the design of a powerfully inclusive framework to enhance the quality of interaction and understanding between people. The Dialogue Practices are widely known from their publication in Dialogue: The Art of Thinking Together (William Isaacs, 1999).



Acknowledgement: B Isaacs, P Garrett & M Jones

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Voice

Voice is the practice of speaking authentically and is your expression of what you are thinking and feeling. Your voice is shaped by your natural propensity, inherent personality and experiences on your journey through life., and is an expression of your individuality within the body of humanity. Each person has a unique voice, and nobody can speak for you in the way you can speak for yourself.

The practice of Voice encourages people to become more skilful at authoring their own contribution in a way that complements that of others. In the context of the conversations and dialogues, the first level of finding your Voice is speaking up and saying something, which can be challenging to do depending on who is present. The next level of Voice is saying in the room what you really think and feel, rather than saying what you believe others might want to hear. This fuller level of Voice means that you say the same thing publicly in the Dialogue that you say privately outside the Dialogue, rather than offering significantly different versions to different audiences. In the next level of Voice, in addition to being genuine and authentic, you are articulating what contributes most to the collective expression or voice of the whole unfolding conversation or Dialogue. With Voice at any level, you enrich the quality of the atmosphere or container within which you are participating.

Listening

Listening is the practice of giving your attention to what is taking place and being said - and to receiving it by enfolding it consciously. At the same time as attending to what others are saying, thinking and feeling, you can listen to what is moving in your own mind, heart, and physical body. These are not unconnected. Curiously, for example, when you listen to someone, they can find their authentic voice more easily. The listening creates an overall atmosphere that is more conducive to their unique expression. At times, you can become distracted from noticing your own personal responses and reactions by becoming absorbed by the words and behaviour of others, or the other way around. Through practice you can listen to both at the same time, as well as noticing the relationship between the inner and outer activities. Listening to what is not being said in any situation may be as important as listening to what is being said. The most basic level of listening enables a person to repeat what was said. A step deeper is to have heard what was said, and to have considered what was meant. A deepest level is the ability to listen to the unfolding meaning emerging in the whole room, and to hold that as the changing context within which individual speakers are finding their voice.



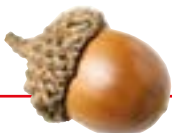
Respect

Respect provides a space for understanding. When you offer Respect, you are seeking to understand rather than to be understood. This is particularly relevant when things appear to be incoherent, and it is not obvious to you how people's words and behaviour are aligned with their apparent intentions. Underlying Respect is the recognition that things are the way they are for a reason, even if that reason is not yet apparent to you. Everything is interconnected, and people are inherently intelligent, compassionate, and naturally want to participate. If that is not apparent, the reason why can be discovered through dialogue. Respect is needed as a non-judgemental view of what is happening. When Respect is lacking, people will reject others out of hand, and that absence of respect fragments the conscious awareness of those involved by separating us from them. The first level of respect is to listen to what people are saying before forming a contrary view - rather than creating a counter argument whilst they are speaking. The next level of Respect is to try to stand in their shoes and sense the challenge to resolve the competing constraints and interests they may have. A yet deeper level of Respect is to deliberately hold the space of non-judgemental inclusion of the whole situation to enable a collective understanding of why things are as they are to become evident in everyone present.

Suspension

Suspension is the Practice most deeply rooted in awareness. When you suspend your thoughts or feelings you describe, as accurately as you can, the movements taking place within you as they occur, and make them available to others. This is an active witnessing of what is happening, including your inclinations to encourage or discourage what is occurring. Suspension does not mean stopping the activity (like being suspended from school). Instead, it is like a chandelier that is suspended from the ceiling and that can be viewed by everyone in different parts of the room. Through suspension the automatic, repetitive and spontaneous patterns of behaviour can all be explored, in yourself and with others. Suspension requires the discernment to follow the subtle as well as the obvious, and to make the movements in conscious awareness available to everyone to deepen collective understanding. When you follow the movements internally and externally, and make your awareness available to others, a seamless process of unfoldment and enfoldment may become more apparent to both you and others. The quality of the Container will depend on the level of active suspension, just as the practice of Suspension will deepen the Container.

To develop the practice of Suspension, the first step is to reflect on what has





happened after the event in a thoughtful way that is both rigorous and subtle. The next step is to bystand what is happening in a way that can be meaningfully understood by others. Then the deeper phase in this practice is to become proprioceptively aware of what is happening and to describe it live whilst it is still happening. This conscious awareness changes the unfolding process in a spontaneous way and can do so for everyone if it is articulated live in the room.



Container Enhancement

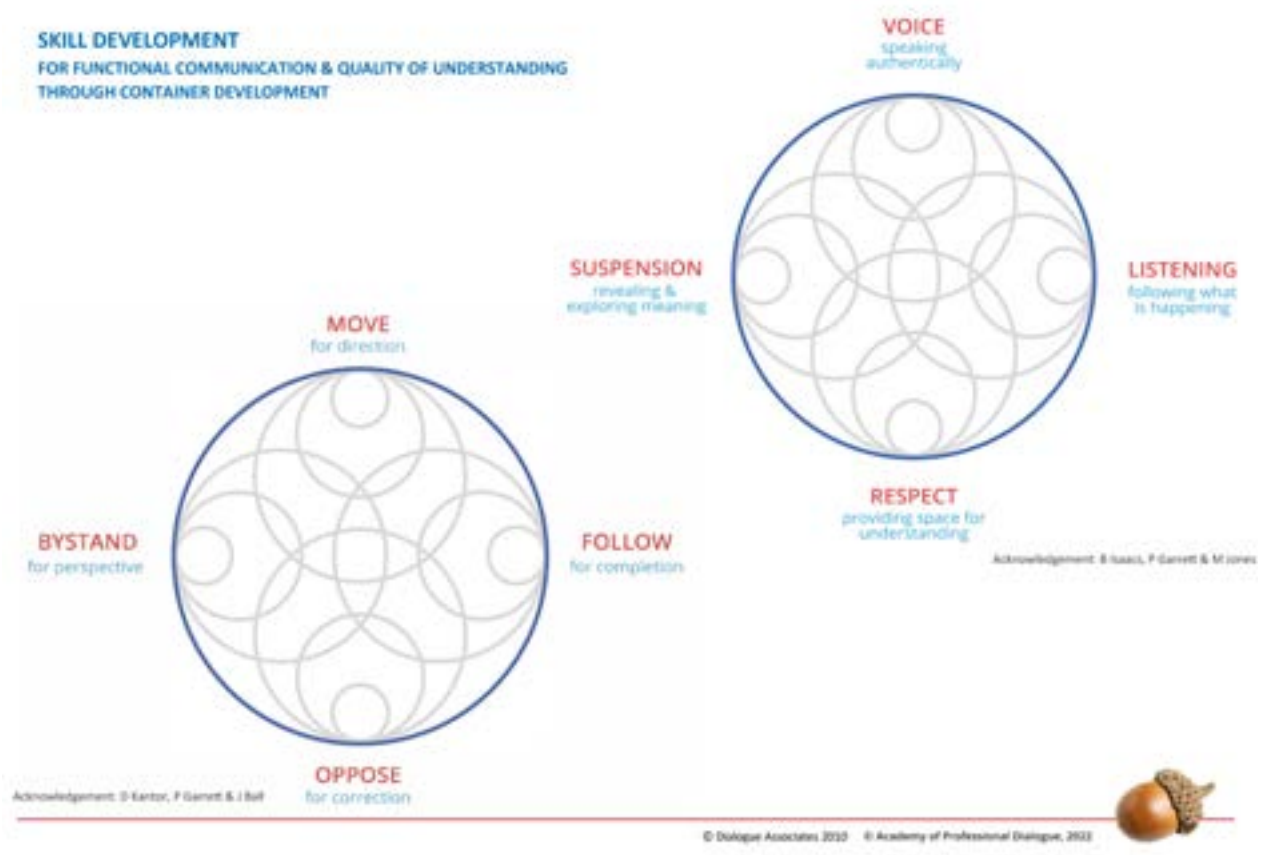
The Container is the atmosphere or ambiance in the room. There are many ways of describing that atmosphere - such as relaxed, tense, attentive, disjointed, and so on. When the Dialogue Practices (Voice, Listening, Respect, and Suspension) are in active use, the atmosphere will be more alive and energetic, it will feel more conducive to dropping a level deeper in the exchanges between people, and there will be a sense of potential change. The converse is also true - that when the Container is weak it will be because one or more of the Practices is not active. People are not saying what they really mean, they are not listening to each other, they are not offering respect to each other, or they are certain they are right. The Professional Dialogue Practitioner discerns what is happening in themselves and tracks what is happening in the room to see how to fill out the use of the Dialogue Practices. This can be done by offering the practices personally (perhaps listening more intently), or by soliciting the practices from others (perhaps asking if people understood what the previous speaker meant).



Relationship between the Modes of Engagement, Dialogic Actions, and the Dialogue Practices

There is a developmental relationship between the Dialogic Actions and the Modes of Talking and Thinking Together. Monologue is essentially a sequence of Moves, and Debate is a sequence of Moves and Opposes, whilst Discussion and Conversation use Follows as well as Moves and Opposes. Skilful Conversation and Dialogue in addition require Bystands. It is helpful to recognize this because changing from one Mode to another requires a change in the Actions in use.

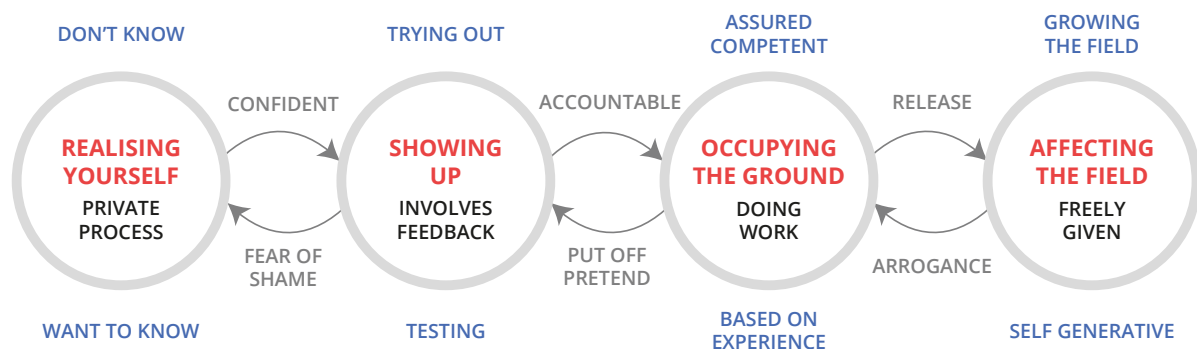
There is a similar but less causal relationship between the Practices and the Actions. The authentic Voice adds the qualitative depth to any Move, as it does to the other actions. Listening opens the receptivity to following informed following, as it does to the other actions. Respect enables opposing views to be received, which cannot happen when being disrespected, and Bystanding is hones the attention for Suspension.



Practitioner Development: Realising Yourself, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground, and Affecting the Field

The Practitioner Development Model was designed by Peter Garrett over 15 years ago and has been used extensively by Peter and Jane. The phases in the model emerged empirically from Peter's personal and professional experiences coaching and consulting to clients and client systems. The predictable sequence of steps from naivety to wisdom involves shifts of relationship, responsibility and identity for individuals, as well as for groups, organisations, and communities.

Container Development Process



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Acknowledgement: P Garrett

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The Container Development process above was introduced in Set 1. In Sets 2 through 8, you will be applying this framework to track your development as a Professional Dialogic Practitioner. More details can be found in [Appendix C](#). You assess your own progress by regularly reflecting on your experience with each of the skills. During the phase of Realising Yourself, you are enquiring to understand the nature of the skill so that you could write or talk about it easily and accurately. In the Showing Up phase you try out the new skill in a group of people and learn



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first-hand from your experience of how it works in, and from the reactions and responses you receive from others that provide feedback. You are Occupying the Ground when you have a reserve of past experiences and your own stories of success and failure to draw on, and you are unlikely to be Affecting the Field in just a few months, so this is largely outside of the scope of this programme. It will come later when you mature as a practitioner and your influence widens.

It should be noted that the container of interest, activity and impact grows steadily through the four phases of this framework. Realising Yourself is a private and more local enquiry, involving reading, noticing and talking with a few people. Showing Up broadens the reach as it directly impacts the whole group present. Occupying the Ground has the reach and reserve of many applications of the skill covering a wide range of people and situations, and Affecting the Field has an impact beyond your direct awareness, as people try what they hear about what you do.

All the phases continue, despite the dominant phase progressively changing. So, you are still Realising Yourself in some ways whilst you are Showing Up or Occupying the Ground. You cannot drift from one dominant phase to the next, however. It requires deliberate shifts of confidence, accountability and release - as depicted in the graphic above.



Resources

The Set 4 resources are in [Appendix G](#), and in the Learning Centre Library.

- The Dialogue Practices
- Skill Development for Functional Communication and Quality of Understanding

You will find the paper: Dialogue As Story in [Appendix N](#).

Once again you should refer to [Appendix C](#) for:

- The Professional Dialogue Practitioner Developmental Framework.
- Self-Assessment Form for the Developmental Framework

Reflective Practice Notes are in the Learning Centre Library, to record your Set 4 Between-Sets work and read notes from other participants.





Between-Sets Work

Each Set provides learnings that are essential for Dialogue Practitioners. These learnings build on each other from set to set, growing an overall capability with dialogic skills. Participants track their developmental progress themselves by using the Developmental Framework in [Appendix C](#). Part of the learning process is to embrace the skills considered in each set and to start putting them into practice before the next set. Between-Sets Work is provided for this purpose. Participants are expected to undertake the Between-Sets Work and make a record in their Reflective Practice Notes, in the Learning Centre Library, for review by colleagues and the faculty before the subsequent set. The Between-Sets Work involves exercises and activities to help participants to understand and practice the skills introduced in each Set. At the outset of the next set, these are reviewed with other participants in reflective practice trios. The trios change each set, so that participants get the chance to work in a smaller grouping with all the other participants.

Reading

Read the Set 4 materials in the ADWOW Field Guide.

Additional resources for Set 4 are available in the [Appendix G](#).

Design

Design your Between-Sets learning activities, using the Dialogue Practices as a different way of working. What will you do, and where will you do it? Choose the level of work that will help you most and identify your practice field opportunities:

- Continue your development using Check-ins and Check-outs, Languages, Paradigms, Dialogic Actions and Modes.
- Where you have moved on from Showing Up and are now Occupying the Ground with any of the above skills then you could identify another person (ideally a working colleague), consider their strengths and constraints with that skill and consider ways of helping them to expand their effectiveness based on your own experience.
- In addition, include the Dialogue Practices.
 - *Realising Yourself:* At the outset of a meeting, choose a Dialogue Practice and deliberately focus and deepen your skills. For example, if you are practicing listening, after the meeting try repeating what each person said.



- *Showing Up*: During any meeting notice which Dialogue Practices are least in evidence and actively bring them in, noticing what differences that makes to the quality of the exchange.

Self-Assessment

- Please find and read the *Professional Dialogue Practitioner Developmental Framework* in the Library under References, as well as [Appendix C](#) in this Field Guide. This combines all the developmental frameworks, along with the background explanation about how to use them).
- Complete a self-assessment sheet and share it with the faculty before Set 5.
- Review and adjust as applicable your self-assessment on Check-ins and Check-outs, the Dialogic Actions, the Expressive Languages and the Organising Paradigms.
- Try a first self-assessment on the Modes of Engagement and the Dialogue Practices, asking yourself, “What level of skill do I have? What can I demonstrate?”

A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING: BRINGING DIALOGUE INTO THE ROOM

DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK

FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION

	SELF DEVELOPMENT					SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS				
	RY		SU		OG	RY		SU		OG
CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT										
LANGUAGES & PARADIGMS										
DIALOGIC ACTIONS										
MODES OF TALKING & THINKING TOGETHER										
DIALOGUE PRACTICES										
LEADING ENERGIES										
PRACTITIONER FACILITATION										
PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT										

Acknowledgement: J Ball

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Personal Development

We explored sense-making and story in Set 4. Refer to the paper in [Appendix N](#) and refresh your understanding of what was considered.

- *Realising Yourself:* Take any situation where there is some tension or conflict and reflect on it. Privately, try to describe your sense-making story, and from what you now, try to construct viable sense-making stories of others involved. What was seen, heard or read? What logic or reasoning was used? And what was the resulting story?
- *Showing Up:* Take any situation where you sense tension and potential conflict. See if you can catch yourself creating a sense-making story and openly check some of your assumptions or reasoning before accepting your first interpretation.

Your confidence and competence as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner will depend on how well you know yourself, and how versatile you can be in different situations.

Preparation for the next set

Add notes of your Between-Sets Work to your **Reflective Practice Notes** in the Learning Centre Library on the Friday that falls **four days before the start of the next Set**. Posting them then gives others the chance to see what you are doing and learning, and where your Between-Sets Work is taking you. Include your activities (what did you do or try to do?) and your ongoing learning (including, What questions are you now asking yourself?). Failure can provide as much learning as success! This enables your Reflective Practice Trio colleagues to think with you more helpfully in the next set.

Becoming an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner

Your notes and reflections



SET 5 – FOCUS OF ATTENTION (LEADING ENERGIES) AND ORGANIZATIONAL DECISION-MAKING

Whether you want to check the progress of a piece of work, to encourage people to sign up for an activity, to understand how best to use your time or to think about where the organisation might be in a couple of years' time - the kind of conversation you want can be described by the energy that leads you to that thinking. The energy of checking a piece of work leads in a Performance direction; encouraging people to sign up leads in a Citizen direction; understanding how best to use time leads in a Wisdom direction, and thinking where we want to be in a couple of years' time leads in a Visionary direction. These considerations each have a different energetic direction and purpose, and different conditions are needed to follow each of them well. For example, it is not possible to have a good Performance conversation without data, or a good Visionary Dialogue without setting aside enough time to slow down the thinking. A Citizen Dialogue depends on being interested in the experience of other people, and a Wisdom Conversation requires perspective.

Peter Garrett

Around Corrections, 2013 - VADOC, Vol 1: Issue 9 - Winter 2013

Outline:

- How do they relate – data, information, knowledge and insight?
- What is the 'journey' of a good decision?
- Leading from where you are.

Learning and Development Objectives

1. Gain knowledge, understanding and experience of how to get work done, by drawing on the dialogic skills from Set 5:
 - The Leading Energies to focus the attention of an exchange between people
 - Dialogic Decision-making
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of your internal identities and how you move between them.
3. Identify a feasible plan to apply the Set 5 learnings, along with your learnings from earlier Sets, to build a different way of working. Basing the plan on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work





The Leading Energies provide a language (Visionary, Citizen, Performance and Wisdom) to bring greater focus and penetration to how people talk and think together in a Dialogue. This helps collective thinking in support of collective purpose in a practical and meaningful way. A key point is that this is not solely dependent on positional power, because anyone can help bring focus to the organisational conversation and thereby provide leadership.

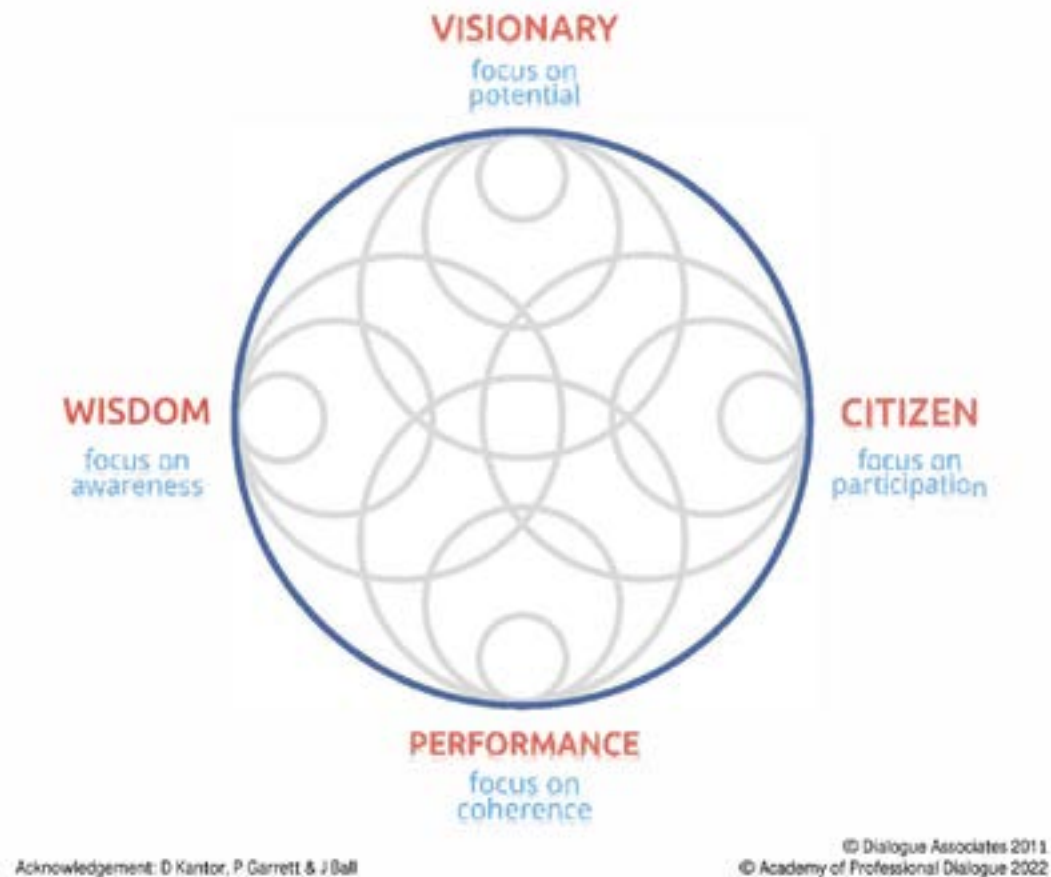
Focus of Attention (Leading Energies)

Once a group has been convened and the participants are engaged with each other (Check-ins, Check-outs and Modes); and people are attentive to how they are participating functionally (Dialogic Actions); and without undue confusion (Expressive Languages and Organising Paradigms); and engaging in a qualitatively refined way (Dialogue Practices); the opportunity opens up to put the emotional and intellectual energy in the room to work.

The Leading Energies are a simple framework for purposefully focusing that energy that is naturally gathered by any grouping of people in Skilful Conversation, Dialogue or Generative Dialogue. The four Leading Energies are the Visionary, Citizen, Performance and Wisdom energies. They can be introduced succinctly and put to work immediately. Each Leading Energy requires different conditions to be effective, and each does a different kind of work.

Peter derived them from a five-part leadership development model designed by David Kantor, and adapted their use, with David's full knowledge and approval, to encourage collective leadership through dialogue (in contrast to David's original intention of coaching individual leaders with positional power). The aim is for organisational teams to have the right conversations at the right time with the right people - and anyone involved can deepen the focus and effectiveness of the organizational conversations using the skills of Professional Dialogue.





Visionary Energy

Visionary Energy draws people into a consideration of the potential inherent in the situation.

- What is the opportunity that we can see or sense?
- What is the need as we best understand it?
- Do we have the imagination to paint a picture of a future that provides what is needed for everyone involved?

The scope may be short term, involving a single meeting or work project, or about the longer-term future of the organization and a review of its strategies. The vision is not yet present and finding that vision challenges participants to set aside the constraints of the present situation temporarily, and to describe a better circumstance in the future. The aim of the Visionary Energy is to articulate a different future in a way that others can see that it is worth achieving and say





'yes!'. As that occurs, the Visionary energy does a unique kind of work. It aligns the direction and purpose of the people in that team, organisation or community. Visionary Energy helps to establish a common direction with common values. It contributes to aligning the context for everyone involved in a Dialogue, or to generating a new context in a Generative Dialogue. The shared aspiration and common intention engender a kind of purposeful resilience amongst the participants. This influences the many decisions made, and the many activities undertaken, by drawing them towards a commonly sought outcome.

Citizen Energy

The Citizen Energy is about how people participate, and the sense of relatedness between those who are working together. This energy draws richer levels of participation both practically and ethically. As people understand the value of their role, and how they contribute to the collective endeavour, they naturally want to learn how to play their part better in relation to the whole. How they impact those with whom they engage directly, and indirectly, becomes a matter of interest or concern. The Citizen Energy makes light work of things. The hierarchical nature of organisations means roles and functions can easily become fragmented, transactional and institutionalised. The Citizen energy harmonises interactions and humanises the system. It deepens pride, ownership and the sense of being part of the team, community or organisation.

As a Dialogue or Generative Dialogue deepens, a common spirit emerges that the Greeks called *koinonia*. Although people may hardly know each other personally, they feel a collective sense of respect and appreciation of one another. This impersonal fellowship embodies the spirit of citizenship, where people stand for the right of others to hold their view and to express them, even though they may not agree with the opinions expressed. As a result, even polar-opposite views can be incorporated into a common enquiry.

Performance Energy

To realise any vision, Performance Energy is needed. It is the passion for delivery, for doing what is needed, that enables a vision to take form and to be realised. Performance Energy requires thinking, decisions and actions that are coherent with the intended outcomes, and the ability to say no if this is not the case. Good performance is surprisingly satisfying, and there is a great sense of accomplishment and achievement for all involved when what was needed, requested or agreed is provided. It leads individuals and groupings of people to bring more care and



accuracy to their work and to become more reliable in the commitments they make.

Wisdom Energy

The focus of Wisdom energy is awareness. This is the energy that sees the relationship between the Visionary, Citizen and Performance Energies. How are people working together, and is what they are doing bringing the vision into form? The Wisdom Energy attends to both the surrounding context and the specific situation, seeing how they are inter-connected and tracking the changes in both. It sees things as an interrelated system and uses experience, knowledge and insights to get the **timing** right - to see when the time is right to push the swing and enhance the movement, not jolt the flow. It is the Wisdom Energy that reveals the few essential things that need to be in place, and therefore what needs to be maintained, changed or addressed. This clarity reduces the time and energy expended. Some call it working smarter, rather than working harder.





Dialogic Decision Making

Conscious Decision-Making

We make decisions all day every day, no matter what we are doing. For example, in speaking a sentence, I decide what meaning I want to convey, what words will carry that meaning best and how to modify the communication depending on the response of those to whom I am talking. Some of this is done consciously, like choosing a particular adjective or adverb to emphasise a point, whilst I may not even notice how I form the rest of the sentence.

Decisions that we make regarding our personal lives may be largely based on the needs, interests, comforts and discomforts of ourselves and those around us as we seek to maintain or to change the relationships with people around us. Organisational decisions have an additional complexity. It is not only our own voice and interests that matter, but also the implicit and explicit responsibility to represent the organisation. We have to consider the organisation's needs and interests, and those of other employees, clients, beneficiaries and stakeholders. Organisations are decision-making structures that organise and distribute power through decision-making rights and accountabilities. Put simply, we are employed to make decisions, and we are accountable for the quality of those decisions and the resulting actions.

Teams are where many decisions are made, confirmed or amended. The aim of a team meeting is generally to make a decision or a series of decisions. This is not always as easy as it appears and sometimes a meeting can go around and around without a convincing decision being reached, leaving a sense of dissatisfaction. One aspect of this ineffectiveness in organisational decision-making can be addressed by clarifying, Whose Decision Is It? Peter designed a simple framework to help to determine this, thereby clarifying the roles of everyone in the team.



WHOSE DECISION?

Decision-Making in Working Meetings

ACCOUNTABILITY	INTENTION	ACTIVITY
NO DECISION	INFORM	TELL
YOUR DECISION	DELEGATE	INSTRUCT
MY DECISION	CONSULT	ASK
OUR DECISION	REACH CONSENSUS	AGREE
EACH DECIDES	DIALOGUE	ALIGN

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Informing people is important but may not be the best use of most of the team's time. **Delegating** decisions in a team can be helpful so that everyone knows who is doing what and can contribute accordingly. **Consulting** other team members about a decision you have to make yourself can be one of the best uses of a team's time and attention. You do not give away your authority of accountability, but you draw on your colleagues' experience and wisdom. Sometimes the team cannot proceed without a collective decision where everyone agrees by reaching **Consensus**.





Depending on the size of the team, reaching consensus can be a challenge. In a well-functioning team that uses dialogue to generate understanding, so that participants hold a common context, the team acts essentially an **aligning** body, and each makes their own decision in their own area of accountability.

Decisions Have A Structure And A Process

As we noted, we make many decisions every day, some more consciously than others, and people who work in organisations are employed to do so. They are delegated authority to make decisions, and they are accountable for the decisions they make. Drawing on the Dialogic Actions, we can see that there is a structure and a process to making any decision. A simple decision in this model is a Move and then a Follow or a series of Follows. People design meetings to try to have this happen easily. A more rigorous decision, however, requires all four Actions. The Moves provide the proposals, the Follows support them, the Opposes challenge to correct or improve them, and the Bystands reveal repeated sequences of Actions that inadvertently may be interfering with the clarity of the decision being made. A more rigorous decision still begins with a Move and ends with a Follow or a series of Follows, but in between all four of the actions can be made until there is clarity. The team can develop good collective decision-making skills. A sign that the team is not doing well enough is when people are trying hard to persuade each other, and when decisions often have to be amended.

Stories Make Decisions

To decide what to do, we draw on our understanding of the situation. If you look more closely, you will find that understanding takes the form of a story. If you ask what the situation is, they will tell a story about it, which is their version of what is really going on. Like any story, these sense-making stories all have a past (what has happened), a present (what is happening now), and a future (what may or will happen). Within that unfolding process, we make our decisions in the present to help to determine the future. By making that decision, we are determining what to do (or not to do) to affect the future in some way. When people are acting from very different and conflicting stories about the same situation, it causes trouble. It leads to misunderstandings, confusion, counter-productive activity, frustration, and perhaps anger.

It is apparent that if we want to work well together, we will need to check the accuracy and validity of our own and other people's stories. This is where the skills of Inquiry and Advocacy are important. In the case of Advocacy, this is a form of



telling what we know that naturally leads to what to do next. It is our stories that are informing our decisions and telling us what to do. Enquiry may be used to confirm things, but it's more important function is to find out what we don't know. An enquiring mind wants to discover more and to understand more. Enquiry is helpful where we have different stories about the same situation. We could ask: "What do our stories have in common, and in what ways are our stories different?" The stories may prove to be accurate, or they may be only partly accurate and benefit from the additional information, perspective and rationale revealed through the enquiry.

Good questions can help the enquiry. For example, an open question like: "What might I have overlooked?" may reveal things that we had not thought to ask about. If we find ourselves in a situation where people are making conflicting decisions and actions, then we have several different stories. We can argue about whether one decision or action is better than another, and to do so we use advocacy. To end up with aligned decisions and actions, we need greater common ground in our stories. Put simply, to change the decisions being made we must change the story. The most helpful enquiry, therefore, is one that checks the story and tries to understand how it is informing the thinking and understanding. A question like "What led me, or you, to interpret what happened the way we did?" is a good starting point.

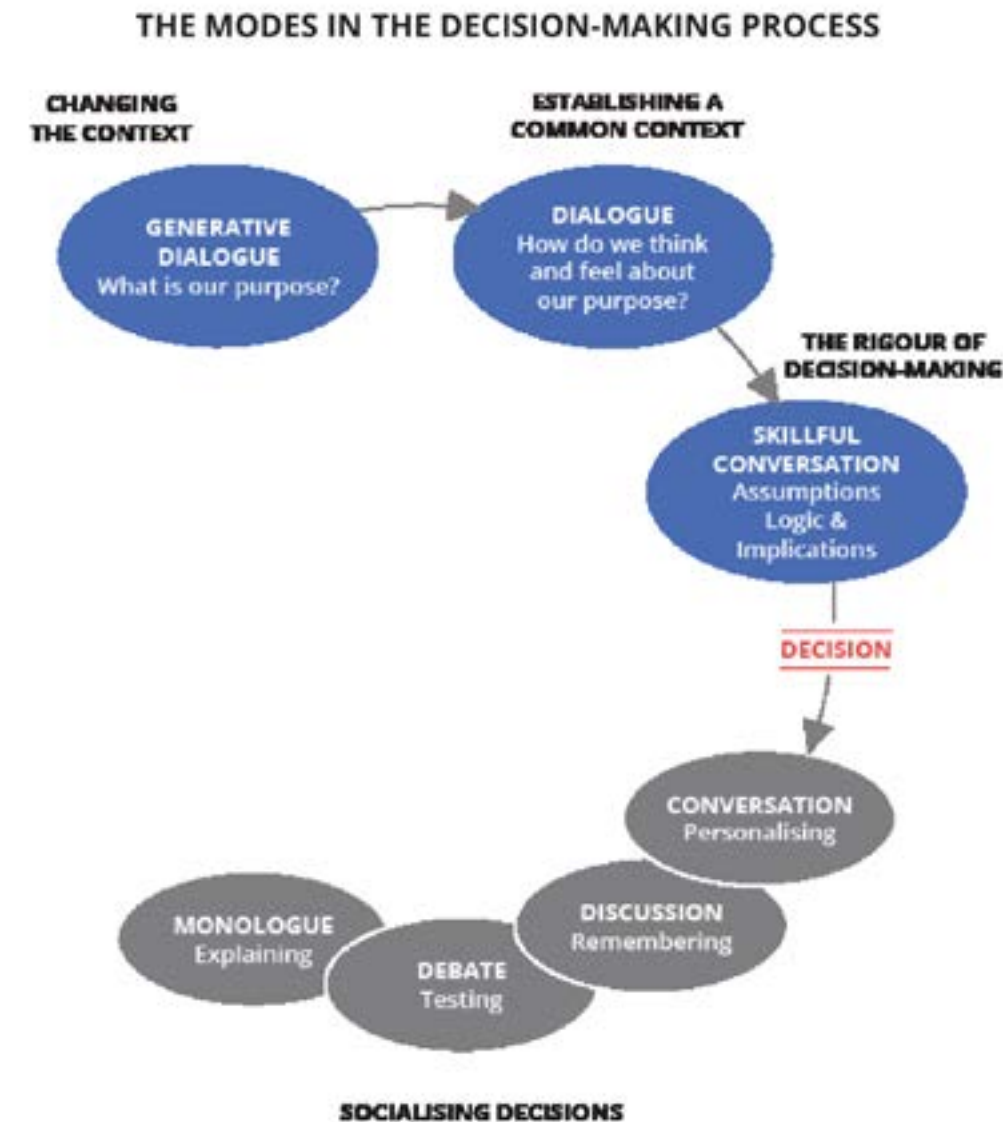
Our Decisions Affect Others

Working in an organisation, we are authorised to make decisions within our area of responsibility, and we are accountable for those decisions. Beyond basic compliance with one's role, people can learn how to make decisions that enhance the quality of the visionary, citizen, performance and wisdom energies, all of which are needed for the joined-up delivery of resounding outcomes for the good of all.

The Modes of Talking and Thinking Together have a role to play in organizational decision-making, which is at the core of the organisation's success. The many decisions being made are aligned through ensuring there is a common story held across the organization, and particularly in the many organizational teams. The common organisational story informs the many pockets of specialised, hierarchical and locational thinking and decision-making. The best mode for decision-making is **Skilful Conversation** where the assumptions, implications, logic and reasoning are all supported and challenged thoughtfully. These elements, however, are all dependent on our sense-making story of the situation, and that includes our read of the context for the organization. **Dialogue** is needed to refresh our understanding and to ensure we are aligned with the changing context or overall situation. If we



lose that alignment, we will need to step back into **Generative Dialogue** to conceive (recognise, discover or generate) a new informing story or common context for ourselves and everyone in the organization. These three modes are coloured blue in the graphic below:



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For decisions to take root they must be socialised. We know that we make most of our decisions by rote, so these automatic decisions need monitoring. Without individual and collective attention through socialisation, we will find ourselves



regressing to patterns of behaviour based on outdated storylines. Through Dialogue, and through our decisions we have changed the storyline, but the outdated one may reappear simply through habit.

Conversation is the Mode through which we manage this individually. In conversation with others, we find we can easily translate the ongoing changes into our personal experience, attitude and disposition as we go about our daily work. This is important because it allows the changing situation to be accommodated in one's personal life as well. Similarly, **Discussion** (light-hearted chat) is an easy way for us to remind ourselves of the new situation and to accommodate it in our many meetings. Where we can't get things clear in our thinking, **Debate** is the useful mode to get everything out in the open by arguing for and against different aspects of our changing worlds. Lastly, we need **Monologue** to inspire, to guide, to include, to exhort and to bring balance to the disparate factors we are managing every day in an organisation.

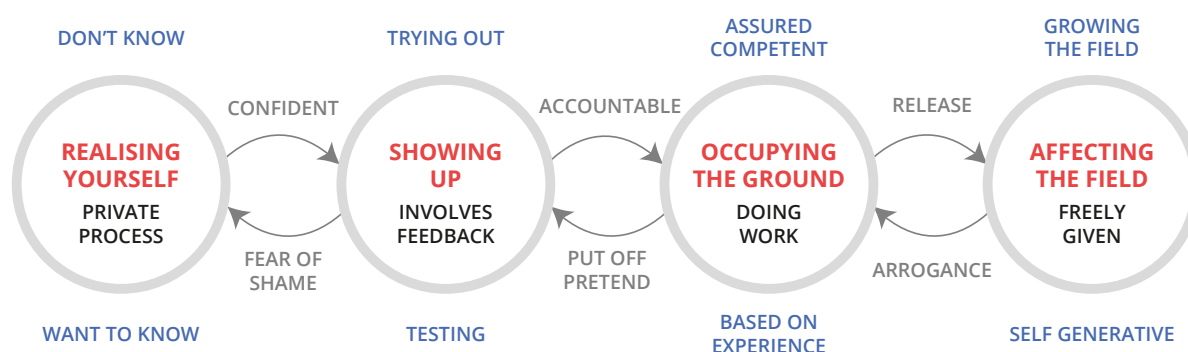




Practitioner Development: Realising Yourself, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground, and Affecting the Field

The Practitioner Development Model was designed by Peter Garrett over 15 years ago and has been used extensively by Peter and Jane. The phases in the model emerged empirically from Peter's personal and professional experiences coaching and consulting to clients and client systems. The predictable sequence of steps from naivety to wisdom involves shifts of relationship, responsibility and identity for individuals, as well as for groups, organisations, and communities.

Container Development Process



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The Container Development process above was introduced in Set 1. In Sets 2 through 8, you will be applying this framework to track your development as a Professional Dialogic Practitioner. More details can be found in [Appendix C](#). You assess your own progress by regularly reflecting on your experience with each of the skills. During the phase of Realising Yourself, you are enquiring to understand the nature of the skill so that you could write or talk about it easily and accurately.



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In the Showing Up phase you try out the new skill in a group of people and learn first-hand from your experience of how it works in, and from the reactions and responses you receive from others that provide feedback. You are Occupying the Ground when you have a reserve of past experiences and your own stories of success and failure to draw on, and you are unlikely to be Affecting the Field in just a few months, so this is largely outside of the scope of this programme. It will come later when you mature as a practitioner and your influence widens.

It should be noted that the container of interest, activity and impact grows steadily through the four phases of this framework. Realising Yourself is a private and more local enquiry, involving reading, noticing and talking with a few people. Showing Up broadens the reach as it directly impacts the whole group present. Occupying the Ground has the reach and reserve of many applications of the skill covering a wide range of people and situations, and Affecting the Field has an impact beyond your direct awareness, as people try what they hear about what you do.

All the phases continue, despite the dominant phase progressively changing. So, you are still Realising Yourself in some ways whilst you are Showing Up or Occupying the Ground. You cannot drift from one dominant phase to the next, however. It requires deliberate shifts of confidence, accountability and release - as depicted in the graphic.





Resources

Set 5 Resources can be found in [Appendix H](#), and in the Learning Centre Library.

- The Leading Energies
- Skill Development for Functionality of Communication, Quality of Understanding, and Focus of Energy
- Dialogic Decision-Making Course Field Guide
- Dialogic Decision-Making Course Facilitation Guide
- Decision-Making Process (Graphic)
- Organisational Power Map (Graphic)
- Working Dialogue (Graphic)
- Dialogue within Decision-making by Peter Garrett

Programme Resources for Practitioner Development are in [Appendix C](#):

- The Professional Dialogue Practitioner Developmental Framework.
- Self-Assessment Form for the Developmental Framework

Reflective Practice Notes are in the Learning Centre Library, to record your Set 5 Between-Sets work and read notes from other participants.



Between-Sets Work

Each Set provides learnings that are essential for Dialogue Practitioners. These learnings build on each other from set to set, growing an overall capability with dialogic skills. Participants track their developmental progress themselves by using the Developmental Framework in [Appendix C](#). Part of the learning process is to embrace the skills considered in each set and to start putting them into practice before the next set. Between-Sets Work is provided for this purpose. Participants are expected to undertake the Between-Sets Work and make a record in their Reflective Practice Notes, in the Learning Centre Library, for review by colleagues and the faculty before the subsequent set. The Between-Sets Work involves exercises and activities to help participants to understand and practice the skills introduced in each Set. At the outset of the next set, these are reviewed with other participants in reflective practice trios. The trios change each set, so that participants get the chance to work in a smaller grouping with all the other participants.

Reading

Read the Set 5 materials in the ADWOW Field Guide.

Additional resources for Set 5 are available in the [Appendix H](#).

Self-Assessment

Please update your Self-Assessment and share the new version with the faculty before Set 6.

- Check your Self-Assessment more thoroughly than you may have done in the past by referring to the Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework and accompanying descriptions to review where you now are. This Self-Assessment will change in the coming months, and beyond the programme.

Between Sets Practice

- Identify and design your between-sets learning to move yourself along the developmental framework with your practice group and in all your interactions. Attend to the Dialogue Practices and the Leading Energies.
- In the areas where you have moved on from Showing Up and are Occupying the Ground - Identify another person, ideally a working colleague, and look at their strengths and constraints. See how you can help them expand their effectiveness given what you are learning, in particular using the Dialogue Practices and the Leading Energies.



A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING: BRINGING DIALOGUE INTO THE ROOM

DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK

FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION

	SELF DEVELOPMENT					SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS				
	RY		SU		OG	RY		SU		OG
CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT										
LANGUAGES & PARADIGMS										
DIALOGIC ACTIONS										
MODES OF TALKING & THINKING TOGETHER										
DIALOGUE PRACTICES										
LEADING ENERGIES										
PRACTITIONER FACILITATION										
PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT										

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Personal Development

During this set we considered the various internal identities we each hold. Try becoming more familiar with the range of inner identities you have and how they change according to the situation and audience:

- See if you can recognize the dominant identity from which other people are speaking as you interact with them.
- Notice how it affects their understanding of you, and your understanding of them.
- Where your narrative or story differs from another person's description of the situation, enquire to find out why:
- What is the root of the different understandings?
- Where the difference is significant, what is the cause of the fragmentation?
- Is it caused by different information? Different assumptions? Different reasoning? Is it rooted in different sub-cultural identities?



Preparation for the next set

Add notes of your Between-Sets Work to your **Reflective Practice Notes** in the Learning Centre Library on the Friday that falls **four days before the start of the next Set**. Posting them then gives others the chance to see what you are doing and learning, and where your Between-Sets Work is taking you. Include your activities (what did you do or try to do?) and your ongoing learning (including, What questions are you now asking yourself?). Failure can provide as much learning as success! This enables your Reflective Practice Trio colleagues to think with you more helpfully in the next set.

Becoming an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner

Your notes and reflections





SET 6 – DIALOGUE FACILITATION (LOCUS OF ATTENTION) AND BECOMING A DIALOGUE PRACTITIONER (DIALOGIC INTENTION)

A unique relationship develops among team members who enter into dialogue regularly. They develop a deep trust that cannot help but carry over into discussions. They develop a richer understanding of the uniqueness of each person's point of view. Moreover, they experience how larger understandings emerge by holding one's own point of view "gently". They learn to master the art of "holding" a position, rather than being "held by" their positions.

Peter M. Senge
The Fifth Discipline, 1990

The facilitator's attention is on the people, the content and the process. Facilitation is a role of enabling the three to play together generatively to create a common meaning and a common understanding. The skilled practitioner is, at the same time, reading the changing container, structure and context. This enables the dialogue to extend itself into the fabric of the organisation or community. Changes in the context occur continually. The organisation changes, the market shifts, legislation interferes, currencies gain or lose value, public opinion weighs in, the environment has an impact. Changes in context require responses in the structure and the container if the dialogue is going to contribute generatively. The dialogue becomes part of the pulse, and the ebb and flow. It provides a forum of social understanding and values to be expressed, considered and felt with others.

Peter Garrett
A New Kind of Dialogue, 2021





Outline:

- Why are things now happening in the way they are?
- What is trying to happen? How can I help?

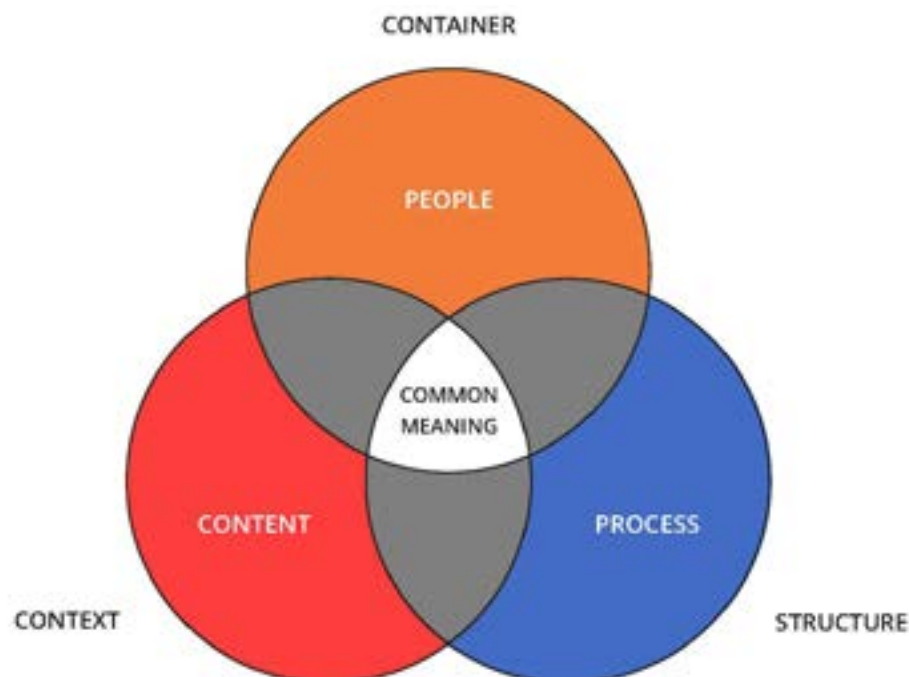
Learning and Development Objectives:

1. Gain knowledge, understanding, and experience of how to bring together the multiple factors present in any group of people, into a developmental process, by drawing on the dialogic skills from Set 6:
 - Facilitation: Locus of Attention
 - Dialogic Principles
2. Development as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner through consideration of your disposition towards your work, drawing on:
 - Practitioner: Dialogic Intention
3. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of your identity as it is affected by the sub-cultural groupings you belong to.
4. Identify a feasible plan to apply the Set 6 learnings, along with your learnings from earlier Sets, to build a different way of working. Basing the plan on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work



Practitioner Facilitation: Locus of Attention

Dialogic facilitation requires being attentive to a range of different but interrelated factors and participating in a way that enables their development for the benefit of those involved. Peter Garrett and Jane Ball designed the Locus of Attention as a simple framework in support of dialogic facilitation. It helps for frameworks to be simple so that they can be used in the moment, when it is easy to become pre-occupied with one aspect and thereby to lose the flow of the whole process. This framework shows where you place or locate your interest and attention to see what of significance is happening and emerging. The three key aspects are the People, the Content and the Process. The skill is to track all three, to support the development of each, and to notice how their interrelated features affect the dynamics and flow. Back of the people is the Container, that they are building and that affects everyone. Back of the Content is the Context that is always changing, sometimes gradually, sometimes suddenly. And back of the Process is the Structure, of the group, the organisation, and so on.



Facilitation: Locus of Attention
Developmental Intervention

Acknowledgement: P Garrett & Jane Ball

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The People

The People are the individuals participating in the Dialogue. Their collective presence is the Container, and that collective Container in turn affects how each of them behaves individually. If the container has an edge of uncertainty, some will require more safety before revealing what they think and feel, whilst others will thrive on the adventure of the unknown challenge at hand. Some will want to check the resilience of the container before stating their position, whilst others will deliberately work to change the container, wanting to be heard and understood.

Noticing all of this helps the practitioner to get a sense of the stage of development for any individual in the matter being considered at this stage of the Dialogue. In terms of Container Development, they may be Realising Themselves, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground or Affecting the Field. Helpfully, the facilitator has an ongoing curiosity. Is that individual Showing-Up? Am I hearing the emergence of Affect in their words? What is causing their frustration? And so on. The level of development will define the ability of each participant to help uncover the underlying inclusive storyline. The practitioner is therefore seeking to read the situation and to support the ongoing development of each individual, and of the group as a whole.

Often, a compounding factor is the patterns of relationship between participants, including the subcultural groupings of participants with a common identity. Each subcultural group has common values and memories that affect their sense-making stories, and their interactions with other subcultural groupings. These can be helpful or dysfunctional. The patterns of behaviour may need to be named (through a bystander) for them to be understood and incorporated into the common storyline to achieve a common feeling (koinonia) as well as a common meaning.

The Content

The Content is the spoken words that could be transcribed. That includes a high level precis or succinct summary of the overall development of what was talked about, but it also includes the explicit phrases and words spoken by individuals that deepen the meaning or trigger reactions, and who said what. A good facilitator, for example, will be able to recall the content and tone of each participant's check-in response, as well as their contributions during the whole meeting. The facilitator will be interested in what is said, and more subtly in what a speaker may be implying through their words, intentionally or unintentionally. Implications are open to interpretation and misunderstanding. Increased transparency helps, with people being encouraged to be more explicit about what they mean.

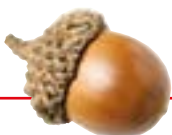


The content depends on the context within which people are meeting. This could be a group of people who know each other and the history of their common situation well, or a first meeting of people who have little understanding of the parts played by others. Decisions may be imminent, or not to be taken for some time. The chapter in the sense-making story may be opening or closing. Key participants may be present or absent. These and other factors provide the context within which the Dialogue is occurring and naturally will affect the content of the considerations.

Underlying all the content is an emergent common story. A circle could be drawn around the group that places everyone in the same current situation, whilst the stories they are telling describe the participants' different circumstances and memories of the past. There is a way in which these can all be incorporated into a common storyline. That is what the practitioner is listening for - the common story in which everyone has played a part, and in which everyone will continue to play a part in the future. That enables the establishment of a common meaning amongst a group of people and is one of the primary purposes of Professional Dialogue.

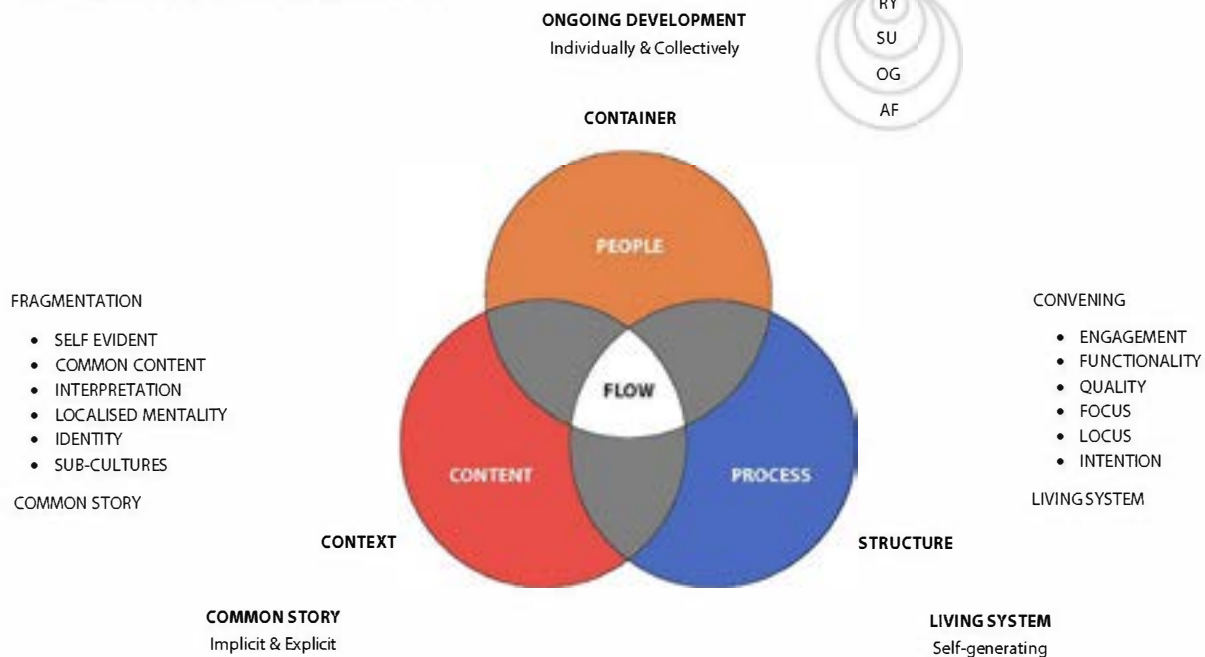
The Process

The dialogue could be likened to a stream of water. The process is the journey of the dialogue, the path it takes and the changing flow, currents and direction of the route. This process is dependent on the structure within which the Dialogue occurs, like banks that contain the flow. For example, it depends on the numbers involved, the physical setting of the meeting and the timing. A large group gathering for the first of a series of meetings is very different from a handful of people meeting just once. There are defined features to any journey, each of which affects the fullness of the process. The practitioner knows this and supports the changing journey. The emphasis and needs are different when convening the participants; then closing the door and gathering people's attention; ensuring adequate levels of functionality; deepening the quality of participation; and drawing the conversation or dialogue to a focus. There are frameworks to 'read' each of these, and skills to develop or deepen them as is required at any time. It becomes apparent that there are phases where things build or dissipate, marked by **turning points**. These turning points mark the passage of alignment of the various narratives as seemingly polar opposites are incorporated into the new common story. From the facilitator's perspective, it is always a matter of timing. Having discerned what needs to be done, what is the most helpful point in the process at which to intervene?



Facilitation: Locus of Attention

Making sense of a changing situation



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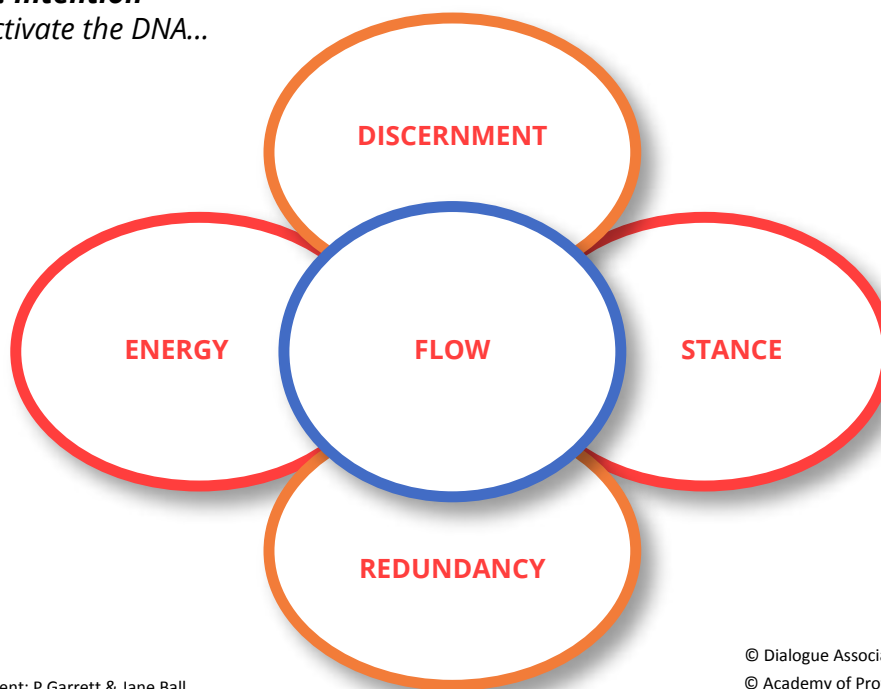
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Dialogue Practitioner: Dialogic Intention

The Dialogic Intention has been implicit and inherent in all the material already considered in this programme, *A Different Way of Working*, because the curriculum is based on the Integrated Dialogue Model. This level of understanding, covering the disposition of the Professional Dialogue Practitioner, was codified by Peter Garrett from his practice as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner over many years. The Dialogic Intention incorporates the right use of Discernment, Stance, Redundancy and Energy to enable a generative flow as depicted in this graphic. The second graphic shows how each facet of the intention ties back to David Bohm's Implicate Change ontology.

Facilitation: Intention
include to activate the DNA...

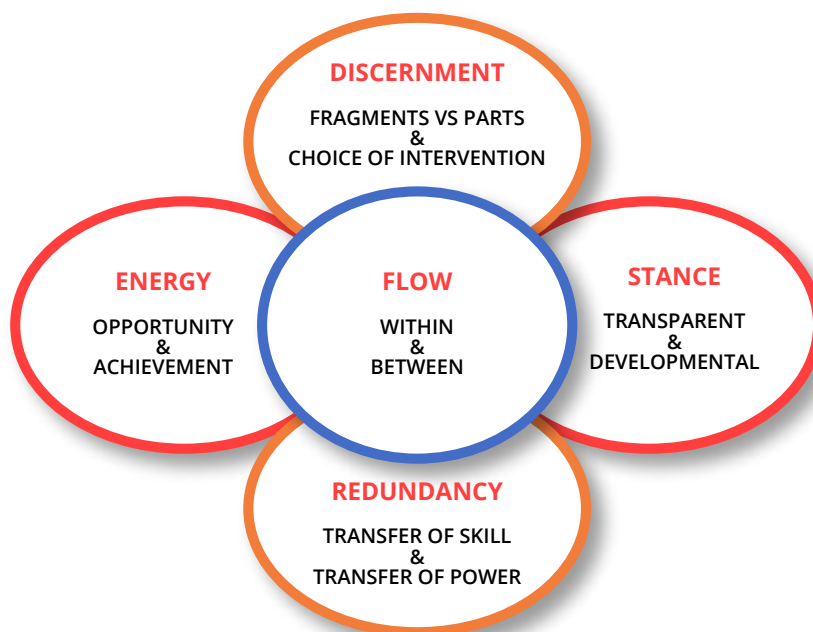


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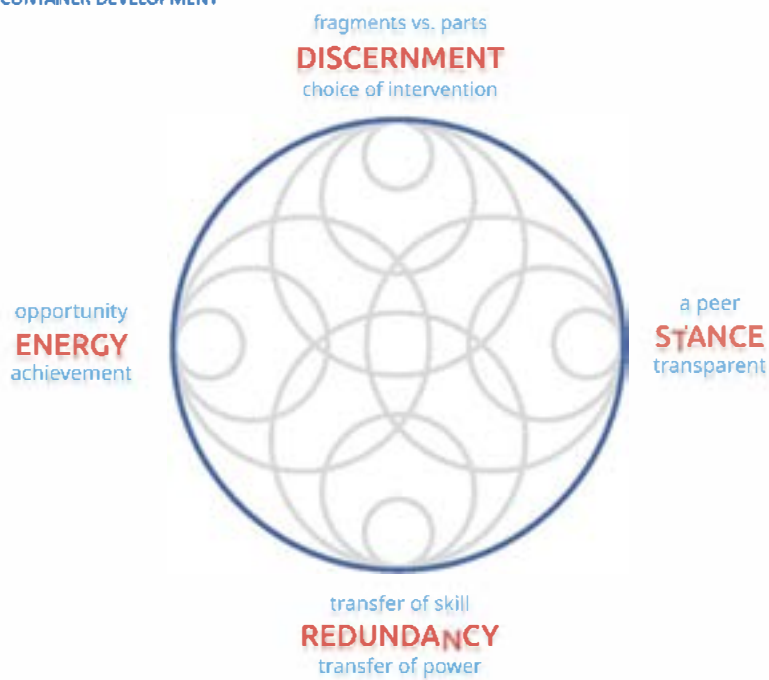
Facilitation: Intention
include to activate the DNA...



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**DIALOGIC INTENTION FOR SKILL TRANSFER
THROUGH CONTAINER DEVELOPMENT**



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Discernment

At any time, Discernment is needed about the level of fragmentation amongst those involved, and therefore what is needed to realise a common understanding in the room between all the participants. The practitioner is not trying to get the group together – but to enable the participants to become aware of how they are already together and affecting each other as they interact within a single living system. Whatever plan might have been made in advance, in the moment the practitioner is more helpfully disposed to discern the opportunity and constraints of the dynamics in the room, and to act accordingly. This discernment naturally provides a sense of timing – of when to push the swing to add to its momentum, and when to let things freewheel and find their own way.

Stance

The practitioner has the facilitation challenge of working with the visible interactions between individual participants. The dynamics of these interactions are partly informed by what is happening in the room. In part, however, they are also driven by memories and shadows of past experiences. Without people necessarily being aware of this, the imprinted past leads to fixed assumptions, assumed identities and a variety of competing sub-cultural groupings. A particular Stance is required by the practitioner to work with this. Civility is required, and it is a responsibility of the practitioner that nobody is damaged by the behaviour of others. The essential interest, however, is to support the developmental growth of everyone involved, by helping them to discover what is occurring in the room and in themselves. The required stance to achieve this is for the practitioner to own their situation in the same way they would like everyone else to do. This means being helpfully open about what one is doing and why one is doing it – a transparent and developmental stance. As participants get the feel for this, they begin to act in a similar way themselves.

Redundancy

The reward for the skilful and effective Professional Dialogic Practitioner is Redundancy and that they are no longer easily distinguished from others in the room. Whatever skills they brought have not only been made available and transferred to others, but they are used by others. The practitioner has made an investment in the longer-term well-being of those involved. As a facilitator, they have successfully made themselves redundant. Instead, they have become a valuable participant in the group. It is worth noting that without this occurring the





group cannot move from Dialogue into Generative Dialogue, since the latter cannot be facilitated.

As well as transferring the skills, the practitioner needs to transfer and release the power and authority they have held. That power has been partly positional power – the authority that goes with being the designated person to facilitate the group – and partly the reputational power that the buck stops with them, and they will step in when needed. This involves give and take – and timing. The practitioner gives (releases) the power to the group, and the group takes (steps up to assume) responsibility for how things work out. For the practitioner, the developmental phase of Affecting the Field means releasing the skills, authority and power in a way that others can assume authority alongside you, or without you.

Energy

Without energy, nothing can be done, and there can be no achievement to celebrate. Energy is needed to do work, and understanding the nature of energy is an important aspect of a practitioner's profession. There is always energy in any system, but the challenge is to access and activate it. Sometimes it is mainly latent energy that is locked into the way the system operates and is difficult to release. More commonly there is potential energy that can be more easily accessed by identifying a need or an opportunity of some kind. By naming the need or opportunity, engaging the relevant people, and releasing the energy, a generative cycle starts to unfold. The flow of Energy opens the way to take on greater opportunities and challenges, building the momentum to enable people to recognise, incorporate and move beyond deeper levels of fragmentation.

Flow

The dialogic intention has an outcome. The common sense established amongst a group of people, which is the aim of Dialogue, turns out to be a flow (an unfolding meaning) rather than a static or fixed thing. At its heart is the flow of Generative Dialogue. As singular facilitation falls away this generative level emerges. The Generative Dialogue has a life of its own which is enriched through the awareness and participation of those present and is commonly generated and commonly owned. It is a shared understanding that informs the behaviours, decisions, and actions of all participants in a living way, rather than through the vagaries of past experience and memory.



Practitioner Ethics

Professionalism

Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners are expected to maintain professional standards and to:

- Embody the standards defined by the Academy's PSAB (Professional Standards and Accreditation Board)
- Have integrity, speak and act honestly, and act for the well-being of the whole.
- Care for the well-being of those involved and intervenes if someone is vulnerable to being damaged by the misuse of power or authority.
- Respect the confidentiality of the client, participants, and system.

Ethics

Behaving ethically means acting for the good of the whole. This is achieved by helping people to discover a valid understanding or true story about the past, present and future in which everyone has a valuable part to play. The Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner:

- Knows that their own presence, intentions, speech, and actions are a part of the overall dynamic being experienced with others.
- Aims to realise the Dialogic Intentions and the developmental learning experience inherent in that framework.
- Has a reflective practice that includes repeatedly preparing in advance for meetings and reflecting afterwards on what happened to deepen first-hand learning.
- Gives priority to learning first-hand with others from the dialogic experience, in preference to being an advocate for or talking about dialogue.

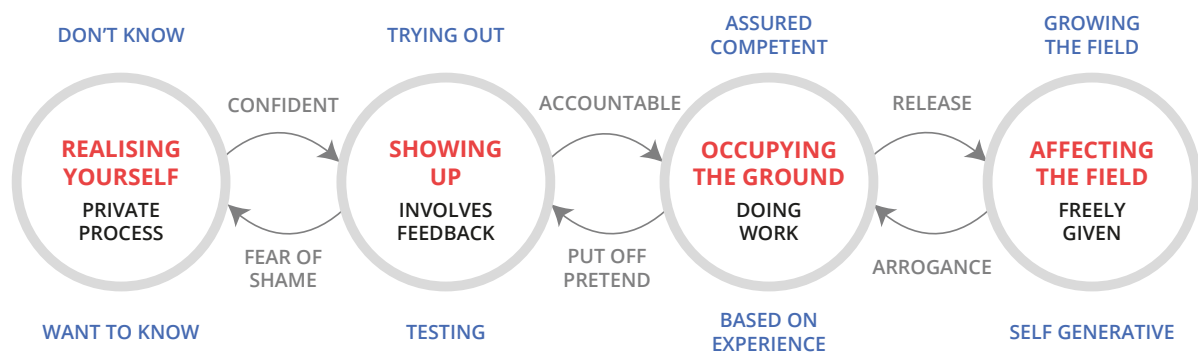




Practitioner Development: Realising Yourself, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground, and Affecting the Field

The Practitioner Development Model was designed by Peter Garrett over 15 years ago and has been used extensively by Peter and Jane. The phases in the model emerged empirically from Peter's personal and professional experiences coaching and consulting to clients and client systems. The predictable sequence of steps from naivety to wisdom involves shifts of relationship, responsibility and identity for individuals, as well as for groups, organisations, and communities.

Container Development Process



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Acknowledgement: P Garrett

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The Container Development process above was introduced in Set 1. In Sets 2 through 8, you will be applying this framework to track your development as a Professional Dialogic Practitioner. More details can be found in [Appendix C](#). You assess your own progress by regularly reflecting on your experience with each of the skills. During the phase of Realising Yourself, you are enquiring to understand the nature of the skill so that you could write or talk about it easily and accurately. In the Showing Up phase you try out the new skill in a group of people and learn

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first-hand from your experience of how it works in, and from the reactions and responses you receive from others that provide feedback. You are Occupying the Ground when you have a reserve of past experiences and your own stories of success and failure to draw on, and you are unlikely to be Affecting the Field in just a few months, so this is largely outside of the scope of this programme. It will come later when you mature as a practitioner and your influence widens.

It should be noted that the container of interest, activity and impact grows steadily through the four phases of this framework. Realising Yourself is a private and more local enquiry, involving reading, noticing and talking with a few people. Showing Up broadens the reach as it directly impacts the whole group present. Occupying the Ground has the reach and reserve of many applications of the skill covering a wide range of people and situations, and Affecting the Field has an impact beyond your direct awareness, as people try what they hear about what you do.

All the phases continue, despite the dominant phase progressively changing. So, you are still Realising Yourself in some ways whilst you are Showing Up or Occupying the Ground. You cannot drift from one dominant phase to the next, however. It requires deliberate shifts of confidence, accountability and release - as depicted in the graphic.





Resources

Set 6 Resources can be found in [Appendix I](#), and in the Learning Centre Library.

- Facilitation: Locus of Attention
- Facilitation: Locus of Attention (One-page Graphic)
- Skill Development for Functionality, Quality, Focus and Intentions
- Practitioner: Dialogic Intention
- Practitioner: Dialogic Intention Step 1 (Graphic)

Programme Resources for Practitioner Development are in [Appendix C](#):

- The Professional Dialogue Practitioner Developmental Framework.
- Self-Assessment Form for the Developmental Framework

Reflective Practice Notes are in the Learning Centre Library, to record your Set 6 Between-Sets work and read notes from other participants.



Between-Sets Work

Each Set provides learnings that are essential for Dialogue Practitioners. These learnings build on each other from set to set, growing an overall capability with dialogic skills. Participants track their developmental progress themselves by using the Developmental Framework in [Appendix C](#). Part of the learning process is to embrace the skills considered in each set and to start putting them into practice before the next set. Between-Sets Work is provided for this purpose. Participants are expected to undertake the Between-Sets Work and make a record in their Reflective Practice Notes, in the Learning Centre Library, for review by colleagues and the faculty before the subsequent set. The Between-Sets Work involves exercises and activities to help participants to understand and practice the skills introduced in each Set. At the outset of the next set, these are reviewed with other participants in reflective practice trios. The trios change each set, so that participants get the chance to work in a smaller grouping with all the other participants.

Reading

Read the Set 6 materials in the ADWOW Field Guide.

Additional resources for Set 6 are available in the [Appendix I](#).

Your Self-Assessment

Review your self-assessment with reference to the 26-page **Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework** – in the **Library**, under **References** and [Appendix C](#) in this Field Guide.

- So far, we have covered **Check-ins** and **Check-outs**, **Expressive Languages** and **Organisational Paradigms**, and **Dialogic Actions**, the **Modes of Engagement**, **Dialogue Practices**, the **Leading Energies** – and this set the Locus of Attention for **Practitioner Facilitation**.

Between Sets Practice

Identify and design your between-sets learning to move yourself along the developmental framework with your practice group and in all your interactions.

- Incorporate the Locus of Attention – People, Content and Process – into your field work.
- In the areas where you have moved on from Showing Up and are Occupying the Ground, identify another person, ideally a working colleague, and assess





their strengths and constraints. See how you can help them expand their effectiveness given what you are learning. In particular, draw on the Dialogue Practices and the Leading Energies.

A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING: BRINGING DIALOGUE INTO THE ROOM
DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK
 FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION

	SELF DEVELOPMENT					SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS				
	RY		SU		OG	RY		SU		OG
CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT										
LANGUAGES & PARADIGMS										
DIALOGIC ACTIONS										
MODES OF TALKING & THINKING TOGETHER										
DIALOGUE PRACTICES										
LEADING ENERGIES										
PRACTITIONER FACILITATION										
PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT										

Acknowledgement: J Ball

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Personal Development

We talked in Set 6 about how much thought is held collectively. Groupings of people draw on the same stories to make sense of what they see, hear and read. They choose the same sources of information, and have their views confirmed by people who hold similar views to their own.

Reflecting on an organisation you know well, try to identify some of the sub-cultural groupings, where people hold the same interpretation or story about the past and the future.

- What are key incidents and defining moments in their stories? What logic or reasoning do they use?



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- Can you recognize lines of organisational fragmentation?
- How would people in other sub-cultural groupings describe you? This is your reputation, and the part of your identity held by others.
- How selective are you in choosing your sources of information, and why do you choose to read or listen to what you do?
- Can you recognise some of the sub-cultural groupings that you belong to yourself?

Preparation for the next set

Add notes of your Between-Sets Work to your **Reflective Practice Notes** in the Learning Centre Library on the Friday that falls **four days before the start of the next Set**. Posting them then gives others the chance to see what you are doing and learning, and where your Between-Sets Work is taking you. Include your activities (what did you do or try to do?) and your ongoing learning (including, What questions are you now asking yourself?). Failure can provide as much learning as success! This enables your Reflective Practice Trio colleagues to think with you more helpfully in the next set.

Becoming an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner

Your notes and reflections





SET 7 – DIALOGUE PRINCIPLES AND PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Consider a tree for example, which grows from a seed. Actually, the seed makes a negligible contribution to the material substance of the plant and to the energy needed to make it grow. The substance comes from the air, water and soil, while the energy comes from the sun. In the absence of a seed, all these move in an implicate order of a relatively low level of subtlety. However, through the information contained in the DNA molecule, the overall process is subtly altered so that it produces a living tree instead.

David Bohm

Wholeness and the Implicate Order, 1980

The microcosm is the seed of change, and the participants in dialogue release the DNA for developmental growth: The latent energy that is locked in the situation is loosened as the Dialogue Practitioner engages the various sub-groupings and discovers the systemic shifts of power and humanising required for vitality. This informs the convening of a microcosm that embodies the pattern of the whole, or the macrocosm. That microcosm in dialogue has the potential to progressively incorporate and dissolve the fragmented dynamics of the whole, of which it is an integral part. In doing so it becomes a generative process. The practitioner uses their skills and presence to balance the power and pace of things - to ensure the energy is released generatively rather than destructively, and that no one is damaged in or by the process. They do so in a way that makes those skills available to others. They aim to thereby become redundant and leave a self-sustaining whole participatory system.

Peter Garrett

A New Kind of Dialogue, 2021, Ch 22: An Integrated Dialogue Model





Outline:

- Review and integration of the curriculum
- From learning to using skills
- From trainer, facilitator, and coach to Dialogue Practitioner

Learning and Development Objectives:

1. Gain knowledge and understanding of the generative process of Dialogue, and the role of a Dialogue Practitioner in bringing about a generative process among a group of people, based on:
 - The Dialogue Principles
 - Review of the ADWOW dialogue skills from Sets 1-6
2. Personal development through enhanced self-awareness and exploration of your changing identity as you become a professional dialogue practitioner.
3. Have the confidence and understanding to complete your self-assessment and developmental plan as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner, drawing on:
 - Professional Dialogue Practitioner Development Framework
 - Between Sets Work
 - Accreditation process and timeline



Dialogue Principles

The Dialogue Principles are the core understanding of dialogue, and the distillation of the essential aspects of vitality within a living system. They were designed by Peter Garrett and Bill Isaacs in the 1990s. As depicted in the graphic below, they are Unfolding Potential, Enfolding Coherence, Holographic Participation and Proprioceptive Awareness. They articulate the underlying foundational ontology of dialogue, namely David Bohm's Implicate Order. These Dialogue Principles are an octave above the level of skill, and they shape and inform the various dialogic skills - and their developmental sequence: from engagement and functionality to quality and focus, and the sustained intention leading to generative dialogue and flow. The Dialogue Principles embody a continuous process that extends and enriches the ground out of which the relationships between the different participants arise.

Unfolding POTENTIAL

Living things grow by unfolding from an ever-present latent potential. The physical metaphor for Unfolding Potential is the acorn. The acorn holds the potential in its DNA, but it needs to be in moist soil to unfold, by germinating and starting to grow. The environment is then able to unfold through the acorn to take the form of an oak tree. There is a potential opportunity in every situation, to be sensed, realised and unfolded in the consciousness of those involved, so that it can take form.

Enfolding COHERENCE

Living things are enfolded back into the whole to nourish their source. The physical metaphor for Enfolding Coherence is the aging oak trees that die, disintegrate and are absorbed back into the earth from which they arose. In doing so they enrich the soil for further cycles of growth. This is a way of describing how the value of what has been achieved is absorbed into those involved, as experience that informs and enriches their understanding and capability.

Holographic PARTICIPATION

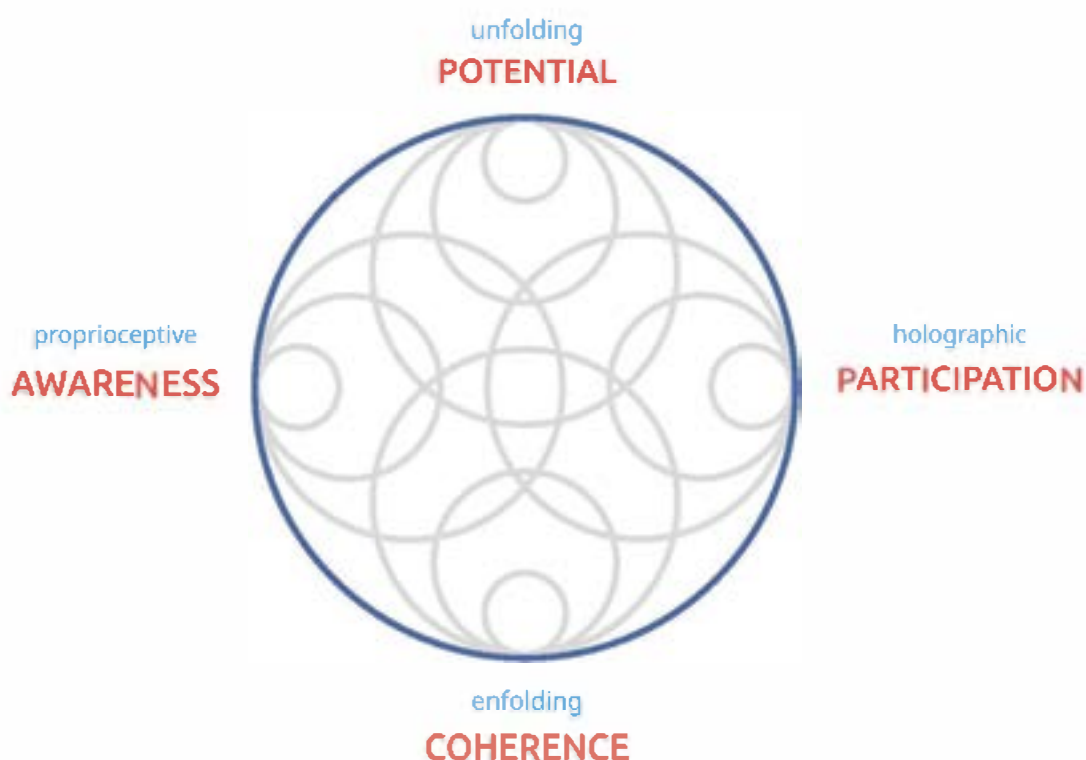
Every part is embedded and embodied in the whole. The physical metaphor for Holographic Participation is the acorn that produces the oak tree, and the oak tree that produces acorns. In this ongoing unfolding cycle, every part of the living system is inter-related, and the whole is inextricably contained within each part. What is going on inside us is inseparable from what is going on outside us, and the discovery of this places us in the flow of the whole,



Proprioceptive AWARENESS

Becoming consciously attentive to the implicit order of wholeness behind the explicit form is the key. The physical metaphor for Proprioceptive Awareness is the thin external layer of living bark on the substantially dead trunk of the oak tree. Only the external layer of bark is alive and carries the rising sap for the seasonal growth of the leaves, flowers and fruit. The internal dead wood of the trunk is essential to hold up the tree. It carries the record of annual rings and is comparable to the thought (past thinking) that reliably sustains our habitual behaviour. The thinner layer of bark is comparable to consciously aware thinking that discerns and sustains the living process. They are inter-related, inter-dependent and rise and fall together.

Just as white light can be refracted to show it is made up of the different colours of the rainbow, so the flow of the living system is here displayed as its four incorporated elements.



Acknowledgement: P Garrett & J Ball

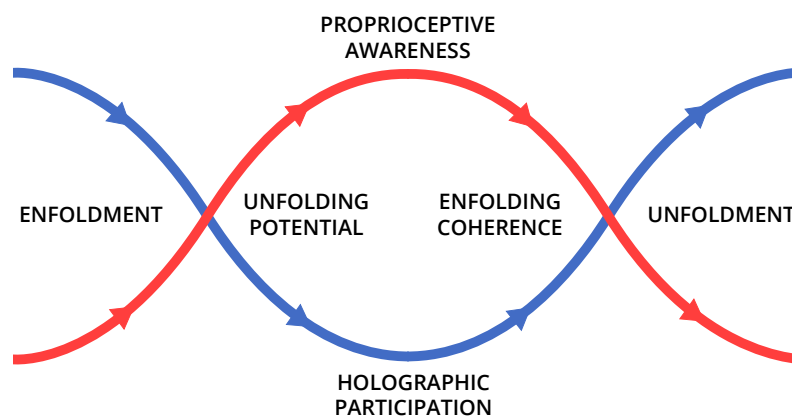
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In the next graphic below, the Dialogue Principles are displayed as a process in time. Each cycle of generation (such as any meeting of people) has an implicit opportunity (**Unfolding Potential**). That opportunity can be discerned through enquiry and drawn into the possibility of becoming realised or achieved in explicit form. Doing so depends on the in-the-moment discernment (**Proprioceptive Awareness**) awareness of knowing what is needed as it is needed - and the aligned action (**Holographic Participation**) of those involved doing what is needed when it is needed. This sustained activity leads to the potential taking form, and then that whole process being taken received as first-hand experiential learning to enrich the whole (**Enfolding Coherence**).

A dialogue practitioner's reflective practice follows just the same sequence. The practitioner considers the potential need and opportunity in the upcoming meeting, and that preparation draws those possibilities a step closer. During the meeting the practitioner is attentively aware of what is occurring and participates in a way enhances things for the benefit of all involved. After the meeting, the reflections about the meeting enfold the available learning to add to the experience and growing capability of the practitioner.

Principles of a Living Process...



Acknowledgement: P Garrett & J Ball

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Review

We have achieved many things during this programme. Firstly, a range of dialogic skills have been introduced in a particular sequence. We followed the typical sequence to get any group of people into dialogue. Namely: find out who is in the room; get people engaged with one another; deal with superficial confusions and dysfunctionality; deepen the quality of the exchanges; and then create a focus for the considerations. Towards the end we have been concentrating on learning the facilitation skills and practitioner skills to do all of that. You have been tracking your ongoing skill development in this regard using the Container Development Model.

We have deliberately used this first-hand learning model that is fundamental to dialogue. We have introduced introductory activities, frameworks and book learning (Realising Yourself); then opportunities with colleagues in the programme and Between-Sets Work assignments to learn through doing (Showing Up); had enough practice time over the six months to gain confidence and competence with some of the earlier skills (Occupying the Ground); and in time no doubt to influence others you will never meet (Affecting the Field).

Our interest is to have you on your way, able to continue your own learning and to transfer your knowledge and experience to others. That will give us the confidence to accredit you. We expect everyone to end the programme with a Self-Development Plan. If you are not yet sufficiently competent and confident for accreditation, then your plan should define the steps needed to become ready for accreditation.



Facilitation: Locus of Attention Process & Structure



INCLUDE STRUCTURE

PURPOSE

SUB-CULTURAL GROUPINGS

SCOPE: TIME + NUMBERS
RESOURCES

PROCESS DEVELOPMENT



Acknowledgement: P Garrett & J Ball

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Accreditation Process and Timeline

ADWOW Accreditation requires that participants learn through first-hand experience and second-hand accounts, work with Dialogue as a mode, a practice, a process and as story, and to use Professional Dialogue™ foundational skills to facilitate generative outcomes and reach sustainable decisions. The intention of Professional Dialogue™ is to transfer skills from the Practitioner to others, thereby making their role redundant. This requires additional competencies:

- introducing Professional Dialogue™ to new groupings using an experiential and participatory process
- using facilitated learning to enable people to use Professional Dialogue™ foundational skills in their practice, and
- coaching others to put Professional Dialogue™ to work.

The Academy of Professional Dialogue is responsible for conferring accreditation status on participants who have successfully demonstrated the skills and competencies outlined in this programme. Once the ADWOW programme ends, the participants will meet with the faculty to determine eligibility and timing of future accreditation. The Academy meets once a quarter throughout the year, so the earliest a participant will be accredited is in the Fall of the year that they attended the ADWOW programme.

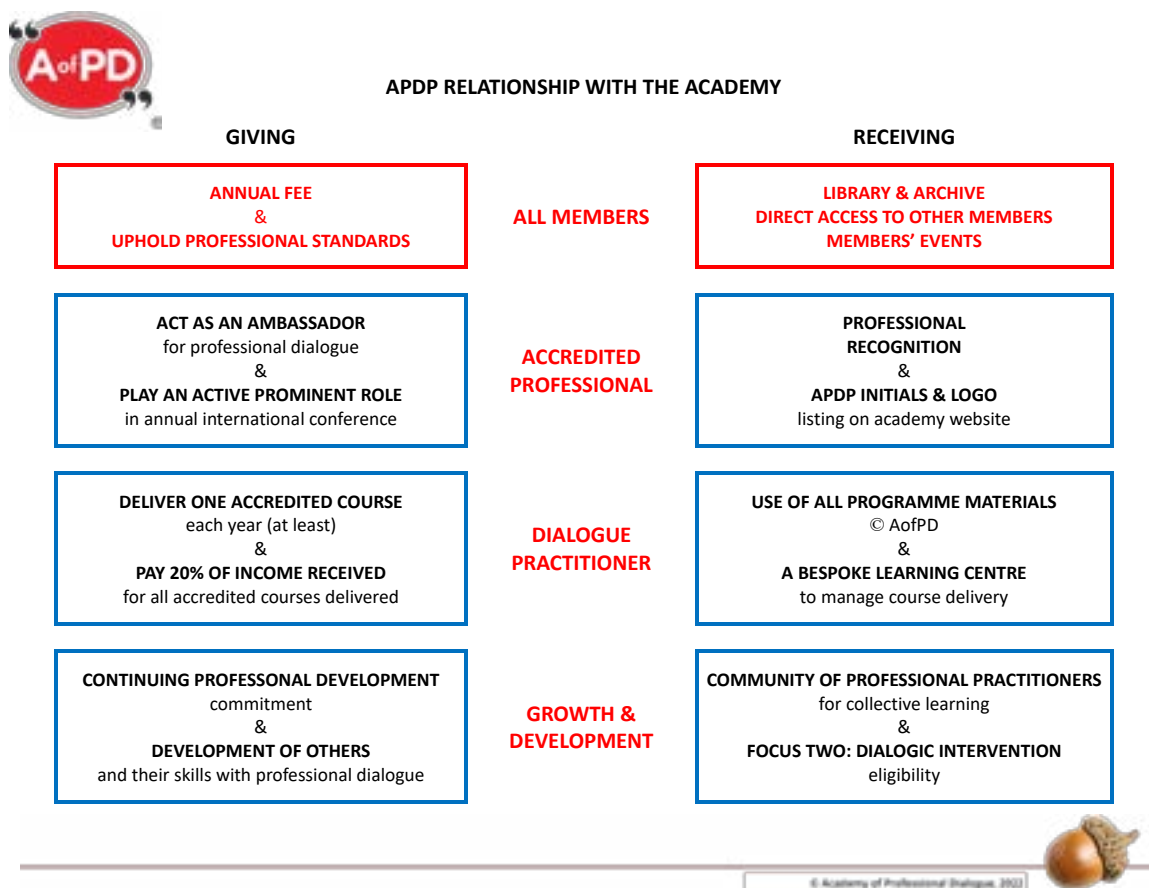


Expectations of APDPs and being Involved in the Academy

The APDP relationship with the Academy relies on balanced giving and receiving. Whether you are a member or an accredited Dialogue Professional, this is a robust partnership that furthers our personal and Academy goals of dissolving fragmentation in collective and individual awareness and understanding, and to encourage coherent participation.

The Academy's overall aims are to inspire people to transform organisations and communities through Dialogue, acknowledge those who are engaged in effective Professional Dialogue™ work, support people who want to learn how to practice Dialogue, and to develop the breadth and depth of the whole field of Professional Dialogue™.

The graphic below outlines the expectations of Professional Dialogue™ Practitioners, and the many ways that the Academy provides support and resources for your ongoing learning and development.





Self-Assessment and Development Plan

The Developmental Framework is based on the Container Development Model. The first steps are a progression from Realising Yourself to Showing Up to Occupying the Ground, followed by the same sequence of steps to transfer these skills to others. Throughout this programme, you have been assessing your own progress by reflecting on your experience with each of the skills.

The Self-Assessment framework provides a way of tracking the progress of your own developmental skill learning and helps you to clarify where to put your attention to grow further. How effectively you transfer the core Professional Dialogue skills to others will depend on how well you recognise where they are in their own developmental learning process. Whether you are coaching individuals or groupings, what you offer depends on your assessment about where they are and what is the next developmental step for them.

The final phase usually takes the longest time, because you are giving away freely what you know. You help to establish a self-generating process of growth for everyone involved. This is also a challenge to the ego and your identity, however, because at this point of success you become redundant. The seeds are sown, and they will grow in their own unique way.

You have been encouraged to do regular self-assessments throughout the programme. Everything is provided for participants to achieve the first step of Realising Yourself, in the form of articles in the Learning Centre library, activities within our sessions together and opportunities for you to raise questions within and between sessions. The faculty anticipates significant developmental learning during the programme with the recurring iterative cycles of preparing, doing, and reflecting.

Towards the close of the programme, you will be asked to show your self-assessment to your colleagues in small groupings. They will support and challenge your self-assessment based on what they have seen during our eight Sets of three half-day (totalling pre-scheduled 96 hrs). Having received the benefit of this peer assessment input from other participants, your self-assessment is then considered by the faculty for their response. The faculty is looking for assurance that participants are making good progress on their learning journey to becoming a Professional Dialogue Practitioner. Some will be accredited at the first meeting



of the Academy following the programme (the Academy meets four times a year). Some participants may need additional time to practice and demonstrate their proficiency before becoming accredited. If someone is not immediately accredited, the faculty will support their developmental plan so that they know what they still need to do to achieve accreditation.





Resources

Set 7 Resources can be found in [Appendix J](#), and in the Learning Centre Library.

- Skill Development for Functionality, Quality, Focus, Intention & Principles
- Principles of a Living Process (Graphic)
- ADWOW Skills for Process Development – Dialogue in the Room
- Academy of Professional Dialogue Education (Graphic)
- APDP Relationship with the Academy (Graphic)

Also see the [Academy of Professional Dialogue website](#).

Programme Resources for Practitioner Development are in [Appendix C](#):

- Developmental Framework – Participant Form for Self-Assessment & Development Plan
- The Professional Dialogue Practitioner Developmental Framework.

Reflective Practice Notes are in the Learning Centre Library, to record your Set 7 Between-Sets work and read notes from other participants.



Between-Sets Work

Each Set provides learnings that are essential for Dialogue Practitioners. These learnings build on each other from set to set, growing an overall capability with dialogic skills. Participants track their developmental progress themselves by using the Developmental Framework in [Appendix C](#). Part of the learning process is to embrace the skills considered in each set and to start putting them into practice before the next set. Between-Sets Work is provided for this purpose. Participants are expected to undertake the Between-Sets Work and make a record in their Reflective Practice Notes, in the Learning Centre Library, for review by colleagues and the faculty before the subsequent set. The Between-Sets Work involves exercises and activities to help participants to understand and practice the skills introduced in each Set. At the outset of the next set, these are reviewed with other participants in reflective practice trios. The trios change each set, so that participants get the chance to work in a smaller grouping with all the other participants.

Reading

Read the Set 7 materials in the ADWOW Field Guide.

Additional resources for Set 7 are available in the [Appendix J](#).

Your development as a *Professional Dialogue Practitioner* is ongoing, taking you through to and beyond accreditation. We hold quarterly Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner community meetings for our continuing professional development (in July, October, January and April). They are intended for those who have been through the programme to continue to learn from one another – both those who have been accredited and those who are working towards accreditation.

Ongoing learning is based on first-hand experience working with and in groups. If you work in an organisation, or with others in their organisation, where you meet often in groups, you need little extra time because you can learn as you do your work. The helpful additional work may be a preparation and reflection plan of some kind. Others may need to convene their own groups, or join existing groups run by others. This ongoing learning is helped by having a conscious intention to do so. We recommend practitioners have a live developmental plan for this purpose and invite you to prepare a first draft for your between-sets work.

Developmental Framework – Participant Form for Self-Assessment & Development Plan





Draft Your Own Developmental Plan

Based on your current self-assessment of your own stage of development:

- **Practitioner Development:** Start with yourself as a Professional Practitioner and consider your own development overall. What do you want to realise (understand and make real), and where do you want to deepen the experiential ground on which you stand as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner? Naming these intentions is an important step to grow in stature as a practitioner.
- **Skill Development:** Next consider where to put your attention and what you can do to expand your capability into the next level for each row in your self-assessment. Consider a key step for your own self-development (the left-hand side of the assessment) and for your skill transfer to others (the right-hand side).
- **Prepare – Act – Reflect:** Develop your own pattern of preparing beforehand, doing, and reflecting afterwards. This enhances development hugely. It is particularly helpful to reflect in writing (and drawing), and to have reflective skilful conversations with a colleague who knows what you are trying to do.

Note: Short statements that you find personally challenging may be the most helpful – and respect yourself and how you do or avoid doing things – don't over-commit and give up, or under-commit and not bother to do the work...

Personal Development

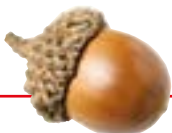
We talked in Set 7 about becoming a Professional Dialogue Practitioner.

- What are the differences do you anticipate it will make to you and your work when you are recognised as an accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner?
- How do you anticipate your inner sense of identity, and your outer reputation may change?
- Preparation for the next set

Add notes of your Between-Sets Work to your **Reflective Practice Notes** in the Learning Centre Library on the Friday that falls **four days before the start of the next Set**. Posting them then gives others the chance to see what you are doing and learning, and where your Between-Sets Work is taking you. Include your activities (what did you do or try to do?) and your ongoing learning (including, What questions are you now asking yourself?). Failure can provide as much learning as success! This enables your Reflective Practice Trio colleagues to think with you more helpfully in the next set.



Becoming an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner
Your notes and reflections





SET 8 – BECOMING AN ACCREDITED PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE PRACTITIONER (APDP)

All people are naturally intelligent, compassionate, and want to participate. If this is not evident in the way they talk, think and act together, then the reason why can be discovered through dialogue.

It seems that humans have changed little since Stone Age times, but our world has changed substantially. It is shaped by the way we now talk and think, that has become detached, fragmented and confused. The proposal that there is a single root cause is radical yet hugely encouraging. It is clear where to place our attention.

Peter Garrett
A New Kind of Dialogue, 2021

Outline:

- Enfolding the experience of the A Different Way of Working Programme
- What do I need next and why?
- Preparing for accreditation.
- Joining the professional community.

Learning Objectives:

1. Consolidate your knowledge, understanding, and experience of how to bring the multiple factors present in any group of people together into a developmental process, by drawing on the dialogic skills from all the previous Sets.
2. Clarify the distinction between being a:
 - Facilitator, including using the Locus of Attention
 - Practitioner, embodying the Dialogic Intentions.
3. Understand the way all the skills are differentiations, at basic and more subtle levels, of the Dialogue Principles.
4. Commit to continuing to give attention to your Personal Development which is the source of your effectiveness as a Practitioner.
5. Check and refine your own Development Plan, based on your Self-Assessment using the Developmental Framework, to take you beyond the end of this programme.





Self-Assessment and Development Plan

Throughout this programme, you have been assessing your own progress by reflecting on your experience with each of the skills. As mentioned in Set 7, the framework provides a way of tracking the progress of your own developmental skill learning and helps you to clarify where to put your attention to grow further. How effectively you transfer the core Professional Dialogue skills to others will depend on how well you recognise where they are in their own developmental learning process. Whether you are coaching individuals or groupings, what you offer depends on your assessment about where they are and what is the next developmental step for them.

The faculty anticipates significant developmental learning during the programme with the recurring iterative cycles of preparing, doing, and reflecting. The Developmental Framework is meant to be an ongoing tool for you to track your progress and continue your development as a Dialogue Practitioner.

By now, you have received feedback from your colleagues on your self-assessment. Having received the benefit of this peer assessment input from other participants, the expectation is to make updates and provide the self-assessment to the faculty for consideration. The faculty is looking for assurance that participants are making good progress on their learning journey to becoming a Professional Dialogue Practitioner. Some will be accredited at the first meeting of the Academy following the programme (the Academy meets four times a year). Some participants may need additional time to practice and demonstrate their proficiency before becoming accredited.



Value of Learning in the Practice Field and its Future Application

Now that we are at the close of this ADWOW programme, it is time to take the next step in your journey. An important part of this programme was to provide you with ample opportunities to reflect on the steps in your life that guided you here, and how you plan to develop your skills and integrate them into your current work. Whether you are a coach or a consultant or working in an organisation, dialogic practices are applicable in all settings where fragmentation is occurring. An important question at this stage of your development is how you will add this to what you are doing in your professional and personal life.

As a reminder, below is the table of programmes and certifications offered by the Academy, along with courses you can now offer as an APDP. You'll see that one of the next natural development steps for an APDP is the Dialogic Intervention.



APDP RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ACADEMY

GIVING		RECEIVING
ANNUAL FEE & UPHOLD PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS	ALL MEMBERS	LIBRARY & ARCHIVE DIRECT ACCESS TO OTHER MEMBERS MEMBERS' EVENTS
ACT AS AN AMBASSADOR for professional dialogue & PLAY AN ACTIVE PROMINENT ROLE in annual international conference	ACCREDITED PROFESSIONAL	PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION & APDP INITIALS & LOGO listing on academy website
DELIVER ONE ACCREDITED COURSE each year (at least) & PAY 20% OF INCOME RECEIVED for all accredited courses delivered	DIALOGUE PRACTITIONER	USE OF ALL PROGRAMME MATERIALS © AofPD & A BESPOKE LEARNING CENTRE to manage course delivery
CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT commitment & DEVELOPMENT OF OTHERS and their skills with professional dialogue	GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT	COMMUNITY OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTITIONERS for collective learning & FOCUS TWO: DIALOGIC INTERVENTION eligibility

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Value of Learning from Colleagues and How That May Continue

The Academy relies on the APDPs to develop and implement ideas for exploring and expanding the professional practice and expanding the breadth and scope of this work internationally. Some ideas in process now include regular opportunities for global drop-ins to explore professional practices of interest to the participants, mutual professional development between APDPs, book and podcast clubs, developing a dialogic practice and client base, expanding the dialogic classroom and engagement of young people, international couples work, and expanding the use of artificial intelligence for dialogic experiences.

Options for Continuing Professional Development, Courses And Programmes

There are numerous opportunities throughout the year for professional development, coursework, and programmes.

- Academy of Professional Dialogue Annual Conference that involves the power and influence of our global community and our common desire to benefit society through Dialogue.
- Quarterly APDP Continuing Professional Development meetings that are available to all who have completed the ADWOE programme, whether or not they have yet been accredited.
- In the Fall of 2024, the Academy launched the Dialogic Teamwork programme. It is designed to be self-managed by clients, with the video and exercise content broken down into steps to be used for each team meeting.
- Ongoing open events on a variety of dialogic topics.
- The opportunity to facilitate and attend ongoing educational courses.



Resources

Set 8 Resources can be found in [Appendix K](#), and in the Learning Centre Library.

- Becoming a Professional Dialogue Practitioner

Also see the [Academy of Professional Dialogue website](#).

Programme Resources for Practitioner Development are in [Appendix C](#):

- Developmental Framework – Participant Form for Self-Assessment & Development Plan
- The Professional Dialogue Practitioner Developmental Framework

Becoming an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner

Your notes and reflections





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PROGRAMME RESOURCES

APPENDIX A:

- Glossary of Terms





Glossary of Terms

These are starting definitions written by Peter Garrett and Jane Ball for the ADWOW programme. As you develop as a practitioner, and engage a wider cross-section of people in dialogue, you will no doubt find your own words to help people understand the distinctions you want to make. Becoming more articulate about dialogue and its skills is an intentional part of your continuing growth and effectiveness.

Academy of Professional Dialogue: An international non-profit educational charity that works to make Professional Dialogue™ available for the benefit of society.

Advocacy: Telling or proposing something. Giving voice to your view or opinion. (See: Enquiry)

ADWOW: A Different Way Of Working. This is Focus One of the Academy's accreditation provision for practitioners. The other two are Dialogic Intervention and Whole-System Dialogue.

Affect: See Expressive Languages - Affect.

Affecting the Field: See Container Development Model - Affecting the Field.

APDP: Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner. An individual who has successfully completed the ADWOW programme, is recognized as a competent and confident practitioner, and has been formally accredited by the Academy of Professional Dialogue.

Bystand: See Dialogic Actions - Bystand.

Check-in: One or more questions posed by the facilitator at the beginning of a meeting for all the participants to answer. This serves to draw the participants' awareness into the room and what they are now doing, whilst also guiding where to place their attention, and making it easier for them to speak during the rest of the meeting. The facilitator always checks-in as well. There are various **Check-in Patterns:**

- **Check-in - Cocktail Style:** A useful check-in for large groups, typically of over 50



participants, where individuals are paired several times with different partners to meet others, and to bring everyone into the room and into the topic.

- **Check-in - Free Form:** Participants speak when they sense it is their turn in response to the check-in question. The freedom of choice reveals things about the group, and about the participants and the relationships between them.
- **Check-in - Around the Circle:** Participants go around the circle clockwise or counter-clockwise, until everyone has spoken. The predictability of one's turn helps anxious participants or those unfamiliar with check-ins..
- **Check-in - Tagged:** The facilitator chooses the first speaker, or finds a volunteer to start, and upon completion of their check-in contribution they tag or select the next speaker, and so on until everyone has spoken.. The unpredictability of one's turn keeps people attentive and increases the pace.
- **Check-in - Appreciative Check-in:** In an Appreciative Check-in, each speaker checks-in once, when they choose, to acknowledge the value of the contributions of the previous speaker. The facilitator comes last. The sequence of acknowledgements remind the group of everyone's helpful part.

Check-out: A pattern to close a meeting in a deliberate and orderly way, that creates the opportunity to recognize what progress has been made, and to name what may still need to be considered or done. An appropriate question is posed for everyone to respond to in turn, using one of the patterns used for Check-ins (above).

Citizen: See Leading Energies - Citizen.

Closed: See Organising Paradigms - Closed.

Container: The container is the presence generated at any time by the changing pattern of relationships between the participants and their situation and circumstance. A weak or threadbare container may feel tense, uncomfortable or frustrated and be conducive to withdrawal, argument, mishaps and breakdowns. A strong container, on the other hand, is more resilient, and has a generative atmosphere or ambiance that feels safe and has energy, along with the sense that change is quite possible. The Dialogic Practices strengthen and deepen the container. The mutual respect and listening provide a spaciousness for people to add their voice, explore understandings and find shared meanings. Good containers can be formed surprisingly quickly, they extend across space and time, and can last for many years.





Container Development Model: The Container Development Model was designed by Peter Garrett to show the distinct phases in any developmental learning process, and the transitions between them. In A Different Way of Working we use Container Development to track the progress of practitioners as they progress from first encountering skills to becoming competent and confident with using them and transferring them to others. The four phases are Realising Yourself, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground and Affecting the Field.

- **Realising Yourself:** This first phase involves enquiry, observation and coming to understand the basic feel, value and purpose of what one is learning. This is largely a private process, and it may involve reading, asking others and watching before attempting to do something oneself. You have realised yourself when, for example, you can talk or write about a skill easily and accurately. (Theoretical knowledge).
- **Showing Up:** The second phase is to try using the skill with others. At this point, as you show up, you are seen by others who may be impacted by what you do. Although you may feel vulnerable as they respond or react to you in their own way, their feedback enables growth and learning that cannot be gained in any other way. (Experiential knowledge).
- **Occupying the Ground:** The stage is one of gaining the confidence that you know what you are doing. You have become comfortable with using the skill, and people find you reliable and versatile as you easily step forward and take accountability, even in unfamiliar or challenging circumstances. You are occupying the ground when you have your own first-hand stories to tell of the past use of the skill, and can describe why you succeeded and failed in different situations. (Practical knowledge).
- **Affecting the Field:** The final stage is one where the skill is fully embodied by the practitioner. They naturally use the skill whenever it may be helpful. The way they do so easily transfers the confidence and authority to use the skill to others, who get the 'feel' of how to do so well.. This contributes to the growth and development of the whole field of practice. When someone is affecting the field, other participants will deepen their own practice through presence, rather than by being taught. (Embodied knowledge).

Content: See Locus of Attention - Content.

Conversation: See Modes of Engagement - Conversation.



Debate: See Modes of Engagement - Debate.

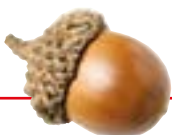
Dialogic Actions: A four-part framework developed by David Kantor that codifies the dynamics of spoken communication and relationship in terms of four actions that are Move, Follow, Oppose, and Bystand. Understanding the sequences of actions spoken in an exchange helps the practitioner to address dysfunctionality.

- **Move:** The speaker initiates a new direction in the exchange. Without Moves there is no direction.
- **Follow:** The speaker goes in the same or a similar direction as an earlier speaker. Without Follows there can be no completion.
- **Oppose:** The speaker states their unwillingness to move in a similar direction to a previous speaker, perhaps blocking or reducing the momentum of that move. Without Opposes there can be no correction.
- **Bystand:** The speaker steps back, observes and says what they see happening. Without Bystands there can be no perspective.

Dialogue Practices: A four-part framework developed by Bill Isaacs, Peter Garrett and Michael Jones to foster deeper and more meaningful engagement, connection, communication and understanding. The skills of Voice, Listening, Respect and Suspension builds and enriches the container within which people are talking and thinking together, leading to collective insights and wisdom.

- **Voice:** Speaking genuinely and authentically by revealing more of what you really think and feel, and in a way that contributes to the unfolding collective dialogue
- **Listening:** Giving attention to what is being said and not being said, and learning how to understand what is meant and how it contributes to the unfolding collective dialogue.
- **Respect:** Accepting that the views and understandings of another person are legitimate to them, deliberately holding the space to enable their coherence to become evident, and receiving and enfolding its meaning consciously.
- **Suspension:** Recognising the various inner voices that are speaking at any time in oneself, and making them more available by revealing them for the benefit of the dialogue.

Dialogic Intention: A framework developed by Peter Garrett and Jane Ball to guide professional dialogue practitioners through the Integrated Dialogue Model. The Dialogic Intention is a specific disposition that embodies what a Professional





Dialogue Practitioner is trying to do in any situation, through the right use of Discernment, Energy, Stance and Redundancy to enable a collective generative Flow.

- **Discernment:** The Professional Dialogue Practitioner has a perceptive way of seeing things, giving attention to sensing and identifying the emergent opportunities inherent in the room that would otherwise remain obscure. They work to realise these possibilities in a generative way, using careful timing and openly addressing the inhibiting constraints.
- **Energy:** The Professional Dialogue Practitioner works all the time with the energy in the room. The energy is the strength and vitality needed for work to be done. Initially they help people to name and reveal the opportunity (the potential energy), then bringing things into alignment enables the dynamic release of the energy in a coherent way to realise the potential and to achieve the best fulfillment of what was possible.
- **Stance:** The Professional Dialogue Practitioner intentionally maintains a transparent and developmental stance by being open about what they are doing and why they are doing it, enabling the transfer of their skills to others. Added to this is a protective responsibility for ensuring that no participants are damaged by the behaviour of others.
- **Redundancy:** The Practitioner knows that their own redundancy is necessary for the investment of their time to be self-sustaining. The transfer of their skills to the other participants, along with the power and confidence to use them, means they will no longer be distinguishable from others because everyone in the room will have the wherewithal to move things forward generatively.
- **Flow:** The dialogic intention has an outcome that is the embodied flow of the unfolding meaning of the Dialogue. For such a Generative Dialogue, facilitation is superfluous because everyone is acting with respect for themselves, for others in the room, and for the flow of the whole.

Dialogue Principles: Peter Garrett and Bill Isaacs designed the Dialogic Principles as a distillation of the essential aspects of vitality within a living system. These are Unfolding Potential, Enfolding Coherence, Holographic Participation and Proprioceptive Awareness. They articulate the underlying foundational ontology of dialogue, namely David Bohm's Implicate Order. These Dialogue Principles shape and inform the dialogic skills - and their developmental sequence: from engagement and functionality to quality and focus, and the sustained intention leading to generative dialogue and flow. They embody a recurrent process that extends and enriches the ground out of which the relationships between the



different participants arise.

- **Unfolding Potential:** Living things grow by unfolding from a latent potential. The physical metaphor for Unfolding Potential is the environment unfolding through the acorn to become an oak tree. The acorn holds the potential in its DNA, but it needs to be in moist soil to unfold, by germinating and starting to grow. There is a potential opportunity in every situation, to be sensed, realised and unfolded in the consciousness of those involved.
- **Enfolding Coherence:** Living things are enfolded back into the whole to nourish the whole. The physical metaphor for Enfolding Coherence is the aging oak tree that dies, disintegrates and is absorbed back into the earth from which it came. In doing so it enriches the soil for further cycles of growth. This is a way of describing how the value of what has been achieved is absorbed into those involved, as experience that informs and enriches people's understanding and capability.
- **Holographic Participation:** Every part is embodied in the whole process. The physical metaphor for Holographic Participation is the acorn that produces the oak tree, and the oak tree that produces acorns. In this ongoing unfolding cycle, every part of the living system is inter-related and the whole is inextricably contained within each part. What is going on inside us is inseparable from what is going on outside us, and the discovery of this places us in the flow of the whole,
- **Proprioceptive Awareness:** Becoming consciously aware is key. The physical metaphor for Proprioceptive Awareness is the trunk of the oak tree. Only the external layer of bark is alive and sustains the growth, whilst the internal wood of the trunk that holds up the tree is no longer living. The trunk of dead wood is comparable to thought (past thinking), that reliably sustains our habitual ways of acting. The thinner layer of bark is like thinking, that carries the rising sap and the living process. They are inter-related, and it is thinking that is needed to be aware of the overall process consciously, whilst thought continues to act reliably.

Dialogue: *Dia* means through, and *Logos* is the word, or meaning - so dialogue is a way of generating a common meaning amongst a group of people.

Dialogue: See Modes of Engagement - Dialogue.

Discernment: See Dialogic Intention - Discernment.





Discussion: See Modes of Engagement - Discussion.

Dysfunctional Actions: Functionality depends on clear Dialogic Actions spoken in a productive sequence. Different adjectives to describe any of the Dialogic Actions (Move, Follow, Oppose and Bystand) that are not clear and lead to dysfunctionality include:

- **Weak** - ineffectual and lacking the intended impact on the dynamics.
- **Spin** - biased in a deceptive way and has an impact yet is hard to respond to effectively.
- **Stuck** - repetitive, over-used, out of balance and ignoring the other actions.
- **Disabled** - unable to be expressed.

Energy: See Dialogic Intention - Energy.

Enfolding Coherence: See Dialogic Principles - Enfolding Coherence.

Enquiry: Asking to find out what one does not know. Closed enquiry confirms or contradicts what had been assumed. Open enquiry can reveal what was not previously known or assumed. (See: Advocacy)

Expressive Languages: There are three distinct ways people express themselves: from the heart (feeling or emotion), from the hands (action or doing) or from the head (intellect or meaning). David Kantor codified them as Affect, Power, and Meaning, because he wanted to hint at their shadows, where emotional expression can be misread as 'affected', an action orientation can be misread as 'the use of power or force', and an intellectual expression can be misread as 'lost in meaning'. All three are needed, but when the use is unbalanced or misunderstood, the situation becomes confusing.

- **Affect:** Speaking with emotions or from the heart to explore and reveal what things feel like.
- **Power:** Speaking from the stance of action to explore and propose how things might be done.
- **Meaning:** Speaking from an intellectual perspective to understand what is meant and why.

Flow: See Dialogic Intention - Flow.



Focus of Attention: see Leading Energies.

Follow: See Dialogic Actions - Follow.

Fragmentation: David Bohm's insight was that dialogue is necessary because of fragmentation in human consciousness. **Parts** interact with each other to make up the whole and are affected by each other - so when I run, my heart automatically beats faster and I breathe more deeply. **Fragments** are unrelated to each other and they no longer respond to the whole - so a smashed watch can no longer tell the time. Somehow people no longer see themselves as a part of the whole and they have lost their sense of connection with others and with society. Instead they act with more concern for their own interests without regard for the whole. This fragmentation is very widespread in organizations and society. It separates individuals from one another and divides society, hindering the development of meaningful connection, understanding, and collaborative problem-solving. Fragmentation in human consciousness inevitably leads to fragmentation in the world around us where we are continually trying to repair the damage caused to the environment and economic well-being by fragmented thinking.

Functional Actions: Functionality depends on clear Dialogic Actions spoken in a productive sequence. Adjectives to describe Dialogic Actions (Move, Follow, Oppose and Bystand) that are clear and lead to functionality include:

- **Clean** - an action that is made in a simple and clear way, thereby having the maximum impact intended..
- **Compound** - when the speaker contributes several actions at one time, such as a follow and then a move. This can allow more precision and subtlety to the communication.

Generative Dialogue: See Modes of Engagement - Generative Dialogue.

Holographic Participation: See Dialogue Principles - Holographic Participation.

Identity: A person's identity is who they are, and is described in terms of their key characteristics. There is an inner identity held by oneself, and an outer identity held by others, hence a response to the question 'Who are you?' can take many different forms depending on who is asking the question. The differences between the inner and the outer identity can be most evident during the developmental phase of





Showing Up (see Container Development Model).

- **Inner Identity:** The inner identity is the identity held by oneself. At one level it is an internalisation of the many roles and relationships one has had with others in the family, workplace, community and culture, and it is shaped by the state of physical, mental and spiritual health. It takes the form of an autobiographical story that has a past, a present and a future. Being authentic about one's inner identity involves revealing, respecting and reconciling the many inconsistencies in the inner identity that have been inherited from the externally fragmented world. That can help one to get clearer about the most helpful way to act.
- **Outer Identity:** One's outer identity is held by other people in the form of your reputation. This is how people think and speak about you, and the attributions they may make based on their own inner identities and what they have seen, heard and read. First-hand experience with another person gives the best understanding of that individual. Being authentic with one's outer identity involves saying what you think, feel and mean based on your inner identity - rather than saying what you believe others would like to hear based on your and their reputation.

Inner Identity: See Identity - Inner Identity.

Koinonia: The Greek word for the form of love that could be described as impersonal fellowship or the sense of communion. People respect each other, feel a strong sense of social responsibility (like citizenship), and may feel a strong connection even though they may not know each other personally.

Languages: See Expressive Languages.

Leading Energies (Focus of Attention): This framework names four different ways to focus and deepen the attention, awareness and understanding in any consideration - in the same way that more may be seen when light is brought to focus through wearing glasses, or using a telescope or microscope. This is an adapted framework derived from an individual leadership development model codified by David Kantor. We have incorporated four of his five leadership styles, and refer to them as leading energies to indicate that leadership can be provided by anyone helping to develop the relevant consideration, not just by named leaders. The four Leading Energies are the Visionary, Citizen, Performance and Wisdom energies.



- **Visionary:** This energy draws people into a consideration of the potential inherent in the situation. The vision may not yet be fully evident, and this challenges participants to set aside the constraints of the present situation temporarily in order to loosen up their thinking about opportunities, and what may be needed for a better future.
- **Citizen:** This energy leads to a focus on participation and the inter-connectedness between those who are working together, practically and technically. As participants understand the value of their role, and how they contribute to the collective endeavour, they naturally want to learn how to play their part better in relation to the whole.
- **Performance:** The delivery of any vision into form is achieved through the performance energy. Here the focus is on progress, constraints and the decision-making required to ensure that actions are coherent with the outcome intended. Performance considerations generally require reliable information to support and challenge the thinking.
- **Wisdom:** Here the focus is on awareness of the whole and the parts. Guided by experience, knowledge and insight the Wisdom Energy enables participants to recognise the unnoticed consequences of everything already being interconnected, and thereby determining the best way to act in relation to the whole.

Listening: See Dialogue Practices - Listening.

Locus of Attention: Peter Garrett and Jane Ball designed the Locus of Attention framework to encourage practitioners to discern what of significance is happening among the participants - by locating their attention in the three key aspects of the People, the Content and the Process. The facilitation skill is to attend to all three at the same time, and to sense the best timing for where and when to intervene to support the development of the group and their work.

- **People:** The individuals participating in the Dialogue each have different propensities, they are at different levels of development and have different growth opportunities that are supported and challenged by the dialogue. Their collective presence is the Container, and that collective Container in turn affects how each of them behaves individually.
- **Content:** The spoken words that the participants hear are the Content. The practitioner's focus is on what is said, and what a speaker may be implying through their words, intentionally or unintentionally. The practitioner is listening





to how the different stories told may contribute to a larger common story in which everyone has played a part.

- **Process:** The process is the journey of the Dialogue, the path it takes, the key turning points, and the changing pace and direction of the route. Structural components of the process are typically the number of people, the setting, the time available and the frequency of meetings. The dynamic components include recounting past experiences from memory, and slowing down to think and feel what is happening in the moment.

Meaning: See Expressive Languages - Meaning.

Modes of Engagement: See Modes of Thinking and Talking Together.

Modes of Talking and Thinking Together: The Modes of Engagement is a seven level codification by Peter Garrett and Jane Ball of the many patterns of social engagement as we talk and think with others. It describes the dynamic and structure of the exchange or discourse, not the content of what is said or being talked about. All seven Modes are needed at different times for different purposes, and when people are talking and thinking with others, one of these Modes is always in use: Monologue, Debate, Discussion, Conversation, Skillful Conversation, Dialogue, Generative Dialogue.

- **Monologue:** This Mode has its roots in oral history and story telling, and it is a fine way to provide explanatory, instructional, and directive information, with everyone hearing the same thing at the same time. The structure is that one speaker holds the floor (it is hard to interrupt) and the dynamic is a one-way delivery (which is hardly conducive to consultation).
- **Debate:** Debate provides due process for decision-making, with the more convincing arguments winning the favour of the decision-maker. In a dialogic approach we alternate our position of being 'in favour of' or 'against' the proposal or 'motion', thereby getting all the internal and external views out in the open. The structure is trying to win by beating down. The dynamic is 'I am right and you are wrong' with the speaker advocating their views whilst disputing and rebutting the opposing views.
- **Discussion:** This mode is closest to 'chatting' together. It is a helpfully inclusive way of talking together and sensing others' disposition without being demanding, and an efficient way of canvassing views and making a prompt call on the best way to proceed. Discussion has a very loose structure that allows



ideas and opinions to be batted back and forth easily but without commitment.

- **Conversation:** Conversation is a way of turning over thoughts and observations with one another that builds a sense of connection quickly. It is inherently suited to sharing personal experiences of what is happening in any situation. It is the most versatile and necessary of the seven modes. Without conversation children do not develop and older people become senile. The structure is that a conversation lasts as long as it feels relevant, and can be resumed easily at a later time. The process is one of finding something you have in common with another, and turning over thoughts together about that.
- **Skillful Conversation:** This Mode provides transparency by revealing the thinking behind the words. It involves an exploration of assumption, validity, reasoning and implications. Participants consider why they each hold the views they do, and thinking in this way together provides clarity in sense-making and decision-making. The structure is one of rigorous enquiry, and the dynamic encourages the support and challenge of views expressed to help to determine their validity and relevance.
- **Dialogue:** In dialogue people contribute their thinking and feeling for the benefit of the whole, even though at times their contribution may at first seem contradictory to what has been said by others. The space and process of the dialogue enables new ideas and interpretations to be developed and owned together in a way that creates a common understanding amongst participants. People work with each other, so that what emerges is created and owned by everyone involved. Dialogue requires people to listen, rather than dismissing other's views out of hand, to be genuine without being certain they are right, to express their views thoughtfully and to respect each other's intentions. The structure is that each speaks to all, and the dynamic is to understand rather than to persuade.
- **Generative Dialogue:** This is the least structured Mode that requires the most skill. Whereas Dialogue has a starting topic to provide focus, purpose and direction, Generative Dialogue deliberately has none. The conception and generation of new meaning requires an enquiry into the surrounding context, and into the subtle content. This requires stepping back to see, as well as stepping forward to experience. In the movement between the two a flow emerges that enables whatever needs to take form for that group of people at that time to do so. The structure is one that is containing, not constraining, and the dynamic is one of unfolding and enfolding by being fully present to the potential inherent in the moment.





Monologue: See Modes of Engagement - Monologue.

Move: See Dialogic Actions - Move.

Occupying the Ground: See Container Development Model - Occupying the Ground.

Open: See Organising Paradigms - Open.

Oppose: See Dialogic Actions - Oppose.

Organising Paradigms: When it comes to organising things, in their thinking and their work, there are three natural dispositions that people assume to plan, prepare and order things namely; inclusively, directively or energetically. All three are effective. David Kantor named the three approaches: Open, Closed and Random to hint at their shadows (implying some are 'open to anything', others are 'closed and unreceptive' and yet others are random and 'don't know what they are doing').. People have natural preferences, so determining a single organising paradigm for any group initiative can be a challenge, whilst using only one can lead some people to be reluctant to participate.

- **Open:** The organization of thoughts and things in an inclusive and participatory way where everyone's contribution is openly included to determine how the collective group acts.
- **Closed:** In a Closed paradigm things are clearly structured and the 'right' way is defined to ensure people know what is expected and that they understand how to proceed before they move into action.
- **Random:** A third approach is where things are organised by the flow of interest and energy, allowing things to come together in self-organised ways that were not planned or predicted yet achieve what is needed.

Outer Identity: See Identity - Outer Identity.

Paradigms: See Organising Paradigms.

People: See Locus of Attention - People.

Performance: See Leading Energies - Performance.



Power: See Expressive Languages - Power.

Practitioner Development Assessment: This is the developmental framework for the assessment, coaching, and accreditation in the ADWOW programmes. Based on the Container Development Model, the steps progress from Realising Yourself to Showing Up to Occupying the Ground for the practitioner's personal development, followed by transferring the skills to others.

Professional Dialogue: A method of talking and thinking together that prioritizes the Dialogue Practices, Leading Energies, Locus of Attention and the Dialogic Intention to co-create knowledge and solutions within a work environment. Individuals engage in open, authentic exchanges with one another to co-create solutions to problems and achieve collective goals through the generation of understanding and common meaning amongst the participants.

Process: See Locus of Attention - Process.

Proprioceptive Awareness: See Dialogue Principles - Proprioceptive Awareness.

Random: See Organising Paradigms - Random.

Realising Yourself: See Container Development Model - Realising yourself.

Redundancy: See Dialogic Intention - Redundancy.

Respect: See Dialogue Practices - Respect.

Subcultural Identity: People are recognisable as a subcultural grouping when they hold similar memories about what has happened, and similar storylines about what is happening now and will likely happen in the future. This common understanding leads to a collective sense of identity and reasoning that is reconfirmed by others in that same subcultural grouping. The beliefs and values of an individual in a sub-cultural group are difficult to change because the memories are collectively held and reinforced. Instead group dialogues are needed to explore and shift the subcultural storyline and consequent values.

Showing Up: See Container Development Model - Showing Up.





Stance: See Dialogic Intention - Stance.

Suspension: see Dialogue Practices - Suspension.

Skillful Conversation: See Modes of Engagement - Skillful Conversation.

Unfolding Potential: see Dialogic Principles - Unfolding Potential.

Unfoldment: See Dialogue Principles - Unfolding Potential

Visionary: See Leading Energies - Visionary.

Voice: See Dialogue Practices - Voice.

Wisdom: See Leading Energies - Wisdom.



PROGRAMME RESOURCES

APPENDIX B:

- Resources List - Books, Papers, Podcasts and Websites





Resources List

Books

- 1980 Wholeness and the Implicate Order - David Bohm
- 1985 Unfolding Meaning - A Weekend of Dialogue with David Bohm - Don Factor
- 1985 The Ending of Time - J Krishnamurti and David Bohm
- 1990 The Fifth Discipline - Peter Senge
- 1991 Koinonia: From Hate through Dialogue to Culture in the Larger Group - Patrick de Mare
- 1998 Dialogue: Rediscover the transforming Power of Conversation - Glenna Gerard and Linda Ellinor
- 1999 Dialogue - The Art of Thinking Together -William Isaacs
- 1999 My Lover, Myself - David Kantor1996 On Dialogue - David Bohm
- 2012 Reading the Room - David Kantor
- 2015 Healing Corrections - Chris Innes
- 2019 The Spirit of Dialogue in a Digital Age - Marie-Eve Marchand
- 2021 A New Kind of Dialogue - Peter Garrett

The World Needs Dialogue! From the Academy of Professional Dialogue Annual Conferences

- 2019 One: Gathering the Field
- 2020 Two: Setting the Bearings
- 2021 Three: Shaping the Profession
- 2022 Four: Putting Dialogue to Work
- 2023 Five: Dialogue as Story
- 2024 Six: Your Organization Needs Dialogue
- 2025 Seven: Your Team Needs Dialogue

Papers

- 1991 Dialogue - A Proposal - David Bohm, Donald Factor, Peter Garrett
- 2020 David Bohm's Ontology: The Implicate Order - Peter Garrett
- 2022 Dialogue as Story - Peter Garrett

Other Resources

Academy of Professional Dialogue: aofpd.org
Podcast: A New Kind of Dialogue
Dialogic Teamwork website: dialogicteamwork.com
Dialogue Associates: dialogue-associates.com



PROGRAMME RESOURCES

APPENDIX C:

Programme Resources for Practitioner Development

- The Professional Dialogue Practitioner Developmental Framework
- Self-Assessment Form for the Developmental Framework
- Developmental Framework – Participant Form for Self-Assessment & Development Plan





DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION

Covering: Using the Developmental Framework; Own Skill Development; Skill Transfer to Others; A Different Way of Working with the Container Development Model; Next Generation Programme Accreditation Process.

Using the Developmental Framework

The Developmental Framework is based on the Container Development Model. The first steps are a progression from *Realising Yourself* to *Showing Up* to *Occupying the Ground* (displayed in the image below as blue circles). These are followed by the same sequence of steps to track the giving away or transferring of these skills to others (again shown in blue). The red circles between the blue ones mark the transitions between the phases – first the confidence to show up trying out the skills live, and then taking accountability for reliably and regularly using the skills for the benefits they provide.

You can assess your own progress by reflecting on your experience with each of the skills. Start with *Realising Yourself* where you are naïve. You don't know and you want to know. You can tick that blue circle when you understand the skill and you can write or talk about it easily and accurately. To move to the next phase requires dealing with an inhibition - the embarrassment or even shame of getting it 'wrong'. We cannot learn without making mistakes, but it does require confidence to be seen by others as we try out the skill 'live' with a group of people. You can tick that red circle when you are prepared to try *Showing Up*. This phase is quite different because of the impact you have on others and their feedback. Others like or do not like the way you do things. Repeatedly *Showing Up* builds experience and leads you to take accountability to use the skill whenever it is needed, including in challenging or 'high stakes' situations. Eventually you find you are *Occupying the Ground* within yourself, and you can be relied upon to use the skills even in unfamiliar circumstances and situations. You know you are at this level, and can tick this red box, when you have your own stories to tell about the results of using the skill. This is half the skill you are aiming for as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner. The other half is to help other people to move through the same sequence of phases. Of course, you can only give away what you have, so your own development is essential if you are to assist others in their growth.

A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING: BRINGING DIALOGUE INTO THE ROOM
DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK
FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION

	SELF DEVELOPMENT			SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS		
	RY	SU	OG	RY	SU	OG
CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
LANGUAGES & PARADIGMS	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
DIALOGIC ACTIONS	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
MODES OF TALKING & THINKING TOGETHER	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
DIALOGUE PRACTICES	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
LEADING ENERGIES	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
PRACTITIONER FACILITATION	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Acknowledgement: Jane Ball



Own Skill Development

The framework provides a way of tracking the progress of your own developmental skill learning and helps you to clarify where to put your attention to grow further. It is deceptively easy to gloss over the steps needed to ground your learning and to assume that because you have read about a skill you know how to use it effectively live – or because you have shown up once or twice that you are sufficiently skilled and competent to use the skill at any time and in any situation. This is rarely the case. You may have read a manual about defusing a bomb, but to do so live, and regularly, requires a different level of attention, experience, and know-how.

Skill Transfer to Others

How effectively you transfer the core Professional Dialogue skills to others will depend on how well you recognise where they are in their developmental learning process. The four phases of container development provide an easy framework to determine what to offer when. There is no point in pressing someone into *Showing Up* when they are unclear about the nature and purpose of a skill and have yet to realise it for themselves. To show up before *Realising Oneself* would require people to memorise their lines, or to use PowerPoint slides, because what they are saying and doing is unclear in their own thinking. On the other hand, there is no point in colluding with someone who fears *Showing Up* and is struggling with how to take that step. They need support and challenge to do so. Nor does it help people to stay in their comfort zone if they need to ground their experience to do more challenging work. Whether you are coaching individuals or groupings, what you offer depends on your assessment about where they are and what is the next developmental step for them. This does, of course, vary in different contexts and settings. An experienced leader may still be realising herself about how to communicate well online, and an experienced online communicator may be *Showing Up* for the first time as a supervisor with responsibilities for other staff members.

A Different Way of Working with the Container Development Model

The graphic over-the-page depicts the four phases of the Container Development Model in terms of doing work. The starting point is realising that you don't know and want to know how to use a skill. Used well, this naivety is a valuable source of discovery. You are trying to realise for yourself by watching, reading, and asking people. Once you understand what is involved, it is a matter of the courage to try it out. The confidence to do so is inhibited by the fear of failure, but without trying out the skill you cannot learn the knowhow involved in doing. Testing the skill live is when you are seen *Showing Up*, and of course people respond and react in different ways to what you do. The container is larger because it now actively involves other people. It takes perseverance to become accomplished, assured, and competent. You must commit to take accountability for the best use of the skill involved to move into the next phase of *Occupying the Ground*. Here the container is yet larger. You are no longer testing - you are doing work with the skill. Others are enabled to work more effectively, enjoyably, and meaningfully as a result of your use of the skill. You are now affecting those around you in your workplace or community. The final phase usually takes the longest time. This is where you give away freely what you know. You help to establish a self-generating process of growth for all involved. This is also a challenge to the ego and your identity, however, because at this point of success you become redundant. The seeds are sown, and they will grow in their own unique way.



Container Development Process



Acknowledgement: P Garrett

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Next Generation Programme Accreditation Process

The Developmental Coaching Framework is used for assessment in the Next Generation programme. You are encouraged to do regular self-assessments as the programme proceeds. Everything is provided for participants to achieve the first step of *Realising Yourself*, in the form of articles in the Learning Centre library, activities within our sessions together and opportunities for you to raise questions within and between sessions. You naturally start *Showing Up* in the sessions, and more importantly you deliberately do so in your practice fields between sessions. We anticipate significant developmental learning during the programme with the recurring iterative cycles of preparing, doing, and reflecting.

Towards the close of the programme, you will be asked to show your self-assessment to your colleagues in small groupings. They will support and challenge your self-assessment based on what they have seen during our eight Sets of three half-day (totalling 96 hrs). Having received the benefit of this peer assessment input from other participants, your self-assessment is then considered with the faculty for their response. The faculty is looking for assurance that participants are making good progress on their learning journey to becoming a Professional Dialogue Practitioner. Some will be accredited immediately on completion of the programme, but others will need more 'flying time' to ground their experience before becoming accredited. We provide support for this through the Continuing Professional Development sessions with colleagues who have been accredited or are in the process of becoming accredited.



DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION ENGAGEMENT

CHECK-IN

KEY FEATURES OF A GOOD CHECK-IN

- *opens the meeting clearly (we are now starting)*
- *begins with enquiry not advocacy (the check-in poses a question/s)*
- *engages participants (who speak and listen to each other)*
- *increases the interest and willingness to attend (voluntary rather than polite or obligatory)*
- *sets the direction and tone of the meeting*
- *helps everyone to learn more about each other and how they are working together*
- *helps the practitioner to discover more about the 'work to be done'*

Design includes:

- the direction you intend to go with the meeting
- the perspective (me, us, them, it – or a combination)
- a question that is relevant to everyone
- the structure: round the circle, tagged, free form (when you choose), etc

Facilitation includes:

- noticing what is happening in the room before starting
- adapting the check-in design as needed if circumstances differ from what you anticipated
- introducing the Check-in question and structure
- managing the sequence and overall time taken for the check-in
- reminding people of the question where necessary
- by-standing the Check-in at the end, to increase everyone's awareness of what occurred during the Check-in

CHECK-OUT

KEY FEATURES OF A GOOD CHECK-OUT

- *marks the close of the meeting (we have now finished)*
- *hear people's reflective comments to encourage a common understanding on closure*
- *name the work that was done and that still needs to be done*

Design includes:

- preparing several Check-out options beforehand (each with a question, perspective and structure)
- choosing or adapting an option to close the meeting in the most useful way depending on what happened during the meeting

Facilitation includes:

- by-standing the meeting to acknowledge what has been achieved and what is still to be done
- ending the meeting at the designated time



SELF DEVELOPMENT

Realising Yourself: Understanding about Check-ins and Check-outs by referring to the key features of a good Check-in, reading programme material, learning from others, participating, and noticing what happens when a Check-in or Check-out is used.

Can you talk and write about Check-ins and Check-outs in theory?

Are you confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using Check-ins and Check-outs to learn from what happens, by acting as a practitioner, helping to realise the potential of a meeting, listening to what participants have to say, learning from first-hand experience and the reflective use of the key features, design and facilitation of Check-ins and Check-outs.

Have you built experience in designing and facilitating Check-ins and Check-outs, and how to use them to do work?

Do you take accountability for designing and facilitating Check-ins and Check-outs, and using them to do work?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to predict the Check-in or Check-out best suited to do the work you recognise is needed.

Are you confident, competent and reliable with Check-ins and Check-outs in familiar and new situations?

Do you have stories based on your own experience describing work you have done using Check-ins and Check-outs?

SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS - giving away what you have

The next three developmental phases for the practitioner are to become accomplished at transferring their skills to others. This requires learning how to recognise the skill level of others, and how to support their progress through the sequence of developmental phases.

Realising Yourself: Understanding about Check-ins and Check-outs by referring to the key features of a good Check-in, reading programme material, learning from others, participating, and noticing what happens when a Check-in or Check-out is used.

Can they talk and write about Check-ins and Check-outs in theory?

Are they confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using Check-ins and Check-outs to learn from what happens, by acting as a practitioner, helping to realise the potential of a meeting, listening to what participants have to say, learning from first-hand experience and the reflective use of the key features, design and facilitation of Check-ins and Check-outs.

Have they built experience in designing and facilitating Check-ins and Check-outs, and how to use them to do work?



Do they take accountability for designing and facilitating Check-ins and Check-outs, using them to do work?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to predict the Check-in or Check-out best suited to do the work you recognise is needed.

Are they confident, competent and reliable with Check-ins and Check-outs in familiar and new situations?

Do they have stories based on their own experience describing work they have done using Check-ins and Check-outs?

4.4.22



DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION FUNCTIONALITY

THE LANGUAGES

KEY FEATURES OF THE LANGUAGES (AFFECT, POWER, AND MEANING)

The Languages describe the way people are disposed to talk and give their attention. The Dialogic Actions are the verbs (what is done) and the Languages and Paradigms are the adverbs (describing how it is done). For example, a move in open meaning, or an oppose in random power.

The Languages help people to:

- improve functional communication (so that what is said and intended is heard)
- listen to others (rather than assuming they are missing the point)
- understand, appreciate and work with each other better (rather than requiring others to engage in a different manner or language)

Reduce:

- confusion (by recognising when people's attention is in their head, heart or hands)
- misplaced attributions (that people are lost in meaning, over-affected by their emotions or asserting their power to get things done)

Help practitioners to:

- discern what may be needed in the situation (and which language will improve functionality in the room)
- engage a wider range of participants in the room (by speaking in affect, power and meaning rather than always using the same language)

SELF DEVELOPMENT

Realising Yourself: Understanding the Languages by referring to the key features of the Languages, reading programme material, learning from others, participating, and noticing what happens in conversations/exchanges with other people.

Can you talk and write about the Languages in theory?

Are you confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the Languages to learn from what happens, by acting as a practitioner to enhance functionality, reduce confusion, change the Language in use at the time (and helpfully naming it when others do), learning from first-hand experience and the reflective use of the key features of the Languages.

Have you built experience in using and changing between the three Languages to improve communication?



Do you take accountability for using and changing between the three Languages to improve communication?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to predict the Language best suited to doing the work you recognise is needed.

Are you confident, competent and reliable using and changing the Language to improve communication, and to do so in familiar and new situations?

Do you have stories based on your own experience describing how you have done so?

SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS - giving away what you have

The next three developmental phases for the practitioner are to become accomplished at transferring their skills to others. This requires learning how to recognise the skill level of others, and how to support their progress through the sequence of developmental phases.

Realising Yourself: Understanding the Languages by referring to the key features of the Languages, reading programme material, learning from others, participating, and noticing what happens in conversations/exchanges with other people.

Can they talk and write about the Languages in theory?

Are they confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the Languages to learn from what happens, by acting as a practitioner to enhance functionality, reduce confusion, change the language in use at the time (and helpfully naming it when others do), learning from first-hand experience and the reflective use of the key features of the Languages.

Have they built experience in using and changing between the three Languages to improve communication?

Do they take accountability for using and changing between the three Languages to improve communication?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to predict the Language best suited to doing the work you recognise is needed.

Are they confident, competent and reliable using and changing the Language to improve communication, and to do so in familiar and new situations?

Do they have stories based on their own experience describing how they have done so?



DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION FUNCTIONALITY

THE PARADIGMS

KEY FEATURES OF THE PARADIGMS (OPEN, CLOSED AND RANDOM)

The Paradigms describe the way that individuals, groups and organisations prefer to organise things. The Dialogic Actions are the verbs (what is done) and the Paradigms and Languages are the adverbs (describing how it is done). For example, a move in closed power, or a follow in open affect.

The Paradigms help people to:

- interact with others in a style that helps them (by respecting their preferred way of organising)
- think, plan and work together more simply, enjoyably and effectively (by recognising and respecting their different preferences for organising things)

Reduce:

- confusion (by recognising whether people prefer to be inclusive, structured or spontaneous)
- misplaced attributions (that people are so open and inclusive that they never get anything done, so closed and blinkered that they miss obvious opportunities, or so random or impulsive that they don't know what they are doing)

Help practitioners to:

- discern what may be needed (to improve functionality in the room)
- coach others better (by engaging them in their preferred paradigm, and drawing them into the other paradigms)
- address the confusion caused by cross-paradigm conversations (by using one paradigm at a time before switching to another)

SELF DEVELOPMENT

Realising Yourself: Understanding the Paradigms by referring to the key features of the Paradigms, reading programme material, learning from others, participating, and noticing what happens in conversations/exchanges with other people.

Can you talk and write about the Paradigms in theory?

Are you confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the Paradigms to learn from what happens, by acting as a practitioner to enhance functionality, reduce confusion, change the Paradigm in use at the time (and helpfully naming it when others do), learning from first-hand experience and the reflective use of the key features of the Paradigms.

Have you built experience in using and changing between the three Paradigms to improve communication?



Do you take accountability for using and changing between the three Paradigms to improve communication?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to predict the Paradigm best suited to doing the work you recognise is needed.

Are you confident, competent and reliable using and changing the Paradigm to improve communication, and to do so in familiar and new situations?

Do you have stories based on your own experience describing how you have done so?

SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS - giving away what you have

The next three developmental phases for the practitioner are to become accomplished at transferring their skills to others. This requires learning how to recognise the skill level of others, and how to support their progress through the sequence of developmental phases.

Realising Yourself: Understanding the Paradigms by referring to the key features of the Paradigms, reading programme material, learning from others, participating, and noticing what happens in conversations/exchanges with other people.

Can they talk and write about the Paradigms in theory?

Are they confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the Paradigms to learn from what happens, by acting as a practitioner to enhance functionality, reduce confusion, change the paradigm in use at the time (and helpfully naming it when others do), learning from first-hand experience and the reflective use of the key features of the Paradigms.

Have they built experience in using and changing between the three Paradigms to improve communication?

Do they take accountability for using and changing between the three Paradigms to improve communication?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to predict the Paradigm best suited to doing the work you recognise is needed.

Are they confident, competent and reliable using and changing the Paradigm to improve communication, and to do so in familiar and new situations?

Do they have stories based on their own experience describing how they have done so?

4.4.22



DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION FUNCTIONALITY

DIALOGIC ACTIONS

KEY FEATURES OF THE DIALOGIC ACTIONS (MOVE, FOLLOW, OPPOSE, BYSTAND)

The Dialogic Actions are the verbs (what is done) whilst the Languages and Paradigms are the adverbs (describing how it is done). For example, a random move in affect, followed by a closed oppose in power (the impulsive declaration of love was rejected without consideration).

The Dialogic Actions enable people to:

- distinguish between the process and the content of the communication (the nature of the communication itself, rather than what the communication is about)
- describe communication in a series of process steps (each step being one of four actions)
- see that the structure of a series of actions changes the impact of the communication (and that the same four actions used in different sequences have different outcomes)

Develop the skills to:

- reflect after any communication (to make sense of why and how the communication went the way it did)
- change the communication whilst it is taking place (by choosing to use different actions and sequences to improve the communication)

Deliver beneficial outcomes by:

- enhancing functionality (by changing patterns of actions that are unhelpful)
- addressing dysfunctionality (by describing and changing unhelpful repetitive patterns)

SELF DEVELOPMENT

Realising Yourself: Understanding and recognising the four Actions by referring to the key features of the Dialogic Actions, reading programme material, learning from others, participating, and noticing what happens in conversations/exchanges with other people.

Can you talk and write about the Dialogic Actions in theory?

Are you confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the four Dialogic Actions to learn from what happens by acting as a practitioner to enhance functionality, by deliberately contributing to constructive sequences of Actions, including in decision-making, learning from first-hand experience and the reflective use of the key features of the Dialogic Actions.

Have you built experience in using the four Dialogic Actions to enhance functionality?

Do you take accountability for using the Dialogic Actions to enhance functionality?



Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to incorporate the Dialogic Actions into a natural way of working, and a natural way of describing what one is doing, to enhance functionality, ensure rigorous decision-making and address repetitive dysfunctionality.

Are you confident, competent and reliable using the Dialogic Actions including addressing repetitive dysfunctionality, and to do so in familiar and new situations?

Do you have stories based on your own experience describing how you have done so?

SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS - giving away what you have

The next three developmental phases for the practitioner are to become accomplished at transferring their skills to others. This requires learning how to recognise the skill level of others, and how to support their progress through the sequence of developmental phases.

Realising Yourself: Understanding and recognising the four Actions by referring to the key features of the Dialogic Actions, reading programme material, learning from others, participating, and noticing what happens in conversations/exchanges with other people.

Can they talk and write about the Dialogic Actions in theory?

Are they confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the four Dialogic Actions to learn from what happens by acting as a practitioner to enhance functionality, by deliberately contributing to constructive sequences of Actions, including in decision-making, learning from first-hand experience and the reflective use of the key features of the Dialogic Actions.

Have they built experience in using the four Dialogic Actions to enhance functionality?

Do they take accountability for using the Dialogic Actions to enhance functionality?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to incorporate the Dialogic Actions into a natural way of working, and a natural way of describing what one is doing, to enhance functionality, ensure rigorous decision-making and address repetitive dysfunctionality.

Are they confident, competent and reliable using the Dialogic Actions including addressing repetitive dysfunctionality, and to do so in familiar and new situations?

Do they have stories based on their own experience describing how they have done so?

4.4.22



DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION ENGAGEMENT

MODES OF TALKING & THINKING TOGETHER

KEY FEATURES OF THE MODES OF TALKING & THINKING TOGETHER (MONOLOGUE, DEBATE, DISCUSSION, CONVERSATION, SKILLFUL CONVERSATION, DIALOGUE & GENERATIVE DIALOGUE)

The Modes of Talking and Thinking Together are patterns of discourse that arise when people are together. When talking together, people are always in one of the seven Modes. Each one provides a different level of engagement and is suited to achieving different things. Unlike literacy and numeracy, people are not taught articulacy at school. Instead, they pick up the various skills they have from other people, along with poor habits.

The aim is to distinguish between the seven Modes, recognise them in use and the work done by each one, learn how to do them well, and then discover how to change the discourse from one Mode to another when helpful or needed. The Modes are 'sticky', in that there is a natural tendency to stay in the current Mode, so it is a learnt skill to change the Mode.

People tend to have a limited range of Modes, and few have much experience of Dialogue and Generative Dialogue, so learning about the Modes opens new opportunities for talking and thinking together. This is particularly relevant to multi-stakeholder organisational change work, where a variety of different perspectives and experiences can be incorporated to generate the best participation and outcomes. Without skills in Dialogue, participation is limited. Instead, change initiatives are designed by 'experts' and 'rolled out' to 'get the buy-in' of those who are uninvolved until they are directed to change what they do

Monologue:

- Monologue is the most rudimentary pattern of discourse. It takes the form of a speech or talk, where one person holds the floor (structure) and others are expected to listen and need permission to speak (dynamic).
- The art of good monologue is to know the audience and to speak directly to them. If they don't know what you are telling them and they want to know, then they will give their full attention. Failing that, people may be polite, but they will be bored and thinking about other things.
- The value of monologue is that everyone hears the same thing at the same time from the speaker (rather than later hearing other people's versions of what was said).



Debate:

- Debate is a different form of engagement where there are two opposing opinions, one held by 'us' and the other by 'them' (structure). The aim is to win by 'beating down' the other view. Each side takes the view that 'I am right – and you are wrong' (dynamic).
- To debate well you address the arguments made by the other side, responding with a stronger one in support of your own position. Done badly, people put down the credibility of 'them' (the opposing side) without caring about the points they are making.
- The value of debate is that it has the energy to gather a range of thoughts and feelings for and against a particular proposal. Ideally everyone argues both sides to get all the ideas out in the open.

Discussion:

- Discussion is a loose pattern (structure) of inconsequential engagement with a rapid change of topics to maintain the energy and interest of others (dynamic).
- To do this 'chat' or 'banter' well, you are lightly and directly engaging, and enjoy the energy of people's responses without being demanding of them. You break the discussion by talking privately to other individuals or getting serious.
- The value of discussion is that it easily includes people. Also, without questioning you can sense and learn about people through their responses and reactions.

Conversation:

- Conversation is the most versatile of the seven Modes. In conversation, people find areas of common interest or concern (structure) even despite their significant differences (in age, gender, ethnicity, social standing, etc). The interpersonal engagement is guided by curiosity and lasts as long as there is interest to continue, (dynamic).
- Good conversation is like a fresh bubbling stream as people add their thoughts and experiences and enquire of the others, resulting an exchange that is participatory and enriching. Monologues kill conversations by monopolising the space without regard for others.
- Conversation is personal, enjoyable and an efficient way of exchanging significant information in a short period of time. The same conversation can easily be resumed at the next meeting of those involved.

Skillful Conversation:

- Skillful Conversation is a more purposeful consideration than Conversation, leading to some kind of resolution (structure). It involves the support and challenge of views and opinions to clarify the assumptions and implications involved (dynamic).
- Skillful Conversation requires thinking as well as reflection and is needed whenever people are seeking clarity and understanding. Jumping to conclusions and emotional outbursts break the rigour of good Skillful Conversation.
- This is the ideal Mode for decision-making, provided there is a common understanding of the context involved.



Dialogue:

- Dialogue is an inclusive way of talking and thinking together. People address the whole group (rather than individuals) as they consider the question under consideration (structure). Just as every piece is needed to complete the jigsaw puzzle and see the full picture, so every participant has something relevant to contribute to the group finding a common understanding (dynamic).
- Skilled Dialogue uses the Dialogue Practices (Voice, Listening, Respect and Suspension) to consider what is said, thought and felt – and to incorporate them into the flow of the Dialogue to establish a common understanding. Emphasising role or status by asking particular individuals for explanations, whilst withholding one's own, cuts across the Dialogue.
- The unique value of Dialogue is its ability to establish a common understanding, feeling and experience amongst a group of people of the overall situation and context.

Generative Dialogue:

- Generative Dialogue is the most radical of the seven Modes and the least pre-defined (structure). It deliberately has no fixed topic so that whatever needs to be considered can be raised within a flow of unfolding meaning (dynamic).
- Curiously, given its free form, discipline is essential for Generative Dialogue, requiring awareness of what is moving internally and externally, and how to reveal this most generatively at any time for oneself and everyone present. Indulgence flies in the face of this Mode, resulting in philosophising about, rather than the direct experience of what is present.
- Generative Dialogue is invaluable to conceive a new general disposition, thereby transforming the overall context. The nature of the change only becomes evident at the end of the Generative Dialogue, rather than being the starting intention.

SELF DEVELOPMENT

Realising Yourself: Understanding and recognising the seven Modes by referring to the key features of the modes of Talking and Thinking Together, reading programme materials, learning from others, participating, and realising the impact of changing the Mode on the nature of the engagement between the participants and the work that can be done in consequence.

Can you talk and write about the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together in theory?

Are you confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together to learn from what happens by acting as a practitioner to know which Mode is in use, doing the Mode well to realise its value through a good level of engagement, and then changing to a better Mode when it would be of benefit to those involved.

Have you built experience in using the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together and changing between the Modes to get a good level of engagement?

Do you take accountability for using the appropriate Mode given the needs of the situation?



Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to use the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together well, and to move between them to achieve the best level of engagement for the work to be done.

Are you confident, competent and reliable using the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together depending on the needs of the situation and the work to be done?

Do you have stories based on your own experience describing how you have done so?

SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS - giving away what you have

The next three developmental phases for the practitioner are to become accomplished at transferring their skills to others. This requires learning how to recognise the skill level of others, and how to support their progress through the sequence of developmental phases.

Realising Yourself: Understanding and recognising the seven Modes by referring to the key features of the modes of Talking and Thinking Together, reading programme materials, learning from others, participating, and realising the impact of changing the Mode on the nature of the engagement between the participants and the work that can be done in consequence.

Can they talk and write about the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together in theory?

Are they confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together to learn from what happens by acting as a practitioner to know which Mode is in use, doing the Mode well to realise its value through a good level of engagement, and then changing to a better Mode when it would be of benefit to those involved.

Have they built experience in using the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together and changing between the Modes to get a good level of engagement?

Do they take accountability for using the appropriate Mode given the needs of the situation?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to use the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together well, and to move between them to achieve the best level of engagement for the work to be done.

Are you confident, competent and reliable using the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together depending on the needs of the situation and the work to be done?

Do they have stories based on their own experience describing how they have done so?

25.4.22



**DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK
FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION
QUALITY OF UNDERSTANDING**

DIALOGUE PRACTICES

KEY FEATURES OF THE DIALOGUE PRACTICES (VOICE, LISTENING, RESPECT, SUSPENSION)

The Dialogue Practices are the means of deepening the quality of any discourse between people. They are simple to understand and effective to use. The four Practices are: speaking genuinely (Voice); seeking to understand others (Listening); taking others seriously (Respect); and explaining oneself (Suspension). They are inter-related, with each Practice enhancing the others, and named as they are because through practise you can improve your level of skill.

It is self-evident that if people do not listen to one another, their exchange cannot be of a high quality. The quality is similarly impaired by the absence of Voice, Respect or Suspension. Whenever the quality is poor, one or more of the Dialogue Practices is absent. Activating all four Practices inherently enhances the quality and vitality of talking and thinking together. The Practices are relevant to all the Modes, and to Dialogue and Generative Dialogue in particular. These two Dialogue Modes establish a common or collective understanding or generate a common meaning amongst all participants.

Voice:

- Expressing your thoughts or experiences to everyone participating in the Dialogue may not be easy at first. Speaking up is the beginning of finding your voice.
- Having spoken, you may find that what you said is not quite what you intended. Perhaps you were not sufficiently articulate, modified your expression because of those who were present, or you were unclear about what you actually wanted to say. Discovering and saying what you really mean is central to the practice of Voice.
- With further practise, you can place your voice and what you need to say into the flow of the Dialogue in a way that helps everyone to establish a common understanding, or to generate a new common meaning.

Listening:

- Listening requires you to give attention to the speaker. This is not easy to do if you are pre-occupied with your own thoughts and feelings. The first measure of listening is that you can repeat everything the speaker said.
- Having heard what was said, there is the opportunity to consider what the speaker intended to convey through their words. Listening to hear the meaning behind the words is central to the practice of Listening.
- With further practise you can listen in a way that provides a receptive space for others to find their voice and help to establish a common understanding, or to generate a new common flow of meaning.



Respect:

- It is easier to give attention to some speakers than others, perhaps because of what they are saying, or the tone and manner of their expression. The willingness to listen to what anyone is saying is the first level of Respect.
- Accepting that others have good reasons to hold the views they do, and trying to discover what those reasons are, is fundamental to the practice of Respect.
- With practise you can acknowledge the legitimacy of people's voice and experiences in a way that we can all come to realise why we hold the views we do – and thereby help everyone to establish a common understanding, or to generate a new common flow of meaning.

Suspension:

- It is not always easy to follow your experience and to express it in a coherent way. Trying to describe what happened in your thoughts and feelings is the beginning of Suspension.
- Reflecting on your experience and describing the sequence of what happened in your thoughts and feelings is central to the practice of Suspension.
- With practise, you can describe the flow of your own thoughts and feelings in relation to what was expressed by others, revealing the common flow of meaning through everyone present.

SELF DEVELOPMENT

Realising Yourself: Understanding and recognising the four Dialogue Practices by referring to the key features of the Dialogic Practices, reading programme materials, learning from others, participating, and noticing the impact on the quality of discourse with other people through the absence or presence of the Practices.

Can you talk and write about the four Dialogue Practices in theory?

Are you confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the four Dialogue Practices to learn from what happens by acting as a practitioner to enhance the quality of discourse, by deliberately naming and using the Dialogue Practices and by encouraging others to use them as well.

Have you built experience in using the four Dialogue Practices to enhance the quality of discourse?

Do you take accountability for using the Dialogue Practices to enhance the quality of discourse?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to incorporate the Dialogue Practices into a natural way of working, and a natural way of describing what you are doing, to enhance the quality of any exchange between people.

Are you confident, competent and reliable using the Dialogue Practices to enhance the quality of any exchange?

Do you have stories based on your own experience describing how you have done so?



SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS - giving away what you have

The next three developmental phases for the practitioner are to become accomplished at transferring their skills to others. This requires learning how to recognise the skill level of others, and how to support their progress through the sequence of developmental phases.

Realising Yourself: Understanding and recognising the four Dialogue Practices by referring to the key features of the Dialogic Practices, reading programme materials, learning from others, participating, and noticing the impact on the quality of discourse with other people through the absence or presence of the Practices.

Can they talk and write about the four Dialogue Practices in theory?

Are they confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the four Dialogue Practices to learn from what happens by acting as a practitioner to enhance the quality of discourse, by deliberately naming and using the Dialogue Practices and by encouraging others to use them as well.

Have they built experience in using the four Dialogue Practices to enhance the quality of discourse?

Do they take accountability for using the Dialogue Practices to enhance the quality of discourse?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to incorporate the Dialogue Practices into a natural way of working, and a natural way of describing what you are doing, to enhance the quality of any exchange between people.

Are they confident, competent and reliable using the Dialogue Practices to enhance the quality of any exchange?

Do they have stories based on their own experience describing how they have done so?

25.4.22



DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION FOCUS

LEADING ENERGIES

KEY FEATURES OF THE LEADING ENERGIES

The Leading Energies are a framework, or construct in consciousness, to purposefully focus the energy naturally gathered by a Dialogue or Generative Dialogue. Through the Leading Energies leadership can be provided by any participant, not just those nominated with leadership roles. There are four Leading Energies (Visionary, Citizen, Performance and Wisdom), and each of them requires different conditions, and does a different kind of work.

Visionary Energy:

- The Visionary energy seeks opportunity and potential. It calls for imagination and the painting of a picture of the future that provides what we want and need. It challenges people to set aside the constraints of the present situation, to be able to say 'yes' to a better circumstance in the future. As Martin Luther King Jnr said: 'I have a dream...'
- Visionary energy does a unique kind of work. It **aligns the direction and purpose** of the people in a team, community or organisation. The aspiration it engenders provides a resilience through common intention. That in turn affects the many decisions made and activities undertaken in the present by drawing them towards a common outcome.

Citizen Energy:

- The Citizen energy draws richer levels of participation. This energy enables people to understand the value of their role and contribution, deepening their desire to learn how to play their part better in relation to the whole. It calls for a recognition of the dynamics of the larger activity in which one is an active part, and provides the fulfilment of impersonal fellowship or 'koinonia'.
- The Citizen energy makes light work of things. It **harmonises interactions**, humanises the system, deepens pride, ownership and the sense of being part of the team, community or organisation. This oils the system, reduces the noise and friction and increases the overall flow and outcomes.

Performance Energy:

- The Performance energy calls for coherence in thinking, decision-making and action. It is the passion for delivery, of doing, that enables a vision to take form and to be realised. The Performance energy requires saying 'no' to distractions and remaining attentive to what contributes to the intended outcome.
- The Performance energy also does work. It **brings things into completed form**. The delivery of what was needed, requested or agreed provides a great sense of accomplishment and achievement for all involved. It leads individuals and groupings of people to bring more care and accuracy to their work and to become reliable in the commitments they make.



Wisdom Energy:

- The Wisdom energy extends conscious awareness. It holds the larger circumstance (the macrocosm) alongside the closer or more immediate situation (the microcosm). By attending to both, the dynamic relationship between them starts to be revealed, and underlying opportunities and tensions can be identified.
- Through the awareness of wisdom, unrecognised sources of energy can be released and used. The Wisdom energy **identifies the essential things** to attend to and the timing to do so. This is what some call working smarter rather than working harder.

SELF DEVELOPMENT

Realising Yourself: Understanding the Leading Energies by referring to the key features of the Leading Energies, reading programme material, learning from others, participating, and noticing what happens in conversations/exchanges with other people.

Can you talk and write about the Leading Energies in theory?

Are you confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the Leading Energies to learn what happens from first-hand experience and reflection, by acting as a practitioner to focus the energy in the room, and to provide leadership by doing the work of: aligning direction and purpose; harmonising interactions; bringing things into completed form; and identifying the essential things to attend to and the timing to do so.

Have you built experience in using the Leading Energies to focus the energy in the room?

Do you take accountability for providing leadership and enabling the work of the Leading Energies?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience to act as a practitioner by predicting the best sequences that will enable the work to be done by the Leading Energies, given the development of the participants in the room.

Are you confident, competent and reliable to enable work to be done by the Leading Energies in familiar and new situations?

Do you have stories based on your own experience describing how you have done so?

SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS - giving away what you have

The next three developmental phases for the practitioner are to become accomplished at transferring their skills to others. This requires learning how to recognise the skill level of others, and how to support their progress through the sequence of developmental phases.



Realising Yourself: Understanding the Leading Energies by referring to the key features of the Leading Energies, reading programme material, learning from others, participating, and noticing what happens in conversations/exchanges with other people.

Can they talk and write about the Leading Energies in theory?

Are they confident to be seen trying them out?

Showing Up: Trying out and using the Leading Energies to learn what happens from first-hand experience and reflection, by acting as a practitioner to focus the energy in the room, and to provide leadership by doing the work of: aligning direction and purpose; harmonising interactions; bringing things into completed form; and identifying the essential things to attend to and the timing to do so.

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Are they confident, competent and reliable to enable work to be done by the Leading Energies in familiar and new situations?

Do they have stories based on their own experience describing how they have done so?

10.5.22



DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION PRACTITIONER FACILITATION

LOCUS OF ATTENTION

KEY FEATURES OF THE PRACTITIONER FACILITATION FRAMEWORK

The Locus of Attention is a simple framework to make sense of changing situations. The balanced awareness of the People, Process and Content helps the Practitioner with the art of seeing where to place their attention at any time to achieve a generative flow. A working knowledge of the various Dialogue skills is then called upon to determine the science of how best to intervene to provide developmental support.

People:

The Container indicates the current state, and Container Development (RY, SU, OG & AF) traces the ongoing growth of people. The aim is to cultivate first-hand learning that is ongoing and self-sustaining. To be of help, the Practitioner is attentive to where people are individually and collectively on the developmental path, and to support or open the way for the next steps.

Process:

A Living System is a self-generating one. This requires healthy structures and processes, much like the anatomy and physiology of the human body. The Practitioner develops them progressively through skilful design and facilitation, attending to the convening of the participants and to their engagement, functionality, quality, focus, locus and intention.

Content:

The Content of any consideration is shaped by its Context, and by the underlying story that is generally disjointed or fragmented. As the disparate views are heard and understood they can be incorporated into an emerging common story, that makes sense explicitly and implicitly. This starts with the realisation that 'self-evidently true facts' are not more than interpretations from a particular perspective. This opens the door to finding a common content in everyone's awareness, common interpretations, an expansion from the local to include the whole, an awareness of identity and a realignment of sub-cultural dispositions.

SELF DEVELOPMENT

Realising Yourself: Understanding the art of following changes in the People, Process and Content in the room. Noticing the Turning Points and what changed. Understanding the science of Container Development and growth of People individually and collectively; the progressive development of the Process and Structure to create a Living System; and the changing Content and Context to move from a fragmented state to a commonly held story, explicitly and implicitly. Learning from asking and reading, from first-hand observations and reflecting.

Can you talk and write about the Locus of Attention in theory?

Are you confident to be seen naming where to put our attention?



Showing Up: Trying Out the art of seeing what to attend to at any time in the People, the Process and the Content. Tracking the changes in each area and testing the science of what facilitative input in different areas would support the overall flow. Naming Turning Points that have shifted the progress of the considerations – and saying what difference they made to the People and container, the Process and vitality, or Content and storyline. Learning from first-hand experience through doing and reflecting.

Have you built experience using the Locus of Attention?

Do you take accountability for using the Locus of Attention to determine where to act?

Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience of the art of attending to the changing situation of the People, the Process and the Content. Seeing the inter-relationships between them and making facilitative input that affects more than one area at the same time in support of the overall flow. Naming Turning Points whilst they are still present in the room, and asking others to describe what is changing. Skilfully inducing needed Turning Points from others and reinforcing the resulting difference to the People and container, the Process and vitality, and/or the Content and storyline. Learning from first-hand experience about the practitioner stance of being facilitative (developmental and transparent) without necessarily being named as the facilitator.

Are you confident, competent and reliable with the art and science of the Locus of Attention?

Do you have stories based on your own experience describing how you have used the Locus of Attention?

SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS - giving away what you have

The next three developmental phases for the practitioner are to become accomplished at transferring their skills to others. This requires learning how to recognise the skill level of others, and how to support their progress through the sequence of developmental phases.

Realising Yourself: Understanding the art of following changes in the People, Process and Content in the room. Noticing the Turning Points and what changed. Understanding the science of Container Development and growth of People individually and collectively; the progressive development of the Process and Structure to create a Living System; and the changing Content and Context to move from a fragmented state to a commonly held story, explicitly and implicitly. Learning from asking and reading, from first-hand observations and reflecting.

Can they talk and write about the Locus of Attention in theory?

Are they confident to be seen naming where to put our attention?

Showing Up: Trying Out the art of seeing what to attend to at any time in the People, the Process and the Content. Tracking the changes in each area and testing the science of what facilitative input in different areas would support the overall flow. Naming Turning Points that have shifted the progress of the considerations – and saying what difference they made to the People and container, the Process and vitality, or Content and storyline. Learning from first-hand experience through doing and reflecting.

Have they built experience using the Locus of Attention?

Do they take accountability for using the Locus of Attention to determine where to act?



Occupying the Ground: Drawing on experience of the art of attending to the changing situation of the People, the Process and the Content. Seeing the inter-relationships between them and making facilitative input that affects more than one area at the same time in support of the overall flow. Naming Turning Points whilst they are still present in the room, and asking others to describe what is changing. Skilfully inducing needed Turning Points from others and reinforcing the resulting difference to the People and container, the Process and vitality, and/or the Content and storyline. Learning from first-hand experience about the practitioner stance of being facilitative (developmental and transparent) without necessarily being named as the facilitator.

Are they confident, competent and reliable with the art and science of the Locus of Attention?

Do they have stories based on their own experience describing how they have used the Locus of Attention?

Peter Garrett & Jane Ball

July 2022





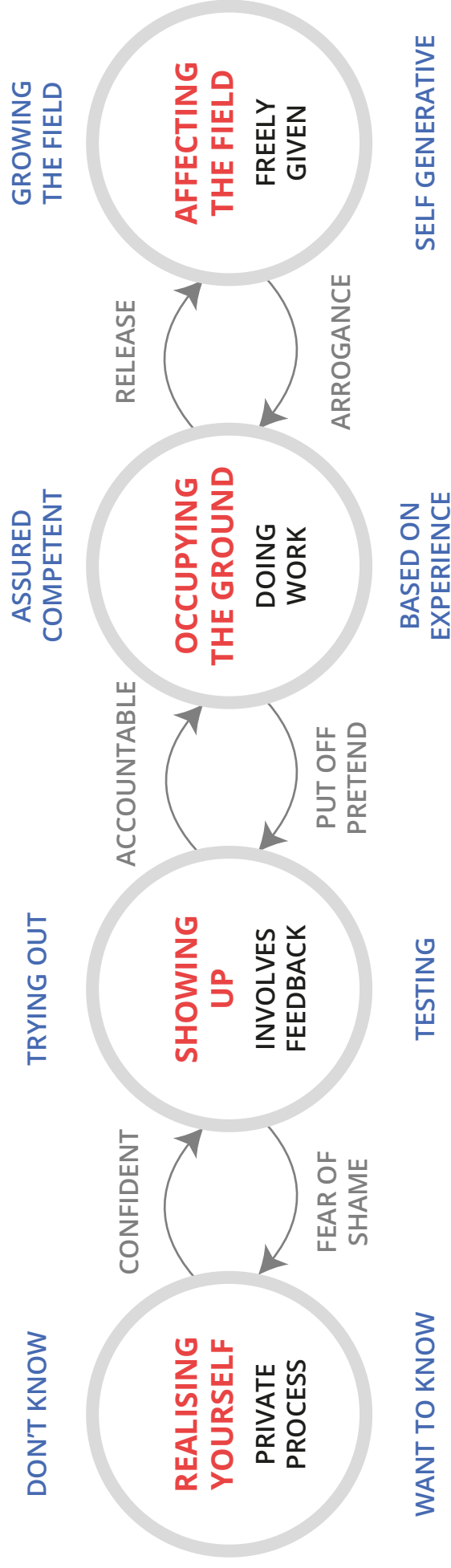
A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING: BRINGING DIALOGUE INTO THE ROOM DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION

	SELF DEVELOPMENT				SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS			
	RY	SU	OG		RY	SU	OG	
CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT								
LANGUAGES & PARADIGMS								
DIALOGIC ACTIONS								
MODES OF TALKING & THINKING TOGETHER								
DIALOGUE PRACTICES								
LEADING ENERGIES								
PRACTITIONER FACILITATION								
PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT								

Acknowledgement: J Ball



Container Development Process



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Acknowledgement: P Garrett



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A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING: BRINGING DIALOGUE INTO THE ROOM

DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK

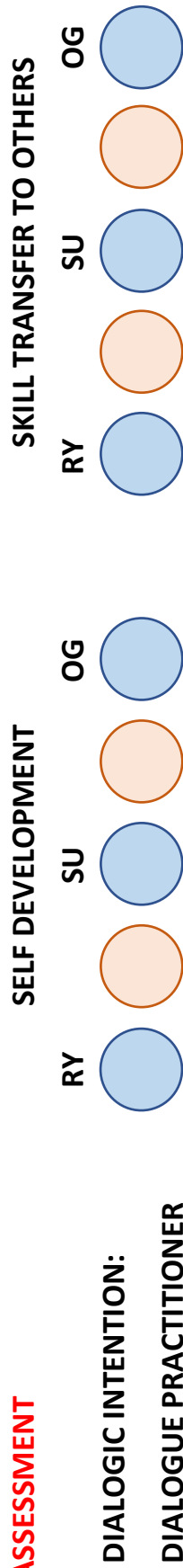
FOR ASSESSMENT, COACHING AND ACCREDITATION

	SELF DEVELOPMENT				SKILL TRANSFER TO OTHERS			
	RY	SU	OG		RY	SU	OG	
CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT								
LANGUAGES & PARADIGMS								
DIALOGIC ACTIONS								
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DIALOGUE PRACTICES								
LEADING ENERGIES								
PRACTITIONER FACILITATION								
PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT								

Acknowledgement: J Ball

A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING: BRINGING DIALOGUE INTO THE ROOM
DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK 1/8

SELF-ASSESSMENT



THE NEXT STEPS

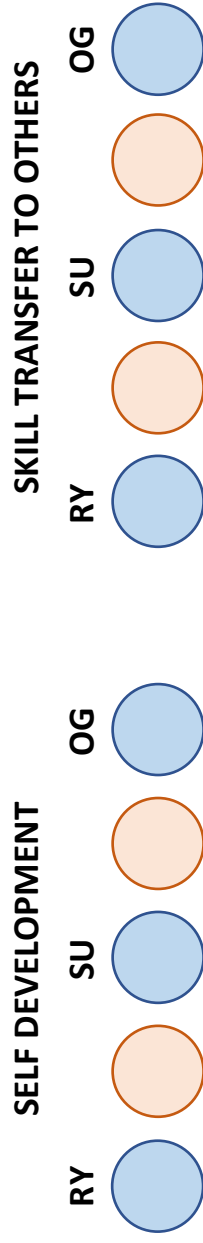
What do I want to *realise* (understand and make real), and where do I want to deepen the *experiential ground* on which I stand as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner? Naming these intentions is an important step to grow in stature as a practitioner.



DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK 2/8

SELF-ASSESSMENT

LOCUS OF ATTENTION:
DIALOGIC FACILITATION
SKILL DEVELOPMENT NEXT STEPS



Where do I need to put my attention and what can I do to expand my capability into the next level?

APX C

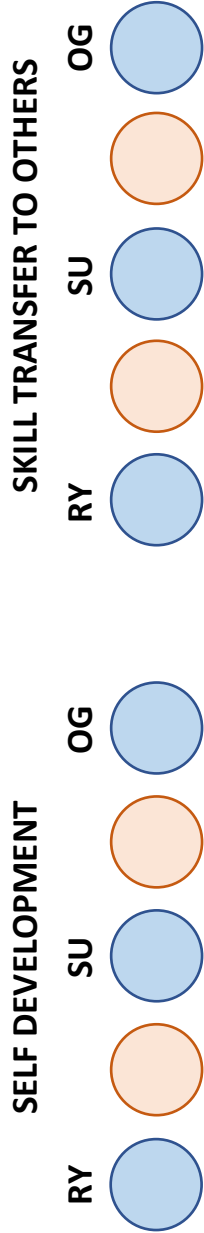


DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK 3/8

SELF-ASSESSMENT

FOCUS OF ATTENTION:
LEADING ENERGIES

SKILL DEVELOPMENT NEXT STEPS



Where do I need to put my attention and what can I do to expand my capability into the next level?



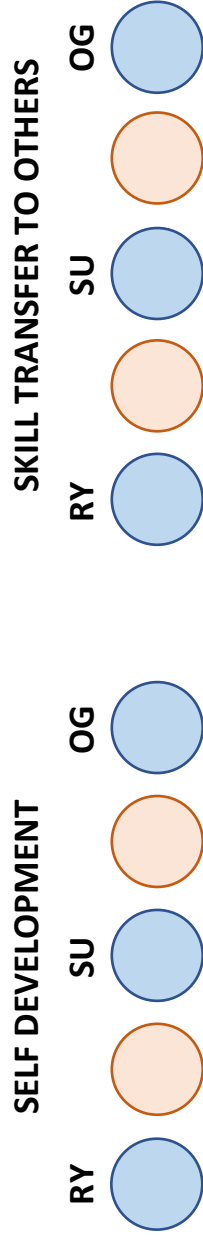
DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK 4/8

SELF-ASSESSMENT

QUALITY OF UNDERSTANDING:
DIALOGUE PRACTICES

SKILL DEVELOPMENT NEXT STEPS

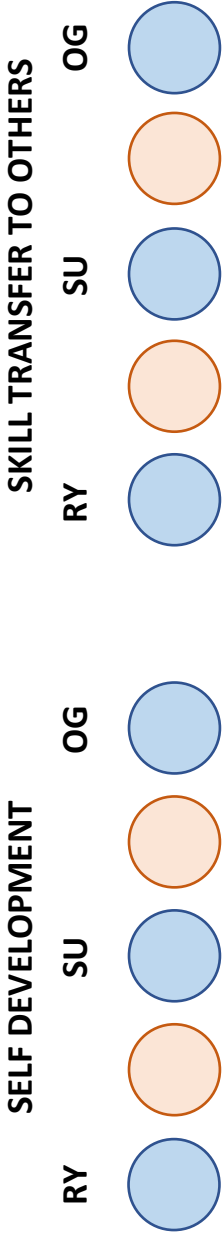
Where do I need to put my attention and what can I do to expand my capability into the next level?



DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK 5/8

SELF-ASSESSMENT

PATTERNS OF INTERACTION:
MODES OF TALKING &
THINKING TOGETHER



SKILL DEVELOPMENT NEXT STEPS

Where do I need to put my attention and what can I do to expand my capability into the next level?

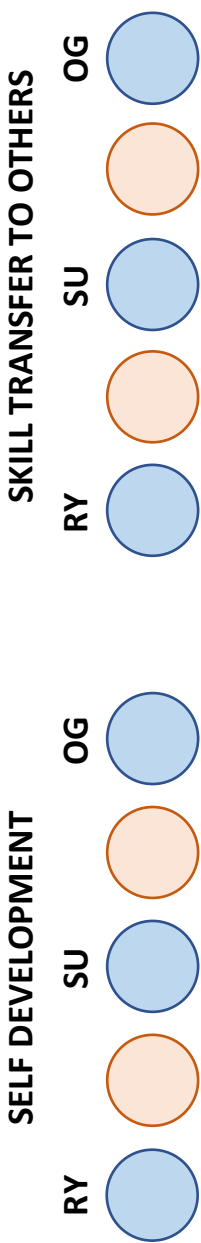


DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK 6/8

SELF-ASSESSMENT

FUNCTIONALITY:
DIALOGIC ACTIONS

SKILL DEVELOPMENT NEXT STEPS



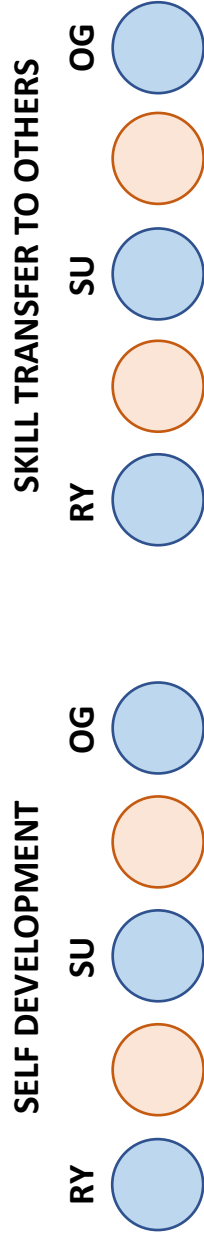
Where do I need to put my attention and what can I do to expand my capability into the next level?



DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK 7/8

SELF-ASSESSMENT

REDUCING CONFUSION:
LANGUAGES & PARADIGMS



SKILL DEVELOPMENT NEXT STEPS

Where do I need to put my attention and what can I do to expand my capability into the next level?



DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORK 8/8

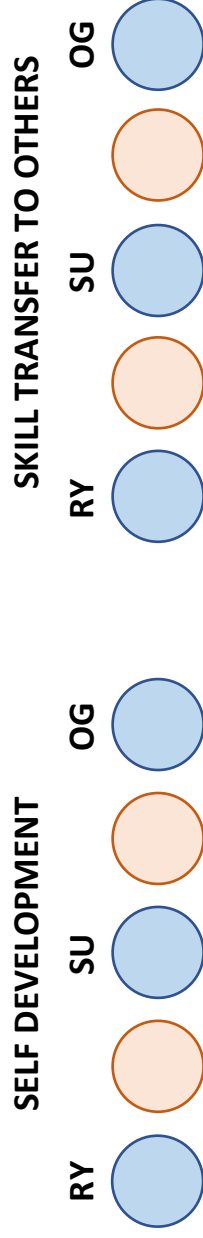
SELF-ASSESSMENT

ENGAGEMENT:

CHECK-IN & CHECK-OUT

SKILL DEVELOPMENT NEXT STEPS

Where do I need to put my attention and what can I do to expand my capability into the next level?





SET RESOURCES

APPENDIX D:

Set 1 - Who is in the room?

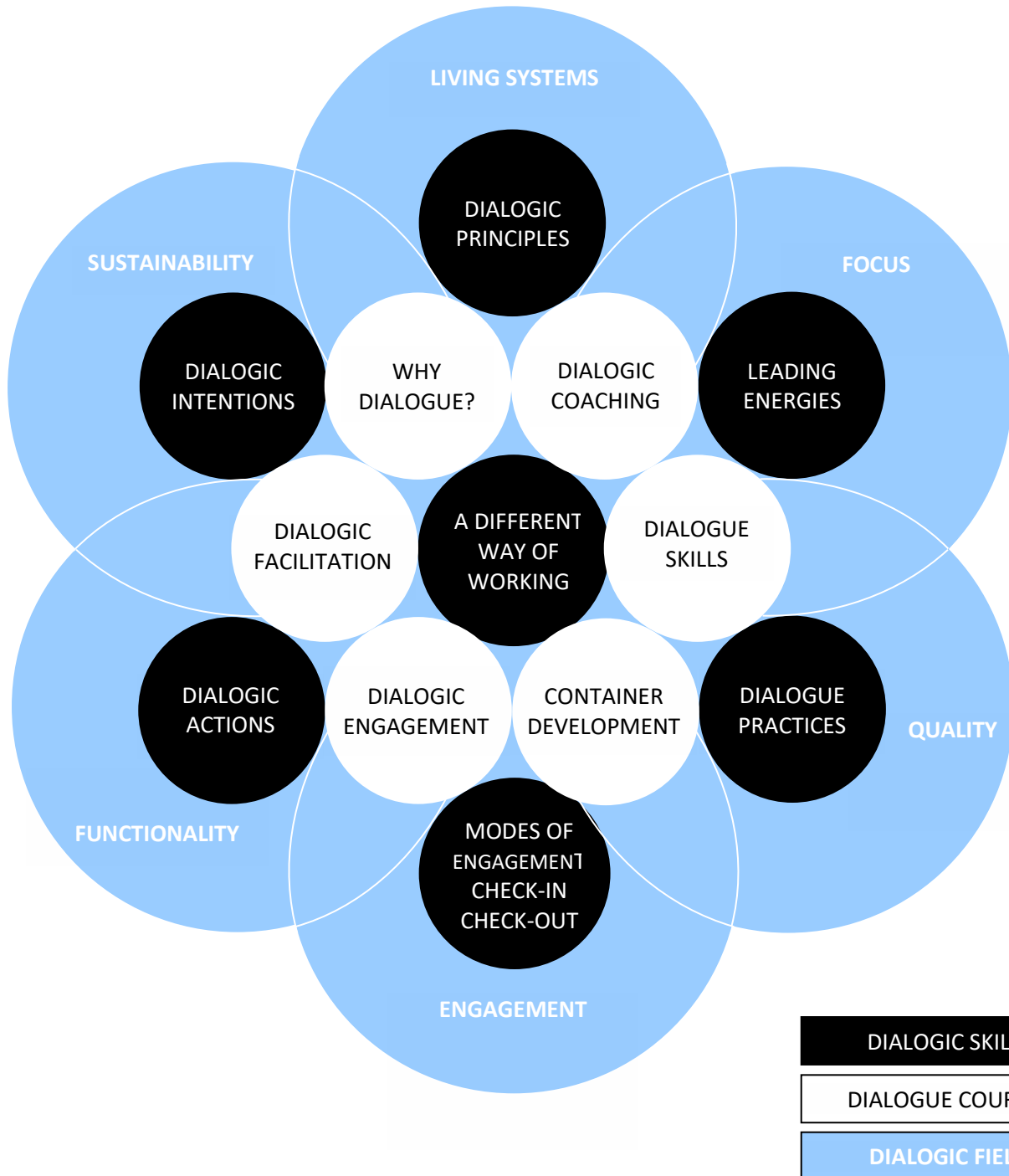
- Programme Mandala for A Different Way of Working
- The Check In - a different way to start a meeting...
- The Check Out - a different way to close a meeting...
- Advocacy & Enquiry
- The Container Development Model by Peter Garrett The World Needs Dialogue! Three
- Reflective Practice 1
- Why Are Organisations Inherently Fragmented



PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE PRACTITIONERS
FOCUS 1: BRINGING DIALOGUE INTO THE ROOM

PROGRAMME MANDALA - A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING

for the constructive alignment of individuals, teams, departments and organisations and resolution of organisational and social fragmentation



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Acknowledgement: P Garrett & J Ball

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to be read alongside the Programme Mandala

DIALOGUE SKILL DEVELOPMENT FOR A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING

ENGAGEMENT

- **Modes of Talking and Thinking Together**

The Modes are an elementary way of positioning Dialogue as a distinctive form of talking and thinking together. The structure and dynamic define the type of engagement and thereby the potential outcomes, and the skill is not only the use of the Mode, but which Mode to choose in any changing situation. The Modes start to define the form and nature of Dialogue which otherwise may be quite vague, such as: just talking that everyone does; a forum for magic to happen between people; a philosophical enquiry; or a safe place.

- **Check-in and Check-out**

The Check-in and Check-out are two patterns that are immediately usable to improve the quality of any meeting without improving the skills of the participants. The skills sit with the Dialogue Practitioner to design and introduce the Check-in, based on the developmental purpose and defined by the structure, dynamic and focus.

FUNCTIONALITY

- **Dialogic Actions**

The Dialogic Actions are derived from a simple framework developed by David Kantor in the 1980s and incorporated into our Integrated Dialogue Model with his encouragement. The skillful use of the Actions enables simplicity, rigour and for a group of people to establish their direction and not to be distracted by dysfunctional behaviour. Although based in family dynamics, the skill framework is equally useful and applicable in organisational and community contexts.

QUALITY

- **Dialogue Practices**

The Dialogue Practices were developed in the late 1990's by William Isaacs, Peter Garrett and Michael Jones to align the individual developmental practice with the developmental practice of the group. They enhance the quality of the container and the Dialogue by deepening awareness and encouraging participation. Dialogue is the practice of a lifetime.

- **Container Development**

The Container Development Model was designed by Peter Garrett and Jane Ball over 15 years ago. The phases in the model emerged empirically from their personal and professional experiences coaching and consulting to clients and client systems. The predictable sequence of steps from naivety to wisdom involves shifts of relationship, responsibility and identity for individuals, groups, organisations and communities.



FOCUS

- **Leading Energies**

The Leading Energies are derived from a framework for individual leadership development designed by David Kantor in the 1990s, that we have both amended and adapted into a collective approach to organisational development, with his full knowledge and encouragement. They result in an energetic focus to align intention, attention, interaction and action.

SUSTAINABILITY

- **Dialogue Intentions**

The Dialogic Intentions are a distillation of the facilitation methods developed by Peter Garrett over a 30-year applied practice since David Bohm's death in 1992, including two decades working with Jane Ball. The measure of success of any Dialogue work is the complete transfer of the spirit, disposition, intention, skills and ongoing development of the Dialogue process. From the outset the Dialogue Practitioner prepares to release their role, and this organic framework supports that journey holographically.

LIVING SYSTEMS

- **Dialogue Principles**

The Dialogue Principles were formulated by William Isaacs and Peter Garrett in the late 1990s to name the essences of Dialogue. At a practical level they provide the framework to recognise and assess the health and vitality of any social system or organisation. At another level they provide an opening into what lies within and beyond the subtle intelligence and elegant process of Dialogue.

DIALOGUE COURSES FOR A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING

- **Dialogic Engagement**

This introductory course is an experiential enquiry into how we talk and think together through different Modes, including the distinctive forms of Dialogue. There is a participatory taste of a sequence of seven different Modes, along with a consideration of the kind of engagement they provide, the potential outcomes, how to be skillful with them, and how they enhance or detract from people's ability to work well with others.

- **Why Dialogue?**

The second introductory course explores the necessity for Dialogue in society, and its relevance to organisations, communities and multi-stakeholder situations in general. The roots are in the original proposals by David Bohm and others about the generic state of fragmentation in consciousness. Through a lack of awareness and common understanding we find ourselves producing many of the very problems we then have to solve. The ongoing enquiry into Dialogue as a way through this impasse led directly to the interest in establishing Professional Dialogue and the Academy.

- **Dialogue Skills**

This is a longer participatory course in which participants learn and develop the dialogic skills needed to achieve engagement, functionality, quality and focus. Individually these immediately useable skills enhance any communication practice - and in combination they



open the doorway into the ongoing practice of Dialogue. Ideally this course is und **APX D** with an intact grouping, thereby deepening the collective as well as individual capability.

- **Dialogic Facilitation**

Facilitation is an art and a science. This Professional Dialogue Facilitation course introduces a primary framework of intention and attention, within which the dialogic skills may be used to realise the full potential of the situation. The outcome is the ability to bring any grouping into Dialogue in support of the work they are undertaking – whilst also transferring the ownership and facilitative power needed for a sustainable process and living dialogic system.

- **Dialogic Coaching**

Dialogic coaching requires the cultivation of a container within which the spirit, intention and skills of Dialogue are explored and transferred to others in support of their thinking and the decisions they make. Expertise with Dialogue is primary, and subject matter knowledge is secondary, as the practitioner learns how to help people and groups through the potential transitional crises as they move from one phase of the Container Development model to another. The Realising Yourself Interview is a structured entry for the individual coaching process.

THEORY DEVELOPMENT

HISTORY

Dialogue - A Proposal by David Bohm, Donald Factor and Peter Garrett 1991

From Bohm to the Academy - recording from *The World Needs Dialogue!* 3 Academy Conference 2020

Thought as a System by David Bohm

David Bohm's Ontology: The Implicate Order by Peter Garrett 2020

A New Kind of Dialogue by Peter Garrett 2021

PURPOSE

Why Dialogue? Axioms by Peter Garrett and Jane Ball

The World Needs Dialogue! 2: Setting the Bearings - Foreword and Section Introductions to a three-part framework - Dialogue In-the-Room, Dialogic Intervention and Systemic Dialogue

Peter Garrett & Jane Ball

2020





THE CHECK-IN

A different way to start a meeting...

AN INTRODUCTION

A Check-in is a pattern designed to enhance the engagement of people in a room at the outset of a meeting. Typically, when people arrive at the meeting they are somewhat pre-occupied with other things, including thoughts about what they have just done or still have to do. The attention in the room is often quite scattered, and if so, people will tend to fall into discussion. Traditionally, the person running the meeting will then call the meeting to order and start with the first item on their agenda. The Check-in is a different way to start the meeting, and it usually works best before considering the agenda, if there is one. The intention of the Check-in is to draw people's awareness into the room so that they give their attention to what they are now doing. Also, a good check-in sets people thinking in a direction that will be helpful for the matters to be considered together.

The structure of a Check-in

The structure of the Check-in is simple and clear. The facilitator poses a question (or more than one question) that each person including the facilitator is invited to answer in turn to the whole group. As a result of everyone having spoken in response to the question, people will be more attentively engaged, and the participants will have a more productive meeting without necessarily being any more skillful than they were before the meeting. This is the nature of a pattern - the interactions and outcomes are enhanced without the participants requiring any additional skill. There is skill involved, but the skill sits with the facilitator in designing the structure and dynamic of the Check-in, and which question to ask. So, preparation is required on the part of the facilitator. Over time, a Dialogue Facilitator will aim to make the necessary skills available to others by explaining after a Check-in why they designed it the way they did.

The dynamic of a Check-in

Without a good design and facilitation, the Check-in could easily take the form of a series of Monologues. That would not necessarily engage everyone in the room – in fact, it is more likely to disengage some of the participants. Instead of contributing a complex series of thoughts, people are therefore best encouraged contribute a shorter single response to the question/s. Using writing as a metaphor, this is more like each person contributing a sentence rather than offering a whole paragraph full of different ideas. You could think of the whole Check-in as the paragraph. A skillful facilitator treats it in that way by by-standing (or inviting others to by-stand) what they heard through the Check-in, once everyone has spoken. This will clarify and deepen the awareness in the room and the value of the Check-in.

Conducive to dialogic engagement

As well as gathering people's attention, and setting the direction of the thinking, the Check-in is conducive to Dialogue. This is partly because of the structure and dynamic. In both the Check-in and the Dialogue there is a common topic, and each person speaks primarily to the whole room, not to a particular individual. The difference is that the Check-in pattern requires each person to speak, unlike the Dialogue. This has the effect of balancing the room as those who tend to speak more are constrained to one chance, and those who speak less are heard equally. The fact that people have taken their turn and found their voice by speaking in the large group, makes it easier for them to do so during the balance of the meeting. As people become familiar with doing Check-ins they realise



that they are more about listening than speaking, since you have only one turn to speak but many turns to listen. At first, however, people may be more concerned about what they will say when it is their turn, and as a facilitator it is worth noting how challenging this may be for some without experience of speaking to a large group.

What the Check-in reveals

The Check-in informs everyone, including the facilitators, about the disposition of those in the room at the outset of the meeting. It can reveal things about the overall atmosphere, the levels of ease and tension, levels of awareness, specific issues that interest and concern people, and about their willingness to participate. This may guide the 'work to be done' during the meeting. There may be adjustments to be made to the shape of the meeting to enhance its relevance and effectiveness, perhaps by altering the sequence of the agenda, or changing the time allocated to some items.

DESIGNING A CHECK-IN

Direction: In preparing for a meeting, it is helpful to consider what you aim to achieve through holding the meeting. This will determine the direction you choose to go with your Check-in. Are you primarily concerned with expanding the thinking, or bringing it to a sharper focus? Do you want to relax people or wake them up? Are you more interested in the opportunity, the delivery, the risks, the ethics, the participation, the alternatives, the learning, the emotions, or something else? This gives you a sense of the kind of thinking and feeling you need to engender or evoke at the outset of the meeting. A well-crafted Check-in question will lead people in a particular direction. An open question will elicit a wider range of responses, whilst a closed question (either/or) will require people take a position. Sometimes a reflexive question provides safety to speak up (what do people in your part of the organisation say about the changes we are making?) or a more specific focus to the thinking (what would your partner hope you will learn about communication today?).

Perspective: If you think 'spatially', you have a range of perspectives from which to address things. There is my experience personally as an individual in this situation (**me**), what I see to be the group's experience and situation (**us**), my understanding of the situation and experiences of other stakeholders not in the room (**them**), and the progress of the common endeavour or work we are undertaking (**it**). These are the four primary perspectives. Then there are also the perspectives of the relationships between **me**, **us**, **them** and **it**. For example, my understanding (**me**) of the work (**it**) we are trying to accomplish, or how the group (**us**) works with the other stakeholders (**them**), and so on. So, where are you best to position the Check-in? That depends on your understanding of the whole situation, and what you need to explore or to draw to attention. Generally, you will want to elicit a personal comment (**me**) as well as a comment from another perspective. This is because there is much happening in people's lives, including successes and tensions in their personal, family and work lives that impact their ability to be fully engaged in the meeting, and it helps everyone to have some sense of this. A Check-in that is only about **them** or **it** is less likely to inform the meeting as well. So the Check-in will often have two parts, enquiring about the state of the individual (**me**), and their understanding of some specific part of the overall situation (**us**, **them**, **it** or the relationships between them).

Structure: The basic structure is that the facilitator poses a question, (or perhaps a two-part question as described above) and invites everyone in turn to give their response to the whole room. If someone chooses not to speak, they should be respected as having some good reason for holding back. Speaking in turn clearly means there is only one speaker at a time, and guidance needs to be given on what sequence is expected. There are essentially four forms of sequence:



Around the circle (clockwise or anti-clockwise). Originally we called Check-ins 'rounds' because we simply went around the group that was seated in a circle of chairs. Online, where there is no circle, and each person may see a different configuration of faces. So, instead this may be sequenced alphabetically, geographically or in some way that everyone easily understands. This clearly defined sequence is the most reassuring for a less confident group of people since they can prepare for their turn to speak. Unfortunately, those towards the end of the sequence and wait longer inevitably prepare more and more to say - and when it eventually comes to their turn they may have several 'paragraphs' ready. Strong and skillful facilitation is required to prevent the later stages of the Check-in degenerating into a series of long Monologues and thereby losing its value of engaging everyone in the room.

Tagged (where on completion of their contribution, the speaker chooses the next speaker). This has the advantage of pace and surprise because people don't know when their turn will come. It often reveals some of the sub-groupings in the room since people tend to choose their familiar colleagues or people who seem to think the same way as they do. One challenge in choosing the next speaker is remembering who has already spoken and who has not, as the pool of participants to tag reduces in number. It is a good indicator of how well people have been listening to others, but it can be embarrassing to choose someone whom others know has already made a significant Check-in comment, thereby revealing that you did not listening to them.

Reverse-tagged (where the next speaker volunteers to speak about the previous speaker before adding their own response). This is best used as an appreciative Check-in, and typically it has two parts. First you acknowledge the previous speaker (to whom you have just been listening) and then you respond to the Check-in question. This leads people to think more carefully about others and what they are contributing. So the Check-in might first ask you to say something you personally appreciate about the previous speaker, and then to describe how the previous speaker contributes to something that you believe is important for us in the work we are doing together. The Reverse-tagged Check-in used in this way reveals and deepens the respect and acknowledgement that is already there, but is usually unspoken except in more formal occasions. A cohesiveness emerges as people's comments are heard by the previous speaker, and openly by everyone present. People feel valued and noticed. This Check-in is essentially about **us**, and builds the inter-connectedness and confidence of a fragmented group, revealing there is more appreciation than is commonly voiced. (**Note:** The Reverse Tagged Check-in should **not** be used to solicit negative feedback or to propose requests for others to change their attitude or behaviour.)

Free-form (where people speak when they feel it is their turn). The invitation to speak whenever you choose, or feel it is your turn, is the least controlling structure for a Check-in. In less experienced groups it is predictable who will speak first because confident speakers with status in the group find it hard to resist leaping in. So, if you don't know the 'pecking order' in the group, and you want to know, this Check-in is likely to reveal some indicators. As participants gain more experience of the value of the Check-in, the free-form check-in may often prove the most helpful structure. What it lacks in pace (because there can be thoughtful silences where it is unclear who will speak next) it makes up for in potential creativity. It leaves the most space for the group to author a 'paragraph' at a deeper level of authenticity, and that is conducive to Generative Dialogue.

Dynamic: The key to a good Check-in is that the question raised matters to everyone in the room, and that there are probably things to be said that have not yet been said in that grouping. During the Check-in people have to 'centre' themselves to find their own genuine response to a question put to the whole room. Their awareness may change as they hear and consider other views expressed. By speaking up they participate and contribute to the thinking in the room. This is an opportunity to hear and understand others, and to be heard and understood by others oneself. The comr



FACILITATING THE CHECK-IN

The Facilitator and the Check-in: The facilitator is also a participant in the Check-in and they offer their response like everyone else. This affects the design of the Check-in since it must be framed in a way that is applicable to everyone in the room including the facilitator/s.

Repeat Check-ins: Avoid repeating the same Check-in with the same group unless there is some good reason for it. Each meeting is unique, even if it is with the same grouping of people, and deserves a thoughtfully designed and appropriate Check-in, just as each book or each movie needs a different title. If you do decide to use the same Check-in, make sure you do not give the same response you gave previously.

Who starts the Check-in? This is important to consider because the starting comment can set the pattern for everyone else.

- If the facilitator speaks first in response to their own question, that will define things most strongly and will probably constrain the information revealed by others. It will, however, give new participants the confidence that what is required has just been demonstrated, so they know how to fulfil the request to participate in the Check-in.
- A looser indication is for the facilitator to ask someone they know already understands what is being invited – perhaps turning to their co-facilitator or some else they know has some experience. A prepared answer from that individual, that shows no evidence of thinking in the room, would clearly be unhelpful.
- The most energetic way is for the facilitator to look around for a bright and willing face, and to invite them to start.
- The least controlled approach is to let anyone step forward to start the Check-in response. This will generally be taken up by a strong, confident individual, often causing less confident speakers to wait longer. Also, it is surprising how often such individuals try to change the whole direction of the Check-in by proposing people answer a quite different question. This gives the facilitator a choice. Does this new proposal meet the design intention as well or better than the question they had posed? If so, there is no problem going with the new proposal. Often the new proposal is of keen interest to some but not particularly relevant to others. If so, that would defeat the design intention of getting everyone engaged and moving in a particular direction, so the facilitator would need to assert the authority inherent in their role to put the Check-in back on track.

How long for the Check-in? This all depends on what you are trying to achieve. Typically, five minutes would be the maximum length for a one-hour meeting, whereas 10 or 15 minutes might suit a three-hour meeting. The skilled facilitator will encourage the group to share responsibility for the length of time taken to Check-in. Naming the total time to be taken enables the facilitator to speed up or slow down the speakers. Alternatively, people may be restricted to say just a couple of sentences each. Where people want to pontificate, the request to hear their role title can become a chaptered history of their career. Serial Monologues will kill the value of the Check-in, so this does require facilitative attention.

By-standing the Check-in: The Check-in will always reveal something about the current state and situation for those in the room. The question is what has it told us? It is the facilitator's responsibility to make this somewhat explicit by stepping back at the end of the Check-in, after everyone including they themselves have responded, to say what they noticed. They may encourage



others to do so as well. This is part of establishing a common understanding amongst everyone in the room, and helps people to use future Check-ins more effectively.

Check-ins with large groups: Where there are fewer than 20 people it may be feasible for everyone to listen to everyone else's response. In larger groups that is rarely helpful. Instead, divide the group into smaller sub-groupings of say 3, 4 or 5 people, depending on the overall numbers. Online, break-out rooms can be used for this purpose. Once people have checked in with a few of their colleagues in the subgroupings, then reconvene the whole group and hear a few comments. A commitment to hear from every sub-group may be unhelpful, depending on numbers. Working with a meeting of 120 people for a day, sub-groupings of 4 people for 10 minutes, then 5 to 10 minutes of comments may work well. Don't lose sight of the aim which is to get people engaged with each other, not make speeches.

Peter Garrett and Jane Ball

February 2022





THE CHECK-OUT

A different way to close a meeting...

AN INTRODUCTION

Typically, a meeting ends when the business has been completed, or when the time for the meeting has run out and remaining agenda items or outstanding matters are deferred. A Check-out is a more deliberate way of closing a meeting, providing an opportunity to give orderly attention to the progress that has been made (or not made), and to note what still needs to be done. When managed well, the Check-out ensures the meeting ends at the agreed time.

The Design of a Check-out

The facilitator or chair needs to determine how soon before the end of the meeting to introduce the Check-out. This depends on the length of the meeting and the number of participants. For an hour-long meeting with 10 people, five minutes should be adequate. A day-long meeting with 20 people may require 30 minutes. The Check-out generally takes the form of a question posed by the facilitator that is answered by everyone, including the facilitator themselves. The question is an invitation to reflect on the meeting in two ways. There is the content of the meeting, including noticing what was covered successfully, what is unclear and what still needs to be considered. Then there is the tone and dynamic of the meeting, including the way people participated and the awareness of those present of what was happening during the meeting. So, the generic Check-out question is probably: "How did we do in our meeting today?" which would cover both content and dynamic. This can then be adapted according to what occurred. Examples are:

- "What do you think we agreed today, and what do you think still needs to be considered?"
- "Is there anything you wanted to say but didn't have a chance to bring into the meeting?"
- "How would you describe the tone of our meeting?"
- "What was the most interesting part of the meeting for you?"
- "What did you discover today?"
- "How could we improve our future meetings?"
- "What needs to be on our agenda next time?"

The Structure of a Check-out

People take turns to answer the Check-out question, meaning only one person speaks at a time. Often it is best to tag the Check-out, with the speaker making their response then choosing the next speaker. This keeps the pace to the end of the meeting. Alternatively, people could be invited to speak when they choose (which may be helpful if the subject or dynamic has been difficult and some are still processing what has happened) or take their turn in a set pattern like around the circle, alphabetically or by geographic region if there are a wide spread of people meeting online.



Surprising Benefits

For the short length of time it takes, the Check-out is an extremely valuable activity for many reasons. Hearing from each person provides an orderly completion to the meeting for everyone, rather than a ragged close where some people drift away before the end, both literally and metaphorically. The facilitator and other participants may hear helpful feedback, and leave with a shared understanding about the experience, rather than uncertainty about what colleagues are thinking. The Check-out invites people to Bystand the meeting, and that will reveal dysfunctional patterns in the dynamic of the group that would otherwise be left unaddressed and persist to everyone's detriment. So, this will improve the quality and effectiveness of future meetings. Lastly, and even more importantly, it is a way of developing the Bystanding skill in all those present without any teaching. People learn for themselves how to reflect and Bystand. This ability to know and be able to say what happened will prove a huge benefit in all work and social situations.

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**FUNCTIONAL COMMUNICATION PART 1****ADVOCACY AND ENQUIRY**

Advocacy and enquiry are both needed for functional communication. If either are absent, the tone and then the effectiveness of the communication will deteriorate. As a basic distinction, advocacy is telling, and enquiry is asking. More specifically, advocating involves proposing something whereas enquiry is concerned with finding something out. When you advocate you are giving voice to a view or opinion, and this is most clearly done when you explain why you are proposing what you are saying. The same is true of enquiry, where an explanation of why you are making your enquiry will help others understand what you are seeking.

It is worth clarifying the difference between asking questions and enquiry. Most questions embody an opinion and are advocacy rather than enquiry. “It’s a hot day, isn’t it?” is an example of advocacy through a question. Another is “You would not trust him, would you?”. The feel of such questions leads you to agree or disagree with the position advocated. Enquiry, on the other hand, leads you to pause and search for a response. This means searching internally for the response that may be most appropriate to the enquiry. A question that takes the form of enquiry is one where you do not know the answer beforehand, and you want to know the answer. Such a question leads to clarification or discovery. First-hand learning is a particularly valuable source of enquiry, as is apprenticeship, where you watch, listen and notice – generally without asking questions. Things can be learnt in this way that are more subtle than can be put into words. In comparison, enquiring by asking questions can be a lazy way of learning. Rather than watching and learning for yourself, a question may be an attempt at a short cut to get the answer without doing the thinking involved to get to that answer.

One could say that questioning prompts memory, whereas enquiry prompts thinking. You may be enquiring to find out for yourself, whilst in coaching the enquiry, and the questions asked, may be primarily intended to help another person discover things. In Dialogue enquiry is helpful when it reveals the different dispositions, views, and opinions of the participants. There may be a range of information, interpretation, and knowledge on any matter. A check-in is a simple example of this. One aim of a Dialogue is to fill out the picture sufficiently for people to hold a common meaning and a common story about things. That may involve asking about things that it would help you to know. Another is to allow new understanding to emerge through a flow of meaning between all the participants. This may lead us into new territory as we enquire into things you didn’t realise that you didn’t know.

The quality of good advocacy and good enquiry depends on the level of attention given. It is a matter of proprioceptive awareness. Listening to yourself speaking, when you do, and following the movements of your own thinking as well as the response in the room, deepens the experience significantly. In this way you become a part of the live flow - rather than separating yourself from others, who are then more like your audience listening to your past thoughts. In this spirit, good enquiry requires the curiosity to get behind the initial understanding, and the courage to reveal what is found. Good advocacy, on the other hand requires the wisdom to weigh up what lies behind a position, and the resilience to stand still to discover its value as it lands with others.

Peter Garrett and Jane Ball
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The Container Development Model

Peter Garrett

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The World Needs Dialogue!

Three: Shaping the Profession

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The Container Development Model

Peter Garrett

I recall starting a new job when I was in my late 30s. I had been running my own business importing women's fashion clothing into the UK and wholesaling it to upmarket independent women's dress shops from a fancy display unit in the rag trade area, behind Oxford Street in London. Then the supply end in South Africa failed to deliver. As I was closing things down and letting the showroom, I thought how much I would enjoy working with property. An old friend was now running the property development side of his family's business, and an opportunity opened up for me to join him. I did not have much experience, so I prepared carefully for my interview with his uncle, the founder of the much-larger conglomerate of construction businesses. I related to him how I had purchased and developed a residential property (which happened to be my own home) some years previously to get myself out of debt. The story was impressive enough for him, and I was hired at a good salary.

The property development company had a total staff of nine, including the partners and the clerical support staff, and was housed in a prestigious and delightfully ornate four-story brick building in South Audley Street, Mayfair. This is just one block away from Park Lane; if you have played the English version of Monopoly you will know this is an expensive area. I had a well-appointed office, and an experienced personal assistant called Thelma. This was back in the days when executives used Dictaphones and their PAs typed their letters for signature or amendment. The whole environment was different and new to me. I didn't really know how things worked in property development, and I knew that I didn't know. I feigned a confident and relaxed air whilst watching everything going on around me very carefully for all the clues I could get. It took me nearly an hour to work out how to use the Dictaphone! This was a highly professional business that made good profits developing commercial and residential property across the UK. They had a dozen or more large and active developments under way at any time, and expected to sell a number of properties every month. The best architects, solicitors and estate agents were keen to have our business.

The role I was expected to play was explained to me on my first day. My brief was to clean up a mixed portfolio of dormant parcels of land that had at some point in the previous 30 years been reserved for later development, thought worthless or simply forgotten. I would have to search in the hard-copy paper archives for evidence we actually had the title

to the various pieces of land, then use my initiative to turn them into profitable developments. In addition I was given two active sites. I was learning fast – largely learning that there were yet further areas of the business about which I knew next to nothing!

On my second day at work I found myself attending a meeting in a barrister's chambers, since I was now a Project Development Manager and this was a key meeting for my active site in the south-coast port of Dover. We held an option to buy development land there pending the gaining of planning permission. Our planning application had been refused, and so we were taking the application to appeal with the Department of the Environment who could, in certain circumstances, overrule the County Council's planning decision. I had to instruct the barrister on how to proceed with our case. Clearly I was naïve in the matter and almost out of my depth. The stakes were high and mistakes could be very costly. I was accompanied by one of our solicitors, whom I met as we entered the chambers, and then it dawned on me what to do. I delegated the briefing of the barrister to him. That way my own inexperience was less obvious as I started to understand the situation and what was involved. They knew I had been recently appointed into my role, and attributed more experience to me than I felt I had.

Over the following months I came to understand the situation more clearly and took on the briefings of the barrister myself. My inexperienced but creative thought and challenges helped to define the arguments that led to us gaining planning permission for an out-of-town retail shopping park in Dover. It was a significant success and I was starting to show up as a confident and competent player. I negotiated the purchase of several further tranches of land from a neighbouring farmer, to our mutual benefit. Then I worked with the architects on the extensive development, tendered the building contracts, project-managed the construction work, let the completed units to top supermarkets, DIY retailers and so on. I completed the process by selling the properties to a pension fund with sitting tenants, yielding a steady income for the new owners. By this time I was the real thing – an experienced Property Development Manager. My main portfolio of forgotten tracts of land had become valuable sites that realised good income: much sought-after car parking in a congested town; a ransom strip (similar to an easement) that provided access to a large residential development near London; a golf course; a cemetery; a cluster of combined live-and-work units for new start-up businesses in Yorkshire, among others. I had found a way of doing things that was effective, and I enjoyed the work.

Inner Development

Stepping back, it is possible to see a growth within me alongside my outer career development during the three-year period I have just described. There is a sequence of phases. As I began I was naïve. I didn't know what I didn't know, and fortunately I was very receptive to learning. This is when I was *realising myself*. The name I use for this first phase has a deliberate

double meaning – it was I who was realising how things fitted together, and I was starting to make my own potential contribution real. It involved talking with people, asking questions, reading files, speculating, theorising and knowing there was more to be seen and learnt. The second phase I now call *showing up*. I was progressing. At times I stepped into the spotlight as I led project management considerations, made new proposals in our partners meetings, recommended investments we might make and represented the company to others. When I got it right I was well acknowledged, and when I didn't I tried to recognise how I could have done it differently (sometimes reluctantly), and endeavoured to learn from the feedback I received. I was lucky to have so many projects to activate and to learn from. I had to respond to circumstances, like moving gypsies off one site to regain possession.

Then I started to find my own direction and purpose. In a run-down part of London where we owned a couple of boarded-up derelict shops, I felt the area had lost its heart. It lacked pride. I imagined a covered street market alongside a shopping arcade that would give it a lively centre and attract people who wanted to be there. I began to acquire the additional neighbouring units, and options on others, to pull this off. This was the phase of *occupying the ground*. My inner confidence, purpose and commitment were now defining my own way of doing business, and I was good at it. In a further phase, people could see I knew what I was doing and started to come to me for ideas, advice and guidance. I had become influential within the company and beyond, and I helped to define the spirit, purpose and integrity with which we worked and were known to work. I was now *affecting the field*.

I have experienced and seen these four phases unfold naturally in this sequence many times: *realising yourself*, *showing up*, *occupying the ground* and *affecting the field*. In each new situation or initiative the phases are similar, even though there is a different content of learning – whether as a child learning to ride a bicycle, as a parent having a first child, as a university student landing a first job, as a warden taking charge of a prison for the first time, as a busy CEO taking over another organisation, as an employee stepping into retirement, or as a widow having just lost her husband.

In the Context of Dialogue

I have found my understanding of these phases particularly helpful in my Dialogue work. Generally the inner development leads the outer growth of effectiveness. For example, typically as individuals *show up* more opportunities come their way. My favourite role is coaching an executive and his or her team on how they work together and with others to deliver a result through the best use of open Dialogue. In these dynamic processes, change is under way everywhere: in each of the individuals in the Dialogues; in the relationships between them; in the dynamics of the whole group; in their relationships and responsibilities with others; and in the overall situation and circumstance. The four phases provide a framework for understanding this complexity in order to be helpful in any transition. An individual may

be an old dog in their current role, but still realising themselves in digital skills, or they may be occupying the ground with their family and the arrival of children, but still showing up in their new leadership role. The team may be showing up, whilst their larger organisation may still be realising itself. To be effective in Dialogue one has to understand the relationship between what is happening internally and what is happening externally. That is the key to releasing the dynamic value of Dialogue.

Supporting the Development of Others

Let's step forward ten years in my life. I am now working as an independent consultant to the European division of an international energy company. I have been successfully coaching Tim, the chief executive, and his leadership team, drawn from across southern Europe, including Turkey, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Italy. Their business meetings start late, with espresso and strong cigarettes. They are informal and conversational, effective, and finish late in good humour. Then the announcement is made that they are about to be absorbed into (actually taken over by) a larger business unit to the north, including the sterner and more disciplined northern European powerhouses of Germany, Austria, Poland, France, UK and the Netherlands. A new cycle had begun.

I met the new incoming chief executive who would be replacing Tim to lead the enlarged business. I agreed to support him in this new role. Ewan is a pleasant man, a Scott with a broad accent, and a qualified accountant. I noted that he is honest, enthusiastic and astute, and that he is entering unknown territory in his job. This is larger, more complex and more socially demanding than anything he has done before. With this new initiative he was clearly in the phase of *realising himself*. I had a good idea what he would be going through during the coming year or two and how to help him.

The leadership handover was beautifully orchestrated. Normally decision-making stops when news breaks of a change of leadership, as those who will report to the new leaders wait to see what changes he or she wants to introduce, and how to position themselves to be seen to be of value. I had seen gaps of three or four months where all major decisions were on pause. So I counselled the two of them to minimise the handover period. We called a two-day meeting of the enlarged Executive Leadership Team meeting two weeks later in Istanbul.

Tim, the outgoing leader, led the first day. He reviewed the state of the business with everyone. Ewan was seated quietly in the background listening carefully and starting to realise the situation. In the evening we took a boat down the Bosphorus. It was a balmy summer evening as we sat on the large open deck watching the Istanbul suburbs drift past on our outward journey. We ate and drank, then dropped anchor to celebrate and acknowledge the role Tim had played. He was popular, good at his job and sometimes absent-minded, which all added to the good humour of the occasion. He appreciated the gifts he was given. Then

we raised anchor for the return leg, and as we did so Tim symbolically handed over the leadership to Ewan with a firm shake of hands. We sailed back, and before breakfast Tim had departed.

Ewan led the second day of the meeting. We had talked about how he would show up in that meeting whilst he was still realising himself, and designed a good way to manage the situation. He began by saying that he was not Tim, and clearly he would do some things in a different way, because he was a different person with a different history and a different set of skills, but first he needed to understand their thinking about the business. We had two rounds where everyone spoke in turn. In the first they introduced themselves and said how they would like to see their part of the business develop over the next year. In the second round they were asked what, if anything, they would like to change during the next month. It was a clever way to start. He had put the initiative in their hands, which was sensible since they knew more than him, and sustained the momentum by asking to hear about immediate decisions to be made by them. He had managed his own naïve phase of realising himself without giving away his authority.

As things worked out, the business flourished. It had the advantage of a full European trading presence and rationalised its investments in a different way in consequence. Then the larger multinational organisation made the strategic purchases of two strongly branded competitors in Germany, thereby adding these businesses into Ewan's remit and significantly expanding his turnover. He was now showing up as confident to lead the integration of the new German businesses into his existing portfolio. There were cultural issues to face, however, before he could do so and fully occupy the ground. I called on a German colleague to co-facilitate some of the sessions as we resolved this.

The challenge was that Ewan valued thinking openly with everyone before making a decision. The new German executives, on the other hand, had just suffered a takeover by Ewan's parent firm and presumed they should agree to whatever he wanted. So he was encouraging open thinking and they were careful to agree with everything he said or might mean. It was politely frustrating for everyone. Once they realised what he was actually calling for, they acted quite differently, often disagreeing and opposing him in strong and blunt terms. At some point Ewan would make his decision and want to move to action, whilst his German colleagues were still making alternative proposals. It became like a three-legged race again, and everyone became quite frustrated with the lack of flow and progress. I had to intervene and make clear distinctions between each part of the meeting. So in the first part they agreed the issues for consideration, in the second part it was open thinking with no decisions made, and in the third part Ewan defined the decision and they explored the implementation of it. Everyone had to play a somewhat different role for this to work. On Ewan's part he had to be clear when he was ready to call a decision, explain his logic and be explicit that no further alternative proposals were welcome after that point. Gradually people understood this process and enjoyed the easy progress they made in consequence. Ewan had begun to occupy the

ground in his own unique and effective way. I stayed with Ewan through perhaps half a dozen further business roles and he became an influential leader in his larger organisation.

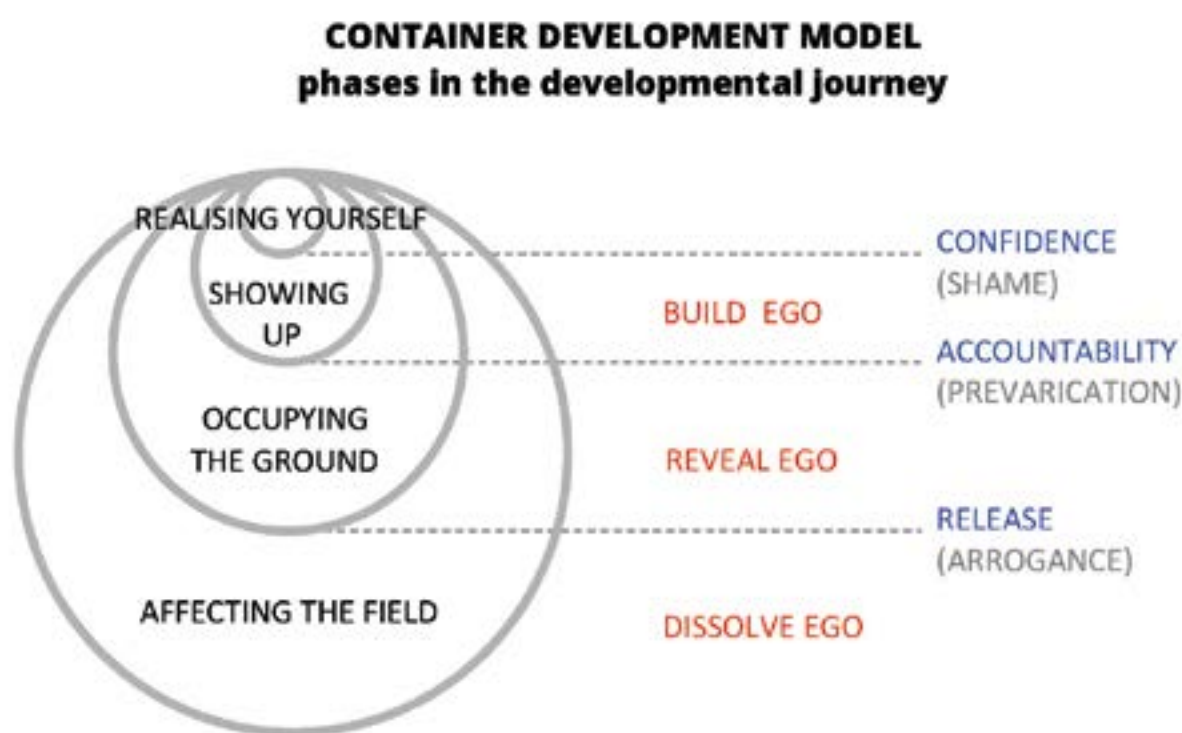
Transitioning to the Next Phase

I had a good feel of how to be helpful in my executive coaching because of this simple sequence of *realising yourself*, *showing up*, *occupying the ground* and *affecting the field*. It revealed the developmental needs of the individual in a particular initiative. I have coached many different individuals, and on entering each new situation they ran through a similar sequence. I could see it in others, and I experienced it repeatedly in myself. There was the time when I took up skiing, for instance. Between the idea of skiing and first getting onto the piste, or ski run, there was a significant phase of realising myself. It is a period of private enquiry. Am I fit enough to do this, or is there some set of exercises I should find at the gym? What do I wear? Is my walking anorak OK or do I have to invest in an alpine outfit in flashy colours? I didn't know what 'normal' looked like. I asked people if they were skiers and found people who knew a bit about it. Younger people used snow boards and older people skis. My age placed me firmly in the skiing group. I discovered some resorts are better for learners than others, and the prices vary, but it is not inexpensive.

Eventually the day arrived when I was dressed in my full new dazzling yellow and black kit (covering new 'wicking' underwear and thermal vest), helmet and reflective goggles. Of course I had tried it all on at home in my bedroom to reassure myself, and I was satisfied I looked good. But now I was at the ski resort in full view of everyone and I felt highly visible! What I had not taken into account was the boots that lock into the skis. They are designed for the skier to be leaning forward at an angle, and as a result it is very difficult to walk wearing them whilst carrying the skis. So I hobbled from the ski hire shop to the snow, with the skis and poles slung awkwardly over my shoulder. I locked the boots into the skis, and there I was, ready to go. What happened next? Well like any typical beginner, I slid a few yards and fell over. So this is learning through mistakes! Pleased I also booked some lessons . . .

Getting from *showing up* to *occupying the ground* in skiing is more difficult than I had imagined. This is because you have to learn to move your body in a way that initially is counter-intuitive. If you try to remember which way to move, by the time you tell your body it is too late and you have fallen over. You have to feel the motion in your body. Let me explain the problem. When I learnt to ride a bicycle as a youngster, I leaned to the left if I wanted to turn left, and I leaned to the right if I wanted to turn right. That is the way to maintain balance. I later did the same on a motorcycle at much faster speeds. On skis it is the other way around. If you intend to turn to the left, you lean to the right! The outer right edge cuts into the snow increasing the friction, and that turns you to the left. If you lean the other way you have no cutting edge, slide wildly and fall. Understanding this is only a small

part of doing it. But there is more. If you are about to drop down a steep slope, intuitively you lean back, as you do going down an incline in your hiking boots. But on skis you will fall if you do that. Instead you have to lean forwards, propelling you even faster down the slope – and the steeper the incline the further forward you have to lean to keep your balance. This is scary stuff! But without mastering these two rather elementary requirements you cannot occupy the ground, because you find yourself instead lying on it. It takes more than skill; it takes an adventurous courage to be any good, and there are more than a few would-be skiers who lose their nerve. I found that the way to get there is to stop thinking and instead to feel what is needed. And it really helps to watch those who know what they are doing. They can help you to sense the way to ski better. In that way they are affecting the field, and being in that field you can really benefit from watching them at a distance.



Acknowledgement: W Isaacs & P Garrett

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The Work To Be Done

It is probably becoming apparent that one does not simply drift from one phase into the next. There is a definite barrier to break and an internal shift to occur as you move into the next phase. *Realising yourself* is a private matter. Your enquiry proceeds at whatever pace you choose, or whatever time you have available to you, exploring whatever sources you can

find. You can read, ask, experiment and speculate, without anyone else knowing what you are up to. When you show up, however, it is apparent to others. You are visibly taking a position and people may or may not like it, and they may or may not agree with you. If you have done your work realising yourself, you will have good reasons for doing what you do, and it will help you if you explain them to others. Essentially it has been a phase of building the ego.

So the challenge of *showing up* is one of confidence. It is about revealing the ego. If I have failed at something I wanted to do in the past, and in particular if I have been shamed or ridiculed by others, then showing up can feel like a dangerous step for me. It is worth considering this in an organisational context. I don't know how many times I have seen a junior rise to the challenge of expressing their different view in an important meeting, only to be slammed by the most senior figure in the room. It results in feelings of humiliation in the meeting, tears in the washroom and the future withholding of relevant information because of the proven dangers of expressing one's view. This is not at all uncommon. As a result, an essential organisational skill in leadership, facilitation and coaching is helping individuals successfully through the barrier of *showing up*. It is important that individuals gain the confidence to do so and, generally speaking, that ease is more important than whether the views they first express are 'right' or 'wrong'. As they get confident showing up they will express their views more clearly, and the thinking behind the views will be more logical. Without hearing from the people affected, however, leaders and decision-makers will be largely flying blind.

Sometimes people are expected to show up before they have done the preparatory work in the previous phase. When this is the case they come over as hollow, because they know the words but not the meaning. They spend hours rehearsing their lines, or use PowerPoint slides to remember what to say because there has been no corresponding inner developmental work. So we have the outline of a coaching model whereby we can recognise where an individual, team or organisation is in a particular initiative, and help them to fill out that phase and move into the next.

The shift from *showing up* into *occupying the ground* is a different challenge. As a manager or supervisor you will have noticed bright juniors who will soon be ready for promotion. They show up in meetings in a convincing way, and have initiative and self-confidence. Perhaps you recommend they apply for a promotion, but they may or may not do so. Showing up is something you do at the right occasion. You may even perform on the stage several times a week, but that is not all day every day. Everyday consistency requires real commitment. A girl might have a boyfriend for a summer, but having a child is for a lifetime. This is about sustaining the ego. A promotion may result in better pay and conditions, but it has responsibilities and accountabilities attached to it. The new role may put that individual in sole charge of some activity or part of the business, answering to more senior people, and that requires a different stance. In my 20s I worked temporarily as a barman in London, and loved it. Later, in my 30s, I held the liquor licence for the 20-bedroom hotel I was managing. They

were similar but completely different roles. As the barman I locked up my bar at night and went home without a care. As the hotel manager I was paid more, but I was continuously accountable. I had calls in the middle of the night and had to get up and deal with them – the police advising a break-in, or a guest complaining that the bath water in their room was only lukewarm!

There can be a tendency to prevaricate and procrastinate. People avoid or put off stepping into the next phase of occupying the ground. The person involved may be quite capable of doing a more senior job, but they may not be ready internally to take on the responsibility. If they do eventually bite the bullet and occupy the ground, they do find that there are consequences. When you are the only one responsible, you have to find a way of managing things. There may not be anyone there to advise or guide you, but still you have to act. You start to gain some first-hand knowledge beyond simply doing what you are told or following the rules. Your way of doing things will be different from others because of your personality, experiences and cultural inheritance. Something else occurs, which is unexpected. When you occupy the ground some people come closer because they are attracted to your way of working and your commitment. They want to work with you. Others move further away from you. Your commitment is an inherent challenge to *their* prevarication and procrastination, and they are uncomfortable being too close to you. So occupying the ground develops a kind of intensity that attracts and repels. It is hard to predict who will come closer and who will move further away, but a sorting out definitely starts to occur.

An Expensive Lesson

Occupying the ground for an extended period builds a body of knowledge and experience about how to manage a particular activity successfully, and what not to do because it will be counterproductive. How do I know? Because I have done it! That is the typical stance of someone who has occupied the ground extensively. But there is a further phase – namely, *affecting the field*. Again there is a barrier and challenge in making this transition. It is necessary to release some aspects of your experiential knowledge whilst remaining fully committed to others. Let me give you an expensive example where this did not happen. I was invited to intervene in a joint venture pilot that was intended to result in a US \$5bn manufacturing business. Two leading companies in the field, from Canada and South Africa, had joined forces to develop an innovative technology. Both had proven prior experience and knew that they knew how to do this work well. The problem was they had different methods and different organisational cultures. They were unable to listen to each other and to learn from each other because they already knew! It was not just a failure of communication – it was a failure in the developmental work needed within each organisation to move beyond their arrogance of having occupied the ground. They could have affected the field internationally with their innovation, but instead the joint initiative simply failed.

The fact that you and I really do know how to do something, and have proof that it works, does not mean that our way is the only way to do it. Finding God through Catholicism does not mean that others cannot find God as a Jew, Hindu or Zoroastrian. If my way definitively excludes other ways, then I cannot affect the field. Whilst remaining committed to the essence of the work, I have to release my ego – my attachment to *my* way being *the* way, if my influence is to be extended further into the field. Reputation is a powerful thing. There is not one way but a thousand ways. Each person and each situation is unique, and an intention to foster the unique work of others is what underwrites the ability to affect the field.

The Developmental Phases in Conscious Awareness

Let's drop into a different endeavour. Back in 1984 I was working with David Bohm on understanding the workings of human consciousness. We believed there was a pervasive defect that took the form of fragmentation and it broke up the sense of common meaning between people. It was the root cause, in our view, of most of the problems facing society today. We used *median*-sized groupings of 20 to 40 people (that are too large for family dynamics and smaller than societal ones, as originally advocated by Patrick de Maré) to identify and talk about our own changing state of conscious awareness as it occurred. One thing we noted is the difference between thinking, which is new, and thoughts, which are replayed past-thinking. Thinking is slower, whilst thoughts can be prompted very quickly by association, provocation, threat or desire. Thinking is a higher level of living, subtle awareness, that can influence which thoughts to entertain and which thoughts to let be. Thoughts, on the other hand, are replayed from the past and cannot manage immediate thinking. Although both are needed, we found that thinking is quite rare. George Bernard Shaw once proposed that most people think only two or three times in a year, and that he had made an international reputation for himself by thinking once or twice a week! We found we were thinking much more often than that, because that is what we were intentionally setting out to do, but it was still quite rare for many participants to get beyond their memory.

I have not forgotten one delightful evening when a group of 25 of us were in Dialogue together in a friend's apartment in Kensington, in London. A colleague, Mike, began to see what was happening for the first time, and he spoke about it in a delightful way. He said, "A thought coming towards you is very different from a thought moving away from you!" He explained what he meant as we all talked about it together. He had felt his initial impulse to think. It was the start of an energetic movement that as yet had no form. It was emergent and urgent, although it was unclear just what it was. Gradually it began to form itself into an idea with purpose, and to be meaningful to him and perhaps to what we were considering in the room. He found words appearing to clothe the idea in language, and as he listened he started to choose some sentences to place his idea into the Dialogue. I find it hard to think of a better name for this first phase than *realising yourself*. He had described what he called 'a

thought coming towards you’. It was actually a subtle thinking process that was emerging into articulation through words, which are thoughts.

Then he spoke a few sentences, adding his contribution to the ongoing conversation. From that point he was showing up. The private process that had been occurring within him had become a public one now occurring in everyone. It was entering the awareness and thinking of others in the room, and they did different things with it. Some liked his idea, some liked the intention but not the words, some thought what he had said was irrelevant to the main theme of the conversation, and so on. This is what he called ‘a thought going away from you’. It was now with other people. He could feel his own impulses to explain more, to defend his idea, to laugh and to be silent. He had the opportunity to continue to think, and to continue to describe the movements in his consciousness, including what occurs when someone else’s thought moves into him. By doing so it would lead to him into occupying the ground – in this case the ground of conscious awareness. That is exactly what many of us did, and thereby we affected the field in terms of the emergence of a new kind of Dialogue. What was very evident in that Dialogue meeting was that the live description of his thinking deepened the atmosphere in the room significantly and drew others into a more subtle sensitivity. Past thoughts were less inclined to flood in to fill the space, and instead people were listening to themselves and each other in a more receptive way.

Container Development

We later called this atmosphere the ‘container’. Why the container? Well, if you consider it carefully, consciousness is simply its content, including the unfolding and enfolding flow of that content. The container is the content and flow that is commonly held by those involved. This container can be expanded and deepened to enable a greater common content and a freer flow of understanding. What is not commonly held is fragmented, and held by some participants but not by others. So the four developmental phases I have been describing are a container development model. The starting point may be largely internal and unseen, like the seed in the soil. It is not apparent to others how things are unfolding and what is emerging until the shoots emerge and some form appears. Then it develops with fuller growth, deeper roots, flowers and eventually the fruit that yields the next seeds to affect the field.

I use this container development model widely in all my work. The container development phases are depicted in many of my models – they are the expanding grey developmental circles, for example, in this graphic of our Dialogue practices, which are at the core of my Dialogue work. They are a reminder that each of the practices develops through the four phases as you grow your own personal container and capability. The same is true of a team that learns to listen better as the container develops, for example – not only to what is said but to what is meant and to the process of thinking and feeling behind that. This is the way into a deeper Dialogue.

A Developmental Framework for Consulting

The framework informs my consulting intervention work too. Here I combine it with a number of other key models derived from my practice. On being invited into a new situation to help, I am very conscious that at the outset I am naïve. I don't know what I don't know, and I am carefully attentive to all the clues I can find as I start to realise myself in that context. I am willing to learn from anyone and everyone. I enjoy my naïvety because it is a time when I can ask about peculiar anomalies and contradictions without being either clever or stupid. It is a valuable time that only happens once in an intervention and is soon lost. This is a time of enquiry, not a time of advocacy. If I understand why things have unfolded the way they have, then I can intervene in a way that enables them to unfold more generatively in the future. Showing up in intervention work is necessary to gain the authority to learn with people in the organisation or community. We will all learn more if I show up in the right spirit. Occupying the ground allows me and others to attract a core grouping to do the work needed in terms of the support and challenge of the existing patterns of relationships and containers. It starts to be apparent why we have what we have, and how to intervene for it to change generatively. This needs authority and right use of the organisational power structures. Affecting the field goes broader and deeper.

And a Career

Perhaps a final example is how the sequence of phases helps me to reflect on my own Professional Dialogue career as a whole over 35 years. The *realising myself* phase was during the eight years I worked with David Bohm in private Dialogue Weekends. I started to show up in corrections with my Prison Dialogue work, starting with a nine-year stint working in an English prison (HMP Whitemoor), and in organisations starting with my work partnering with Bill Isaacs (the Leadership for Collective Intelligence programme). My 20 years of partnership with my friend and colleague Jane Ball has led to the substantial ground we have occupied in our joint consulting company, Dialogue Associates, and the design of the Integrated Dialogue Model. Then we and others deliberately started the Academy of Professional Dialogue in 2017 with the intention of affecting the field.

And that is what we are starting to do . . .

Conference Session Extracts

From a conversation with participants considering the paper with Peter Garrett

- Peter:** What does Realising Yourself mean in a few words? (*Various responses:* Finding a new need and putting yourself in a learning position; self-actualization; preparing yourself for your future endeavour; understanding; as you begin you are naïve – you don't know, and know you don't know.)
- Speaker:** When you think of someone who's newly promoted into a leadership position, they are going to have to find themselves and work out how they fit into this new role moving forward.
- Speaker:** Maybe a supervisor who has been in that job for a considerable time, but they've lost their ability to show up. They may need to be reminded of the importance of being visible, showing up.
- Speaker:** In our small group I made the point there are a lot of really professional, well-educated women that take a lot longer to show up, perhaps, than their male counterparts.
- Peter:** Why do you think it is, in some organisations, that women have more difficulty showing up?
- Speaker:** I can only speak for myself. It took me a long time to learn to show up and then actually experience how beautiful it can be to occupy your ground and see what effect it can have on others. I don't know. Maybe it's how we've been educated, maybe family relations or whatever, an experience that nothing's ever really good enough. Maybe it's also cultural in Germany, but I notice it in a lot of women that I've come in contact with, where I see the brilliance and they sell themselves short.
- Speaker:** I'm working with a senior leader right now who's had to step in to be the head of something, because one of the partners in the firm left. She knows how to do this, and she was really comfortable before, but there's this question of confidence. So I think you're right. It really is a point of sustaining the ego to occupy this new ground.
- Speaker:** I think that we in Finland have this cultural problem that you are expected to go from realising yourself directly to occupying the ground without the showing-up phase. And that's a real problem. People are not allowed to test their skills

and their ideas, because everybody's expecting that if you are showing up, you should know your stuff, be really confident about it. I think that's harmful for new entrepreneurs and emerging experts.

Speaker: Occupying the ground is really embodying your role confidently, effectively relying on your own impact. If you are going to occupy the ground, you have to take accountability. You have to say, okay, this is my job. I'll get this to work.

Speaker: In occupying the ground. I think it's a good opportunity to look at how you can improve something. You're actually trying things out, seeing what worked well, what didn't work well, making the adjustments. In the first stages you're gaining the knowledge, then in occupying the ground you're wising up. But you actually learned that by occupying the ground in my mind.

Speaker: I think sometimes you see that people have potential, but they don't have the confidence to step out. So as leaders, it's your responsibility and due diligence to align them with the opportunities to extract that potential. It is twofold – you're helping them, but what they're doing will, in turn, help the organisation. It also allows them to have buy-in to what you're doing.

Speaker: Affecting the field effectively means we go back to a place of being humble, because it's almost like where you were before realising yourself, but in a different way. You have humility, but you have the confidence at the same time – it's a conscious humility of giving space to others.

Speaker: I give myself six months as a new Director to show up and to get to know the agency. After I have realised myself, I show up and then I am prepared to do what I was brought to do, which is to begin to occupy the ground. And part of that is building a team, shifting the culture and doing all those things necessary to get the outcome ultimately. In Virginia the data and research will show you how our culture shifted over the years. That's an example of how you come in – you begin by realising yourself, then showing up and occupying the ground causes those things to happen on the back end. So that's the way it plays out in my mind and what we have been doing.

Speaker: Peter, when I read your paper, I really thought about the idea of selflessness as you move into that area of affecting the field. It's a choice you make to do that. And I think about it in terms of an organisation. You recognise the value and purpose of the organisation, the impact of the organisation is greater by bringing others in and sharing that information and knowledge with them. To a cer-

tain degree that can be at the expense of the individual potentially, but it makes the organisation better and it helps the organisation accomplish whatever its mission or purpose is.

Speaker: So the Virginia Department of Correctional Justice could be affecting the field of correctional justice in the entirety or in parts. How, how are you doing that?

Speaker: Yes, we are achieving that effect on the field in the US. Last year over a dozen corrections agencies from other states came to Virginia to take a look at what we're doing. So we are leading the cutting edge. I am sought after to speak often at meetings of directors and so forth. Other members of our team and overstaff are being called upon to share what they're doing and their expertise too. Four years ago, I went to the National Institute of Corrections and spoke at a class of people aspiring to be leaders of corrections. I spoke about dialogue and a lot of the things that we are doing to change the culture of the organisation. This past Friday, four years later, I received an email from a gentleman in Arizona who was a member of that class who is now preparing to be a CEO, and he wants me to spend time with him helping him to go over all those notes that he took from me in that class four years ago. He has been watching us from afar and sees things are working. He liked what I said then, and he wants to put some of those things into place in a different state.

Postscript

The author's reflections, written some months after the conference



The four phases of the Container Development Model were generally well recognised by participants, and there was some interesting exploration about the challenges of showing up in an organisational context. Also culturally, it seems in Finland there is an expectation that when you have realised yourself in some field you now occupy the ground – but without the intermediate phase of showing up. I believe this is true in some other cultures too. It is not uncommon for people to claim or pretend to know more than they do to hide the fact they are actually still showing up. This is unfortunate because the successes and failures in showing up are an essential part of learning, without which one cannot occupy the ground. Pretending one already does so usually makes people particularly sensitive to any lack of acknowledgment.

It set me thinking about how one learns and develops during the ‘realising yourself’ phase. The container is smaller and private. The discoveries may be largely vicarious or informed more by the experience of others rather than one’s own. This is particularly the case in traditional forms of education, where reading and being familiar with the existing literature is a requirement for graduation, and graduation seems to imply occupying the ground. Describing what others have done, however, is very different from being able to do it yourself.

This is about different qualities of knowledge that are available in each phase. In the realising yourself phase it is often third-hand and derived from people you have not met, describing things. This may be fine for technical matters, but not regarding personal development. Watching and hearing directly from someone else about their own experience provides access to second-hand knowledge. This is more helpful, because you can sense the context, weight and authenticity behind what you are hearing. Both forms provide guidance that can be adapted and incorporated, but neither are first-hand. That only comes from showing up and trying it ‘live’ for yourself. Your experience and reflections are then very different.

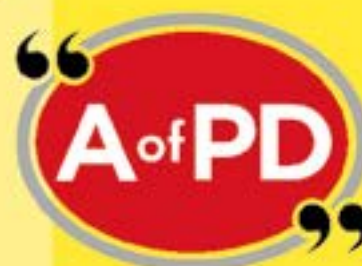
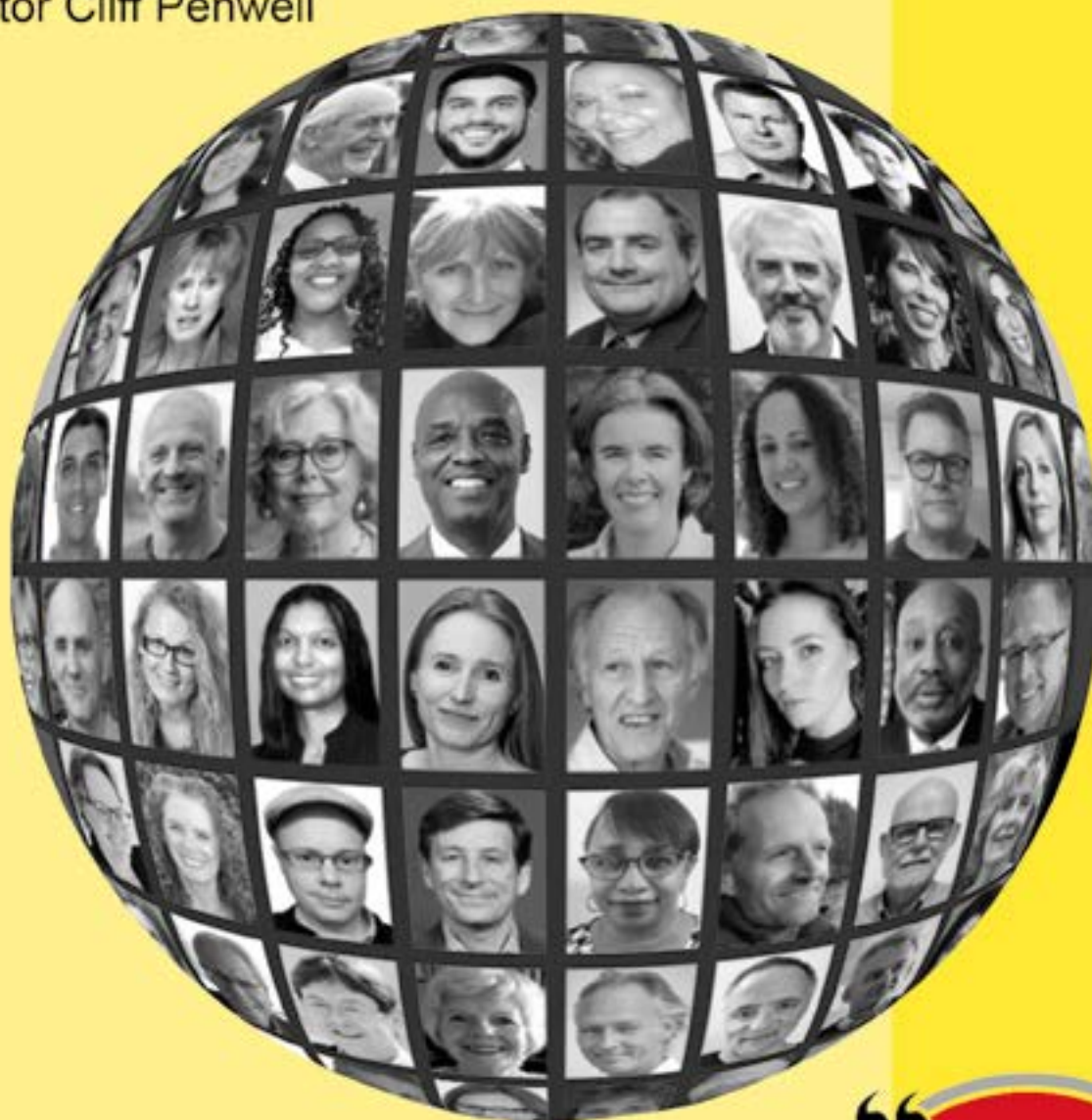
Showing up involves a much larger container that includes others, and they will respond and react to what you do. Therefore, you have much more to handle when you show up, along with a far greater learning opportunity. Acknowledgement seems such an important factor in this transition and I am left wondering: just why?

The World Needs Dialogue!

Three: Shaping the Profession

The collection of Working Papers by Dialogue Practitioners
considered at the third annual international conference
of the Academy of Professional Dialogue

Foreword by Peter Garrett
Editor Cliff Penwell



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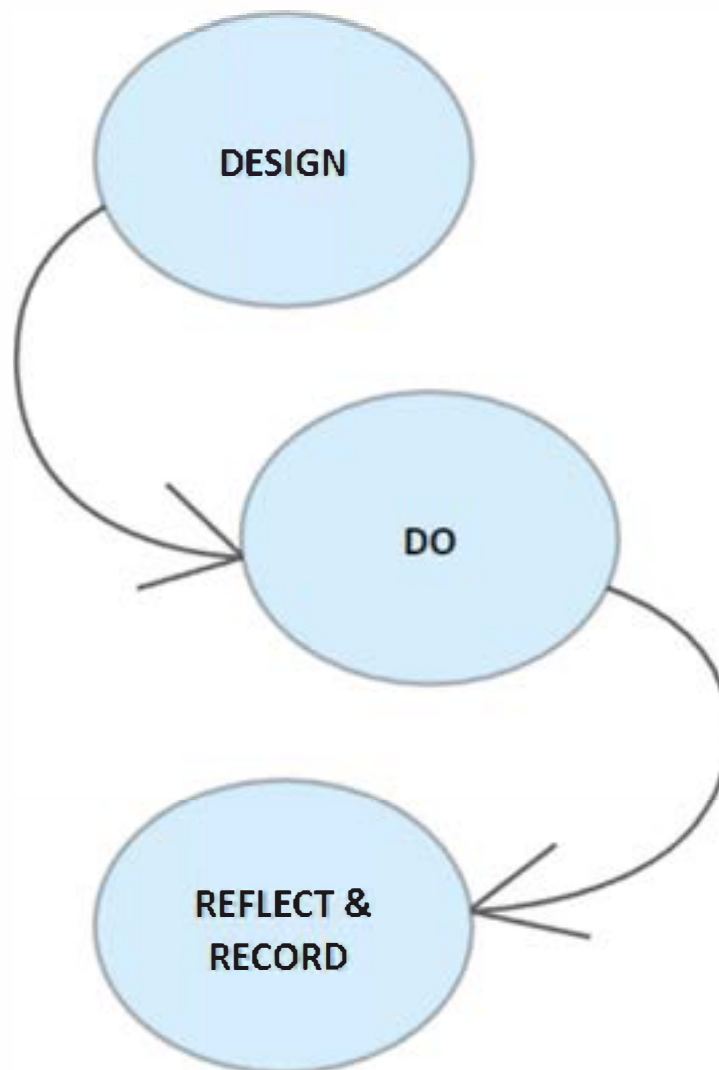
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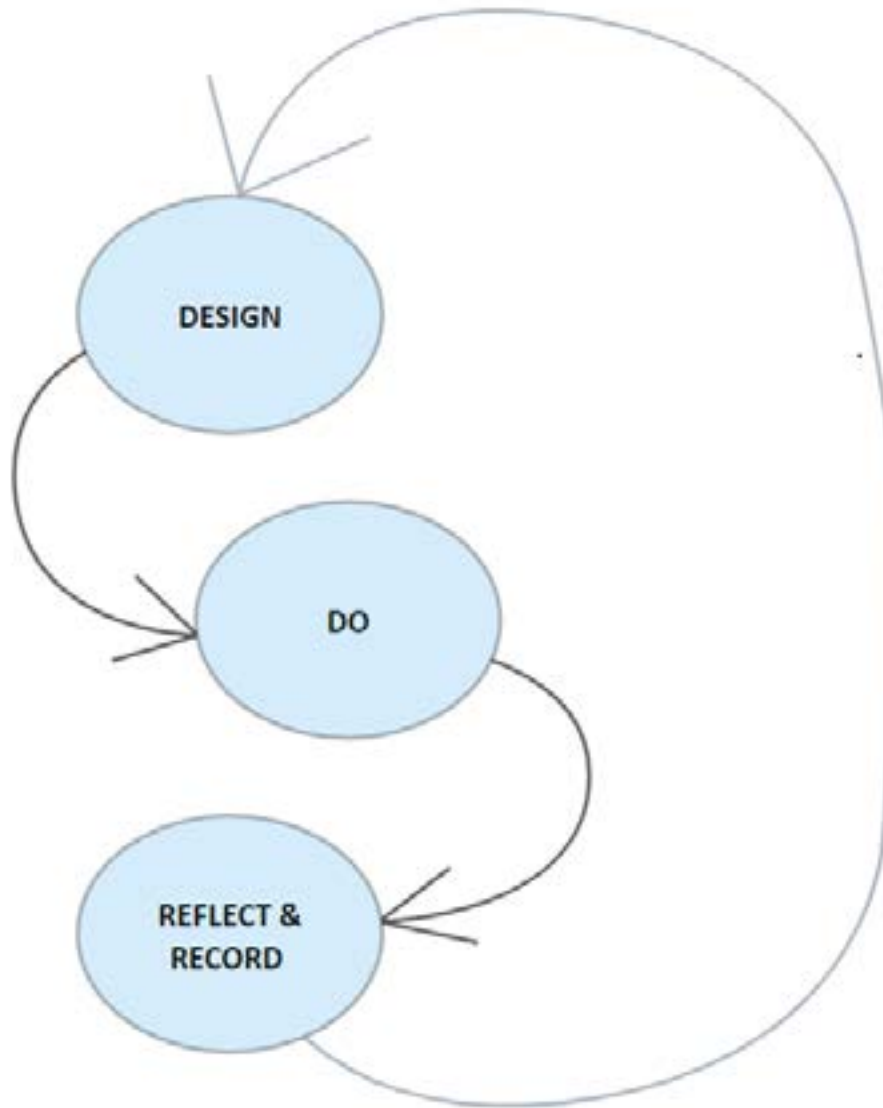
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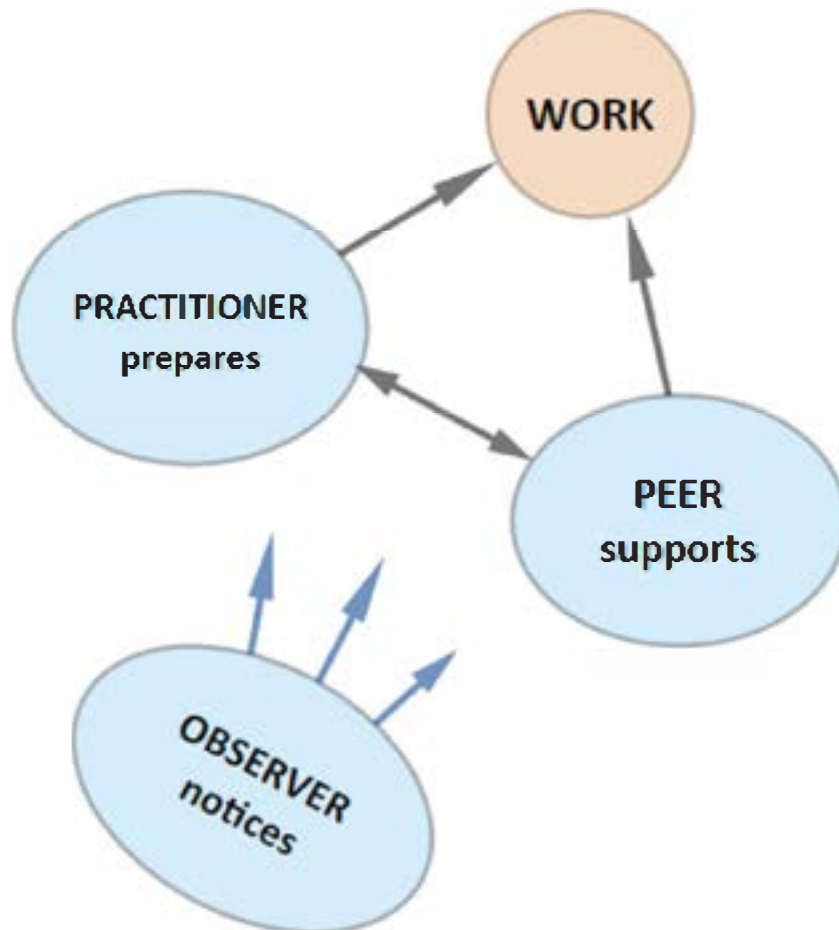
REFLECTIVE PRACTICE LEARNING CYCLE



REFLECTIVE PRACTICE LEARNING CYCLE



REFLECTIVE PRACTICE TRIO ROLES



1. Organisations need:
 - A depth of product/service expertise for effectiveness
 - A distribution of geographic locations to engage clients/customers
 - Hierarchical lines to delegate authority and accountability
 - Staff role specialisation for efficiency
2. These lead to:
 - The concentration of specialised knowledge in different pockets in the organisation
 - A reduction of awareness about the workings of the whole organisation
 - A lack of understanding about how local decisions affect others in the organisation
3. The outcome is:
 - A poor flow of information across the organisation
 - Isolated decision making with unintended consequences – like multiple three-legged races
 - People working for their department/sector not for the organisation as a whole
4. This is a fragmented organisation!

If you see fixers and firefighters, and hear about lethargy and resistance, then you know you have a fragmented organisation.

Leadership can use various methods to mitigate the problem including:

- Multiple leadership communications to inform the organisation
- Corrective policies, procedures and practices
- Increasing requirements for organisational reporting to access data from across the organisation

A Different Way of Working recognises:

- Beyond being informed and being given direction by leadership, a general understanding is needed amongst and between all staff members about the vision (mission, purpose, context and strategy) and the performance (targets, delivery, successes and short falls)
- When the staff have an overall perspective to balance their local one, then leadership support and direction can replace the enforcement of compliance through regulation
- Data cannot replace local knowledge. There is a difference between data (numbers, figures, records and recordings), information (interpretations of data), knowledge (usable information) and insight (meaningful discoveries).

Peter Garrett
2022





SET RESOURCES

APPENDIX E:

Set 2 - Functional Communication

- Functional Communication 1: Advocacy & Enquiry, Expressive Languages and Organising Paradigms
- Functional Communication 2: The Dialogic Actions





ADVOCACY AND ENQUIRY

Advocacy and enquiry are both needed for functional communication. If either are absent, the tone and then the effectiveness of the communication will deteriorate. As a basic distinction, advocacy is telling, and enquiry is asking. More specifically, advocating involves proposing something whereas enquiry is concerned with finding something out. When you advocate you are giving voice to a view or opinion, and this is most clearly done when you explain why you are proposing what you are saying. The same is true of enquiry, where an explanation of why you are making your enquiry will help others understand what you are seeking.

It is worth clarifying the difference between asking questions and enquiry. Most questions embody an opinion and are advocacy rather than enquiry. “It’s a hot day, isn’t it?” is an example of advocacy through a question. Another is “You would not trust him, would you?”. The feel of such questions leads you to agree or disagree with the position advocated. Enquiry, on the other hand, leads you to pause and search for a response. This means searching internally for the response that may be most appropriate to the enquiry. A question that takes the form of enquiry is one where you do not know the answer beforehand, and you want to know the answer. Such a question leads to clarification or discovery. First-hand learning is a particularly valuable source of enquiry, as is apprenticeship, where you watch, listen and notice – generally without asking questions. Things can be learnt in this way that are more subtle than can be put into words. In comparison, enquiring by asking questions can be a lazy way of learning. Rather than watching and learning for yourself, a question may be an attempt at a short cut to get the answer without doing the thinking involved to get to that answer.

One could say that questioning prompts memory, whereas enquiry prompts thinking. You may be enquiring to find out for yourself, whilst in coaching the enquiry, and the questions asked, may be primarily intended to help another person discover things. In Dialogue enquiry is helpful when it reveals the different dispositions, views, and opinions of the participants. There may be a range of information, interpretation, and knowledge on any matter. A check-in is a simple example of this. One aim of a Dialogue is to fill out the picture sufficiently for people to hold a common meaning and a common story about things. That may involve asking about things that it would help you to know. Another is to allow new understanding to emerge through a flow of meaning between all the participants. This may lead us into new territory as we enquire into things you didn’t realise that you didn’t know.

The quality of good advocacy and good enquiry depends on the level of attention given. It is a matter of proprioceptive awareness. Listening to yourself speaking, when you do, and following the movements of your own thinking as well as the response in the room, deepens the experience significantly. In this way you become a part of the live flow - rather than separating yourself from others, who are then more like your audience listening to your past thoughts. In this spirit, good enquiry requires the curiosity to get behind the initial understanding, and the courage to reveal what is found. Good advocacy, on the other hand requires the wisdom to weigh up what lies behind a position, and the resilience to stand still to discover its value as it lands with others.





UNDERSTANDING AND CONFUSION: THREE LANGUAGES

In healthy communication, when an individual says something, other people understand what they mean. If the meaning is unclear, simple enquiry will clarify things. Sometimes, however, asking what was meant does not help and the confusion persists. It is as if people do not share the same vocabulary or are speaking different languages. David Kantor, a systemic family therapist, proposed a simple framework to help to reduce this kind of confusion. He noticed confusion can be caused by three distinctive ways that people express themselves, namely through *emotion*, *action*, or *intellect*. Others call this *heart*, *hands*, or *head*. He used the more provocative terms *affect*, *power* and *meaning* to highlight the confusion and potential attributions. If each of these three forms of expression is thought of as a different 'language', then it is more obvious that the confusion is caused by trying to translate from one to another.

The distinctions between the three forms of expression are not difficult to understand. It is when they are in use at the same time that the confusion is caused. When someone asks a question in meaning and is answered in affect it can seem to be at cross-purposes and confusing. Affect involves speaking from the emotions or the heart to explore what it feels like or might feel like. Power is about action and considering what we have done or could do. Meaning is the intellectual exploration of what was meant or what it might mean. If I am exploring what we could do (in power), and you are asking why we should do it (in meaning), or what it would feel like if we did (in affect), then it can be frustrating as we go around in circles. The facilitative art is to recognise when there is a cross-language confusion. This is obviously the case when a question that is raised in one language is responded to in another. Answering in the same language will be more easily understood, before then speaking in another language. In a larger grouping it may be best to sequence the considerations. Consider one, and then the next, before trying to bring them together.

Of course, these three languages fit together well. In any significant decision there are the obvious questions: What should we do? Why should we do it? What would it feel like if we did? In addressing a larger group of people to make a collective decision, all three are relevant and need to be considered. They all need resolution for an ease of participation. If it can be done, makes sense and feels right – then let's get on with it! So, for the Dialogue Practitioner it is not only a matter of recognising all three languages in use and naming how they are being used to raise everyone's awareness, but also becoming multi-lingual and being versatile enough to understand all three and speak all three.

UNDERSTANDING AND CONFUSION: THREE PARADIGMS

A further perspective on confusion in communication relates to the way people tend to organise things, in their thinking and in their work. It is part of a natural disposition that leads people to plan, prepare and order things in different ways. This is another level of David Kantor's work that he called Systems Paradigms. Practice models need to be simple if they are to be helpful in live situations hence just three paradigms, as there are three languages. He noticed that some people are concerned that everything or everyone is acknowledged or included. Others are less concerned about inclusion and more concerned with the structure, and everything having its defined place. The third, which is the least structured and





least inclusive paradigm, is ordered by the energy in the situation. He could have named them structured, inclusive and free form. But intentionally drawing attention to the confusion they can cause, and the attributions that can be made in that confusion, he called them 'open', 'closed' and 'random'. They will be evident in the way any individual, group, or organisational system functions.

Whilst talking together people will naturally use one or other of the paradigms to make sense of things and to determine how to proceed. Where people can be overwhelmed by the complexity, they tend towards a closed paradigm. They prefer to have set categories, clear boundaries, and defined steps. Hierarchy may provide just that clarity. You will recognise some people who tackle their work in this orderly way, and who may become disturbed if things are unclearly defined. From an open or random perspective, the pejorative comment about them may be that they are quite 'closed' thinkers, implying they are too single minded. Of course, that is also their strength and one that may be lacking in the other paradigms.

Those who prefer an open paradigm are more relaxed about sequence and definition, provided they can incorporate everything successfully. Their style is more adaptable and inclusive. From a closed and random perspective, they may be considered to be less rigorous and less focussed because they are so open to hearing all views before deciding anything. The acknowledgement of the relevance of all perspectives is part of their strength, however. If the open thinker is in a situation where everything cannot easily be included, they may feel disturbed – and to ensure everything is covered they may start to adopt a more closed approach by introducing a few rules.

The third paradigm is purposefully focussed on the energy in any situation. Here it may not be clear how things will work out, but there is trust that the energy inherent in the whole will organise things in its own way. This requires dynamic participation and changes of direction until an emergent organising process becomes evident. The closed and open attribution is one of 'randomness', implying they don't know what they are doing. That is how their thinking may be perceived by others. In fact, there are intent on loosening up the energy without controlling or ordering things, which is a particular skill that can open new possibilities not previously considered.

Once you become familiar with these paradigms you can see them being demonstrated vividly whenever people are looking to make decisions. All three are valid and effective, although some work better than others in different situations. Managing something that requires careful sequencing in a random way can lead to mishaps, just as managing a more developmental process with a closed mind can also lead to trouble. Versatility, and being adept in all three paradigms is the way to go. It enables adaptability and effectiveness. Managing the clashes between the paradigms by naming them and sequencing them will reduce confusion.

One could ask which is the best paradigm for Dialogue – open, closed, or random? Each facilitator or practitioner has their own preference, and this can lead to friction between them about what Dialogue 'really' is. With more experience it becomes clearer that Dialogue thrives on an open approach (to establish a common story that includes everyone), on a closed approach (to determine intricate resolutions), and on a random approach (to shift embedded patterns of behaviour and memory). They each have their strengths and contribution, and all three are needed.





FUNCTIONALITY AND DYSFUNCTIONALITY

The languages and paradigms are two simple frameworks to reduce confusion. Skilful use of them can save everyone's time and energy. There are many such frameworks to help people make sense of what is happening in the room as people talk and think together, so why choose these ones designed by David Kantor? There are two main reasons: they are simple and developmental. As I mentioned before, to be useful live, whilst things are happening, just three distinctions are easily manageable and very helpful. No doubt we could design a framework with 12 languages (and no doubt several already exist) but that would be more useful for analysis than live practice. Secondly, they are not pigeonhole models which are to help manage a situation rather than to develop. Knowing I am 'red' and can manage 'blue', 'green' and 'yellow' people better is a way of fixing my identity or personality. The languages and paradigms are different. I may have a propensity or inclination to one of the languages or the paradigms, but the invitation is to develop and understanding and skills with the others. This expands my repertoire and versatility as well as enabling better engagement with others and reducing confusion.

There are situations, perhaps when confusion has persisted over time, that things have become dysfunctional. Those involved are unable to deal with the situation and there are repetitive defective patterns that interfere with what people are trying to do. A change of language or paradigm is not enough in these circumstances. The Dialogic Actions may prove more helpful to address dysfunctionality. There are four actions, and the sequences in which they are used can address many forms of dysfunctionality, such as arguments, going around in circles, courteous compliance and the inability to make decisions. The Dialogic Actions are a skill rather than a framework, and there is a separate paper to introduce them.

Peter Garrett and Jane Ball
February 2022





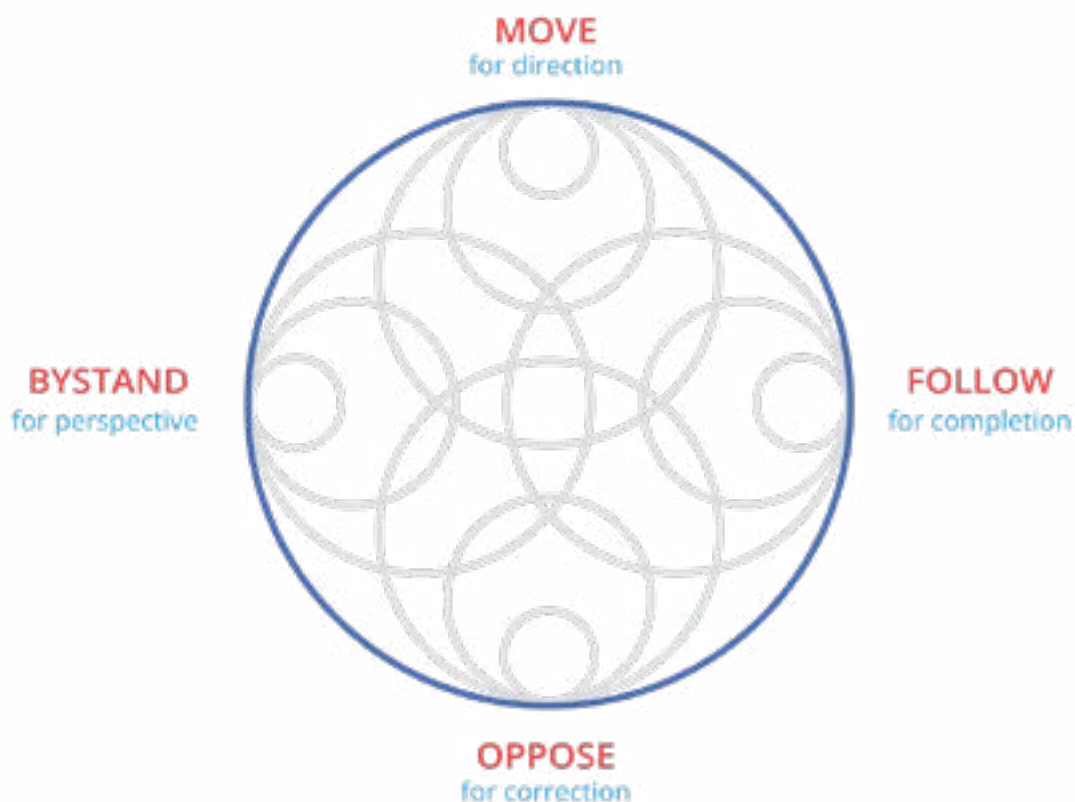
FUNCTIONAL COMMUNICATION PART 2

THE DIALOGIC ACTIONS

AN INTRODUCTION

The Dialogic Actions help people to talk together more successfully and productively. They refer to the structure and dynamics of the communication itself, rather than to the content of what is being said. They can be used reflectively after a conversation to understand what happened. Their greater value, however, is that they are simple enough to use live, in the moment when things are not working well, and people are not ending up where they are trying to go. These Actions are derived from doctoral research by family therapist David Kantor. He worked with dysfunctional families to learn how they might talk together more functionally. Although we may not consider ourselves to be dysfunctional, there are times for everyone when problems arise in communication and we are unclear how to proceed. At such times, the Dialogic Actions are particularly helpful.

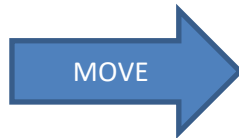
There are just four Dialogic Actions – a Move, a Follow, an Oppose and a Bystand. Each one has a different structure and purpose: the Move gives direction, the Follow gives completion, the Oppose gives correction and the Bystand gives perspective. In this model, every time someone speaks it will be either a Move, a Follow, an Oppose or a Bystand. It is the sequence in which the Actions are made that determines the dynamic of the conversation or exchange between people.



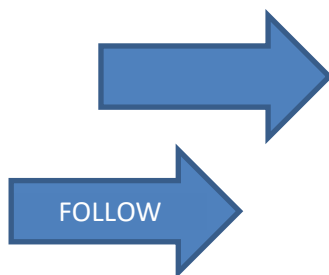
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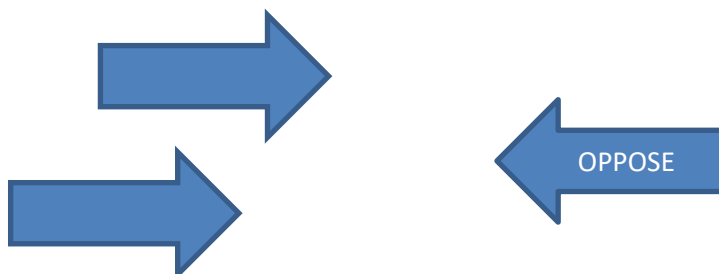
A Move: When someone makes a Move, they introduce a subject or a topic. This is an invitation for others to go in a new direction. So, the opening Action made at the start of any conversation or communication will be a Move. It could take the form: "I want to talk about...."



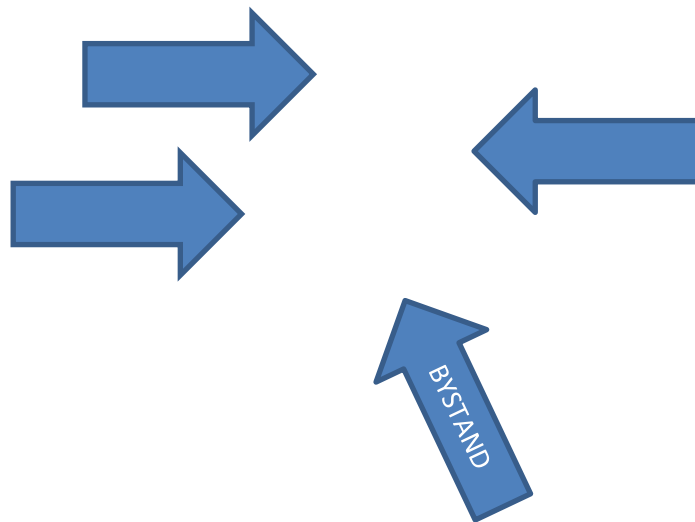
A Follow: Responding to that Move and going in the same direction is called a Follow. This may be a statement of agreement, or it may expand on the matter raised in the Move. This may sound like: "I would like to consider that too..."



An Oppose: Disagreeing with a Move and choosing not to go in the same direction is called an Oppose. This may stop the progress in the direction of the Move. It does not imply going in a different direction, just not going in the direction proposed by the Move. Perhaps: "I have no interest in talking about that."



A Bystand: When someone steps back to a neutral position and describes the dynamic they observe, or the various Actions they have heard, then that is called a Bystand. A Bystand is a spoken observation about what is happening. It does not propose going in a new direction (a Move), going in the same direction someone has proposed (a Follow) or disagreeing with a direction (an Oppose). Instead, the Bystand describes the sequence of Actions witnessed.



The Actions are spoken: There is a difference between thinking and talking. The Actions become meaningful to others when they are spoken. Thinking about making any of the Actions but not saying them is ineffective – the Action makes no contribution to the structure of the communication. That is like writing an email but not sending it. Thinking things and not saying them, leaving them unavailable to others, is one of the main issues in dysfunctional conversations. Learning how to say what you are thinking is part of learning how to communicate better with other people.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

A Developmental Model: This is a developmental model, and its purpose is to enable people to learn to do all the Actions well in any situation. Take tennis as an analogy. To be good at the game you need to be able to play a forehand, a backhand, a lob and a drop shot. If you cannot play a backhand, then you may have to try to run around the approaching tennis ball to play a forehand. In the same way, if you do not know how to Oppose, you may have to Move, Follow or Bystand instead, which would confuse the situation. This may be an aspect of dysfunctionality that is making things difficult. So, everyone is encouraged to use all the Actions as needed. In contrast to the Dialogic Actions, the Myers Briggs personality types is a labelling model. In a labelling model you accept yourself to be a certain type and learn how to manage your communication with others given that fact. The value of the Dialogic Actions is that despite your propensity to use some actions more than others, you are encouraged to learn them all and to use each of them where needed. They are Actions not identities. So, it would make no sense to say, “I am a mover”. That would be like saying “I am a forehand”. Just as you would say “I played a forehand” so in this model you might say “I made a Move”.



Clean Actions and Spin: The Actions work well when they are clearly understood by others, so the simpler and clearer they are the better. An example of a simple and clean Follow is “Yes, I agree”. You might choose to continue with an explanation that develops the thoughts and feelings behind your statement but missing out the clean Follow is far less effective. Putting spin on an Action makes it harder to respond, much like in tennis, where adding top spin or slicing the ball makes it harder for the other player to return it. An example of spin is: “Well if you want to put it that way, I have no choice but to disagree with you”. The clean version might be: “I do not agree with your idea”. To Bystand in a clean way requires a neutral stance of observation – not being for or against the dynamic you are describing. Done well a Bystand will change the dynamics in the conversation. It helps people become aware of the repetitive patterns that are a repeated dysfunction. These patterns exist in every relationship and grouping that meets regularly. It evokes the frustrating feeling: “Here we go again!”.

Compound Actions: When a speaker contributes more than one action at a time then it is called a compound Action. This can be very effective. For example, one might say “I fully support your proposal, but I do not think your method is the best way to achieve it”. That is a compound Action made up of a Follow then an Oppose. It secures agreement for part of what is said (the proposal), whilst seeking to correct another part (the method). Similarly, one might Bystand then Move by saying “For some time we have been talking about three different proposals at the same time, and I see that we are not making much progress on any of them. I suggest we choose one and concentrate on that”.

Strong and Stuck Actions: You will find you have one or more Actions that you are comfortable making and that often gets good results. That is your strong Action, or Actions. The developmental step is to choose deliberately to use the other Actions where you are not so strong or successful and discover how to do them well. Watch other people who are good at those Actions and try copying them until you develop your own style. There will also be times and situations where you get stuck and repeated use the same Action. You might repeatedly Bystand (and thereby avoid taking a position) or repeatedly disagree without ever following or proposing anything. When this happens, you have a stuck Action.

APPLICATION IN GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

Learning how to use the Actions: The first step is to understand the distinction between the four different Actions so that you can easily recognise them in use. They are used by everyone in all conversations and communications so there are plenty of opportunities to observe and to learn. The second step is to understand what each of them does, so that the impact is more or less predictable. For example, a conversation where there is one Move, and many Follows sounds like one person in authority talking with others who are subservient. When the reaction to an Oppose is another Oppose, and that in turn is Opposed again, then we are heading towards an argument. It is the sequence of Actions that reveals the typical dynamics or patterns of behaviour. The skill is to see the pattern and if it is not working, to change the sequence by adding the appropriate Actions to make it more productive.



Functionality and Dysfunctionality: The aim is to have more functional conversations and meetings with others, meaning we are better able to do what we are trying to achieve together. That requires those involved being able to do all four Actions and being attentive to which Action would help most at any time. The simple rule for understanding dysfunctionality is that one or more of the Actions are not available for use in the conversation. Noticing that and providing the missing Actions, or asking others to provide the missing Actions, will always make the conversation more functional.

Good Decision Making: Everybody makes decisions, and when people are working in organisations, they are employed to make many decisions every day. They are responsible and accountable for doing so, and the Dialogic Actions are particularly helpful in this regard. A simple decision in this model is a Move and then a Follow or a series of Follows. That is an efficient decision, and in times of emergency efficiency is essential – hence the command-and-control culture in such situations. A more rigorous decision, however, requires all four Actions. The Moves provide the proposals, the Follows support them, the Opposes challenge to correct or improve them, and the Bystands reveal repetitive sequences of Actions that inadvertently may be interfering with the clarity of the decision being made.

***Peter Garrett and Jane Ball**
February 2022*



SET RESOURCES

APPENDIX F:

Set 3 - Patterns of Social Engagement

- [Dialogic Engagement Field Guide](#)
- [Dialogic Engagement Facilitation Guide](#)
- [Reflections on the Inner Modes of Talking and Thinking Together](#)
- [Reflective Practice 2](#)





DIALOGIC ENGAGEMENT

A facilitated introductory course
to discover Dialogue

&

its relevance to
your work and life...

PARTICIPANT FIELD GUIDE



Academy of Professional Dialogue
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DIALOGIC ENGAGEMENT

A facilitated introductory course
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HOW WELL DO WE TALK AND THINK TOGETHER?

We are taught basic skills at school, like how to read and write (literacy), and how to count (numeracy). Surprisingly, we are not taught how to talk and think together (articulacy). We just pick that up from those around us, and we probably seldom stop to review how good we are at talking and thinking with other people. This is unfortunate because our success, and that of our organisations and communities, is dependent on how well people talk and think together. When we decide to do things that affect other people, we need to talk with them and think about the wider consequences of our actions. If we don't, we keep tripping each other up. That is frustrating, and it limits how effective we are in our everyday work and in our lives in general. To improve one's skills, a good starting point is to consider the ways in which we talk with others.

AN INTRODUCTION TO DIALOGUE

This introduction to Dialogue provides you with an effective framework for recognising, understanding and changing the way people talk and think together. You will be able to make immediate use of this learning to enhance your own participation and for the benefit those around you. The purpose, structure and dynamics of Dialogue are introduced in a way that reveals when and how Dialogue may be the best way to think with others. With practice we anticipate you will be better equipped through Dialogue to help resolve complex and fragmented situations.



FACILITATED LEARNING

This facilitated course is an opportunity to get a taste of Dialogue and how it is different from other ways of talking and thinking together. Two Professional Dialogue Practitioners accompany you on an experiential consideration of seven different Modes of discourse, and a Certificate of Participation is provided on completion. During the course we not only talk about the Modes, but we engage in each of them in a participatory way. The benefit of this approach to learning is that the more enquiry and self-discovery there is, the easier it will be later to recall what you learned.

This Participant Field Guide provides you with a review of all the Modes, including the typical dynamics and structure of each one, as well as the skills and misuses that can help and hinder their effectiveness. Each Mode involves a different kind of engagement, and thereby enables different possibilities. This is an opportunity to recognise and understand the Modes, and to learn how to use them well.

DIALOGIC MODES

Two of the Modes involve Dialogue, and these Modes are particularly important in complex or ambiguous situations, where people hold a variety of perspectives and opinions about what should be done and by whom. Such situations are often best described as fragmented, and fragmentation is surprisingly common in all our lives – in fact, it is pervasive in all communities and organisations around the world.



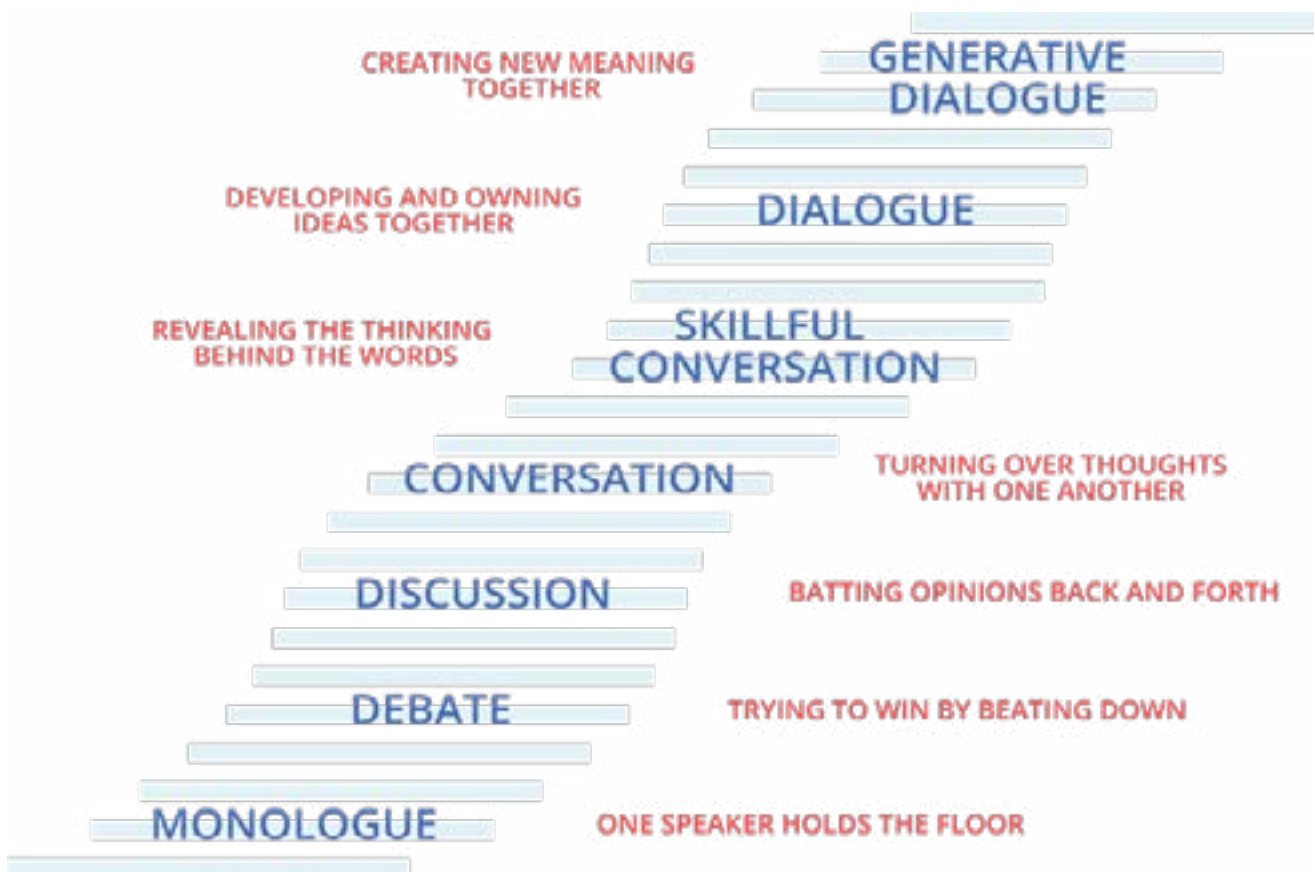
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MODES OF ENGAGEMENT

The Modes describe how we engage with one another and the nature of the exchange or discourse, not the content of what is said or being talked about. We will explore seven Modes, and when we are talking and thinking with others, we are always in one or other of these Modes. All of them are needed, and none is better than any other.

Seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together...



STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS

Each Mode determines a different kind of engagement through a distinctive structure and dynamic. The Modes enable different types of engagement between those involved, and we can start to notice if we are in the best Mode of engagement for what we are trying to do. Using the right Mode for the work at hand will lead to better results. If things are not working so well, we have a choice, and probably need to change to another Mode. The aim is to understand all seven Modes and how to use the most helpful one at any given time.

MODE	STRUCTURE	DYNAMIC
MONOLOGUE	One person holds the floor	One-way delivery
DEBATE	Us and them	We are right - You are wrong!
DISCUSSION	Loose	Anyone can speak about anything
CONVERSATION	Temporary and interpersonal	Pursuit of common interests
SKILLFUL CONVERSATION	Rigorous enquiry	Support and challenge
DIALOGUE	Common topic Each speaks to all	Understanding not persuading Incorporating all voices
GENERATIVE DIALOGUE	Emergent Containing not constraining	Unfolding and enfolding



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MONOLOGUE

Monologue is the most rudimentary and commonly used Mode for running meetings. It requires everyone to follow one speaker's thoughts. This Mode has a fine history in the form of storytelling, and before writing was commonly available, oral history (delivered in the form of a Monologue) was essential to retain an understanding and appreciation of one's heritage and social identity. This was gradually replaced by oratory and speeches, which are a more personalised version of history. As our world and lives have become more mechanised, Monologues have become more technical, explanatory, instructional and directive. As a result, there has been a proliferation of Monologues that may or may not be relevant to the audiences they address – although the socially polite response is for the audience to appear to be attentive even if they have little interest in what is being said.

STRUCTURE: *One person holds the floor*

The speaker has authority and control throughout the Monologue. The seating is generally arranged so that everyone can see the speaker, but not one another. The speaker can accept or refuse interruptions that are generally prefaced by raising one's hand, as first learnt at school. In frustration, people may heckle to try to gain the floor from the speaker.

DYNAMIC: *One-way delivery*

The speaker is the focus of attention and determines the pace and duration of the Monologue. Speakers like Monologue because they are in control and can prepare what they want to say in advance. If they are repeating other people's thoughts they may use notes, slides or posters to remember what to say. Audience participation is typically restricted to a shorter question-and-answer session under the control of the speaker.





ENGAGEMENT: *Transactional*

Specific information is passed from the speaker to the audience. The better the speaker knows their audience the more effective the transfer.

OUTCOME: *The speaker knew, now the audience knows*

The benefits of Monologue are that:

- a) large numbers of people can be addressed at the same time
- b) everyone present hears the same thing at the same time
- c) people hear for themselves, not a second-hand version of what was said

GOOD USAGE:

Monologue is good for telling everyone (but not for hearing from them) so it is ideal for announcements, speeches, marking symbolic change, instructions and expounding a particular point of view. People appreciate a Monologue when they want to know what the speaker has to say.

POOR USAGE:

Monologue is poor for consultation because it does not draw out the listeners' thinking but requires everyone to follow the speaker's thinking. A boring meeting is one where you don't want to know what is being said, and it feels like a waste of time. Beware of serial Monologues disguised as Dialogue.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

When you are the speaker, try listening to yourself, to what you are saying, to what you are thinking, and to the room as a whole as you are speaking. This gives you access to the meaning that is developing whilst you are speaking. This is radically different from playing a 'tape recording' of your past thoughts. See what you discover about the pace of thinking and of previous thought.



DEBATE

Debate is generally more energetic and more engaging than Monologue. It is also more complex because you not only advocate your own views, but you also dispute and rebut the opposing views. This requires following your own line of thinking as well as following the ones you are opposing. Debate has a fine tradition of providing due process for decision-making, with the more convincing arguments winning the favour of the decision-maker, or winning the most votes in an assembly. Party politics has gradually reduced the quality of Debate to rhetoric, since the voting is often predictable. As a result, Debate has become divisive rather than inclusive, reinforcing the identity of sub-cultural groupings rather than leading them to understand and accommodate one another. The argumentative overtones have become more and more dominant in Debate in recent times.

STRUCTURE: *Us and Them*

Orderly Debate has a clear proposal or 'motion' and two opposing groupings – one is for the motion (agrees) and the other is against it (disagrees). This divides the room into 'us' and 'them', and the two groupings are usually seated facing (or confronting) one another. They take turns to make their case and to oppose the other's arguments.

DYNAMIC: *We are right – You are wrong!*

The aim is to win. The method is to 'beat down' which is the root meaning of the word Debate. It takes the form of 'I am right and you are wrong', to which the response is 'No – I am right and you are wrong!' The heat can rise significantly as the process develops, so most assemblies appoint a controlling impartial 'speaker' to provide order.





ENGAGEMENT: *Combative and Definitive*

OUTCOME: *Winners and Losers*

The benefits of Debate are that:

- a) a decision is made and witnessed by everyone present
- b) the competitive energy and heat in the exchange leads participants to reveal their deeper convictions and limits of tolerance

GOOD USAGE:

The secret to good Debate is to address the rationale of the thinking, and it is ideal for decisions where there is only one outcome. It gets all the thinking out on the table, provokes arguments that have not previously been articulated, draws out unspoken thoughts and emotions, and reveals sub-cultural attitudes that are collectively held.

POOR USAGE:

Some situations are not best served by an either/or approach, that inevitably has winners and losers. Another Mode could combine parts of the opposing views to find a new solution. In comparison, it is easy to lose perspective through Debate by dismissing the other view outright. Poor debating skills lead people to 'play dirty' by putting down the person rather than their views.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

When you are having a private, internal debate and know you are getting opinionated and stuck, try reversing the roles and arguing against what you have been advocating to yourself.



DISCUSSION

This is the Mode where people are batting ideas back and forth – a bit like table tennis, but less structured and with very loose rules. It can be fast and superficial, enjoyable and inconsequential. Discussion is derived from the same root as percussion, and it is a bit like tapping the surface to sense what is underneath. This is an efficient and participatory way of canvassing views and making a prompt call on which way to proceed. You can reach a decision without going into depth, like determining ‘roughly how long before we should meet again?’ It could be ideal for checking the items on an agenda – whereas within each agenda item you would expect to be in a different Mode to go into much more depth. The strength of Discussion is its lightness and speed; the weakness is that it does not achieve alignment or commitment. If Discussion is used to address complicated issues where competing stakeholders have not revealed all their interests and concerns, then the superficial decisions made are liable to unwind as the implications become more evident to everyone.

STRUCTURE: *Loose*

Discussion is undemanding and often dominated by a few people – whilst others may not speak at all or even be that attentive to what is being said. It is often scattered with speakers needing to gather attention, perhaps through gesture or humour. It lasts as long as it lasts, and it is not considered impolite to drop in and out of a Discussion.

DYNAMIC: *Anyone can speak about anything*

Because the structure is so loose, and anyone can introduce what they choose, the direction can and often does change abruptly from one speaker to the next.





ENGAGEMENT: *Temporary and superficial*

OUTCOME: *Non-binding decisions*

The process by which a group of people reach a decision varies in different contexts and situations. When multiple Discussions are used to sound out the position of different participants, this may give a sense of where agreement might be found. The alignment of needs and interests required for methodical decision-making, however, needs a different Mode. Changing the Mode when needed is an important skill.

GOOD USAGE:

Discussion can be highly participatory and inclusive, and it is good for engaging people, reaching a quick but superficial decision, or agreeing what to talk about. It is ideal for social engagement, such as at a barbeque or picnic, and the quips, banter and repartee one hears between colleagues entering or leaving work provide a comfortable sense of being noticed, acknowledged and belonging. Discussion can turn the boredom of waiting into fun.

POOR USAGE:

Like Monologue, Discussion can be overused in work meetings. The superficiality of the Mode can obscure things rather than progressing activities. When the group drops into Discussion, it may appear to have addressed the business at hand, whilst not actually doing so. At the close of the meeting people have different ideas about what was decided, and everyone probably knows that actions agreed in Discussion are unlikely to happen. Although it might have seemed faster, this Mode may require things to be reconsidered and so actually takes longer.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

Discussion is superficial, but it does give a sense of belonging. Try getting marginal individuals engaged by finding a voice you rarely use, to discover things about yourself and them.



Acknowledgement: P Garrett, J Ball

CONVERSATION

At the mid-point of the seven Modes is Conversation, which is the most versatile of all. The root meaning of the word is to “turn things over together”. In Conversation people turn over their experiences and ideas together. This is an informal, participatory, engaging and undemanding activity than can yield surprising pleasure and outcomes in a short space of time. Because Conversation is naturally flowing and adaptable, it makes it possible for people to bridge differences easily – enabling a young boy to engage with an elderly woman; seniors with juniors; unqualified with professional; manual with intellectual; organisational function with operational line and so on. Conversation is inherently suited to building relationships and sharing personal experiences of what is happening in any situation. For good health everyone should spend at least half an hour a day in Conversation... Before infants can talk, they enjoy Conversation! Should old people become isolated, they can start to die from a lack of Conversation.

STRUCTURE: *Temporary and interpersonal*

How long a Conversation lasts is entirely dependent on the extent of common interest and the energy to continue – it could be an exchange of two sentences or last for half an hour. The fact that it could end at any time gives a curious vitality to the engagement. The participants meet as peers, despite their obvious differences – in fact the greater the differences the more surprising and enjoyable the Conversation can be.

DYNAMICS: *Pursuit of common interests*

The essential dynamic is to find what interests you have in common. Within those common interests, the differences add colour and energy. We may both enjoy football or movies, but the different football teams we support or the movie stars we admire will bring us closer to each other's worlds. First, we find what we have in common – it may present itself in our clothing, demeanour, or whatever – and then we follow the thread of wherever this takes us.





ENGAGEMENT: *Relationship building*

OUTCOME: *Personal connection*

The essential human interaction takes little time and results in a personal sense of closeness. It involves recognition, a sense of shared direction, and evokes interest in participating in a common endeavour.

GOOD USAGE:

Conversation is not only an important social skill – it is also a strong asset in the workplace. Leaders can develop a rapport with any of their staff through an appropriate short Conversation. Colleagues can understand one another beyond their business roles. Through Conversation we understand the victories people are celebrating and the losses they are suffering without making an imposition of any kind.

POOR USAGE:

Conversation can be used to avoid facing the issue at hand. You may go to see your boss to request a decision, have a great Conversation about each of your weekends, but leave no closer to the decision you sought, because you were in the wrong Mode. Conversation is essentially reciprocal. If one withholds whilst enquiring of the other, this can become prying to tease out information. That is against the spirit of Conversation and can cause lasting damage.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

Try starting the Conversations you habitually avoid because you doubt that you have anything in common with the other person. Genuinely ask the beggar how he is, the rude official if she is OK, or ask to see the manager to compliment rather than to complain.



SKILLFUL CONVERSATION

Skillful Conversation has a more defined structure than the free-flowing Mode of Conversation. In Conversation you give your thoughts about whatever comes up and try to say them in a way that makes sense to others. With Skillful Conversation there is a significant addition – you reveal and explore why you hold the views you hold. There is a rigour to recalling what you have seen, read, heard and been told – and what assumptions you made about the situation and the context. This tests your logic and reasoning, and the implications of what you believe. It pushes on the framework underlying your past and future decisions. So, this is an essential Mode for clarity in sense-making and decision-making. You may notice how much you appreciate colleagues who are good at Skillful Conversation, and able to draw you and others into this structured Mode. This is an essential Mode for working meetings. It does depend on who is involved, and it does have strong analytic and reflective features that can be overplayed to avoid reaching a tough decision.

STRUCTURE: *Rigorous enquiry*

It takes time to focus attention on the situation under consideration, and to understand how views and opinions have been formed and sustained. Stopping before some kind of resolution has been formulated would feel unsatisfactory.

DYNAMIC: *Support and challenge*

The reliability of the information you have seen and heard, the assumptions inevitably made, your logic and reasoning, the certainty of your views and opinions, and the implications of holding such a disposition are amongst the features to be tested through support and challenge. Ideally these are suspended (held openly) rather than defended.





ENGAGEMENT: *Intensive*

OUTCOME: *In-depth understanding*

Skillful Conversation lays the ground for effective decision-making for individuals or set groupings. It helps to reveal how the situation has come about, the essential factors to address, pursue or mitigate – and the potential benefits, risks and consequences.

GOOD USAGE:

Talking with others to reveal what is behind your words and actions, and to discover the inherent assumptions and implications, helps everyone to reach a better understanding of the situation and what to do. Thinking on one's own can result in circular thinking. It takes the rigour of Skillful Conversation to break these repetitive loops – by noticing and testing the thoughts involved.

POOR USAGE:

Beware of avoiding decisions by prolonging the Skillful Conversation. Also, because of the analytic nature of Skillful Conversation, one may be distracted from potential new possibilities, which may be better found in a more generative Mode like Dialogue.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

Whilst engaging in Skillful Conversation, try assuming there is a good reason for things working out the way they are. Suppose that Life is trying to teach you something. What is the potential learning here? For example, a conflict is an opportunity in disguise – the question is, what opportunity?



Acknowledgement: P Garrett, J Ball

DIALOGUE

The two Modes of Dialogue, described in the next two sections, are quite different from the other Modes. Rather than being a means for the individual to hold sway (as in a Monologue) or for one group to win (as in Debate), the aim here is for everyone to benefit. The essential nature of the activity is inclusion. We want to include the views and experiences of others in a way that creates a common understanding. The root meaning is drawn from logos, which is the word or 'meaning', and dia which means 'through', as a diameter is a line through the centre of a circle. Dialogue seeks to find a common meaning through and amongst a group of people. Participants work with each other, contributing to the Conversation rather than giving the answer, so that what emerges is created and owned by everyone involved. It soon becomes apparent that a particular set of skills is required, or people will revert to other Modes. People need to listen, rather than dismissing other's views out of hand, to be genuine without being certain they are right, and to respect each other's intentions. This leads to a common sense of identity and purposeful stewardship of the individual and collective worlds. Dialogue is a significantly under-used Mode. Most cultures have a history of social Dialogue with forums like the English town moot hall, the South African indaba and the State Senate, but they have largely devolved into arenas for negotiation or Debate.

STRUCTURE: *Common topic – Each speaks to all*

There is no dominant seat in the Dialogue, and everyone needs to be able to see and hear everyone else (unlike Monologue, where everyone needs to see only one person, namely the speaker) so a circle of chairs is ideal. The topic, theme or concern of the Dialogue guides the direction as different perspectives are revealed.

DYNAMIC: *Understanding not persuading – Incorporating all voices*

This is a highly participative Mode. People concentrate on everything that is being said and how it is changing the understanding in the room and in themselves. They attend to the overall movement or flow of meaning. As they speak they address the whole group rather than speaking to individuals interpersonally.

Acknowledgement: P Garrett, J Ball





ENGAGEMENT: *Inclusive and transparent*

OUTCOME: *Common understanding*

This is an ideal Mode for cultivating a common understanding and a common sense amongst multiple stakeholders. People transparently suspend their views for common enquiry. A sustained Dialogue creates genuine alignment and lays the ground for collective decision-making.

GOOD USAGE:

The spirit of Dialogue is to work with people, not to do things to or for them. The intention is to understand rather than to convince, enabling an idea or proposal to be worked on together, with everyone's contribution being incorporated into the developing thinking. This results in collectively owned outcomes, without selling answers to get 'buy-in'. The involvement or representation of everyone affected by the consideration is needed as a sound basis for sustainable decisions.

POOR USAGE:

By nature, Dialogue is open and transparent. The antithesis is a covert and exclusive consideration led by strong personal agendas. One can misuse Dialogue by deliberately or inadvertently leaving out key individuals and sub-groupings who are affected by the topic under consideration. Also, it may appear to take longer to use Dialogue than to tell people what to do, although thinking together at the outset is invariably more efficient in the long run.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP:

Within and without? Try listening to words spoken by others as if they were being said by you yourself. Find the part of yourself that would say what is being said if it could, and consider how you may be including or excluding that part of yourself.



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GENERATIVE DIALOGUE

Dialogue has a topic to address within a specific situation. Generative Dialogue, on the other hand, has far greater reach and can also address the context that surrounds the situation. This is a step back from the existing patterns of relationships, into the ground out of which those relationships arise. So, this is the emergent Mode, for generating the kind of environment that enables whatever needs to take form to do so. It requires collective presence (being fully present) and attention to the potential opportunity inherent in the moment. To the degree that people free themselves from their personal and collective agendas (their wants and ambitions), they can enter a different space. In these uncharted waters, are simple but highly innovative solutions that were previously elusive, and the essential spirit of fellowship, citizenship and communion. This Mode can shift paradigms.

STRUCTURE: *Emergent – Containing, not constraining*

Generative Dialogue is the least structured of the Modes, enabling the potential in the moment to emerge in its own unique way on each occasion. It requires greater personal discipline and largeness of character to participate in a Generative Dialogue, without pre-defined boundaries or an agenda, than it does to operate in a rule-bound space. Releasing the rules (not complying or fighting against them) requires a live awareness of what is happening as it happens – and that facilitation itself be released before it becomes a constraint.

DYNAMIC: *Unfolding and enfolding*

One might wonder what one would talk about if there is no pre-set topic or agenda. With Generative Dialogue you make a start and find out. An agenda may emerge and change as feels right, and it is only at the end that one could really say what the agenda was. As you reveal your emerging awareness, and enfold what you hear from others, a current or direction emerges that takes the Generative Dialogue wider and deeper at the same time. The relationship between the immediate process and the general nature of what is happening in society becomes evident in surprising and significant ways.





ENGAGEMENT: *Generative*

OUTCOME: *Collective potential*

People discover that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, and something special emerges when you think together without constraints. Generative Dialogue lays the ground for contextual change, without which the essential dynamics repeat themselves.

GOOD USAGE:

We long to have a profound and fundamental experience of our world and our purpose in it. Here is an opportunity to acknowledge the human condition of which we are a part, and to move beyond that personally and collectively into the generative experience of life that enables common stewardship of the world. A Generative Dialogue with one's closest friends and colleagues is the most obvious way to creatively shift the ground of one's life and work. If only more people understood that!

POOR USAGE:

All versions of poor use are based on the promotion of self-interest rather than the well-being of the whole. The enriching experience of the Generative Dialogue is received by those who trust and accept the power of the generative process itself.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

The practice of Being an Acorn: The acorn does not become the oak tree – it is the soil and moisture, passing through that tiny acorn, that are genetically informed to become the mighty oak. So, let go of your ambitions to be impressive to others. Rather, attend to the more modest work of informing whatever passes through your consciousness, in a generative way, so that it can grow into whatever is needed in the world.



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ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE CERTIFIED COURSES

On completion of Dialogic Engagement you will be issued with a Certificate of Participation by the Academy of Professional Dialogue. A sequenced programme of further courses is available from the Academy to enable you to develop the professional skills and understanding that will be of value to you in any organisational or social setting. For details, please check the Academy's website: aofpd.org. Participation in these courses will benefit those who apply to become an accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner, thereby being authorised to deliver the Academy's educational courses.





DIALOGUE PUBLICATIONS

Dialogue Publications was founded in 2017 to make Professional Dialogue materials available internationally. The editors release an annual publication entitled *The World Needs Dialogue!* (hardback and e-book), covering the Working Papers considered by Members at the Academy's annual conference. Other publications include books authored by Academy Members, as well as supporting materials for all educational programmes and courses accredited by the Academy.





THE ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE

The Academy is an educational non-profit charity that promotes and inspires the international use of Professional Dialogue for the benefit of society. The primary aims are to inform people about the practice of Professional Dialogue in organisational and social settings, to acknowledge the work done by skilled Dialogue Practitioners around the world, to provide professional affiliation and to develop the field of Dialogue into a profession.



DIALOGIC ENGAGEMENT

A facilitated introductory course
to discover Dialogue

&

its relevance to
your work and life...

PRACTITIONER FACILITATION GUIDE



Academy of Professional Dialogue
accredited course



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FACILITATION GUIDANCE

COURSE DELIVERY

Dialogic Engagement is an Academy accredited course, and it is a requirement that it be facilitated by two accredited (or in-training) Professional Dialogue Practitioners using the participatory learning model described in these notes. The Learning Centre has a maximum capacity of 25 screens, and the course is to be delivered to a group of at least 12 and not more than 21 registered participants.

The course has four parts of 90 minutes each and may be offered either as a one-day course, or over two half-days.

ONE-DAY COURSE:

9:30am – 4:45pm
(Parts 1-4)

TWO HALF-DAYS COURSE:

Either 9:30am – 12:45pm or 1:30pm – 4:45pm
(Parts 1 and 2 followed by Parts 3 and 4)
Not more than one week apart

PART 1

Welcome & Intro (5)
Check-in (20)
Monologue (20)
Debate (45)

BREAK 15

PART 2

Discussion (10)
Conversation (40)
Skillful Conversation (40)

LUNCH 45

PART 3

Dialogue (60)
Generative Dialogue (30)

BREAK 15

PART 4

Review (60)
Check-out (30)



PARTICIPANT ACCESS TO THE LEARNING CENTRE

Once the course booking has been made by the two Professional Dialogue Practitioners who will facilitate the course, there will be a set period during which participants can access the Learning Centre to register themselves onto the course, to pay by credit card (if a charge is being made) and to place their photo and details for the benefit of other participants. The course is confidential to the participants, with the sole exception of the final Check-out, which is to be recorded by the Practitioners facilitating the course. Participants may print their Participant Guide, on acceptance of the condition they do not distribute it to others who are not involved in the course, and they will have access to the Learning Centre for a day after the completion of the course to enable them to do so. Once the Professional Dialogue Practitioners have confirmed the Participant's presence for the full duration of the course, the Academy will issue a formal *Certificate of Participation* for **Dialogic Engagement** along with the date/s and the names of the Professional Dialogue Practitioners who facilitated the course.



HOW WELL DO WE TALK AND THINK TOGETHER?

We are taught basic skills at school, like how to read and write (literacy), and how to count (numeracy). Surprisingly, we are not taught how to talk and think together (articulacy). We just pick that up from those around us, and we probably seldom stop to review how good we are at talking and thinking with other people. This is unfortunate because our success, and that of our organisations and communities, is dependent on how well people talk and think together. When we decide to do things that affect other people, we need to talk with them and think about the wider consequences of our actions. If we don't, we keep tripping each other up. That is frustrating, and it limits how effective we are in our everyday work and in our lives in general. To improve one's skills, a good starting point is to consider the ways in which we talk with others.

AN INTRODUCTION TO DIALOGUE

This introduction to Dialogue provides you with an effective framework for recognising, understanding and changing the way people talk and think together. You will be able to make immediate use of this learning to enhance your own participation and for the benefit those around you. The purpose, structure and dynamics of Dialogue are introduced in a way that reveals when and how Dialogue may be the best way to think with others. With practice we anticipate you will be better equipped through Dialogue to help resolve complex and fragmented situations.



FACILITATED LEARNING

This facilitated course is an opportunity to get a taste of Dialogue and how it is different from other ways of talking and thinking together. Two Professional Dialogue Practitioners accompany you on an experiential consideration of seven different Modes of discourse, and a Certificate of Participation is provided on completion. During the course we not only talk about the Modes, but we engage in each of them in a participatory way. The benefit of this approach to learning is that the more enquiry and self-discovery there is, the easier it will be later to recall what you learned.

This Participant Field Guide provides you with a review of all the Modes, including the typical dynamics and structure of each one, as well as the skills and misuses that can help and hinder their effectiveness. Each Mode involves a different kind of engagement, and thereby enables different possibilities. This is an opportunity to recognise and understand the Modes, and to learn how to use them well.

DIALOGIC MODES

Two of the Modes involve Dialogue, and these Modes are particularly important in complex or ambiguous situations, where people hold a variety of perspectives and opinions about what should be done and by whom. Such situations are often best described as fragmented, and fragmentation is surprisingly common in all our lives – in fact, it is pervasive in all communities and organisations around the world.



FACILITATION GUIDANCE

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

- Welcome participants
- Outline the day (or two half-days)
- Describe the Learning Centre architecture. Include what happens in each room and availability of the lounge, which will be open in breaks and at the close.
- Explain why the Academy has an introductory *Dialogic Engagement* course, and what you can expect from the day. Draw content from the early pages of the Participant Field Guide as appropriate.
- Who's in the room? Describe common features and different subgroups participating. (For example: In the room today we have five lecturers and 12 students, all from Oxford University) This will be relevant to the Debate 'motion' you choose later.

THE CHECK-IN

The Check-in question: Whatever will help participants to meet each other, and build some energy and anticipation that this might be an interesting and enjoyable time together. Perhaps:

- Who are you (your name)?
- Where are you (your location)?
- What do you get paid to do (your role)?
- Why do you think today might be helpful to you (what experience do you have of Dialogue)?



INTRODUCE THE MODES

Draw on the introductory pages in the Participant Field Guide and remember to include:

- The Modes are about the way people talk and thinking together – not about the content or what is being talked about.
- They are all helpful and needed, in different situations for different kinds of engagement.
- We will experience each of the seven Modes in turn to appreciate what they feel like and how they are different.
- We want to explore how to use each of the Modes well, and which one is needed when.



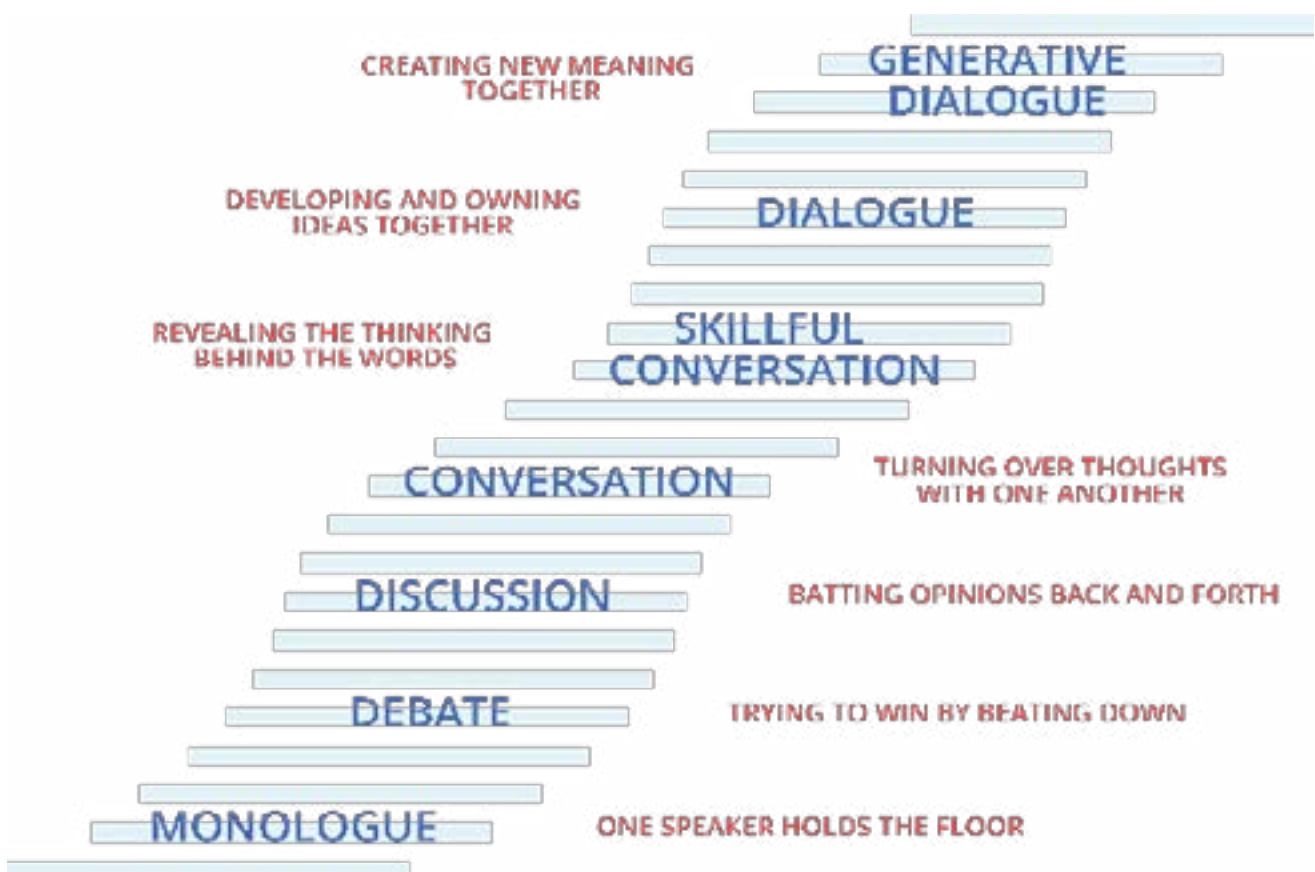
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MODES OF ENGAGEMENT

The Modes describe how we engage with one another and the nature of the exchange or discourse, not the content of what is said or being talked about. We will explore seven Modes, and when we are talking and thinking with others, we are always in one or other of these Modes. All of them are needed, and none is better than any other.

Seven Modes of Talking and Thinking Together...



STRUCTURE AND DYNAMICS

Each Mode determines a different kind of engagement through a distinctive structure and dynamic. The Modes enable different types of engagement between those involved, and we can start to notice if we are in the best Mode of engagement for what we are trying to do. Using the right Mode for the work at hand will lead to better results. If things are not working so well, we have a choice, and probably need to change to another Mode. The aim is to understand all seven Modes and how to use the most helpful one at any given time.

MODE	STRUCTURE	DYNAMIC
MONOLOGUE	One person holds the floor	One-way delivery
DEBATE	Us and them	We are right - You are wrong!
DISCUSSION	Loose	Anyone can speak about anything
CONVERSATION	Temporary and interpersonal	Pursuit of common interests
SKILLFUL CONVERSATION	Rigorous enquiry	Support and challenge
DIALOGUE	Common topic Each speaks to all	Understanding not persuading Incorporating all voices
GENERATIVE DIALOGUE	Emergent Containing not constraining	Unfolding and enfolding



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MONOLOGUE

Monologue is the most rudimentary and commonly used Mode for running meetings. It requires everyone to follow one speaker's thoughts. This Mode has a fine history in the form of storytelling, and before writing was commonly available, oral history (delivered in the form of a Monologue) was essential to retain an understanding and appreciation of one's heritage and social identity. This was gradually replaced by oratory and speeches, which are a more personalised version of history. As our world and lives have become more mechanised, Monologues have become more technical, explanatory, instructional and directive. As a result, there has been a proliferation of Monologues that may or may not be relevant to the audiences they address – although the socially polite response is for the audience to appear to be attentive even if they have little interest in what is being said.

STRUCTURE: *One person holds the floor*

The speaker has authority and control throughout the Monologue. The seating is generally arranged so that everyone can see the speaker, but not one another. The speaker can accept or refuse interruptions that are generally prefaced by raising one's hand, as first learnt at school. In frustration, people may heckle to try to gain the floor from the speaker.

DYNAMIC: *One-way delivery*

The speaker is the focus of attention and determines the pace and duration of the Monologue. Speakers like Monologue because they are in control and can prepare what they want to say in advance. If they are repeating other people's thoughts they may use notes, slides or posters to remember what to say. Audience participation is typically restricted to a shorter question-and-answer session under the control of the speaker.





ENGAGEMENT: *Transactional*

Specific information is passed from the speaker to the audience. The better the speaker knows their audience the more effective the transfer.

OUTCOME: *The speaker knew, now the audience knows*

The benefits of Monologue are that:

- a) large numbers of people can be addressed at the same time
- b) everyone present hears the same thing at the same time
- c) people hear for themselves, not a second-hand version of what was said

GOOD USAGE:

Monologue is good for telling everyone (but not for hearing from them) so it is ideal for announcements, speeches, marking symbolic change, instructions and expounding a particular point of view. People appreciate a Monologue when they want to know what the speaker has to say.

POOR USAGE:

Monologue is poor for consultation because it does not draw out the listeners' thinking but requires everyone to follow the speaker's thinking. A boring meeting is one where you don't want to know what is being said, and it feels like a waste of time. Beware of serial Monologues disguised as Dialogue.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

When you are the speaker, try listening to yourself, to what you are saying, to what you are thinking, and to the room as a whole as you are speaking. This gives you access to the meaning that is developing whilst you are speaking. This is radically different from playing a 'tape recording' of your past thoughts. See what you discover about the pace of thinking and of previous thought.



FACILITATION GUIDANCE

The aim is to encourage people to learn for themselves. Refrain from teaching and telling people the answer that they will have to memorise. Try to draw out the answer.

LEARNING FROM DOING

THE EXERCISE FOR MONOLOGUE

Have people experience the Mode through some kind of activity, game or exercise such as the one outlined below.

- Before the exercise, identify:
 - two participants you believe will enable the task, and alternatives in case they say no
 - subjects for the two Monologues
- Invite the first participant to deliver a Monologue about a subject or a personal story of interest to the group. Offer the example you have in mind but check with them.
- Spotlight the speaker on Zoom and mute everyone else.
- Give them three minutes to talk.
- Repeat with the second participant delivering a Monologue providing a technical instruction or expert opinion they have knowledge about but is unlikely to interest others.
- Remove spotlight, turn on mic and ask everyone to return to gallery view.





THE DEBRIEF

Facilitate a reflection with the participants on their experience, to discover and understand the **structure and dynamic** involved.

Examples of questions to ask:

- What happened? What was your experience of the two speakers?
- Who could you see? Who could talk?
- Did you have thoughts to add or questions to raise? How would you add those?
- In the first Monologue – what did the speaker say? What was the result?
- And in the second – what did the speaker say? What was the result?
- What were you thinking about whilst you were listening?



LEARNING FROM PAST EXPERIENCES

PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES

Call for memories and stories of the Mode that lead to an understanding of what **outcomes** the Mode enables if done well, and disables if done poorly.

Examples of questions to ask:

- In what situations do you see Monologue being used? Specifically, at work? And at home?
- What is the goal of the Monologue in those situations?
- What happens? For the speaker? And the audience?

YOUR EXPERIENCES

Tell some of your own examples and stories to deepen the understanding of the kind of **engagement and outcomes** enabled or disabled by **good or poor usage** of this Mode.

Prepare a variety of examples to draw on depending on the mix of people present. If you tell the same stories repeatedly in different courses you will no longer be learning yourself – you will be teaching.





A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP FOR MATURE GROUPS

Before moving to the next Mode, you have the option to take the Mode to a deeper level by proposing a developmental step to deepen the use of that Mode. Demonstrate doing it as you describe what you are proposing.

When you are the speaker, try listening to yourself, to what you are saying, to what you are thinking, and to the room as a whole as you are speaking. This gives you access to the meaning that is developing whilst you are speaking. This is radically different from playing a 'tape recording' of your past thought. See what you discover about the pace of thinking and of previous thought.

Alternative: Try reading a piece of poetry at the speed you can visualise what is being described. For example:

Silence

Silence is white like a penguin in an igloo in Antarctica.
It feels like being alone in an empty dusty old cave.
It tastes like a tasteless rice cake.
It sounds like you're alone in an empty desert.
It smells like tumble dryer powder.
It looks like a river flowing gently.
It reminds me of a walk round the countryside.

*Devon Hiseman Green (age 9)
Malcolm Sargeant Primary School
Lincolnshire, UK*

Find your own preferred poem that contains real 'things' that can be visualised (not just ideas).

TRANSITION TO THE NEXT MODE

The change to the next Mode should be made as deliberately and promptly as possible so that people 'feel' the shift to a different structure and process. The Modes do not drift from one into another; they require a deliberate change.

Have your co-facilitator prepare to introduce the next Mode.



Acknowledgement: P Garrett, J Ball

DEBATE

Debate is generally more energetic and more engaging than Monologue. It is also more complex because you not only advocate your own views, but you also dispute and rebut the opposing views. This requires following your own line of thinking as well as following the ones you are opposing. Debate has a fine tradition of providing due process for decision-making, with the more convincing arguments winning the favour of the decision-maker, or winning the most votes in an assembly. Party politics has gradually reduced the quality of Debate to rhetoric, since the voting is often predictable. As a result, Debate has become divisive rather than inclusive, reinforcing the identity of sub-cultural groupings rather than leading them to understand and accommodate one another. The argumentative overtones have become more and more dominant in Debate in recent times.

STRUCTURE: *Us and Them*

Orderly Debate has a clear proposal or 'motion' and two opposing groupings – one is for the motion (agrees) and the other is against it (disagrees). This divides the room into 'us' and 'them', and the two groupings are usually seated facing (or confronting) one another. They take turns to make their case and to oppose the other's arguments.

DYNAMIC: *We are right – You are wrong!*

The aim is to win. The method is to 'beat down' which is the root meaning of the word Debate. It takes the form of 'I am right and you are wrong', to which the response is 'No – I am right and you are wrong!' The heat can rise significantly as the process develops, so most assemblies appoint a controlling impartial 'speaker' to provide order.





ENGAGEMENT: *Combative and Definitive*

OUTCOME: *Winners and Losers*

The benefits of Debate are that:

- a) a decision is made and witnessed by everyone present
- b) the competitive energy and heat in the exchange leads participants to reveal their deeper convictions and limits of tolerance

GOOD USAGE:

The secret to good Debate is to address the rationale of the thinking, and it is ideal for decisions where there is only one outcome. It gets all the thinking out on the table, provokes arguments that have not previously been articulated, draws out unspoken thoughts and emotions, and reveals sub-cultural attitudes that are collectively held.

POOR USAGE:

Some situations are not best served by an either/or approach, that inevitably has winners and losers. Another Mode could combine parts of the opposing views to find a new solution. In comparison, it is easy to lose perspective through Debate by dismissing the other view outright. Poor debating skills lead people to 'play dirty' by putting down the person rather than their views.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

When you are having a private, internal debate and know you are getting opinionated and stuck, try reversing the roles and arguing against what you have been advocating to yourself.



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FACILITATION GUIDANCE

The aim is to encourage people to learn for themselves. Refrain from teaching and telling people the answer that they will have to memorise. Try to draw out the answer.

LEARNING FROM DOING

THE EXERCISE FOR DEBATE

Have people experience the Mode through some kind of activity, game or exercise such as the one outlined below.

1. Before the exercise:

The Groups: Decide how you will visually distinguish two groups for a Debate on Zoom. For example, face masks (on or off), or different Zoom backgrounds (downloaded in red and blue). Ensure participants have what they need.

The Motion: Identify a contentious motion for the Debate that will be relevant and have energy for the group. The motion should be a statement that is framed provocatively so that it runs against the commonly accepted norms of the group on the course (perhaps like: 'Men make better leaders than women').

2. Create two evenly numbered debating teams. Choose a leader for each side and have them alternate to choose participants for their teams. Let teams get their masks or prepare their background.
3. Propose the motion.
4. Invite the Team A to argue against the motion. Encourage everyone to add at least one comment. If necessary, add comments that help to reveal the characteristics of Debate. Explain that people do not need to say what they personally believe – they have to argue against (or for) the motion and can repeat what they have heard said by others outside the course.





Remember, Members of Team B should be listening, and you can mute them if they try to speak or interrupt the arguments made by their opponents in Team A!

5. Invite Team B to argue for their opposing motion and mute Team A.
6. Now, contrary to normal debating, ask the teams to swap sides – Team A must argue for the motion, and then Team B argues against the motion.

Remember to have fun, and have the co-facilitator track the timing....

THE DEBRIEF

Facilitate a reflection with the participants on their experience, to discover and understand the **structure and dynamic** involved.

Examples of questions to ask:

- What happened?
- What did you notice as the Debate began? In yourself? In others?
- What were you thinking and feeling as you were putting forward your case? And when you were listening to the other side?
- How would you describe the energy levels?
- Where was your attention?
- How did the Debate proceed? Did any comments stand out? Why?
- What happened at the end? Who 'won'?
- What was not said?



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FACILITATION GUIDANCE

LEARNING FROM PAST EXPERIENCES

PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES

Call for memories and stories of the Mode that lead to an understanding of what **outcomes** the Mode enables if done well, and disables if done poorly.

Examples of questions to ask:

- **Where have you seen this happening in your workplace?**
- **What happened? What were the consequences?**
- **If the examples are negative, ask for examples where the outcome was helpful, or vice versa.**
- **What are the strengths of Debate, and its weaknesses?**

YOUR EXPERIENCES

Tell some of your own examples and stories to deepen the understanding of the kind of **engagement and outcomes** enabled or disabled by good or poor usage of this Mode.

Prepare a variety of examples to draw on depending on the mix of people present. If you tell the same stories repeatedly in different courses you will no longer be learning yourself – you will be teaching.





A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP FOR MATURE GROUPS

Before moving to the next Mode, there is the option to take the Mode to a deeper level by proposing a developmental step to deepen the use of that Mode.

Demonstrate doing it as you describe what you are proposing.

When you are having a private, internal Debate and know you are getting opinionated and stuck, try reversing the roles and arguing against what you have been advocating to yourself.

TRANSITION TO THE NEXT MODE

The change to the next Mode should be made as deliberately and promptly as possible so that people 'feel' the shift to a different structure and process.

The Modes do not drift from one into another; they require a deliberate change.



DISCUSSION

This is the Mode where people are batting ideas back and forth – a bit like table tennis, but less structured and with very loose rules. It can be fast and superficial, enjoyable and inconsequential. Discussion is derived from the same root as percussion, and it is a bit like tapping the surface to sense what is underneath. This is an efficient and participatory way of canvassing views and making a prompt call on which way to proceed. You can reach a decision without going into depth, like determining ‘roughly how long before we should meet again?’ It could be ideal for checking the items on an agenda – whereas within each agenda item you would expect to be in a different Mode to go into much more depth. The strength of Discussion is its lightness and speed; the weakness is that it does not achieve alignment or commitment. If Discussion is used to address complicated issues where competing stakeholders have not revealed all their interests and concerns, then the superficial decisions made are liable to unwind as the implications become more evident to everyone.

STRUCTURE: *Loose*

Discussion is undemanding and often dominated by a few people – whilst others may not speak at all or even be that attentive to what is being said. It is often scattered with speakers needing to gather attention, perhaps through gesture or humour. It lasts as long as it lasts, and it is not considered impolite to drop in and out of a Discussion.

DYNAMIC: *Anyone can speak about anything*

Because the structure is so loose, and anyone can introduce what they choose, the direction can and often does change abruptly from one speaker to the next.





ENGAGEMENT: *Temporary and superficial*

OUTCOME: *Non-binding decisions*

The process by which a group of people reach a decision varies in different contexts and situations. When multiple Discussions are used to sound out the position of different participants, this may give a sense of where agreement might be found. The alignment of needs and interests required for methodical decision-making, however, needs a different Mode. Changing the Mode when needed is an important skill.

GOOD USAGE:

Discussion can be highly participatory and inclusive, and it is good for engaging people, reaching a quick but superficial decision, or agreeing what to talk about. It is ideal for social engagement, such as at a barbeque or picnic, and the quips, banter and repartee one hears between colleagues entering or leaving work provide a comfortable sense of being noticed, acknowledged and belonging. Discussion can turn the boredom of waiting into fun.

POOR USAGE:

Like Monologue, Discussion can be overused in work meetings. The superficiality of the Mode can obscure things rather than progressing activities. When the group drops into Discussion, it may appear to have addressed the business at hand, whilst not actually doing so. At the close of the meeting people have different ideas about what was decided, and everyone probably knows that actions agreed in Discussion are unlikely to happen. Although it might have seemed faster, this Mode may require things to be reconsidered and so actually takes longer.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

Discussion is superficial, but it does give a sense of belonging. Try getting marginal individuals engaged by finding a voice you rarely use, to discover things about yourself and them.



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FACILITATION GUIDANCE

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LEARNING FROM DOING

THE EXERCISE FOR DISCUSSION

Have people experience the Mode through some kind of activity, game or exercise such as the one outlined below.

- Ask everyone to remove their masks completely or take off their Zoom background.
- Mute all mics and keep Zoom on gallery view.
- Invite participants to communicate through the Zoom chat function only for the next few minutes. Allow enough time for the dynamics of discussion to reveal themselves, and perhaps add the occasional comment to help if it is not doing so.
- There is no topic.
- Turn on mics to start the debrief.





THE DEBRIEF

Facilitate a reflection with the participants on their experience, to discover and understand the **structure and dynamic** involved.

Examples of questions to ask:

- What happened?
- What was your experience of communicating with the group through chat?
- How much did you read? How much did you comment? Why?
- How many different subjects came up in the chat?
- How many people added comments – did anyone not add a comment to chat? Did it matter? Did anyone message someone else privately?
- Step back from the content – how would you describe the structure and the dynamic of talking and thinking together?



FACILITATION GUIDANCE

LEARNING FROM PAST EXPERIENCES

PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES

Call for memories and stories of the Mode that lead to an understanding of what **outcomes** the Mode enables if done well, and disables if done poorly.

Examples of questions to ask:

- Think about a similar kind of exchange in words, not chat. Where and when does that happen? We call it Discussion.
- Where do you enjoy this Mode? Where do you not enjoy it?
- What does this Mode provide in social situations?
- Is Discussion common in your meetings at work? How does it affect the dynamics and outcomes of these meetings?

YOUR EXPERIENCES

Tell some of your own examples and stories to deepen the understanding of the kind of **engagement and outcomes** enabled or disabled by good or poor usage of this Mode.

Prepare a variety of examples to draw on depending on the mix of people present. If you tell the same stories repeatedly in different courses you will no longer be learning yourself – you will be teaching.





A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP FOR MATURE GROUPS

Before moving to the next Mode, there is the option to take the Mode to a deeper level by proposing a developmental step to deepen the use of that Mode.

Demonstrate doing it as you describe what you are proposing.

Discussion is superficial but it does give a sense of belonging. Try getting marginal individuals in the course engaged by finding a voice you may rarely use to discover things about them, and yourself

TRANSITION TO THE NEXT MODE

The change to the next Mode should be made as deliberately and promptly as possible so that people ‘feel’ the shift to a different structure and process.

The Modes do not drift from one into another; they require a deliberate change.



CONVERSATION

At the mid-point of the seven Modes is Conversation, which is the most versatile of all. The root meaning of the word is to “turn things over together”. In Conversation people turn over their experiences and ideas together. This is an informal, participatory, engaging and undemanding activity than can yield surprising pleasure and outcomes in a short space of time. Because Conversation is naturally flowing and adaptable, it makes it possible for people to bridge differences easily – enabling a young boy to engage with an elderly woman; seniors with juniors; unqualified with professional; manual with intellectual; organisational function with operational line and so on. Conversation is inherently suited to building relationships and sharing personal experiences of what is happening in any situation. For good health everyone should spend at least half an hour a day in Conversation... Before infants can talk, they enjoy Conversation! Should old people become isolated, they can start to die from a lack of Conversation.

STRUCTURE: *Temporary and interpersonal*

How long a Conversation lasts is entirely dependent on the extent of common interest and the energy to continue – it could be an exchange of two sentences or last for half an hour. The fact that it could end at any time gives a curious vitality to the engagement. The participants meet as peers, despite their obvious differences – in fact the greater the differences the more surprising and enjoyable the Conversation can be.

DYNAMICS: *Pursuit of common interests*

The essential dynamic is to find what interests you have in common. Within those common interests, the differences add colour and energy. We may both enjoy football or movies, but the different football teams we support or the movie stars we admire will bring us closer to each other's worlds. First, we find what we have in common – it may present itself in our clothing, demeanour, or whatever – and then we follow the thread of wherever this takes us.





ENGAGEMENT: *Relationship building*

OUTCOME: *Personal connection*

The essential human interaction takes little time and results in a personal sense of closeness. It involves recognition, a sense of shared direction, and evokes interest in participating in a common endeavour.

GOOD USAGE:

Conversation is not only an important social skill – it is also a strong asset in the workplace. Leaders can develop a rapport with any of their staff through an appropriate short Conversation. Colleagues can understand one another beyond their business roles. Through Conversation we understand the victories people are celebrating and the losses they are suffering without making an imposition of any kind.

POOR USAGE:

Conversation can be used to avoid facing the issue at hand. You may go to see your boss to request a decision, have a great Conversation about each of your weekends, but leave no closer to the decision you sought, because you were in the wrong Mode. Conversation is essentially reciprocal. If one withholds whilst enquiring of the other, this can become prying to tease out information. That is against the spirit of Conversation and can cause lasting damage.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

Try starting the Conversations you habitually avoid because you doubt that you have anything in common with the other person. Genuinely ask the beggar how he is, the rude official if she is OK, or ask to see the manager to compliment rather than to complain.



FACILITATION GUIDANCE

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LEARNING FROM DOING

THE EXERCISE FOR CONVERSATION

Have people experience the Mode through some kind of activity, game or exercise such as the one outlined below.

- Propose a competition in groups of three to find out the most unusual thing they have in common.
- Create random groups of three in breakout rooms. (If the number is not divisible by three have some pairs not fours)
- Give five minutes to find their best answer.
- Back together in gallery view, hear the answer from each group and give them a score. One facilitator asks for the answers and the other is the score-master. Have fun with people and make the scoring obviously not serious to ensure the competitiveness is secondary to the learning. The winners are the group with the most unusual answer!





THE DEBRIEF

Facilitate a reflection with the participants on their experience, to discover and understand the **structure and dynamic** involved.

Examples of questions to ask:

- What was your experience of that game?
- How did you go about finding what you have in common?
- Who were you interested in? Whose thoughts were you following?
- What else did you discover about each other?
- How did that exercise differ from the other activities we have done?



FACILITATION GUIDANCE

LEARNING FROM PAST EXPERIENCES

PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES

Call for memories and stories of the Mode that lead to an understanding of what **outcomes** the Mode enables if done well, and disables if done poorly.

Examples of questions to ask:

- **With whom do you find you have most Conversations? Socially? At work?**
- **What impact does that have? On you and on the other person?**
- **Have you worked in a team where there was little Conversation? How would you describe that team?**
- **Do you experience gossip at work?**
- **Is there anyone near you at work you have never had a Conversation with?**
- **What experience have you had of Conversations with strangers?**

YOUR EXPERIENCES

Tell some of your own examples and stories to deepen the understanding of the kind of **engagement and outcomes** enabled or disabled by good or poor usage of this Mode.

Prepare a variety of examples to draw on depending on the mix of people present. If you tell the same stories repeatedly in different courses you will no longer be learning yourself – you will be teaching.





A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP FOR MATURE GROUPS

Before moving to the next Mode, there is the option to take the Mode to a deeper level by proposing a developmental step to deepen the use of that Mode.

Demonstrate doing it as you describe what you are proposing.

Try starting the Conversations you habitually avoid because you doubt that you have anything in common with the other person. Genuinely ask the beggar how he is, the rude official if she is OK, or ask to see the manager to compliment rather than complain.

TRANSITION TO THE NEXT MODE

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SKILLFUL CONVERSATION

Skillful Conversation has a more defined structure than the free-flowing Mode of Conversation. In Conversation you give your thoughts about whatever comes up and try to say them in a way that makes sense to others. With Skillful Conversation there is a significant addition – you reveal and explore why you hold the views you hold. There is a rigour to recalling what you have seen, read, heard and been told – and what assumptions you made about the situation and the context. This tests your logic and reasoning, and the implications of what you believe. It pushes on the framework underlying your past and future decisions. So, this is an essential Mode for clarity in sense-making and decision-making. You may notice how much you appreciate colleagues who are good at Skillful Conversation, and able to draw you and others into this structured Mode. This is an essential Mode for working meetings. It does depend on who is involved, and it does have strong analytic and reflective features that can be overplayed to avoid reaching a tough decision.

STRUCTURE: *Rigorous enquiry*

It takes time to focus attention on the situation under consideration, and to understand how views and opinions have been formed and sustained. Stopping before some kind of resolution has been formulated would feel unsatisfactory.

DYNAMIC: *Support and challenge*

The reliability of the information you have seen and heard, the assumptions inevitably made, your logic and reasoning, the certainty of your views and opinions, and the implications of holding such a disposition are amongst the features to be tested through support and challenge. Ideally these are suspended (held openly) rather than defended.





ENGAGEMENT: *Intensive*

OUTCOME: *In-depth understanding*

Skillful Conversation lays the ground for effective decision-making for individuals or set groupings. It helps to reveal how the situation has come about, the essential factors to address, pursue or mitigate – and the potential benefits, risks and consequences.

GOOD USAGE:

Talking with others to reveal what is behind your words and actions, and to discover the inherent assumptions and implications, helps everyone to reach a better understanding of the situation and what to do. Thinking on one's own can result in circular thinking. It takes the rigour of Skillful Conversation to break these repetitive loops – by noticing and testing the thoughts involved.

POOR USAGE:

Beware of avoiding decisions by prolonging the Skillful Conversation. Also, because of the analytic nature of Skillful Conversation, one may be distracted from potential new possibilities, which may be better found in a more generative Mode like Dialogue.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

Whilst engaging in Skillful Conversation, try assuming there is a good reason for things working out the way they are. Suppose that Life is trying to teach you something. What is the potential learning here? For example, a conflict is an opportunity in disguise – the question is, what opportunity?



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LEARNING FROM DOING

THE EXERCISE FOR SKILLFUL CONVERSATION

Have people experience the Mode through some kind of activity, game or exercise such as the one outlined below.

Here is a rare opportunity to talk and think about something that is in the back of your mind, and you know needs some thoughtful attention. It might require a decision of some kind, and it could be in your work, social or personal life. Here is an opportunity to give the matter your attention, with the support of colleagues who will listen, and might ask a question, but will not coach you. The aim is for you to explore your own thinking and feelings, not to be given advice. The content is confidential to your small group.

Create breakout rooms with the same groups they were in for the Conversation exercise.

Take a 10 mins turn each (total 30 minutes)





THE DEBRIEF

Facilitate a reflection with the participants on their experience, to discover and understand the **structure and dynamic** involved.

Examples of questions to ask:

- What was your experience taking the time to consider what was concerning you?
- And your experience listening to others?
- How was this Skillful Conversation exercise different from the previous exercise on Conversation?
- How was the dynamic and the structure of the Mode different?



FACILITATION GUIDANCE

LEARNING FROM PAST EXPERIENCES

PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES

Call for memories and stories of the Mode that lead to an understanding of what **outcomes** the Mode enables if done well, and disables if done poorly.

Examples of questions to ask:

- **What leads us to delay considering some issues? (Possibly time, timing, avoidance...)**
- **What quality of Conversation is needed?**
- **What difference has a good Skillful Conversation made to you?**

YOUR EXPERIENCES

Tell some of your own examples and stories to deepen the understanding of the kind of **engagement and outcomes** enabled or disabled by good or poor usage of this Mode.

Prepare a variety of examples to draw on depending on the mix of people present. If you tell the same stories repeatedly in different courses you will no longer be learning yourself – you will be teaching.





A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP FOR MATURE GROUPS

Before moving to the next Mode, there is the option to take the Mode to a deeper level by proposing a developmental step to deepen the use of that Mode.

Demonstrate doing it as you describe what you are proposing.

Whilst engaging in Skillful Conversation, try assuming there is a good reason for things working out the way they are. Suppose that life is trying to teach you something. What is the potential learning here? For example, a conflict is an opportunity in disguise – the question is, what opportunity?

TRANSITION TO THE NEXT MODE

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DIALOGUE

The two Modes of Dialogue, described in the next two sections, are quite different from the other Modes. Rather than being a means for the individual to hold sway (as in a Monologue) or for one group to win (as in Debate), the aim here is for everyone to benefit. The essential nature of the activity is inclusion. We want to include the views and experiences of others in a way that creates a common understanding. The root meaning is drawn from logos, which is the word or 'meaning', and dia which means 'through', as a diameter is a line through the centre of a circle. Dialogue seeks to find a common meaning through and amongst a group of people. Participants work with each other, contributing to the Conversation rather than giving the answer, so that what emerges is created and owned by everyone involved. It soon becomes apparent that a particular set of skills is required, or people will revert to other Modes. People need to listen, rather than dismissing other's views out of hand, to be genuine without being certain they are right, and to respect each other's intentions. This leads to a common sense of identity and purposeful stewardship of the individual and collective worlds. Dialogue is a significantly under-used Mode. Most cultures have a history of social Dialogue with forums like the English town moot hall, the South African indaba and the State Senate, but they have largely devolved into arenas for negotiation or Debate.

STRUCTURE: *Common topic – Each speaks to all*

There is no dominant seat in the Dialogue, and everyone needs to be able to see and hear everyone else (unlike Monologue, where everyone needs to see only one person, namely the speaker) so a circle of chairs is ideal. The topic, theme or concern of the Dialogue guides the direction as different perspectives are revealed.

DYNAMIC: *Understanding not persuading – Incorporating all voices*

This is a highly participative Mode. People concentrate on everything that is being said and how it is changing the understanding in the room and in themselves. They attend to the overall movement or flow of meaning. As they speak they address the whole group rather than speaking to individuals interpersonally.

Acknowledgement: P Garrett, J Ball





ENGAGEMENT: *Inclusive and transparent*

OUTCOME: *Common understanding*

This is an ideal Mode for cultivating a common understanding and a common sense amongst multiple stakeholders. People transparently suspend their views for common enquiry. A sustained Dialogue creates genuine alignment and lays the ground for collective decision-making.

GOOD USAGE:

The spirit of Dialogue is to work with people, not to do things to or for them. The intention is to understand rather than to convince, enabling an idea or proposal to be worked on together, with everyone's contribution being incorporated into the developing thinking. This results in collectively owned outcomes, without selling answers to get 'buy-in'. The involvement or representation of everyone affected by the consideration is needed as a sound basis for sustainable decisions.

POOR USAGE:

By nature, Dialogue is open and transparent. The antithesis is a covert and exclusive consideration led by strong personal agendas. One can misuse Dialogue by deliberately or inadvertently leaving out key individuals and sub-groupings who are affected by the topic under consideration. Also, it may appear to take longer to use Dialogue than to tell people what to do, although thinking together at the outset is invariably more efficient in the long run.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP:

Within and without? Try listening to words spoken by others as if they were being said by you yourself. Find the part of yourself that would say what is being said if it could, and consider how you may be including or excluding that part of yourself.



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LEARNING FROM DOING

THE EXERCISE FOR DIALOGUE

Have people experience the Mode through some kind of activity, game or exercise such as the one outlined below.

- Ask everyone to prepare their Zoom settings:
 1. Gallery view
 2. Remove any virtual backgrounds
- And their Personal settings:

We want everyone to see all the differences that are contributing to the richness of the Dialogue. Deliberately watch all of the other participants during the Dialogue, not only the speaker. That way it is more obvious when it is your time to speak.
- Propose a topic of common interest and concern that is unresolved in this particular grouping.
- Explain that you will call the Dialogue to a close by letting people know when there will be just two more speakers before we stop.
- The facilitators should avoid speaking during the first 10 minutes. When you speak, describe your experience to make it easier for others to do so (do not give the authoritative answer). Any facilitation should be to help others to speak in the Dialogue.





THE DEBRIEF

Facilitate a reflection with the participants on their experience, to discover and understand the **structure and dynamic** involved.

Examples of questions to ask people to consider in trios in breakout rooms:

- What was your experience of talking together (for the first time) as a whole group?
- Were you able to follow what was happening in the whole group as well as your own experience?
- When did you think it felt most dialogic?
- How did the energy and understanding change during the Dialogue? In the room and for you personally?

With the whole group:

- Hear some comments (not report back)
- Ask how well the group included or excluded different contributions during the Dialogue.
- Demonstrate yourself how to incorporate what is said in a generative way for the developmental experience of the participants.



FACILITATION GUIDANCE

LEARNING FROM PAST EXPERIENCES

PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES

Call for memories and stories of the Mode that lead to an understanding of what **outcomes** the Mode enables if done well, and disables if done poorly.

Examples of questions to ask:

- What experience do you have of a large group of people talking and thinking successfully together? And of a range of perspectives being included about a topic?
- What difference does it make to decision-making?
- How is this different from answering a questionnaire or participating in a focus group?

YOUR EXPERIENCES

Tell some of your own examples and stories to deepen the understanding of the kind of **engagement and outcomes** enabled or disabled by good or poor usage of this Mode.

Prepare a variety of examples to draw on depending on the mix of people present. If you tell the same stories repeatedly in different courses you will no longer be learning yourself – you will be teaching.





A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP FOR MATURE GROUPS

Before moving to the next Mode, there is the option to take the Mode to a deeper level by proposing a developmental step to deepen the use of that Mode.

Demonstrate doing it as you describe what you are proposing.

Within and without? Try listening to words spoken by others as if they were being said by you yourself. Find the part of yourself that would say what is being said if it could, and consider how you include that part of yourself.

TRANSITION TO THE NEXT MODE

The change to the next Mode should be made as deliberately and promptly as possible so that people 'feel' the shift to a different structure and process.

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GENERATIVE DIALOGUE

Dialogue has a topic to address within a specific situation. Generative Dialogue, on the other hand, has far greater reach and can also address the context that surrounds the situation. This is a step back from the existing patterns of relationships, into the ground out of which those relationships arise. So, this is the emergent Mode, for generating the kind of environment that enables whatever needs to take form to do so. It requires collective presence (being fully present) and attention to the potential opportunity inherent in the moment. To the degree that people free themselves from their personal and collective agendas (their wants and ambitions), they can enter a different space. In these uncharted waters, are simple but highly innovative solutions that were previously elusive, and the essential spirit of fellowship, citizenship and communion. This Mode can shift paradigms.

STRUCTURE: *Emergent – Containing, not constraining*

Generative Dialogue is the least structured of the Modes, enabling the potential in the moment to emerge in its own unique way on each occasion. It requires greater personal discipline and largeness of character to participate in a Generative Dialogue, without pre-defined boundaries or an agenda, than it does to operate in a rule-bound space. Releasing the rules (not complying or fighting against them) requires a live awareness of what is happening as it happens – and that facilitation itself be released before it becomes a constraint.

DYNAMIC: *Unfolding and enfolding*

One might wonder what one would talk about if there is no pre-set topic or agenda. With Generative Dialogue you make a start and find out. An agenda may emerge and change as feels right, and it is only at the end that one could really say what the agenda was. As you reveal your emerging awareness, and enfold what you hear from others, a current or direction emerges that takes the Generative Dialogue wider and deeper at the same time. The relationship between the immediate process and the general nature of what is happening in society becomes evident in surprising and significant ways.





ENGAGEMENT: *Generative*

OUTCOME: *Collective potential*

People discover that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, and something special emerges when you think together without constraints. Generative Dialogue lays the ground for contextual change, without which the essential dynamics repeat themselves.

GOOD USAGE:

We long to have a profound and fundamental experience of our world and our purpose in it. Here is an opportunity to acknowledge the human condition of which we are a part, and to move beyond that personally and collectively into the generative experience of life that enables common stewardship of the world. A Generative Dialogue with one's closest friends and colleagues is the most obvious way to creatively shift the ground of one's life and work. If only more people understood that!

POOR USAGE:

All versions of poor use are based on the promotion of self-interest rather than the well-being of the whole. The enriching experience of the Generative Dialogue is received by those who trust and accept the power of the generative process itself.

A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP...

The practice of Being an Acorn: The acorn does not become the oak tree – it is the soil and moisture, passing through that tiny acorn, that are genetically informed to become the mighty oak. So, let go of your ambitions to be impressive to others. Rather, attend to the more modest work of informing whatever passes through your consciousness, in a generative way, so that it can grow into whatever is needed in the world.



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LEARNING FROM DOING

THE EXERCISE FOR GENERATIVE DIALOGUE

Have people experience the Mode through some kind of activity, game or exercise such as the one outlined below.

- Ask everyone to prepare their Zoom settings:
 1. Gallery view
 2. Self-view off
 3. Choose green virtual background
- And their Personal settings:

Ask people what difference it makes when we have a common green virtual background. We are less interested in people's individual situations and the wants and needs they represent, and more interested to discover the common context that is defining our experiences.
- Rather than setting a topic (as we did for the Dialogue) ask the group to explore and discover together the most generative consideration we might have. Say that this is a unique grouping (give an example or two explaining how you see this grouping is unique) and ask – what is our potential? What is the opportunity here today?
- Explain it might take a while for this to emerge as we talk and think together and that is part of the process of Generative Dialogue.
- Start by having a couple of minutes silence for us to journal our initial thoughts. Simply write what comes to mind. What lies beneath what you write will probably come up in the Generative Dialogue.





- Tell people that you will be participating like everyone else, and therefore we all need to be sensitive to who needs to speak when.
- Explain that you will, however, call the Generative Dialogue to a close by letting people know when there will be just two more speakers before we stop.

THE DEBRIEF

Facilitate a reflection with the participants on their experience, to discover and understand the **structure and dynamic** involved.

Pairs in breakout rooms: Describe your experience of the Generative Dialogue to your partner.

With the whole group:

- What was the storyline you heard unfolding in the room?
- How do you feel different as a result of the Generative Dialogue?
- What has been enfolded in you as a result of the experience?
- What did you realise?



FACILITATION GUIDANCE

LEARNING FROM PAST EXPERIENCES

PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES

Call for memories and stories of the Mode that lead to an understanding of what **outcomes** the Mode enables if done well, and disables if done poorly.

Examples of questions to ask:

- What experiences have you had in other contexts that are most like your understanding of Generative Dialogue? What difference did they make to you?
- What is the quality of space needed for new understanding to emerge in your experience?
- Meeting others in Generative Dialogue is different from meeting in Debate or Skillful Conversation. What stuck situations can you think of in the world, and in your community, that might shift if people knew how to meet in Generative Dialogue?

YOUR EXPERIENCES

Tell some of your own examples and stories to deepen the understanding of the kind of **engagement and outcomes** enabled or disabled by good or poor usage of this Mode.

Prepare a variety of examples to draw on depending on the mix of people present. If you tell the same stories repeatedly in different courses you will no longer be learning yourself – you will be teaching.





A DEVELOPMENTAL STEP FOR MATURE GROUPS

There is the option to take the Mode to a deeper level by proposing a developmental step to deepen the use of that Mode.

Demonstrate doing it as you describe what you are proposing.

The practice of being an acorn: The acorn does not become the oak tree – it is the soil and moisture, passing through that tiny acorn, that are genetically informed to become the mighty oak. So, let go of your ambitions to be impressive to others. Rather, attend to the more modest work of informing whatever passes through your consciousness in a generative way, so that it can grow into whatever is needed in the world.

TRANSITION TO PART FOUR AND THE REVIEW

Tell people how to find the Participant Field Guide and how to print it, and that we will be using this after the break to review the seven Modes and their relevance to work and social situations. Let people know that it is restricted to people who have participated in the course, hence the tick box requirement.



FACILITATION GUIDANCE

REVIEW OF THE MODES

Share the screen showing the Participant Field Guide so everyone can follow the review.

Spotlight the two facilitators, so only they are visible alongside the image.

Start with the cover of the Participant Field Guide and explain what is in it. Show the Graphic of the seven Modes to remind people of the sequence, and why it is important to understand the Modes. Explain that we will review the Modes in three steps.

1. Monologue, Debate and Discussion:

In random trio break-out rooms people each take a turn to do a Monologue. The first does a Monologue about Monologue, the second does a Monologue about Debate, and the third does a Monologue about Discussion. Try to describe the Mode, and its structure, dynamic, good and poor usage, etc.

Back in the whole group have a Skillful Conversation about how these Modes are used/over-used/under-used in your workplace or community. What are the consequences and what could be changed?

2. Conversation and Skillful Conversation:

In different trios, have a Skillful Conversation about the difference between Conversation and Skillful Conversation. Try to describe both Modes, and their structure, dynamic, good and poor usage, etc.

Back in the whole group have a Skillful Conversation about how you personally use Conversation and Skillful Conversation at work. What are the consequences and what could be changed?



3. Dialogue and Generative Dialogue:

Stay in the whole group (no break-outs) use the Mode of Dialogue to explore where and when Dialogue and Generative Dialogue are used at your workplace. Where could they be introduced to the benefit of all involved?

WHAT NEXT?

Describe the further Academy of Professional Dialogue courses that are available for those who have completed this introductory A Taste of Dialogue. The next obvious ones are the one-day (or two half-days) Why Dialogue? and the three day (or six half-days) Professional Dialogue Skills.

THE CHECK-OUT

Congratulate people on their completion of the introductory A Taste of Dialogue course, and tell them that they will receive a numbered Certificate of Completion from the Academy. For the closing Check-out, explain this will be recorded for Academy Members to keep track of the expanding numbers of people becoming involved in Professional Dialogue, and it is a course requirement for the Facilitators to confirm your participation to the Academy.

The Check-out question: Whatever will help participants to express themselves and notice the value of the course for them personally and professionally. Perhaps:

- Now that you have had a taste of Dialogue, what are you thinking?
- What did you appreciate most about today's course?
- What have you discovered today?

Tell people that if they want to talk further with participants or the Faculty, then they should move across to the Lounge. Otherwise, goodbye, good luck and we look forward to working with you again!



ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE CERTIFIED COURSES

On completion of Dialogic Enagagement you will be issued with a Certificate of Participation by the Academy of Professional Dialogue. A sequenced programme of further courses is available from the Academy to enable you to develop the professional skills and understanding that will be of value to you in any organisational or social setting. For details, please check the Academy's website: aofpd.org. Participation in these courses will benefit those who apply to become an accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner, thereby being authorised to deliver the Academy's educational courses.





DIALOGUE PUBLICATIONS

Dialogue Publications was founded in 2017 to make Professional Dialogue materials available internationally. The editors release an annual publication entitled *The World Needs Dialogue!* (hardback and e-book), covering the Working Papers considered by Members at the Academy's annual conference. Other publications include books authored by Academy Members, as well as supporting materials for all educational programmes and courses accredited by the Academy.





THE ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE

The Academy is an educational non-profit charity that promotes and inspires the international use of Professional Dialogue for the benefit of society. The primary aims are to inform people about the practice of Professional Dialogue in organisational and social settings, to acknowledge the work done by skilled Dialogue Practitioners around the world, to provide professional affiliation and to develop the field of Dialogue into a profession.



REFLECTIONS ON THE INNER MODES OF TALKING AND THINKING TOGETHER

During the First Generation Programme sessions last week we considered the Modes of Talking and Thinking Together. I thought you might be interested to consider my own developmental reflections regarding the Modes as I deepen my own Professional Dialogue practice.

Peter Garrett: 15th Feb'21

The *Dialogue-in-the-Room* we have been considering together is deliberately positioned within the context of Professional Dialogue *Intervention* and *Systemic* work. At a systemic level, Jane and I have talked about the value we attribute to establishing a common language across an organisation or community, from top to bottom hierarchically, and across various sectors and geographies. A common language makes it easier to understand each other, and to emphasise this point Jane and I have used the same format to introduce Professional Dialogue for everyone, wherever they may be in an organisation. A language provides a common way of describing what we and others can see and experience. If we look more closely, we will see it is more than that. It is also a way of finding inner forms and impulses that are analogous to the ones we see externally. This is particularly important in Dialogue where we are looking to become more conversant with the way that what unfolds externally around us also does so within us (depending on our awareness), and what is unfolding within us takes form externally (depending on our participation) as one continuous process.

The Modes are an interesting example. So far, we have been looking at the Modes of Talking and Thinking Together as an external form, noting the structure and dynamic of each. The external structure of monologue, to take the first one, is that *one person holds the floor*, and the dynamic is that *everyone else hears what that one person has to say*. We also referred to the roots of monologue in oral history where the collective story is told and retold over generations to sustain the collective identity. (This role is a proud precursor to the current technical search for what we want to know on Google). This external Mode of Monologue has an internal manifestation, in the form of an internal voice. That internal voice has the same structure and dynamic. You may recognise it as the voice that wants to tell the story of what has happened. Sometimes this takes the form of the definitive and certain 'tape recording' that has been repeated many times internally. At other times, it is the desire to recount what has happened for a first time, to become more aware of what occurred. When something confusing or disturbing has occurred, it is the voice that tries to make sense of what happened and tries to pull it all together into a meaningful story. If it cannot do so, it can run through the same sequence again and again to try to get a coherent resolution. Revealing this inner process in words is what, working with David Bohm, we called 'suspension'. Practiced together with others, it can help to establish a common meaning amongst a group of people, which is the aim of Dialogue.

Curiously, some people have an extremely limited awareness of this internal voice. They may not become aware of what was going on in their thoughts until they have said it aloud in words. Although it may not be a complex idea or reflection, they have to say it to find out what it is. This takes time, as speech is slower than thought, and sometimes they are as surprised as everyone else by what they themselves say and what it reveals of their thinking. Without saying it they can



become increasingly frustrated and confused because they want to participate but are unable to do so unless they speak. Others can participate whilst listening, and enfolding what is being said by others until they can contribute. A highly proprioceptive person knows what is occurring internally and can track several different internal voices at the same time. They too may discover things as they express their thoughts and emotions, but this is more about how the meaning changes as it is heard and accepted or rejected by others.

Rather than being a free form, each internal voice is rooted in an internal identity or sub-identity. This is more than a personality or trait. The identity is a kind of fusion or amalgamation of various past thoughts and emotions and is essentially memory-based. The voice will be triggered by a stimulation to that internal identity, particularly when threatened, or acknowledged. Then, as a largely automatic response or reaction, the voice arises from the inner identity into external expression. Of course, there are many different voices that are each rooted in different identities, or sub-identities. The Modes are a framework that provides a spectrum of seven such voices arising from seven different internal identities. We are outlining the structure and dynamic of each to help to recognise that Mode externally, and this can help us to recognise the corresponding inner voice. Debate has the structure of *us and them*, and the dynamic of *trying to win by beating down*. There were situations in the past where it mattered that I was right and where I had to prove I was right. Those who claimed I was wrong had to be proven wrong, and those who supported my thinking reinforced that I was right. This complex of memory-based thought and feeling wrapped into an identity is a self-sustaining one and easily triggered. Do you recognise the internal voice that wants to prove *I am right and you are wrong*, and also wants to win by beating you down?

We proposed that the introduction of each external Mode starts with an experience together through an exercise, game or activity. Then as we all describe our memories and experiences of that Mode (Monologue, Debate, Discussion and so on), we begin to establish a common meaning for the words we are using. It is important that the attributed meaning is primarily rooted in experience that ties back to the inner voice, rather than to abstract dictionary definitions. The primary intention of understanding the different Modes is to determine which one is most useful in any situation, and to change to another Mode if that would be more helpful given what we are trying to do. Then we go on to consider how to use the Mode skillfully, and the disadvantages of misusing the Mode. As we do so, we are opening the possibility of building an inner recognition of the voices and identities we hold. Previously these may simply have been automatic responses and reactions, and now we are starting to make a choice possible. Do I have to prove that my view is right and that you are wrong, or would it help to choose a different Mode? Do I have to beat down your voice by using my own stronger one? Do I have to feel unheard or disrespected if I the direction does not change in the way I wanted, or could a different voice be more helpful? The exploration of the Modes internally starts to give me a choice about which of my voices to use.

As we considered, much can be learned from Discussion, but it is very loose in structure. A group in Discussion is a group still finding its direction or focus. It is not unlike shopping. One might look at a garment in a shop to take in its style and feel the fabric for the quality compared to its price - then walk over to a different part of the shop to give equally serious attention to a piece of clothing that is quite different. It may begin with browsing and become quite thoughtful perhaps leading to a purchase, but the purchase itself is a different Mode altogether. David and Saral Bohm described something similar to me after they returned from North America where they had attended a native



American Indian equivalent of a Dialogue. Before people sat down in the circle they had something akin to a cocktail party where people milled around in Discussion with one another. They were sounding out with each other what topic was of general interest and concern for their Dialogue. Once this was clear, they sat down and deliberately changed Mode. The inner voice here is one that is lively and attentive, versatile and interested, but not necessarily yet fixed or committed to any particular outcome.

Conversation is the first Mode in the sequence where an interest in other people is necessary. This Mode involves an equal engagement between me and the other as we turn things over together. I cannot be entirely self-centred and engage in a conversation. The conversation involves discovery. We cannot find what we have in common, which is the starting point of a conversation, if I reveal nothing of myself and simply ask you questions. So this is not the discovery of an interview, which is one-sided, but learning through an engaged enquiry within and between both of us, where I find pleasure in giving as well as receiving. This can be hugely nourishing to all involved. It is the inner voice of undemanding curiosity. Do you know that place within yourself? Skillful Conversation goes deeper and implies a potential change which is not inherent in conversation. It is a more rigorous exploration into how the views and feelings that you and I hold have been formed, their relevance in the current situation and their implications for the future. It is reflective in nature, requiring stepping back. This external consideration hones the very skills required for choosing which of my competing inner voices may be most helpful in the moment - and how to understand and manage the support and challenge to the underlying identities of other voices.

So, what about Dialogue? In some ways Dialogue is a social conversation rather than a personal one. In external form it therefore requires numbers of people. We can talk and think together dialogically in a small grouping, but for a Dialogue we need to get beyond the personal and that is more easily experienced in the larger grouping. To engage in Dialogue, I give my attention and interest to the whole group as well as to what is occurring within me. It is an opportunity to recognise the relationship between what is happening in the room, and what is happening in me. I can start to see it is one living system. The Dialogue provides a pronounced opportunity to do this as participants are invited to reveal what they are thinking and feeling, which may otherwise be held privately. With the participation of others I can now start to trace the inner and outer paths of activity. I can experience how what is said prompts me to say or think something. Looking closer I can see the reactive and responsive compulsions in the underlying identities that prompted a particular voice. And as I become more conversant with that, it becomes apparent I have choice. Just as externally I may see that a debate may be less helpful to us than a discussion, so internally I can notice the different voices I have and choose which would be most helpful to everyone, not just to me. I am not just automatically saying what I feel and what comes into my head. This is the emergence of thinking. Thinking is active in the moment whereas thought, or memory of past thinking, is reactive, automatic and fast.

So typically, we start with automatic actions and reactions as we attempt to Dialogue together. It was David Bohm's view that most of what people consider to be authentic expression is simply unmediated reaction to the situation they are in, and that what people think of as their freedom of expression is anything but that. That is why we began the deeper enquiry we had. To the degree we can start to *suspend* what we can see of the inner and outer processes, they become more evident to ourselves and others. In a fragmented mentality we may have thought that we were largely



independent of others. As we and others start to reveal what is happening by putting the immediate experience into words, we start to realise the systemic nature of the situation and our common context. We may try using a particular voice, or not using it to understand its make-up. Tracing this inner and outer movement is what, working with David Bohm, we called being *proprioceptive* of the movements in consciousness. This means being aware of them as they happen, rather than reflecting on them after the event.

Dialogue, then, has an outer structure and process, and an inner one too. We are interested in establishing a genuine (rather than an enforced) common meaning around the topic under consideration, so we need to understand and include others' experiences in a meaningful way. It is important that this makes coherent sense to all of us, so we are addressing everyone in the room when we speak, and we are interested to hear everyone else's experience. Exchanging chat messages during a Dialogue would be quite contradictory to the intended dynamic. As would looking up the meaning of a word or phrase on Google. It would undermine the common meaning and understanding we are seeking to establish. Not knowing and finding out with everyone is how we find a common understanding. To succeed we will have to reveal some of our inner workings and be willing to listen to the experience of others in the form of their different voices. We discover that trying to persuade others to agree with us will hide part of their voices. Persuasion is one of our voices that may appear when we operate on automatic, so we start to learn how to slow down and choose the voice that would be more helpful to create a genuine common understanding and meaning.

You might think this sounds much the same as Skillful Conversation, but it is significantly different. Let me remind you of the example I described from a prison Dialogue. It involved a group of perhaps 15 prisoners, 3 uniformed security staff and half a dozen non-uniformed staff and volunteers from outside the prison. A loud and forceful expression by one prisoner was managed in an even more authoritative requirement by one of the security staff. Everyone in the room saw the same incident and considered it to be proof of what they already knew and believed. The prisoners saw a bullying and repressive security officer shut down their fellow prisoner to prevent him from expressing his legitimate views. The officers and many of the other staff present, on the other hand, saw a responsible security officer doing a necessary and good job by preventing a prisoner's bad behaviour getting out of hand. Of course, they were both right!

A Skillful Conversation may have successfully determined how such incidents would be better managed in the future. It could have agreed ground rules that all would accept and respect. A Dialogue, on the other hand, requires much more. It leads to a deeper understanding of the experiences and choices available to each involved. The officer was not only bound by certain role responsibilities, but as an individual woman she had ideas about what was appropriate and fears about what would happen if things got out of hand. The Prisoner was not only one of many held in that secure building, but he was an individual man with strained family responsibilities that he was unable to fulfil because of the constraints of his imprisonment. The trigger was a comment made in the Dialogue, but the intense pressure was caused by something outside the room – he had heard that his daughter had taken up prostitution to pay the family bills.

Although the prisoner and the officer were the principal speakers (or shouters), everyone else in the room also participated - by the way they thought and felt at the time, and how they subsequently



spoke and acted. The incident could have been made into a recorded chargeable offence, or into a non-incident, depending on everyone involved and how they participated. Here was a fine opportunity to see a dynamic in the system at play. Not only a dynamic at play on that particular morning, but a typical dynamic in the system that played in a similar automatic way around the prison every day. We had a chance to become conscious of the identities held behind people's roles, and the voices automatically prompted when those identities were challenged. Suspending the experiences and describing them to make them available to each other, and recognising the repetitive pattern, began to defuse its power. Understanding each other led to a different relationship between the groupings involved (staff members and prisoners), not just a commitment to comply with a set pattern of behaviour. The inner voices and identities were being addressed, rather than just the external ones. As you may imagine, this ongoing weekly prison Dialogue impacted the culture in the prison over the nine years it ran.

Dialogue has a topic. In this case, the topic had become the use of discretion in an institution with strongly defined codes of behaviour held in place by pre-determined penalties. The Dialogue was changing the relationships within the situation. In a similar way Dialogue can change the relationships between participants in any complex and fragmented multi-stakeholder situation. Changing the relationships in a situation does not, however, change the context. The prison is still a prison after the Dialogue, although perhaps a somewhat better one than it was before the Dialogue. It is, however, still an institution with uniformed staff and incarcerated prisoners. So how does one change the context?

Generative Dialogue goes a step further. Here we are interested in letting go of the implied agenda rather than endeavouring to further it. It is not easy to recognise our context and the implicit intentions that we all hold. They are inherently embedded in any topic, so we start without one. If a topic does arise we hold it lightly. It sits somewhere between the specific moment and the general human condition. Staying with the criminal justice sector, several men that Jane and I worked with over many years realised, through the simple act of sitting in a Dialogue that this way of working could transform the way they conceived of Corrections. Steve Holland, an English prison Governor, relaxed the dominant ethos of the isolation and segregation of prisoners, with responsible engagement and purposeful activity. Harold Clarke, a US Director of Corrections, replaced the ethos of a command-and-control culture with a healing environment. They were changes in the contextual perception, that in turn led to changes of relationships in different situations.

The external Mode was Generative Dialogue. And the internal Mode? It is similarly generative and involves following the qualitative line of enquiry that is emerging in the room without trying to influence its outcome, even though it may run contrary to some of one's treasured identities. This has consequences. A good friend of mine who grew hugely through participating in Generative Dialogues, caught sight of this and called it more dangerous than bungee jumping! Of course, bungee jumping seems more dangerous than it really is. Following the line of enquiry that threatens one's way of working or one's investments in proud achievements also seems dangerous. But as you hear so often a year or two later from someone who unwillingly lost their job – it was the best thing that ever happened to me! So, who or what guides this seemingly radical enquiry in the Generative Dialogue? Some might frame it spiritually as the 'true self', others as the intrinsic inter-relationship of all living things. These both imply a deeper assurance that lies beyond memory-bound identities. I know that I set my bearings based on my best sense of the potential in the opportunities that

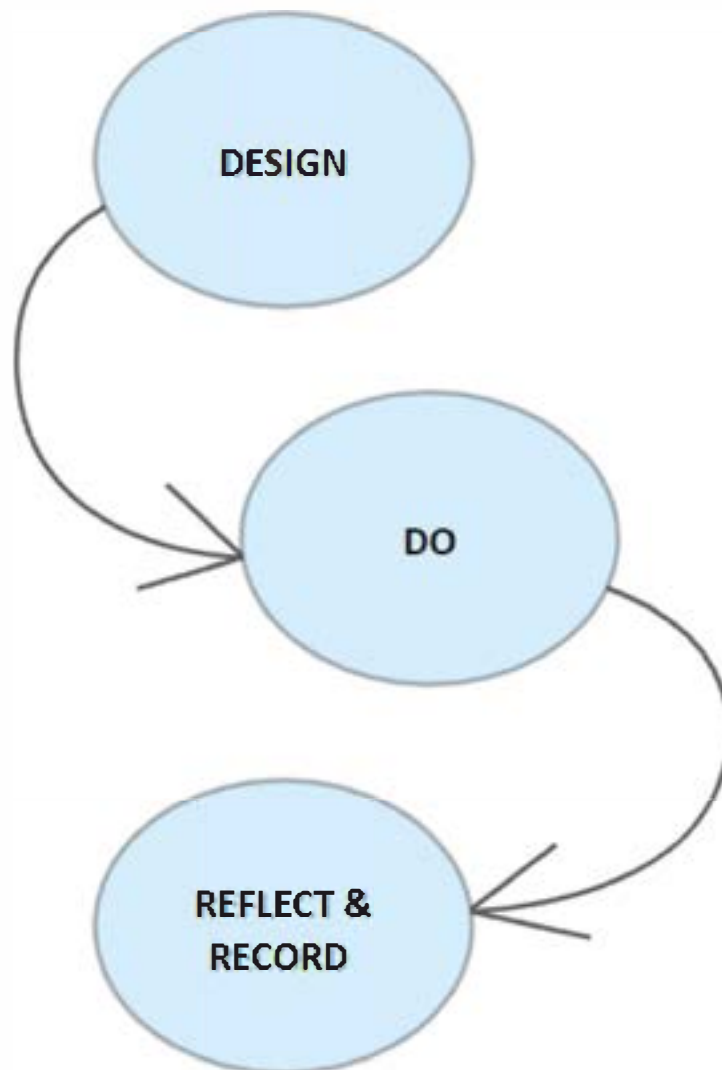


present themselves, and that this requires a rigour of attention and a precision of timing in now I participate. Those have remained the constant in my changing life and work.

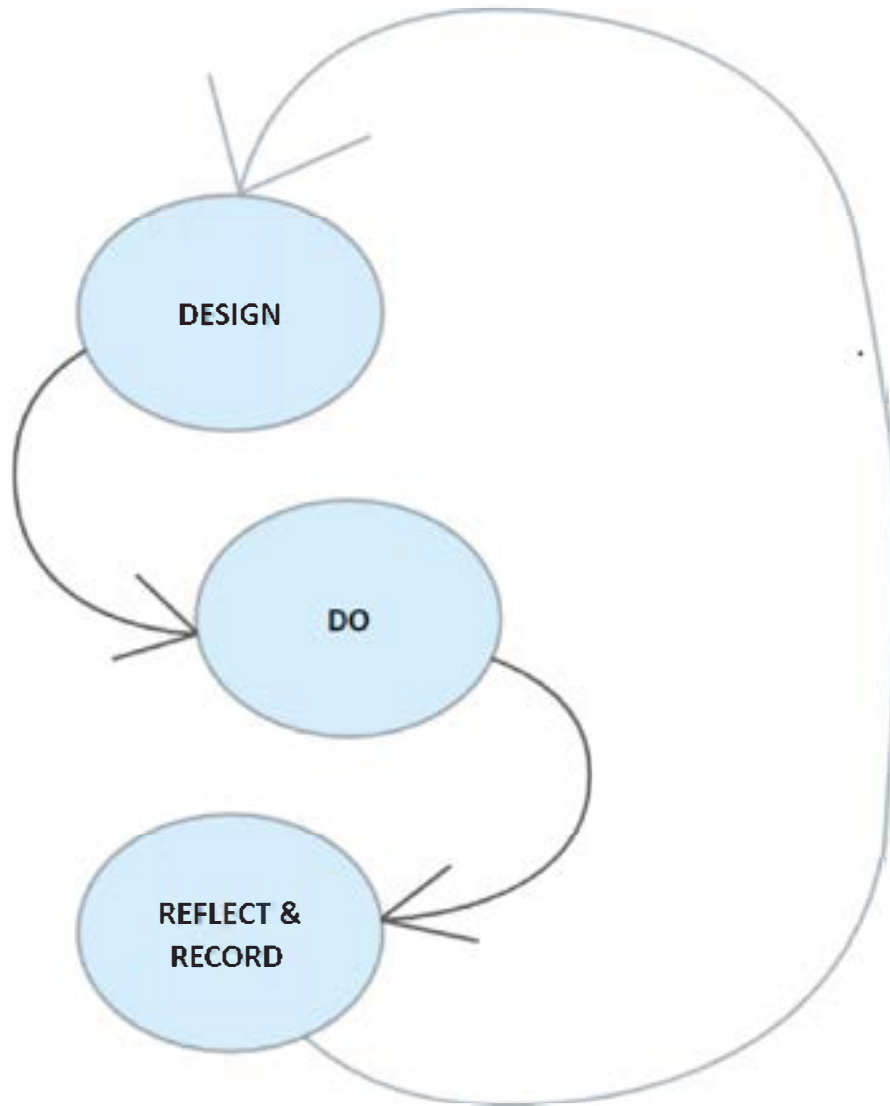
Peter Garrett
February 2021



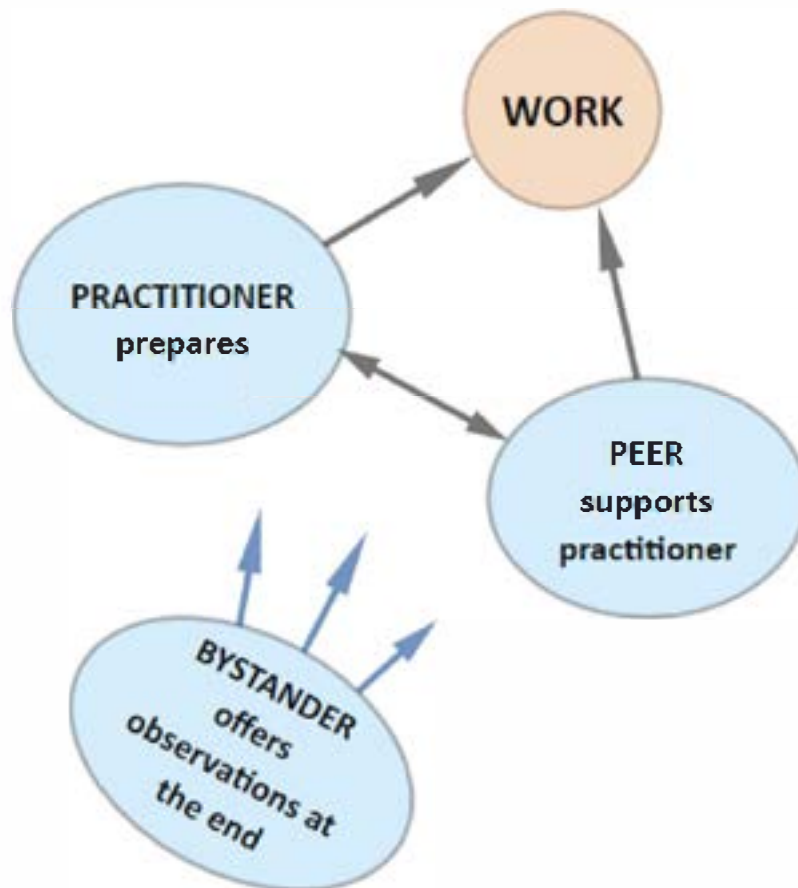
REFLECTIVE PRACTICE LEARNING CYCLE



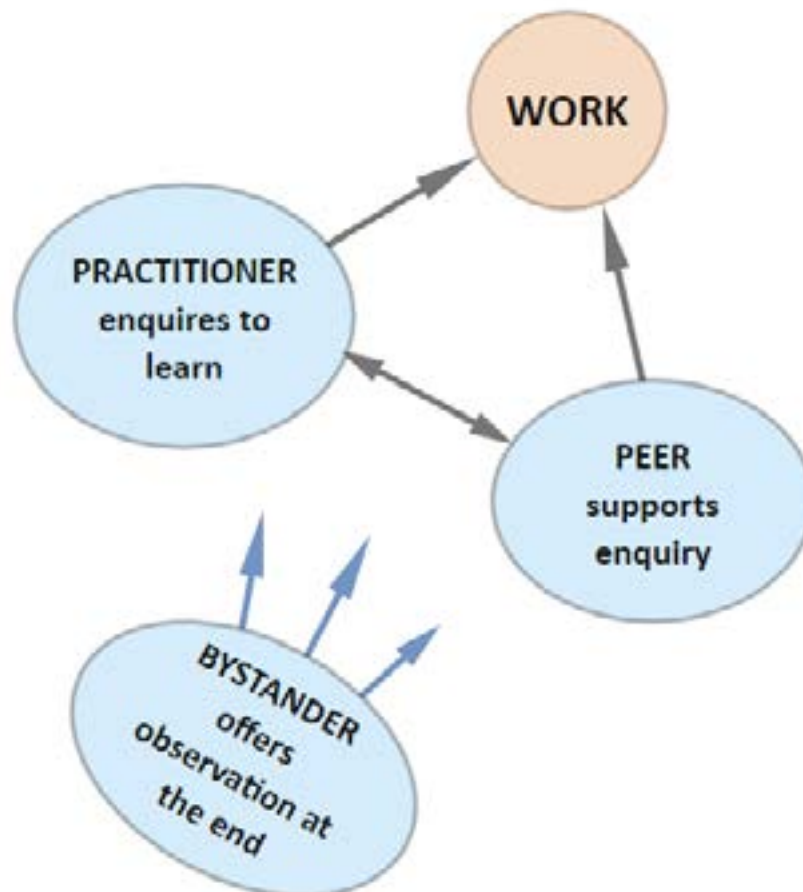
REFLECTIVE PRACTICE LEARNING CYCLE



REFLECTIVE PRACTICE TRIO ROLES PREPARATION



REFLECTIVE PRACTICE TRIO ROLES REFLECTION





SET RESOURCES

APPENDIX G:

Set 4 - Quality of Understanding

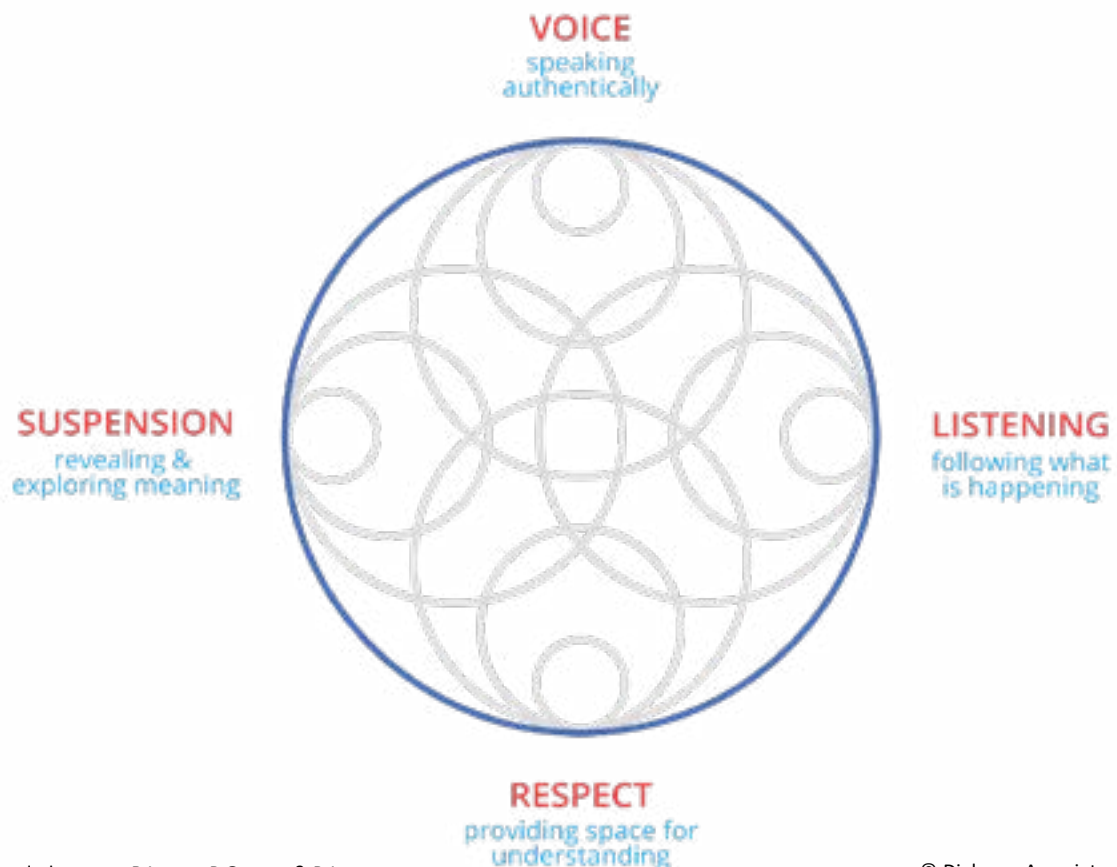
- The Dialogue Practices
- Skill Development for Functional Communication and Quality of Understanding



THE DIALOGUE PRACTICES

AN INTRODUCTION

The Dialogic Practices are at the heart of any high-quality conversation or Dialogue. They are called practices because, whatever your level of skill, you can become better by practising. No special forum or occasion is needed to practise because they are relevant to the quality of your interactions every time you talk and think with others. They originated in the late 1990s through the collaboration of Bill Isaacs, Peter Garrett and Michael Jones who were working together as the faculty of a Leadership for Collective Intelligence programme. The innovative blending of organisational leadership theory, high security prison dialogue experience and extemporaneous music performance resulted in the design of a powerfully inclusive framework. The Dialogue Practices are well-known from their publication in *Dialogue: The Art of Thinking Together* (William Isaacs, 1999).



Acknowledgement: B Isaacs, P Garrett & P Jones

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Quality: Whilst the Modes for Talking and Thinking Together describe the level of engagement between participants, and the Dialogic Actions are relevant to the functionality of being able to do what you intend to do, the Dialogue Practices are necessary for the quality of any interaction. They



are the guide to deepening the quality of any Mode of engagement. For example, take Monologue. Respecting your audience and listening to what you yourself are saying whilst you are speaking will improve your Monologue and enhance the quality of the rapport you have with your audience. Similarly, the Dialogic Practices will lead you into more effective debating skills that address assumptions and rationale, rather than resorting to 'playing dirty' by putting down the character and reputation of the other side. Where the Practices really come into their own, however, is in Dialogue and Generative Dialogue. It is here that one's own inner experience is so closely related to the outer behaviour of others in a common process.

There are four Dialogue Practices, and they are similarly inter-related in a mutually enhancing way:

Voice – speaking authentically: Your voice is your expression of the meaning and feelings that arise from the vitality flowing through you at any time. That voice is shaped by your natural propensity, inherent personality and experiences on your journey through life, and is an expression of your individuality. Each person has a unique voice, just as each person's fingers and eyes have different fingerprints and iris patterns. By finding your voice you make a distinctive contribution. Nobody can speak for you in the way you can speak for yourself. Unfortunately education, social hierarchy and misfortune have led many to obscure their own expression by instead repeating the words and copying the manner of others. The practice of Voice encourages people to become more skillful at authoring their own contribution in a way that complements that of others. When you do, you enrich the quality of the atmosphere or container within which you are participating.

Within the context of a Dialogue, finding your voice begins with speaking up and saying something. That may be harder for some than for others, which is why a Check-in and facilitative support may help participants to get started. The next level of voice involves authenticity, and saying what you really think and feel, rather than what you believe others might want to hear. This fuller level of voice means that you say the same thing publicly in the Dialogue that you say privately outside the Dialogue, rather than offering different versions to different audiences. Through practising this can be taken to a third level of skill – in addition to being genuine and authentic, you are articulating what contributes most to the collective expression or voice of the whole unfolding Dialogue.

Listening – following what is happening: Listening is the practice of giving your attention to what is taking place, and to receiving it by enfolding it consciously. At the same time as attending to what others are saying, thinking and feeling, you can listen to what is moving within one's own heart, mind and physical body. Of course, this is occurring within a particular situation and at a particular time, so you can be attentive to that contextual process as well. Curiously, when you listen to someone who is speaking, that speaker can find their own voice more easily. The listening creates an overall atmosphere that is more conducive to their unique expression, revealing one way in which the practices are inter-related. It is easy to become distracted from attending to other people and the overall process by some detail that draws you into an associated personal reflection, a pattern that is sometimes called 'chasing rabbits'. Similarly, you can become distracted from noticing your own personal responses and reactions by becoming absorbed by the words and behaviour of others. Through practise you can listen to these different areas at the same time, as well as the relationship between them. Sometimes, listening to what is not being said in that situation is as important as listening to what is said.



In the context of the Dialogue, the most basic level of listening enables a person to repeat what has been said. It is surprising how often participants are unable to do this, even though they believe they are good listeners. A step deeper is to have heard what was said, and to have considered what was meant. This goes beyond the words spoken, in a way that is apparent for example when someone with a constricted vocabulary, because they are speaking in their second or third language, conveys what they mean unambiguously. The third level is to listen to the unfolding meaning in the whole room and to hold that as the changing context within which individual speakers are finding their voice.

Respect – providing space for understanding: Respect is the stance or disposition that opens the space for people and situations to be better understood and received. When respect is present, you are seeking to understand rather than to be understood. This is particularly relevant when things appear to be incoherent, and it is not obvious to you how people's words and behaviour are aligned with their apparent intentions. Respect is different from trust. Trust is earned by consistent behaviour whereas respect is offered whatever a person's behaviour, even when they are not trustworthy. Underlying respect is the recognition that things are the way they are for a reason, even if that reason is not yet apparent. Everything is inter-connected, and people are inherently intelligent, compassionate, and naturally want to participate. If this is not obviously the case then, rather than rejecting or condoning the behaviour and the situation, respect leads to a non-judgemental view of what is happening. Inherent in respect is the assumption that people's behaviour is their best resolution of all the factors at work for them in that situation and at that time. Given that is the case for yourself, why would it not be so for others?

In the context of the Dialogue, when respect is not present people will reject others out of hand. 'Dissing' people, and not even taking the time to hear them, is the clear evidence of the absence of respect, and it fragments the conscious awareness of those involved by creating 'them'. The most elementary level of respect is to listen to what people are saying before forming a contrary view, rather than creating a counter argument whilst they are speaking. This is deepened by trying to understand what it would be like for you to stand in their shoes and resolve the competing constraints and interests they may have. A further level of respect is to deliberately hold the space of non-judgemental inclusion to enable the coherence to become evident and to move something in everyone present. This supports a personal and collective enquiry into the nature and history of the situation we share in the Dialogue.

Suspension – revealing and exploring meaning: Suspension is the fourth practice, and the one most deeply rooted in awareness. It involves your active witnessing of what is happening in a way that neither encourages nor discourages what is occurring. Suspension does not mean stopping the activity, as when suspending a child from attending school. Instead, it refers to making things visible, much like a chandelier hanging from the ceiling can be viewed by everyone in different parts of the room. Through suspension you can explore and probe your automatic and repetitive patterns of behaviour that are driven by memory and make them available to yourself and others. When you suspend your thoughts or feelings you describe as accurately as you can the movements taking place within you. These may be your internal thoughts and feelings, or your descriptions of what you see happening externally. When you follow the movements internally and externally and make them available to others, a seamless process of unfoldment and enfoldment may become apparent to



both you and others. Suspension requires the discernment to follow the subtle as well as the blatant, and to make the movements in conscious awareness available to everyone to deepen collective understanding. The quality of the container will depend on the level of active suspension, just as the practice of suspension will deepen the container.

In the context of Dialogue, the first step is to reflect on what has happened after the Dialogue in a thoughtful way that is both subtle and rigorous. The next step is to reveal your reflections in a way that can be meaningfully understood by others. A deeper step is to become proprioceptively aware and to suspend what is happening by describing it whilst it is still happening. This is an activity of live thinking that transforms the experience people are having together in the Dialogue and enriches the container.

Container – the atmosphere or ambiance: The atmosphere within which a group of people meet is dependent on the Practices being active, and that atmosphere is fundamental to the quality of the conversation or Dialogue. Can you imagine a conversation being of high quality if the participants are not listening to each other? That is not possible. The same is true with each of the four Practices – they are the way to deepen the quality of rapport between the participants. The resulting ambiance is conducive to an increased awareness of what is happening, a spaciousness to explore what people mean and a clear expression of participants intentions and spirit. Where there is mutual respect and listening, people can more easily add their voice and explain their understanding.

The converse is also true – when the atmosphere is weak or threadbare it will be because one or more of the Dialogue Practices is not active. Either people are not speaking genuinely, they are not listening to each other, they are not offering respect to each other, or they are unwilling or unable to make their experience available to others. When the atmosphere is poor, the requirement is to activate the absent practice or practices. As the facilitator you can provide this expression yourself, and you can solicit the Practices from others by supporting and challenging them.

You can read the atmosphere by the tone and character of the comments being made by participants. You may find the manner in which people address the room changes depending on the topic. This is because of the activation of memories that are held individually and collectively. Where there is a clear pattern of relationship between all the participants – we call this the container. Within that container there is a rapport that enables people to move together in a common process. Beyond the territory of containment there is a more or less fragmented experience. The work of the facilitator is to expand the container, and the means to do that is through the activation of the Dialogue Practices.

The Dialogic Actions and the Dialogue Practices: There is a relatedness between the Modes of Talking and Thinking Together and the Actions, where different Modes emphasise different Actions. Monologue uses Moves dominantly, for example, whilst Debate primarily employs Moves and Opposes. Similarly, there is a pattern of correspondence between the Dialogic Actions and the Dialogic Practices. When you find your Voice and speak genuinely you author a unique direction that, qualitatively, is an octave above a Move. The move can be recorded on video, whereas your authentic voice originates from your spirit. In finding your voice you can, of course,



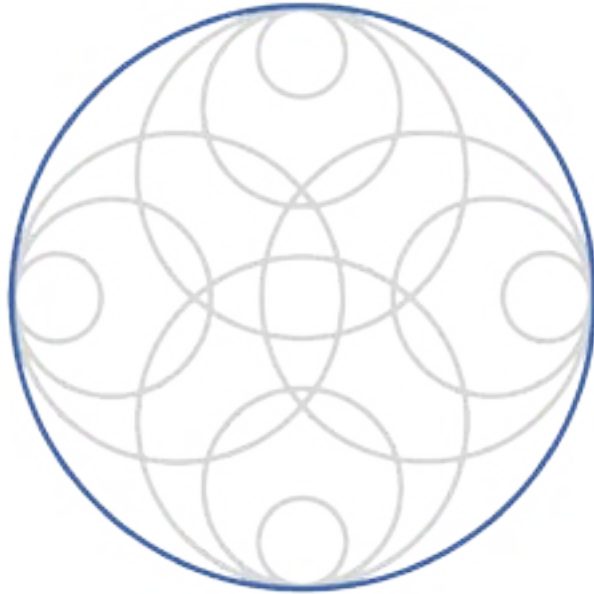
also be making a follow, oppose or by-stand. Listening requires following, even if it leads you to move, by-stand or oppose. Respect opens the space within which opposing may be received as a helpful contribution to be understood, whilst in the absence of respect the oppose may be taken as an unwelcome block to progress. Suspension relies on the same skills as by-standing, as it requires you to step back to see what is happening, but suspension describes far more than the sequence of Actions. Good suspension includes the more subtle territory of significance, meaning, intention, response and reaction – to what is happening inside you as well as the spoken words.

Peter Garrett and Jane Ball
February 2022



SKILL DEVELOPMENT FOR FUNCTIONAL COMMUNICATION & QUALITY OF UNDERSTANDING THROUGH CONTAINER DEVELOPMENT

VOICE
speaking
authentically



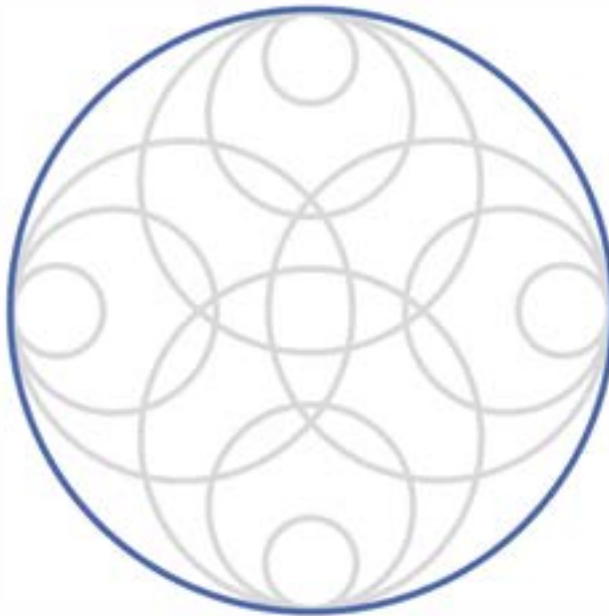
SUSPENSION
revealing &
exploring meaning

LISTENING
following what
is happening

RESPECT
providing space for
understanding

Acknowledgement: B Isaacs, P Garrett & M Jones

FOLLOW
for completion



MOVE
for direction

BYSTAND
for perspective

OPPOSE
for correction

Acknowledgement: D Kantor, P Garrett & J Ball

APX G



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SET RESOURCES

APPENDIX H:

Set 5 - Focus of Attention and Organisational Decision-Making

- The Leading Energies
- Skill Development for Functionality of Communication, Quality of Understanding, and Focus of Energy
- Dialogic Decision-Making Course Field Guide
- Dialogic Decision-Making Course Facilitation Guide
- Decision-Making Process (Graphic)
- Organisational Power Map (Graphic)
- Working Dialogue (Graphic)
- Dialogue within Decision-Making by Peter Garrett

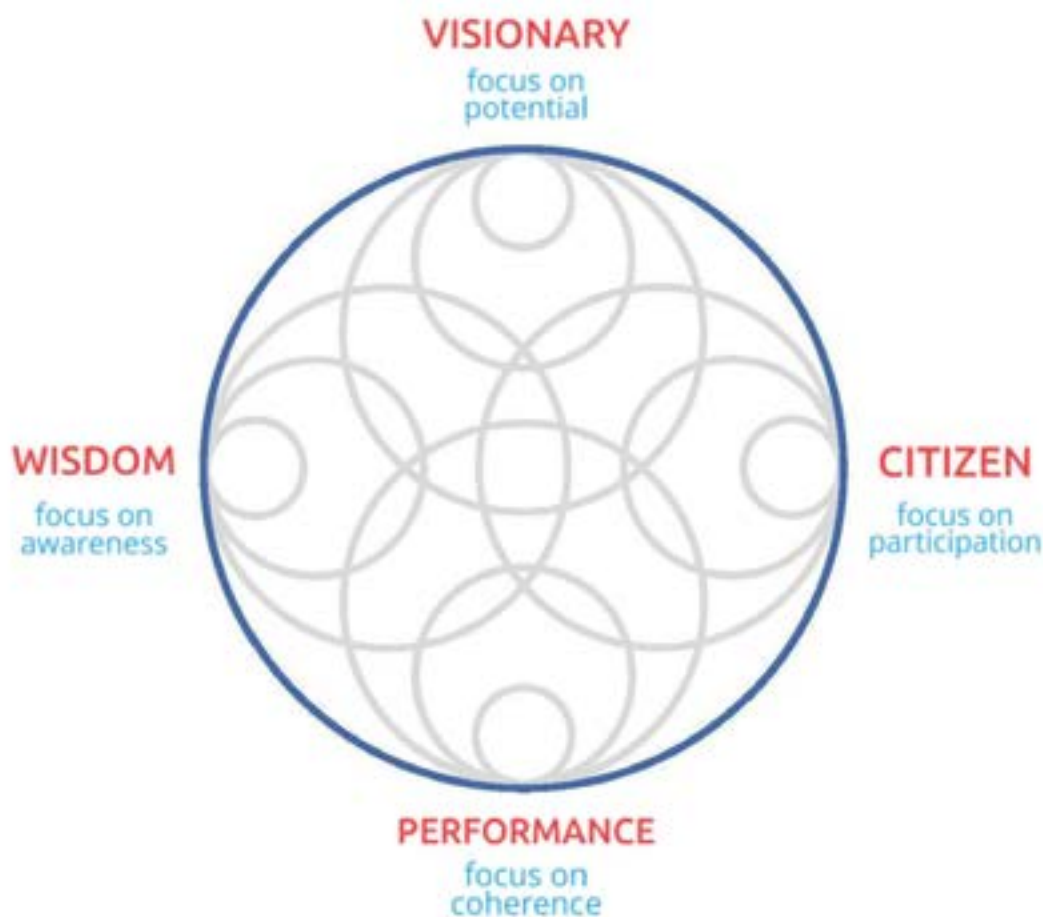




THE LEADING ENERGIES

AN INTRODUCTION

Once the group has been convened and the participants are engaged (*Check-in, Check-out and Modes*) and attentive to how they are participating functionally (*Languages, Paradigms and Dialogic Actions*) and in a qualitative way (*Dialogue Practices*), there is the opportunity to put the emotional and intellectual energy in the room to work. The Leading Energies are a framework, or a construct in consciousness, to do just that. Used well, the Leading Energies can purposefully focus the energy that is naturally gathered by a Dialogue or a Generative Dialogue. They are derived from a leadership development model designed by David Kantor for individual executives. We use the framework in a somewhat different way to encourage any participant to provide leadership in the consideration, not just those with nominated leadership roles. There are four Leading Energies, namely Visionary, Citizen, Performance and Wisdom. Each of them requires different conditions, and each does a different kind of work.



Acknowledgement: D Kantor, P Garrett, J Ball

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Visionary Energy: The Visionary energy leads people to consider the potential inherent in the situation. What is the opportunity that we can sense? What is the need as we best understand it? Do we have the imagination to paint a picture of the future that provides what we want and need for everyone involved? This may be short term and involving a single meeting or work project, or longer term. It could even extend over several generations like the American Civil Rights Movement. That was sustained for a century, and latterly articulated by Martin Luther King Jnr in the words: 'I have a dream...' The vision is not yet present, and the vision challenges people to set aside the constraints of the present situation temporarily, to consider a better circumstance in the future. The challenge of the Visionary energy is to articulate the vision in a way that others can see that it is worth achieving and say 'yes!'.

As that occurs, the Visionary energy does a unique kind of work. It aligns the direction and purpose of the people in that team, organisation or community. The Visionary energy helps to establish a common direction with common values. It contributes to aligning the context for everyone involved in a Dialogue, or to generating a new context in a Generative Dialogue. As a result, everyone is aiming to reach the same situation. It is not only about the future. The shared aspiration and common intention engender a kind of purposeful resilience. This affects the many decisions made and activities undertaken in the present by drawing them towards a common outcome. **Without a shared vision, people inadvertently trip each other up. Without any vision, people become aimless, self-centred and depressed. Clarity of vision can lift significant weights!**

Citizen Energy: The Citizen energy is concerned with the relatedness between those who are working together, and the energy draws richer levels of participation both practically and ethically. As people understand the value of their role, and how they contribute to the collective endeavour, they naturally want to learn how to play the part better in relation to the whole. How they impact those with whom they engage directly, and indirectly, becomes a matter of concern. The Citizen energy makes light work of things. It oils the system by reducing the noise and friction, increasing the overall flow and outcomes. The hierarchical nature of organisations means they can easily become fragmented, transactional and institutionalised. The Citizen energy harmonises interactions and humanises the system. It deepens pride, ownership and the sense of being part of the team, community or organisation. Clearly, **when there is more noise that work being done, the Citizen energy is lacking.**

As a Dialogue or Generative Dialogue deepens, a common spirit emerges that we have called 'koinonia' (from the Greek language). This happens collectively. Although people may not know each other personally, and may only have interacted through the Dialogues, they feel a sense of kith or respect and appreciation of one another. This impersonal fellowship embodies the spirit of citizenship. People stand for the right of others to hold their view and to express it, even though they may disagree with it. Koinonia reveals a remarkable quality of Dialogue – it can incorporate polar-opposite views in a common enquiry. At times the phenomenon is called communion, implying an ethical working community.



Performance Energy: Some visions remain for ever in the future, like rainbows that are always beyond reach. Others become real. The difference depends on Performance energy. It is the passion for delivery, of doing, that enables a vision to take form and to be realised. Performance energy requires that the thinking and decision-making are coherent with what people are trying to bring about, as must be the actions. Although this may seem self-evident, it is surprising how recurrent assumptions and habitual ways of thinking and acting often sustain the very situation people are trying to change. ‘Don’t just stand there – do something!’ is not consistent with the precision of Performance energy. Activity does not necessarily lead to the delivery of good performance. To be effective at Performance energy, it is necessary to say ‘no’ to distractions (sorry, that is not in the budget!) whilst remaining attentive to what contributes to the intended outcome.

The Performance energy requires a particular kind of attention. The work it does is to bring things into completed form. To do that a sequence of steps is inevitably needed. Not only is the letter written, but it is put into an envelope that is addressed, has a postage stamp and is dropped into the mailbox. Without that the message cannot be delivered by the mail service. This reveals how important each Leading Energy is, and how all four are required in a successful team, organisation or community. Good performance is surprisingly satisfying. There is a great sense of accomplishment and achievement for all involved when what was needed, requested or agreed is provided. It leads individuals and groupings of people to bring more care and accuracy to their work and to become reliable in the commitments they make.

Wisdom Energy: Lying behind the Leading Energies are the Dialogic Principles. The focus of the Visionary energy is *potential*, whilst the focus of Citizen energy is *participation*, and the Performance energy is *coherence*. The focus of Wisdom energy is *awareness*. It extends conscious awareness of what is happening within and beyond the room. It does this in a particular way – by holding the larger circumstance (the macrocosm) alongside the closer or more immediate situation (the microcosm). By attending to both the context and the situation, the dynamic relationship between them starts to be revealed. How is the system (of which we are a part) affecting us and what we do, and what are we doing that affects the larger system (of which we are a part)? This systemic awareness gives a sense of timing that can free up unnoticed opportunities. Experience, knowledge and insight guide us to the right moment to push the swing and to enhance the movement. Similarly, there is a wrong moment to push that will disrupt the fullness of the swing and will cause or reveal contradictory tensions.

Complex circumstances can be understood and simplified through the awareness of wisdom. The essential dynamics are revealed as what might be called ‘the golden thread’ or the essential dynamic. In consequence, the key things that need to be maintained, changed, done or addressed become apparent. This clarity about what is needed reduces the amount of time and energy expended. It is the awareness of what is needed to work smarter, rather than working harder. Without such awareness, the list of what needs to be done in a changing situation gets longer and longer.



COACHING USING THE LEADING ENERGIES

The essence of Dialogic Coaching is easily understood. It is a matter of supporting and challenging people to understand, introduce and then use Dialogue as a Mode, a Practice and a Process in order to do work through resolving social fragmentation. Learning to do this occurs developmentally through the phases of Realising Yourself, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground and Affecting the Field. The skills of gathering, engagement, functionality, and quality are well documented. We are now considering the focus of attention, that is needed to do work of benefit to others. The focus harnesses the available energy to do work, taking the form of Visionary, Citizen, Performance or Wisdom energy. Individuals typically have areas of strength and weakness in each Leading Energy. What we appreciate about people's character and natural disposition is essentially where they are strong, and we should reinforce and celebrate that propensity. The same is true for teams, organisations and communities. The purpose of coaching is to extend the capability to focus and release generative energy in other areas.

Coaching Using Visionary Energy: Individuals and groupings of individuals rich in Visionary energy inspire, encourage, and lead the way into the future. They are searching for the opportunity in the moment and the potential that is approaching. They bring the pioneering spirit by advocating a better future and calling people to act in a different way to bring this about. 'Be the future you want to see!' They have a cost to pay for their strength, however, in those times when they find themselves isolated and without a following body of support. That is a lonely place and a test to their commitment. It is also a clear indication that they need to draw on other energies – namely by developing the Citizen, Performance or Wisdom energies.

Those with little Visionary energy are bound to the familiar and to mediocrity. Where there is no vision the people perish! There is a reason they have activated little Visionary energy in their work or lives that has its root in fragmentation. The starting point is not to ask them how to become visionaries, but rather to ask: 'What difference would it make if you had a clear vision of the future you need and want?'

Coaching Using Citizen Energy: Individuals and groupings of individuals rich in Citizen energy not only understand their own role and contribution, but they help others to see the contribution they are making. In an organisational context, they want to know if people understand what is expected of them, if they are sufficiently skilled to do their work, and if they recognise how their work makes a difference to the overall outcome. When this is the case team spirit rises, things flow and absenteeism falls. People want to help their colleagues and the larger organisation. It makes light of the work and people feel good.

There can be a cost for those who over-indulge in the Citizen energy, however. When they meet a repeated lack of response they can become cynical. Despite their best efforts, the opportunities they offer for people to learn and contribute have been ignored or rejected. Instead, people criticise and complain, wanting to get without giving. It is a firm indication that other energies are needed to progress. They must activate the Visionary, Performance or Wisdom energy to find a way forward.



Those with little Citizen energy suffer the fragmented experience of not knowing what others are doing and what impact they may be having on them. There is a reason they have activated little Citizen energy in their work or lives and suffer this form of fragmentation. Without seeing the value, there is little point in asking them how to become Citizen leaders. First there is the question: 'What difference would it make if you felt yourself to be a part of what everyone is doing, and you understood your contribution to the well-being of the whole?'

Coaching Using Performance Energy: Performance energy is powerful and purposeful. Getting things done makes a visible impact on everyone. Those who are strong performers like challenges and targets. They enjoy working out how to accomplish what is needed, and value doing so with others. The Performance energy requires tracking all the elements involved, sequencing activities, tracking progress and achieving results. High performers take pride in their skills and track record, that is evident by how easily they can be hurt by criticism of their competency.

Despite this, there is a cost to high performers. In an organisation, those who deliver more than is expected of them are rewarded with yet higher expectations. Eventually there are not enough hours in the day, or the weekend, to do what needs to be done. This is the experience of being overwhelmed, leading to burn-out and a sure sign other energies need to be activated – namely the Visionary, Citizen and Wisdom energies.

Those who lack Performance energy find themselves unable to complete things, and thereby become dependent on others to do so. They have an unhelpful vagueness about what is needed to get something done, and an aversion to finding out. There is, of course, a reason why the individual or group are constrained in this way. In the fragmented experience, dependency on others provides a connection. Initial coaching in this situation is not about how to, but about what difference it would make if. The starting enquiry to make is: What difference would it make to you and those around you if you could commit to deliver what is asked of you, and know you could be relied upon to do so?

Coaching Using Wisdom Energy: Well used, the Wisdom energy is peculiarly valuable to individuals, families, teams, organisations and communities. It is not needed all the time, but in those situations when it is needed it can prove pivotal. There are occasions to step back from the fray and take stock. Where are things going, and can we catch the wave of change, or will we be dumped by it? What will make the essential difference? The role of Wisdom energy is to discern what has been hidden through the fragmented state of human conscious awareness. In all the complexity, what is the underlying dynamic? What are the necessary connections to tighten or loosen? Knowing where to look and finding what needs attention is indeed wisdom.

The handicap for those who work solely with Wisdom energy is the challenge of trying to resolve too much – eventually everything - and ending up confused and unable to act. It is not so much being caught in the headlights as being confused in a hall of mirrors. The experience is no longer grounded. A balance is needed by calling on the other energies – namely Visionary, Citizen and Performance.

Those who lack the Wisdom energy are unable to deal with complexity. They find themselves working their way down the list of actions without a sense of priority, doing as much as can be done



knowing it will never be enough. Wisdom cannot be taught, it has to be derived from attention, experience, knowledge and insight. Given you cannot be told how to become wise, it is not so helpful to ask how you become adept at the Wisdom energy. A better starting point is to recognise the value and create a thirst for Wisdom. The enquiry could be: What difference would it make to you and those around you if you had a clear sense of priorities based on the essentials in the current situation?

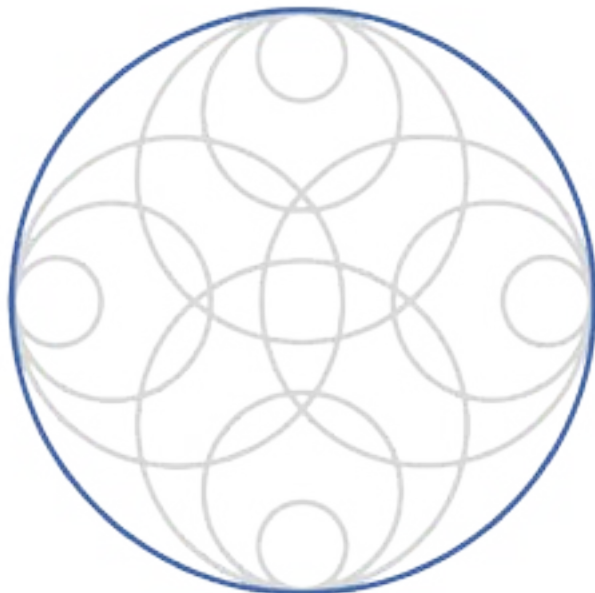
Peter Garrett and Jane Ball

February 2022



SKILL DEVELOPMENT
FOR FUNCTIONAL COMMUNICATION, QUALITY OF UNDERSTANDING
& FOCUS OF ENERGY
THROUGH CONTAINER DEVELOPMENT

VOICE
 speaking
 authentically

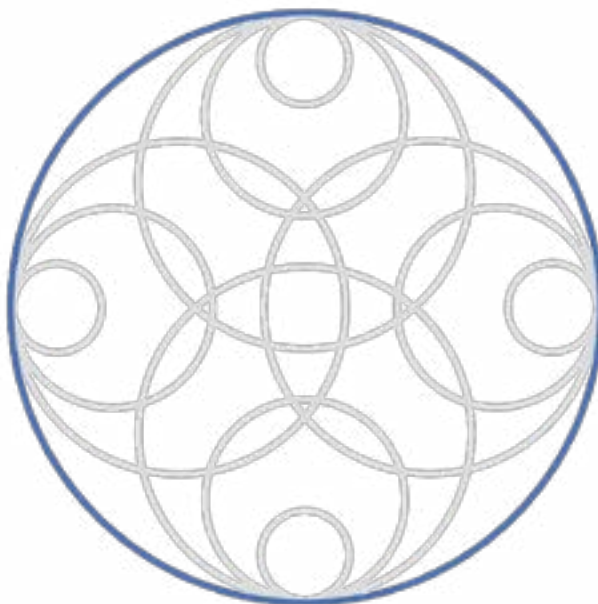


LISTENING
 following what
 is happening

RESPECT
 providing space for
 understanding

SUSPENSION
 revealing &
 exploring meaning

FOLLOW
 for completion

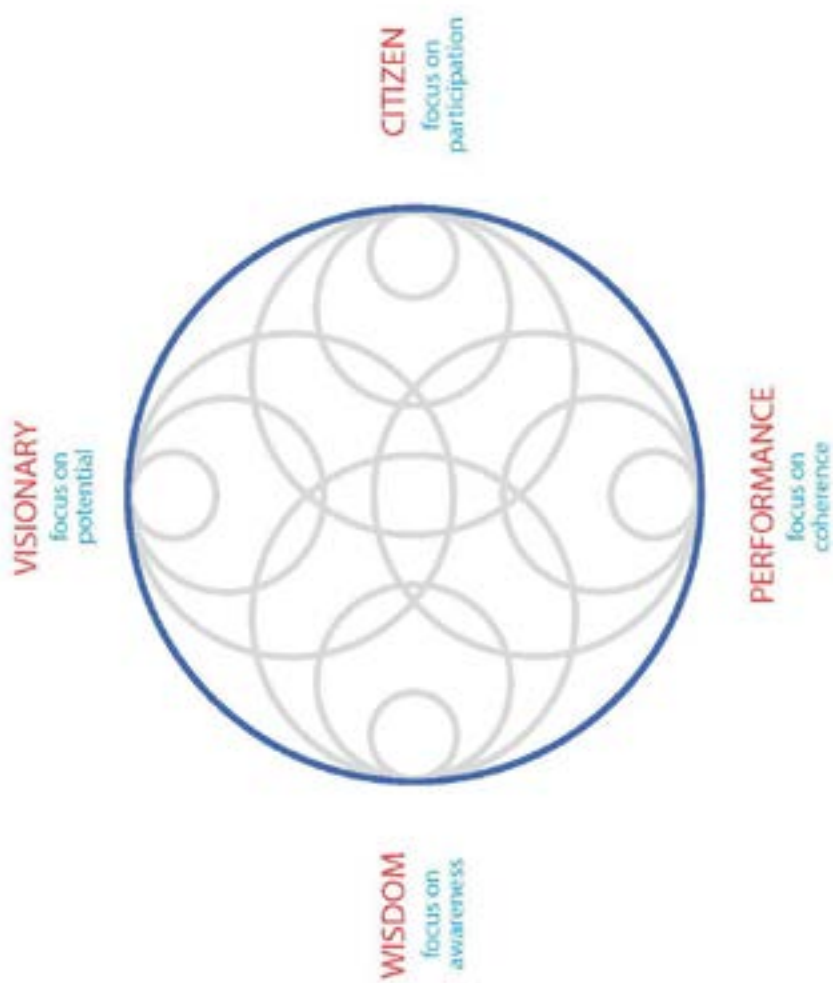


MOVE
 for direction

BYSTAND
 for perspective

OPPOSE
 for correction







DIALOGIC DECISION-MAKING in an organisational context

A developmental educational course recognised by the
Academy of Professional Dialogue

PARTICIPANT FIELD GUIDE



Academy of Professional Dialogue
accredited course



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THE ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE

The Academy of Professional Dialogue is an educational non-profit charity established in 2016 to make Professional Dialogue available for the benefit of society. Every year the Academy convenes an international conference under the title ***The World Needs Dialogue!*** and publishes accounts of work by its members. The Academy's certificated courses and accredited programmes provide the opportunity to discover the remarkable value of Professional Dialogue in the workplace, and the benefits that the practice of Professional Dialogue offers to an individual's career and private life.

EDUCATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL

The Academy's courses and programmes are co-facilitated by Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners, supporting proven educational learning. They are developmental in design, providing insightful frameworks and ways of thinking that enable ongoing first-hand learning for many years after participating in the course or programme.

WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM THIS COURSE?

This course takes a practical approach to the process of decision-making, particularly in the context of organisations. Anyone working in an organisation will find value in understanding and then practicing a dialogic approach to making decisions. Similarly, coaches and consultants who work with individuals, teams or organisations will find greater clarity about how to help others in making effective decisions.



THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

The deliberate focus of this course is decision-making within the context of organisations because we live in an era of organisations. Almost everything we do, from birth to death, is managed or regulated by organisations – including our food, housing, health, transport, education, employment, money, recreation, and entertainment. Organisational decisions affect everyone every day. Organisations pay their staff to make decisions and act on their behalf, and the leadership often provides training and instruction on how to do so. This course in Dialogic Decision-making is a significant step beyond a *do and don't* set of rules, or a simplistic *five steps to the right decision*. It opens the door to a deeper understanding of what is involved in making decisions with others within the structure of an organisation.

A SET OF THREE COURSES:

1. DIALOGIC ENGAGEMENT
2. DIALOGIC DECISION-MAKING
3. WORKING DIALOGUE

We recommend taking the Dialogic Engagement course prior to the Dialogic Decision-making course, and completing both before taking the Working Dialogue course. The Dialogic Engagement course concentrates on how we talk together, placing Dialogue in a continuum of communication skills needed to manage ongoing activities and to introduce change into organisations. Working Dialogue is a structured and facilitated intervention pattern for making good decisions in complex situations with multiple stakeholders and accountabilities. Together, the three courses cover the practice, theory and skills for sustainable decision-making in organisations by supervisors, managers and leaders.



PART 1: CONSCIOUS DECISION-MAKING

The Dialogic Decision-making course has four parts. Each one considers a different aspect of the process of decision-making. The purpose of the first part of the course is to encourage awareness of how prolific our decisions are, and how little we may have attended to how we make those many decisions. We make decisions all day every day, no matter what we are doing. For example, in speaking a sentence, I decide what meaning I want to convey, what words will carry that meaning best and how to modify the communication depending on the response of those to whom I am talking. Some of this is done consciously, like choosing a particular adjective or adverb to emphasise a point, whilst I may not even notice how I form the rest of the sentence.

Similarly, as I drive my car down the road, I must make many decisions. If I am an experienced driver, most of these are done automatically. Whilst I hold the conscious intention to get to my destination safely, I may not notice how often I change gear, accelerate, brake and use the indicators as I travel on my journey. In fact, I may even overlook my destination and follow my habitual route to work, forgetting it is a Saturday and I am going to play sport, not travelling to work. And all the time I can be driving quite safely.

It becomes apparent that there is a wide spread. At one end are the decisions that we make deliberately and with conscious awareness, whilst at the other end are the many decisions that are made automatically without our noticing that we have made them. In between are those that we are partly conscious of needing to make, and then of having made them. This range is necessary for us to live our daily lives successfully. We assume the sidewalk is flat and we walk comfortably without really thinking about it. If we trip, however, we must take more care, notice the irregular flagstones in the pavement and be more careful about how we lift our feet as we walk.

This gives an interesting insight about the relationship between the conscious decisions that need to be made, and the less conscious ones that happen more automatically. Our conscious awareness can monitor the many automatic decisions by getting the 'feel' of how they





are working, and only intervene if it is evident that they are not good enough. In this way, having a sense of how the whole is working guides us when more conscious and deliberate decisions may need to be made. If we are not clear headed (perhaps because we are emotionally disturbed or inebriated) and we lose this sense of the whole, it will impair our decisions. One situation where we can easily lose track of the way things are working overall is in organisations. We can easily find ourselves more attentive to our own area of endeavour and largely oblivious to how things are working in other parts of the organisation. In fact we may be trained and rewarded for doing so. That is one reason why organisational decision-making needs special attention.

HOW DO WE MAKE OUR MORE CONSCIOUS DECISIONS?

Accepting that many decisions are made 'on automatic', how do we make the more conscious decisions that we make? It will be somewhat different for each person, and will vary according to the circumstance they are in. There is no one answer, but we can find patterns in our decision-making. We may prefer to be proactive and leap in before others; cautious and prefer to wait to see which way to go; or reactively forced into decisions. We may be analytic; enjoy going with the flow; like to stand out as different; or stuck in our traditional ways of deciding. Each of these characteristics have strengths and weaknesses. It is not about good or bad, but how to use one's propensities well. The relevant patterns are the ones that reveal where we regularly succeed, and where we regularly fall short in making good decisions. As we become more conscious of what we do, we can vary our approach with significant rewards. If we act too quickly or impulsively, slowing down may help. If we wait too long and miss the opportunity, taking more chances may be called for. We are encouraging an enquiry into our own behaviour, in order to understand why and how we do what we do. This is far more helpful than trying to remember a decision-making technique to superimpose on our natural inclinations.

If you want to help others - as a coach, supervisor, colleague or leader - then understanding how people reach their decisions is essential. If you don't know how they make their decisions it will be hard for you to help them. Trying to reach a decision is a process that occurs over time and may involve a range of information, assumptions, reasoning,



Acknowledgement: P Garrett, J Ball

feelings and impulses to act or to refrain from acting. Once the decision itself has been made, these all become evident or accessible. One is left with a simpler rationale, having declared the decision, with which to advocate or defend it.

Talking with an individual about what they are thinking and feeling as they move through this complex process can be of immense help to them. Advising them of what in your opinion is the best decision to make, on the other hand, is far less helpful - since it withdraws attention from the other person's decision-making process, leaving them no better equipped next time they face the same situation. The key to improving decision-making is first-hand learning, where realising oneself what is happening is all important to the learning.

PERSONAL DECISIONS AND ORGANISATIONAL DECISIONS

Decisions that we make regarding our personal lives (rather than our working roles) are largely based on the needs, interests, comforts and discomforts of ourselves and those around us. We are often seeking to maintain or to change the relationships with people close to us.

Organisational decisions are made in relation to the workplace and have a different complexity. Our role means that we have some kind of contract or formal relationship with the organisation. It is not only our own voice and interests that matter, but also the implicit and explicit responsibility to represent the organisation. We must consider the organisation's needs and interests, and those of other employees, clients, beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Organisations are decision-making structures that organise and distribute power through decision-making rights and accountabilities. Put simply, we are employed to make decisions, and we are accountable for the quality of those decisions and the resulting actions. Having to speak and act on behalf of others makes it more difficult. There are many meetings and teams to address this complexity, as anyone working in an organisation knows.

Yet there is an additional handicap! Typically, employees do not actually know what others in the organisation are doing or trying to do. They understand and concentrate on their own area of work, and





the reporting lines generally discourage asking about or interfering in decisions made in other parts of the organisation. Calling parts of the organisation ‘divisions’ is a telling description. It is apparent that organisational decision-making does have some different challenges from personal decision-making.

WHOSE DECISION IS IT?

Because of their complexity, many team meetings are convened within organisations. Generally, their aim is to make a decision or a series of decisions. This is not always as easy as it appears and sometimes the meeting can go around and around without a convincing decision being reached, leaving a sense of dissatisfaction. We have all probably had such an experience as a participant or facilitator. One aspect of this confusion or dysfunctionality in organisational decision-making can be addressed with a simple framework called *Whose Decision Is It?*

WHO'S THE DECISION?	HOW TO DECIDE IT?	HOW TO REPORT IT?
NO DECISION	INFORM	TELL
YOUR DECISION	DELEGATE	INSTRUCT
MY DECISION	CONSULT	ASK
OUR DECISION	REACH CONSENSUS	AGREE
EACH DECIDES	DIALOGUE	ALIGN



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Confusion arises when people are not clear what their role is in the process. This framework emerged from work with a very inefficient new team that was making little progress. The team (who at that time were really a group rather than a team) always had a clear agenda that they followed, but they tended to argue without reaching constructive conclusions. As the source of the problem became clearer, the first facilitation step was to place a name (or names) as a lead against each agenda item so that it was clear who wanted it included in the meeting. Then the lead person was required to top and tail the consideration of their item. As they began, they were asked to say if a decision was to be made – and if so, what it was and by whom. Then at the close of their agenda item they were asked to say if a decision had been made - and if so, what it was so that it could be recorded. What a difference it made to those team meetings!

In the early meetings the lead participant's intentions had been quite vague. They mainly talked about what had happened since they last met, and occasionally about what they were endeavouring to do. This took the form of rambling reports designed to display how busy they had been, and essentially intended to impress their colleagues and the team leader. Update reports can be very helpful – but not if they take 80% of the meeting time and force decisions about other matters out of the meeting to be made privately later. The problem became blatant when, at the outset of an agenda item to which an hour had been allocated, it was apparent that it was for information only and no decision was required by the team. The solution? Instead, team members started to provide pre-reading or post-reading, and used five or 10 minutes to emphasise the key points that needed to be noted and why. This reversed the balance, and the team spent at most 20% of their time on 'no decision' updates rather than 80%.

There were other parts of the meetings where the team leader was delegating tasks or responsibilities to others. He was quite clear that they were to be determined by the team members to whom they were being given, and without further reference to him. These fitted the category of 'your decision'. There may be questions raised during the meeting for clarification, and any obvious gaps or duplications could be questioned, but then they moved on without an open consideration about how someone should do what was delegated to them. The reason





the tasks were delegated in the team meeting was so that everyone knew who was doing what. The requirement was outlined, and it was the team member's responsibility to decide how to manage it, not anyone else.

It was the next type of agenda item that started to build a team out of the group. The lead made clear it was their own decision to make, and they were asking for their colleague's input. They were consulting their colleagues for their experience, guidance, or ideas – but they were not giving away their responsibility and accountability for the decision to be made. As others realised how to contribute to this kind of consideration, they began to participate constructively, without trying to determine the outcome. Sometimes a decision was stated during the meeting, but more often the individual chose to ponder on the matter further before making their decision later. The group matured as people became helpful to each other's thinking.

Beyond that, there were a few decisions that required the agreement of every member of the team. Originally, they had been treating every item as if a consensus was needed, but it was surprising how infrequently that was really required. Generally, 'our decision' was needed for major corrective decisions that had a material impact on everyone present. Their earlier meetings had been so filled with 'no decision' updates that the big decisions would end up being made privately between the stronger members who then presented them as a *fait accompli*. To make 'our decision' well requires time. It needs attention to what is needed by the whole, as well as the benefit or cost to the individuals. This is like changing hats. Instead of wearing the hat of your own part of the organisation, each person is now invited to wear the hat of the whole team or organisation - and to make a decision for the good of the whole even though it may be detrimental to their part. Going to a vote is rightly seen as a failing, although it may occasionally prove necessary depending on the constraints of time. 'Our decisions' are binding on all the team members, deepening the ethical expectation for colleagues to support their collective decisions.

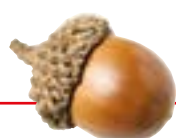
Lastly, there is the category of 'each decides'. For each to decide how to proceed in their own area, there needs to be a good sense of alignment amongst everyone. That is found through open Dialogue. People began



to learn how to listen to each other's situations and views respectfully, whilst explaining their own carefully and with the awareness that it was their best interpretation or understanding. People were not trying to win, or to back down. Instead, they sought a common understanding to which they all contributed. Gradually a feeling of common sense emerged about how to proceed. With this collective alignment there is a real team operating well individually and collectively. Dialogue is definitely needed in organisations and in teams.



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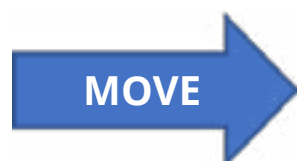
PART 2: DECISIONS HAVE A STRUCTURE AND A PROCESS

Few people realise that there is a simple structure and process to every decision. Understanding this makes it easier at a practical level to reach a decision, or to know why a decision is not being made. To consider this, we first need to look at the basic make-up of communication. This thinking is derived from the work of David Kantor, a (now deceased) member of the Academy. Peter Garrett and Jane Ball worked closely with him whilst developing the meaning of functionality within their Integrated Dialogue Model. His deep interest as a practicing family therapist was functional and dysfunctional communication.

THE ESSENTIAL *STRUCTURE* OF COMMUNICATION

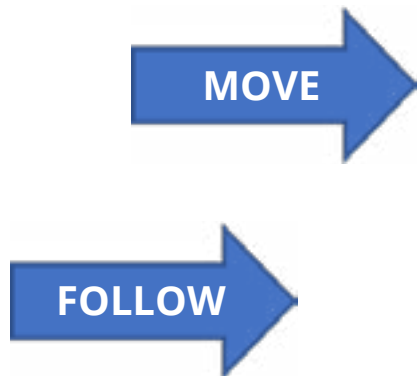
In this model, when we talk and think together there are just four actions we can make. By actions we are referring to the act of communicating, rather than to the content of what is said. These actions can be tracked reflectively after a conversation to understand what happened. Their greater value, however, is that they are simple enough to use live and be helpful in the moment when things are not working well, and people are not ending up where they are trying to go. The four Dialogic Actions are: a Move, a Follow, an Oppose and a By-stand. Each action does a different thing. The Move gives direction, the Follow gives completion, the Oppose gives correction and the By-stand gives perspective. Each time someone speaks they will either move, follow, oppose or by-stand.

A MOVE: When someone makes a Move they introduce a subject or a topic. This is an invitation for others to go in that new direction. The opening action made at the start of any conversation or communication will be a move. It could take the form: "Let's talk about..."

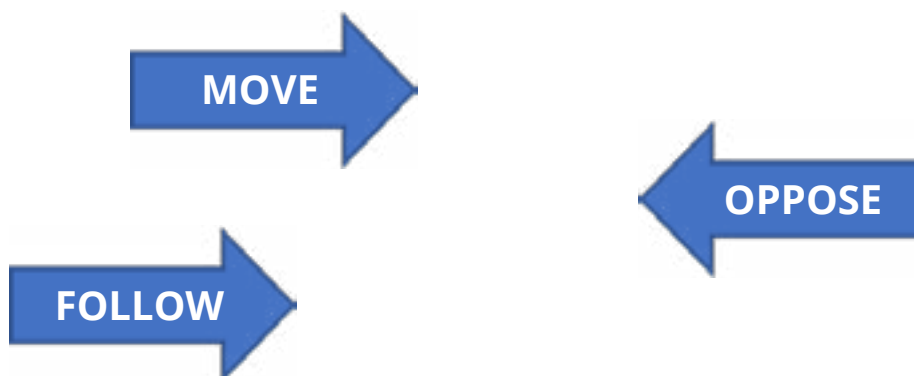




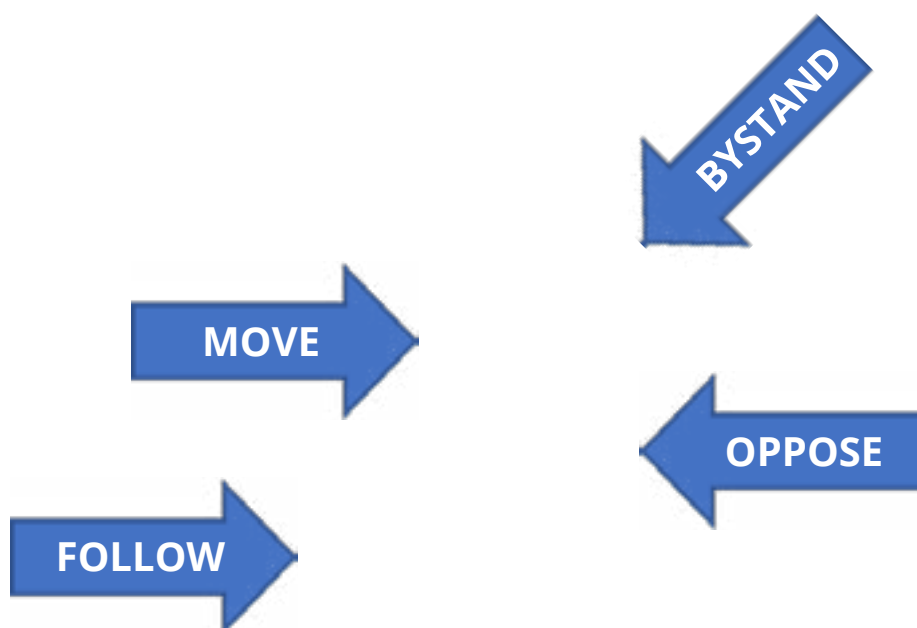
A FOLLOW: Responding to that Move and going in the same direction is called a Follow. This may be a statement of agreement, or it may expand on the matter raised in the Move. This may sound like: “That is certainly of interest and concern to me...”



AN OPPOSE: Disagreeing with a Move and choosing not to go in the same direction is called an Oppose. This may stop the progress in the direction of the Move. It does not imply going in a different direction, just not going in the direction proposed by the Move. Perhaps: “We have talked about that so many times before that I am not prepared to do so again!”



A BY-STAND: When someone steps back to a neutral position and describes the process or dynamic they noticed, or the sequence of the various Actions they have heard, then that is called a By-stand. A By-stand is an observation about what is happening. It does not propose going in a new direction (a Move), going in the same direction someone has proposed (a Follow) or disagreeing with a direction (an Oppose). Instead, the By-stand describes what has been happening, perhaps by recalling the sequence of Actions. This is particularly helpful if the sequence is a repeated one that has or has not worked well in the past. By-standing can draw awareness to the process and its impact, relevance or helpfulness in the current situation. Perhaps: "I notice that two of you often raise this issue whilst John then refuses to consider it."



THE ACTIONS ARE SPOKEN

There is a difference between thinking and talking. The Actions become meaningful to others when they are spoken. Thinking about any of the Actions but not saying them is ineffective. That is like writing a letter or an email but not sending it. Thinking things and not saying them, and thereby not making your thoughts available to others, is one of the main causes of dysfunctional conversations. Learning how to say what you are thinking in a way that can be understood by others is part of learning how to communicate better with other people.





THE ESSENTIAL *PROCESS* OF COMMUNICATION

The process of a conversation or exchange between people is determined by the sequence in which the different Actions are made. For example, a brain storming session to generate new ideas takes the form of a series of Moves, each in a new direction. A repeated sequence of Moves then Opposes, however, is a different dynamic – namely a debate or an argument. The process of any verbal exchange between people can be described by the sequence of Actions involved. A change of sequence, and a change of which Actions are included makes all the difference. Politeness or courteous compliance is a Move and then a series of Follows. This sequence describes people agreeing in a superficial and perhaps a socially acceptable way.

THE PROCESS OF A DECISION

What about a decision? Described as a sequence of actions, a simple decision takes the form of a Move then a Follow. That is the most basic form of decision. It involves those two Actions in that sequence. “I think we are best to do X” followed by “I agree!” seals the decision between two people. It is worth noting that without the Move there cannot be a decision, and without the Follow there is no decision. If nobody makes these two actions when a decision is needed, they can be solicited. “Does anyone have a proposal for what we should do?” will encourage people to make Moves. This may be necessary because without a clear proposal (or move) there cannot be a meaningful decision. Similarly, to call for Follows, one might ask “Does anyone agree with the proposal that has been made?” It is surprising how often the decision-making process fails because there is no clear proposal (move) or no clear agreement (follow).

The sequence of move and follow is the essence of a command-and-control culture. It often takes the form: “This is what I want you to do...” and the response “Yes, Sir!”. In matters of urgent safety this may be appropriate and necessary. It may also be the case where there is the call for trust, respect or loyalty. Often, however, more of a process is required. A more carefully considered or rigorous decision amongst a group of people would involve all four of the actions, including opposes and by-stands. Opposes helpfully test the direction in which things are



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going, perhaps because there is information that has been overlooked. By-stands draw attention to repeated sequences of actions which help or hinder the process. A more rigorous decision, therefore, begins with a move and ends with a follow or series of follows. In between are follows, opposes, by-stands and other moves.

A good supervisor, leader or facilitator can encourage more rigour in the group's decision-making. For example: "Before we finalise this decision, can you think of any reasons why it might not work?" That solicits opposes. "What would others say about the decision we are making?" encourages by-standing. It is helpful to take various views into account before making the decision, rather than encountering them after the decision has been made. Otherwise people may resent their views not being considered, and hearing them may necessitate a change to the decision.

USING THE ACTIONS EFFECTIVELY: CLEAN ACTIONS

The Actions work best when they are clearly understood by others. Generally, the simpler they are the better. An example of a simple and clean Follow is "Yes, I agree with your view". You might choose to pause, then to continue with an explanation that develops the thoughts and feelings behind your statement - but giving the explanation whilst missing out the clean Follow is far less effective. It is the follow that is decisive. Similarly, it is only a Follow if it is spoken. If someone asks: "Does anyone disagree with the proposal?" and is met with silence, a decision has not yet been made. They may then say "Fine, is nobody disagrees then we have agreed to proceed", but that is not really true, as may later be revealed.

USING THE ACTIONS SKILFULLY

COMPOUND ACTIONS: When a speaker contributes more than one action at a time, it is called a compound Action. This can be very effective. For example, one might say "I fully support your proposal, but I do not think your method is the best way to achieve it". That is a compound Action made up of a Follow then an Oppose. It secures agreement for part of what is said (the proposal), whilst seeking to correct another part (the method). Similarly, one might By-stand then





Move by saying “For some time we have been talking about three different proposals at the same time, and I see that we are not making much progress on any of them. I suggest we concentrate on one at a time”.

PROBLEMS THAT LEAD TO DYSFUNCTIONALITY: STUCK, DISABLED AND SPIN

STUCK: It is natural for people to have one or two stronger Actions that they are particularly effective at. A problem arises when they make one action repeatedly or exclusively, and they thus become **Stuck Actions**. Only moving, only opposing or repeatedly following or by-standing limits the exchanges that are possible. The repetition leaves everyone stuck and frustrated.

DISABLED: When people cannot make one or more of the Actions because they feel **disabled** from doing so, the situation becomes dysfunctional. Perhaps nobody can oppose because of the power differences in the room, or nobody can follow because as a group they are too proud or arrogant. If nobody by-stands, unhelpful sequences will be repeated – “here we go again!”

SPIN: Actions that are simple, clear, and put across respectfully are easy to respond to honestly and openly. It is harder when someone puts a **Spin** on the action they make. A spin doctor is someone who makes something appear to be different from what it really is. Putting **Spin** on an Action makes it harder to respond, much like in tennis, where adding topspin or slicing the ball makes it harder for the other player to return it. An example of spin is: “Well if you want to put it that way, I have no choice but to disagree with you”. That oppose has confused who is responsible for what, making it more difficult to respond. The clean version might be: “I do not agree with your idea”.

A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The Dialogic Actions are a developmental model. The aim with the Dialogic Actions is for people to develop the skills to do all the Actions well. The value of the Dialogic Actions is that despite your natural preference or propensity to use some actions more than others, you are



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encouraged to learn them all and to use each of them where needed. They are Actions, not labels or identities. By contrast, a labelling model is one where you accept yourself to be a certain type and must live with only being good at some activities whilst learning how to manage not being good at others. It would make no sense to say "I am a mover". That would be like saying "I am a forehand". Just as you would say "I played a forehand" so in this model you might say "I made a Move".

GOOD DECISION-MAKING

In summary, everybody makes many decisions every day, and when people work in organisations they are employed to do so. They are responsible and accountable for making decisions, and the Dialogic Actions are particularly helpful in this regard. A simple decision in this model is a Move and then a Follow or a series of Follows. That is an efficient decision, and in times of emergency efficiency is essential – hence the command-and-control culture in such situations. A more rigorous decision, however, requires all four Actions. The Moves provide the proposals, the Follows support them, the Opposes challenge to correct or improve them, and the Bystands reveal repetitive sequences of Actions that inadvertently may be interfering with the clarity of the decision being made. A more rigorous decision begins with a move and ends with a follow or a series of follows. In between are all four of the other actions. The additional skills are to make clear actions rather than adding spin; to beware of getting stuck by repeating just one or two actions; and to use compound actions to gain common ground whilst making more rigorous decisions.





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PART 3: STORIES MAKE DECISIONS

WE MAKE SENSE THROUGH STORY

To decide what to do, we draw on our understanding of the situation. Curiously, that understanding takes the form of a story. This phenomenon is so common that you may not have noticed it. If someone is asked what the situation is, they will tell a story about it. It is their version of what is really going on. These sense-making stories all have a past (what has happened), a present (what is happening now), and a future (what may or will happen). That is the nature of a story. Within that unfolding process, we make our decisions in the present to help to determine the future. By making that decision, we are determining what to do (or not to do) to affect the future in some way.

Although we may think we are making the decision, in large part it is our story that determines what decision we make. This is not problematic when everyone involved has a similar story from which they are acting. Then people will be reasonably aligned in the decisions they make and what they do. We can celebrate the diversity. It is often the case, however, that those involved have different stories or understandings that are at odds with those held by others. When people are acting from very different and conflicting stories, it causes trouble. It leads to misunderstandings, confusion, counter-productive activity, frustration, and perhaps anger.

ADVOCACY AND ENQUIRY

It is apparent that if we want to work well together, we will need to check the accuracy and validity of our own and other people's stories. To do this we need to distinguish between *advocacy* and *enquiry*. Put most simply, advocacy is telling, whilst enquiry is asking. Stories are told. They are a form of telling what we know that naturally leads to what to do next. It is our stories that are informing our decisions and telling us what to do. In contrast, enquiry is the way to find out what we don't know. An enquiring mind wants to discover more and to understand more. Enquiry is helpful where we have different stories about the same situation. We could ask: "What do our stories have in common, and in



what ways are our stories different?" Not knowing, asking, and wanting to know are different aspects of good enquiry. The stories may prove to be accurate, or they may be only partly accurate and benefit from the additional information, perspective and rationale revealed through the enquiry.

ENQUIRY AND ASKING QUESTIONS

Enquiry is a skill that is harder than it first appears as we are often conditioned by childhood experiences at school. There teachers ask the questions, and as pupils we are expected to find the 'right' (pre-determined) answer to any question we are asked. As a result, we tend to be more familiar with the focussed nature of advocating the right answer, and to be less comfortable with the openness and receptivity that is natural to enquiry. Good questions can help the enquiry. For example, an open question like: "What might I have overlooked?" may reveal things that we had not thought to ask about. Closed questions that lead to "yes" or "no" answers, on the other hand, are generally less helpful because they constrain the scope of the enquiry tightly. The least helpful questions assume the answer is obvious and are intended to confirm the pre-determined answer, such as: "Do you agree that this was the wrong thing to do?".

It is worth noting that some questions are not enquiries at all. Rhetorical questions like "It is hot, isn't it!" or "Do you really think she deserved that?" both have underlying statements (namely: *I am hot* and *She did not deserve that*) and are really statements not enquiry.

HOW TO ENQUIRE WELL

If we find ourselves in a situation where people are making conflicting decisions and actions, then we have a number of different stories. We can argue about whether one decision or action is better than another, and to do so we use advocacy. We can try to persuade or force others to yield. To end up with aligned decisions and actions, however, we need greater common ground in our stories. Put simply, to change the decisions being made we must change the story. The most helpful enquiry, therefore, is one that checks the story and tries to understand how it is informing the thinking and understanding. A question like



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“What led me, or you, to interpret what happened the way we did?” is a good starting point. A simple check of the quality of our enquiry is whether we think we already have the answer to our own question. If we have the answer on the tip of our tongue, then the question is almost certainly driven by advocacy.

STORIES AND AUTHORS

We each have many different stories and we tell them every day. Some we tell other people, and some we only repeat internally within our private thoughts. There are first-hand stories (we were there) about people we know and the situation we are in. Clearly, we are the authors of our own first-hand stories, and as we tell them we may recall more relevant details that we had previously overlooked. Other stories are second or third-hand (we were not there). These are stories we have heard or read about people and the circumstances around us. Despite that, we may find ourselves with surprisingly strong views about people we have never met, and situations we have never encountered. Although these stories were written or spoken by other people, it is important to note the degree to which we author our own version of those stories. We choose what to notice, what to attribute significance to, and what to remember and repeat. It may be someone else’s story, but it becomes our version or interpretation of their account of what happened.

STORIES AND STORYLINE

Individuals have stories, and so do teams, divisions and whole organisations. This may all look rather complex at an organisational level, given the many people and stories involved. If we look carefully, however, we will find beneath the many stories are relatively few storylines. The storyline is how the story works and the storyline embodies its rationale. To get a sense of this, take the play *Romeo and Juliet* by Shakespeare. It is a story of five acts that takes hours to perform. The underlying storyline is somewhat simpler – the tragedy of how the misunderstanding between lovers from feuding families leads them to choose suicide rather than separation. It is the storyline that informs the decision about how to act. We may not need to pay



attention to every detail in the story, but we do need to check the storyline carefully.

The author's propensities make a difference. We may be pessimistic until things prove they can work – or alternatively be optimistic despite often failing. If we by-stand ourselves and the kind of stories we make, we can find the patterns of our storylines. These storylines drive our decision-making within the many situations we find ourselves. There are consequences. Things may work even less because of the pessimistic storyline we attribute to the situation and the decisions we make that affect the later outworking – or our optimism may help create the generative climate within which things succeed more often.

WHY DO WE HAVE DIFFERENT STORIES ABOUT THE SAME SITUATION?

People in the same situations can form very different stories about what is happening. How can that be? There are several reasons:

1. I might be wrong, but I doubt it!

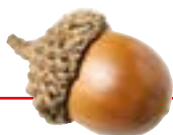
This is a lack of awareness of one's blind spot. Why bother checking my own story with any seriousness if it is self-evidently the case? Anyone of reasonable mind would see what I see. People who do not agree are perverse and unreasonable.

Other people have other perspectives (from below not above; on entering rather than leaving; and so on) that are equally self-evident to them.

2. If I had known that!

I took everything I knew into account, but I didn't know what I didn't know. With the additional information you are now telling me I would have made a different decision.

Our stories may be different because we are aware of different participants and events from each other. We have a different content of consciousness from each other.



3. I just didn't think about it that way!

For example: "It never occurred to me that in their own way they were trying to be helpful rather than trying to prevent us succeeding..."

As authors our logic and reasoning may be faulty. We may have concentrated on the impact others had on us, and as a result made misplaced attributions about their intentions.

4. I look after my own affairs and let others look after theirs

This is the localised mentality of 'I'm alright, Jack'. I ignore the impact I may be having on others and look after my own interests: "If I didn't sell them cocaine, someone else would."

As Lead Belly sang: "We're in the same boat brother – and if you shake one end you're going to rock the other – in the same boat brother."

5. Collectively-held stories

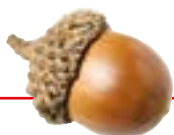
I think the same way as many people I know and respect. This is the challenge of sub-cultural groupings that hold their stories collectively as part of their identity – religiously (Muslim or Hindu), organisationally (Management and Unions), politically (left and right), educationally (lecturers and students) and so on.

Collectively-held stories may be inherited and repeatedly reinforced collectively. An intervention is required to align the collectively held stories of different sub-cultural groupings working together in the same organisation.

WHY WE NEED DIALOGUE FOR GOOD DECISION-MAKING

Dialogue is a way of talking and thinking together to find a common meaning. **Dia** means *through* (as a diameter is a line through the centre of a circle) and **logos** is *the word or meaning*. Dialogue is a common meaning amongst a group of people. That meaning takes the form of a story, and organisationally we are seeking to establish a common story about the organisation – its direction, purpose, contribution and the way we work together to achieve that.





PART 4: OUR DECISIONS AFFECT OTHERS

HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU ARE MAKING GOOD DECISIONS?

Working in an organisation we are tasked with making decisions within our area of responsibility and we are accountable for those decisions, so the most basic measure of a good decision is that it is compliant with the requirements of our role. To not be so would imply incompetence. In every organisation there are areas that fall short of this basic measure of compliance, exacerbated no doubt by staff turnover and changing requirements. Beyond that it is reasonable to expect our decisions to enhance the quality and improve the quantity of our performance output. That implies that we don't need to keep amending or reversing our decisions, which would be counter-productive to better performance. Despite meeting these two measures of *compliance* and *performance*, we find that some of our decisions do not work out as well as we had intended. There may be various reasons for this, but a major cause is that our decisions affect other people in ways we had not anticipated.

ASSUMING WHAT OTHERS NEED

It is obvious that some of our decisions will have an impact on others, and no doubt there are times when we are particularly careful to consider what we assume this will be. Yet despite our intention to be helpful, people may still react and complain. The next measure of a good decision, therefore, is that our decisions *serve* others by helping them to *comply* and *perform* well. To serve others, we must take their needs into account in a way that helps them. Isn't it obvious what others need? If it were, we could assume these needs, but unfortunately it is not obvious what others need. We do not have the perspective held by others. The reason for this is inherent in the structure of all organisations of any size – namely *organisational fragmentation*.

Organisations are efficient due to specialisation (concentrating on one function and giving less attention to others), hierarchy (focussing on your own level of decision-making and leaving others to manage theirs) and location (the geographic or online communities that determine





most of our formal and informal interactions). It is the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation that inevitably leaves us uninformed about what others in the organisation are trying to do, and the challenges they are facing. We simply don't know because we interact with them so little.

ORGANISATIONAL FRAGMENTATION AT TEAM LEVEL

What is called a team in name may lack the attributes of team in attitude and behaviour. In a well-functioning team, people support and challenge each other to serve the whole team better. In a good team the members understand their team colleagues, and where they are challenged by compliance and performance issues. It is good to ask if we know how our colleagues are managing in their different roles. What are we doing that helps or hinders them, and vice versa? The easiest way to find out is to introduce a Check-in and a Check-out at the start and close of each team meeting that asks and addresses these kinds of questions together. This is the simplest way to transform a team and its decision-making skills.

What about between teams? The solution is much the same, but the opportunities may be less obvious. The first step is to ask for feedback with open questions about where we and our team are helpful, and where we are unhelpful. As the interface challenges become more apparent, a meeting of the two interfacing teams can be very effective in shifting the quality of decision-making. Rather than assuming or anticipating what people need, why not ask them before making the decision! There are high-performing teams - ones given accolades and awards for their own brilliant performance - that are highly problematic to other teams with whom they interface. An organisation is a complex organism where each part affects other parts. When building a team, it is essential to see how it can better serve those teams with which it interfaces.

THE MODES OF TALKING AND THINKING TOGETHER

Decision-making, which is at the core of the organisation's success, is substantially enabled in teams and organisations by the use and understanding of the Modes of Talking and Thinking Together.



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There are seven Modes or ways of talking together. Each has a different function in the decision-making process. Knowing that the decisions we make affect others, and realising the complexity and fragmentation inherent in organisations, the need is for a common context within which decisions are made. This takes us back to the root meaning of Dialogue: **dia** means *through* (as a diameter is the line through the centre of a circle) and **logos** is *the word or meaning*. Hence *Dialogue is a way of finding a common meaning in a group of people*. That is the fundamental starting point of good decisions – that they are aligned through a common understanding. People are participating in a common story about the organisation and what they are trying to do together. That is why we need to bring the little-known skills of Dialogue into organisations.

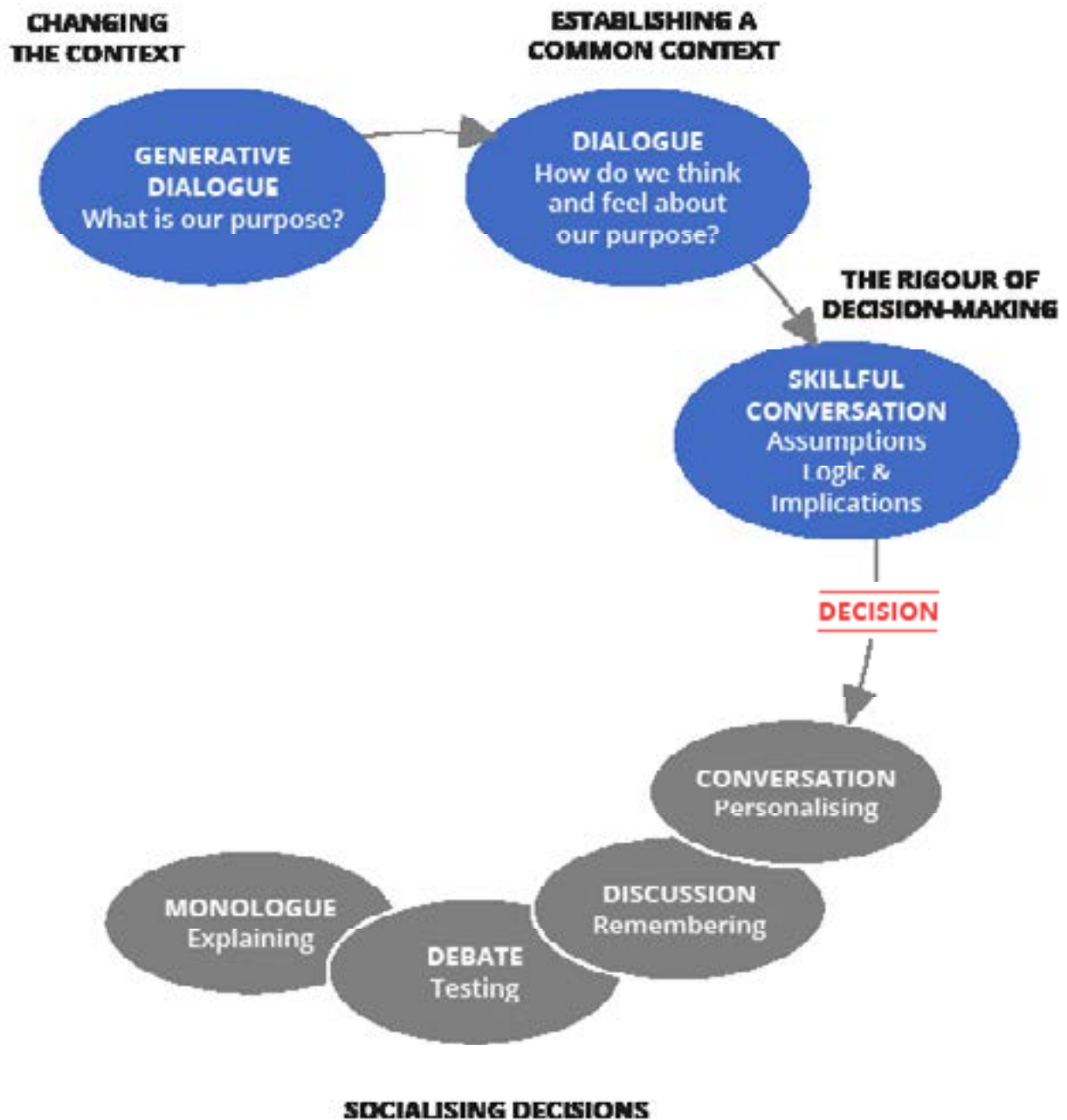
There are occasions where no single story seems able to encompass the past. Perhaps the different historical stories are held too deeply by conflictual sub-cultural groupings. Then a new story must emerge





through Generative Dialogue, changing the paradigm at times of fundamental change.

THE MODES IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS



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Through Dialogue we establish the common understanding and the common sense. Without this, apparently good decisions can be made in different parts of the organisation that prove counter-productive to others. The dynamic is much like a three-legged race. However, when our commonly held understanding and story do provide a common context, then each individual, team or department can make decisions regarding their own area of responsibility and accountability, knowing that their decisions will be coherent with what others are doing. It would be unwieldy and unrealistic for everyone to be involved in every decision. Instead, the smaller groupings use Skillful Conversation for rigorous decisions in relation to their accountabilities. The common organisational story informs the many pockets of specialised, hierarchical and locational thinking and decision-making.

For decisions to take root they must be socialised. We know that we make most of our decisions on automatic, as we considered in the first part of this course. The automatic decisions need monitoring, otherwise by habit we may do the equivalent of driving to our work location when it is the weekend and we intended to go elsewhere for leisure. The phenomenon is called regression. Without individual and collective attention through socialisation, we will find ourselves regressing to patterns of behaviour based on outdated storylines. Through Dialogue, and through our decisions we have changed the storyline, but the outdated one may reappear simply through habit.

Conversation is the Mode through which we manage this individually. In conversation with others we find we can easily translate the ongoing changes into our personal experience, attitude and disposition as we go about our daily work. This is important because it allows the changing situation to be accommodated in one's personal life as well. Similarly, Discussion is an easy way for us to remind ourselves of the new situation and to accommodate it in our many meetings. Where we can't get things clear in our thinking, Debate is the useful mode to get everything out in the open by arguing for and against different aspects of our changing worlds. Last, but not least, is Monologue. We need Monologue to inspire, to guide, to include, to exhort and to bring balance to the disparate factors we are managing everyday in an organisation.





It is time to let go of the idea that an organisation is like a large machine with endless cogs turning in predefined ways without awareness of or regard for each other. We are far better served by the idea that an organisation is a living form where each individual plays a part and is related to and aware of the whole organisation. The sense of connectedness with every other part - from top to bottom, across every discipline and in every area – is achieved through the common story that enables aligned decisions throughout. That is at the heart of Dialogic Decision-Making.

DIALOGIC ENGAGEMENT, ORGANISATIONAL DECISION-MAKING AND WORKING DIALOGUES

This course sits in the middle of three courses. The first course, that is called Dialogic Engagement, is a consideration of the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking together, and of their structure, process and skillful use. This course positions Dialogue and the other Modes in relation to organisational Decision-making. The third course is an applied course for use within organisations, called a Working Dialogue. The Working Dialogue is a structured and facilitated decision-making process for use in complex situations that involve different levels of hierarchy, different specialisations in the organisation and different locations. Clearly, Dialogue is at the heart of its success and it is facilitated by Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners.

A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING

These three courses open the door to a different way of working. For those who are interested, a career can be developed in Professional Dialogue through the accredited programmes approved by the Academy of Professional Dialogue. The entry programme is called A Different Way of Working and provides the skills and frameworks needed to *Bring Dialogue into the Room*. That lays the foundation for the *Dialogic Intervention* programme, and then for professional *Systemic Dialogue* work.



Acknowledgement: P Garrett, J Ball

REFERENCES:

[Dialogic Engagement course details](#)

[Dialogic Decision-making course details](#)

[Working Dialogue applied course details](#)

[A Different Way of Working programme details](#)

[A New Kind of Dialogue by Peter Garrett](#)

[TWND! 1 to 4](#)



ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE CERTIFIED COURSES

On completion of Dialogic Decision-Making you will be issued with a Certificate of Participation by the Academy of Professional Dialogue. A sequenced programme of further courses is available from the Academy to enable you to develop the professional skills and understanding that will be of value to you in any organisational or social setting. For details, please check the Academy's website: aofpd.org. Participation in these courses will benefit those who apply to become an accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner, thereby being authorised to deliver the Academy's educational courses.





DIALOGUE PUBLICATIONS

Dialogue Publications was founded in 2017 to make Professional Dialogue materials available internationally. The editors release an annual publication entitled *The World Needs Dialogue!* (hardback and e-book), covering the Working Papers considered by Members at the Academy's annual conference. Other publications include books authored by Academy Members, as well as supporting materials for all educational programmes and courses accredited by the Academy.





THE ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE

The Academy is an educational non-profit charity that promotes and inspires the international use of Professional Dialogue for the benefit of society. The primary aims are to inform people about the practice of Professional Dialogue in organisational and social settings, to acknowledge the work done by skilled Dialogue Practitioners around the world, to provide professional affiliation and to develop the field of Dialogue into a profession.

DIALOGIC DECISION-MAKING in an organisational context

A developmental educational course recognised by the
Academy of Professional Dialogue

FACILITATION GUIDE





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The Academy of Professional Dialogue is an educational non-profit charity established in 2016 to make Professional Dialogue available for the benefit of society. Every year the Academy convenes an international conference under the title ***The World Needs Dialogue!*** and publishes accounts of work by its members. The Academy's certificated courses and accredited programmes provide the opportunity to discover the remarkable value of Professional Dialogue in the workplace, and the benefits that the practice of Professional Dialogue offers to an individual's career and private life.

EDUCATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL

The Academy's courses and programmes are co-facilitated by Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners, supporting proven educational learning. They are developmental in design, providing insightful frameworks and ways of thinking that enable ongoing first-hand learning for many years after participating in the course or programme.

WHO WOULD BENEFIT FROM THIS COURSE?

This course takes a practical approach to the process of decision-making, particularly in the context of organisations. Anyone working in an organisation will find value in understanding and then practicing a dialogic approach to making decisions. Similarly, coaches and consultants who work with individuals, teams or organisations will find greater clarity about how to help others in making effective decisions.



THE ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

The deliberate focus of this course is decision-making within the context of organisations because we live in an era of organisations. Almost everything we do, from birth to death, is managed or regulated by organisations – including our food, housing, health, transport, education, employment, money, recreation, and entertainment. Organisational decisions affect everyone every day. Organisations pay their staff to make decisions and act on their behalf, and the leadership often provides training and instruction on how to do so. This course in Dialogic Decision-making is a significant step beyond a *do and don't* set of rules, or a simplistic *five steps to the right decision*. It opens the door to a deeper understanding of what is involved in making decisions with others within the structure of an organisation.

A SET OF THREE COURSES:

1. DIALOGIC ENGAGEMENT
2. DIALOGIC DECISION-MAKING
3. WORKING DIALOGUE

We recommend taking the Dialogic Engagement course prior to the Dialogic Decision-making course, and completing both before taking the Working Dialogue course. The Dialogic Engagement course concentrates on how we talk together, placing Dialogue in a continuum of communication skills needed to manage ongoing activities and to introduce change into organisations. Working Dialogue is a structured and facilitated intervention pattern for making good decisions in complex situations with multiple stakeholders and accountabilities. Together, the three courses cover the practice, theory and skills for sustainable decision-making in organisations by supervisors, managers and leaders.



PART 1: CONSCIOUS DECISION-MAKING

The Dialogic Decision-making course has four parts. Each one considers a different aspect of the process of decision-making. The purpose of the first part of the course is to encourage awareness of how prolific our decisions are, and how little we may have attended to how we make those many decisions. We make decisions all day every day, no matter what we are doing. For example, in speaking a sentence, I decide what meaning I want to convey, what words will carry that meaning best and how to modify the communication depending on the response of those to whom I am talking. Some of this is done consciously, like choosing a particular adjective or adverb to emphasise a point, whilst I may not even notice how I form the rest of the sentence.

Similarly, as I drive my car down the road, I must make many decisions. If I am an experienced driver, most of these are done automatically. Whilst I hold the conscious intention to get to my destination safely, I may not notice how often I change gear, accelerate, brake and use the indicators as I travel on my journey. In fact, I may even overlook my destination and follow my habitual route to work, forgetting it is a Saturday and I am going to play sport, not travelling to work. And all the time I can be driving quite safely.

It becomes apparent that there is a wide spread. At one end are the decisions that we make deliberately and with conscious awareness, whilst at the other end are the many decisions that are made automatically without our noticing that we have made them. In between are those that we are partly conscious of needing to make, and then of having made them. This range is necessary for us to live our daily lives successfully. We assume the sidewalk is flat and we walk comfortably without really thinking about it. If we trip, however, we must take more care, notice the irregular flagstones in the pavement and be more careful about how we lift our feet as we walk.

This gives an interesting insight about the relationship between the conscious decisions that need to be made, and the less conscious ones that happen more automatically. Our conscious awareness can monitor the many automatic decisions by getting the 'feel' of how they



are working, and only intervene if it is evident that they are not good enough. In this way, having a sense of how the whole is working guides us when more conscious and deliberate decisions may need to be made. If we are not clear headed (perhaps because we are emotionally disturbed or inebriated) and we lose this sense of the whole, it will impair our decisions. One situation where we can easily lose track of the way things are working overall is in organisations. We can easily find ourselves more attentive to our own area of endeavour and largely oblivious to how things are working in other parts of the organisation. In fact we may be trained and rewarded for doing so. That is one reason why organisational decision-making needs special attention.

HOW DO WE MAKE OUR MORE CONSCIOUS DECISIONS?

Accepting that many decisions are made 'on automatic', how do we make the more conscious decisions that we make? It will be somewhat different for each person, and will vary according to the circumstance they are in. There is no one answer, but we can find patterns in our decision-making. We may prefer to be proactive and leap in before others; cautious and prefer to wait to see which way to go; or reactively forced into decisions. We may be analytic; enjoy going with the flow; like to stand out as different; or stuck in our traditional ways of deciding. Each of these characteristics have strengths and weaknesses. It is not about good or bad, but how to use one's propensities well. The relevant patterns are the ones that reveal where we regularly succeed, and where we regularly fall short in making good decisions. As we become more conscious of what we do, we can vary our approach with significant rewards. If we act too quickly or impulsively, slowing down may help. If we wait too long and miss the opportunity, taking more chances may be called for. We are encouraging an enquiry into our own behaviour, in order to understand why and how we do what we do. This is far more helpful than trying to remember a decision-making technique to superimpose on our natural inclinations.

If you want to help others - as a coach, supervisor, colleague or leader - then understanding how people reach their decisions is essential. If you don't know how they make their decisions it will be hard for you to help them. Trying to reach a decision is a process that occurs over time and may involve a range of information, assumptions, reasoning,





feelings and impulses to act or to refrain from acting. Once the decision itself has been made, these all become evident or accessible. One is left with a simpler rationale, having declared the decision, with which to advocate or defend it.

Talking with an individual about what they are thinking and feeling as they move through this complex process can be of immense help to them. Advising them of what in your opinion is the best decision to make, on the other hand, is far less helpful - since it withdraws attention from the other person's decision-making process, leaving them no better equipped next time they face the same situation. The key to improving decision-making is first-hand learning, where realising oneself what is happening is all important to the learning.

PERSONAL DECISIONS AND ORGANISATIONAL DECISIONS

Decisions that we make regarding our personal lives (rather than our working roles) are largely based on the needs, interests, comforts and discomforts of ourselves and those around us. We are often seeking to maintain or to change the relationships with people close to us.

Organisational decisions are made in relation to the workplace and have a different complexity. Our role means that we have some kind of contract or formal relationship with the organisation. It is not only our own voice and interests that matter, but also the implicit and explicit responsibility to represent the organisation. We must consider the organisation's needs and interests, and those of other employees, clients, beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Organisations are decision-making structures that organise and distribute power through decision-making rights and accountabilities. Put simply, we are employed to make decisions, and we are accountable for the quality of those decisions and the resulting actions. Having to speak and act on behalf of others makes it more difficult. There are many meetings and teams to address this complexity, as anyone working in an organisation knows.

Yet there is an additional handicap! Typically, employees do not actually know what others in the organisation are doing or trying to do. They understand and concentrate on their own area of work, and



the reporting lines generally discourage asking about or interfering in decisions made in other parts of the organisation. Calling parts of the organisation 'divisions' is a telling description. It is apparent that organisational decision-making does have some different challenges from personal decision-making.

WHOSE DECISION IS IT?

Because of their complexity, many team meetings are convened within organisations. Generally, their aim is to make a decision or a series of decisions. This is not always as easy as it appears and sometimes the meeting can go around and around without a convincing decision being reached, leaving a sense of dissatisfaction. We have all probably had such an experience as a participant or facilitator. One aspect of this confusion or dysfunctionality in organisational decision-making can be addressed with a simple framework called *Whose Decision Is It?*

YOUR DECISION	TOGETHER DECISION	TOGETHER DECISION
NO DECISION	INFORM	TELL
YOUR DECISION	DELEGATE	INSTRUCT
MY DECISION	CONSULT	ASK
OUR DECISION	REACH CONSENSUS	AGREE
EACH DECIDES	DIALOGUE	ALIGN



Acknowledgement: P Garrett, J Ball



Confusion arises when people are not clear what their role is in the process. This framework emerged from work with a very inefficient new team that was making little progress. The team (who at that time were really a group rather than a team) always had a clear agenda that they followed, but they tended to argue without reaching constructive conclusions. As the source of the problem became clearer, the first facilitation step was to place a name (or names) as a lead against each agenda item so that it was clear who wanted it included in the meeting. Then the lead person was required to top and tail the consideration of their item. As they began, they were asked to say if a decision was to be made – and if so, what it was and by whom. Then at the close of their agenda item they were asked to say if a decision had been made – and if so, what it was so that it could be recorded. What a difference it made to those team meetings!

In the early meetings the lead participant's intentions had been quite vague. They mainly talked about what had happened since they last met, and occasionally about what they were endeavouring to do. This took the form of rambling reports designed to display how busy they had been, and essentially intended to impress their colleagues and the team leader. Update reports can be very helpful – but not if they take 80% of the meeting time and force decisions about other matters out of the meeting to be made privately later. The problem became blatant when, at the outset of an agenda item to which an hour had been allocated, it was apparent that it was for information only and no decision was required by the team. The solution? Instead, team members started to provide pre-reading or post-reading, and used five or 10 minutes to emphasise the key points that needed to be noted and why. This reversed the balance, and the team spent at most 20% of their time on 'no decision' updates rather than 80%.

There were other parts of the meetings where the team leader was delegating tasks or responsibilities to others. He was quite clear that they were to be determined by the team members to whom they were being given, and without further reference to him. These fitted the category of 'your decision'. There may be questions raised during the meeting for clarification, and any obvious gaps or duplications could be questioned, but then they moved on without an open consideration about how someone should do what was delegated to them. The reason



the tasks were delegated in the team meeting was so that everyone knew who was doing what. The requirement was outlined, and it was the team member's responsibility to decide how to manage it, not anyone else.

It was the next type of agenda item that started to build a team out of the group. The lead made clear it was their own decision to make, and they were asking for their colleague's input. They were consulting their colleagues for their experience, guidance, or ideas – but they were not giving away their responsibility and accountability for the decision to be made. As others realised how to contribute to this kind of consideration, they began to participate constructively, without trying to determine the outcome. Sometimes a decision was stated during the meeting, but more often the individual chose to ponder on the matter further before making their decision later. The group matured as people became helpful to each other's thinking.

Beyond that, there were a few decisions that required the agreement of every member of the team. Originally, they had been treating every item as if a consensus was needed, but it was surprising how infrequently that was really required. Generally, 'our decision' was needed for major corrective decisions that had a material impact on everyone present. Their earlier meetings had been so filled with 'no decision' updates that the big decisions would end up being made privately between the stronger members who then presented them as a fait accompli. To make 'our decision' well requires time. It needs attention to what is needed by the whole, as well as the benefit or cost to the individuals. This is like changing hats. Instead of wearing the hat of your own part of the organisation, each person is now invited to wear the hat of the whole team or organisation - and to make a decision for the good of the whole even though it may be detrimental to their part. Going to a vote is rightly seen as a failing, although it may occasionally prove necessary depending on the constraints of time. 'Our decisions' are binding on all the team members, deepening the ethical expectation for colleagues to support their collective decisions.

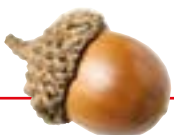
Lastly, there is the category of 'each decides'. For each to decide how to proceed in their own area, there needs to be a good sense of alignment amongst everyone. That is found through open Dialogue. People began





to learn how to listen to each other's situations and views respectfully, whilst explaining their own carefully and with the awareness that it was their best interpretation or understanding. People were not trying to win, or to back down. Instead, they sought a common understanding to which they all contributed. Gradually a feeling of common sense emerged about how to proceed. With this collective alignment there is a real team operating well individually and collectively. Dialogue is definitely needed in organisations and in teams.





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FACILITATION GUIDANCE

THE FACULTY

Introduce themselves as the co-facilitators

WELCOME

This educational course is recognised by the Academy of Professional Dialogue. You will receive a certificate of completion once you have attended all four parts of the course. All the materials you need are in the Library of our Learning Centre, and you can download them whenever you choose.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to explore decision-making and to learn how to use a dialogic approach to make better decisions in an organizational context. Of course, it will help you in your private life as well! There are four parts to the course:

PART 1: Conscious decision-making

PART 2: Decisions have a structure and a process

PART 3: Stories make decisions

PART 4: Our decisions affect others

INTRODUCTION

- Although we may not notice it, we decide what to do, or what not to do, hundreds of times every day.
- Most of these decisions are made habitually, unconsciously or on automatic.
(For example, we probably eat whatever we usually eat – unless we start a diet, in which case we have some rules and must deliberately decide what food to eat and not to eat.)
- The consequences of the many unconscious decisions we make

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may require us to make conscious decisions to correct the situation. (Like choosing to diet)

Are we conscious of how we make decisions? That is what we want to explore today.

CHECK-IN

- a. Co-ordinates (your name, organisational role, and physical location), and...
- b. In a sentence or two, describe how you like to think that you make decisions.

BYSTAND THE CHECK-IN noting who is in the room, the change of atmosphere and any key points of relevant content - leading into an open consideration:

HOW DO YOU SEE OTHER PEOPLE MAKING DECISIONS?

Name some approaches that have been mentioned already in the Check-in.

Compile a list of different approaches, including:

- Rule following
- By habit
- In people's own interests
- To satisfy the needs/interests of other key people (Art Kleiner's Core Group)
- Peer group acceptable norms
- Analysis and logic
- Go with the flow
- Not deciding and have others do it!

We may not have thought much about this activity that we do hundreds of times every day... and we do not always make decisions the way we





would like to think we do.

Distinguish between personal (non-work) decisions and organizational (work) decisions

- **PERSONAL** In our personal lives when we are not at work, we make decisions all the time based on the needs, interests, comforts and discomforts of ourselves and of those around us. These decisions are often about maintaining or changing the relationships with those who are close to us.
- **ORGANIZATIONAL** The workplace is somewhat different. Our role means we must also consider the needs and interests of the organisation, other employees, clients, and stakeholders. Organisations are decision-making structures. We are employed and paid to make decisions, and we are accountable for the quality of those decisions and the resulting actions. Furthermore, many people do not know what others in the organisation are doing or trying to do.

Consider dividing into small break-out groupings for people to think through what has been considered so far about conscious and unconscious decisions, about different ways of making decisions, and about the distinction between private/personal decisions and organisational decisions.

ENQUIRY: In some workplace meetings the decision-making goes round and round in circles without a clear decision being made. Have you experienced that at work?

There could be many reasons for that. One very simple cause is a lack of clarity about whose decision it is. There is a simple framing that can help any business meeting.

When each agenda item is introduced, specifically state if there is a decision to be made, and by whom.



GRAPHIC 1: WHOSE DECISION IS IT?

ACCOUNTABILITY	INTENTION	ACTIVITY
NO DECISION	INFORM	TELL
YOUR DECISION	DELEGATE	INSTRUCT
MY DECISION	CONSULT	ASK
OUR DECISION	REACH CONSENSUS	AGREE
EACH DECIDES	DIALOGUE	ALIGN

Talk through the framework, then have an open consideration about the impact this may have on the meeting, on the roles people play in the meeting, and on future agendas.

For example, in many meetings most of their time is spent on updates where no decision is required, leaving inadequate time for the decisions they do need to be made together.

FIELDWORK: In your next meetings, at the start of each agenda item clarify whose decision it is, and therefore what the role is of the various participants. Note the impact this has on the meetings, and bring your reflections to our next session together.





PART 2: DECISIONS HAVE A STRUCTURE AND A PROCESS

Few people realise that there is a simple structure and process to every decision. Understanding this makes it easier at a practical level to reach a decision, or to know why a decision is not being made. To consider this, we first need to look at the basic make-up of communication. This thinking is derived from the work of David Kantor, a (now deceased) member of the Academy. Peter Garrett and Jane Ball worked closely with him whilst developing the meaning of functionality within their Integrated Dialogue Model. His deep interest as a practicing family therapist was functional and dysfunctional communication.

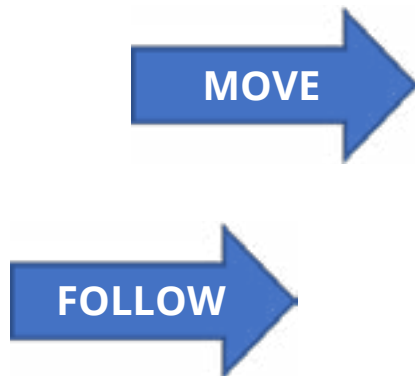
THE ESSENTIAL *STRUCTURE* OF COMMUNICATION

In this model, when we talk and think together there are just four actions we can make. By actions we are referring to the act of communicating, rather than to the content of what is said. These actions can be tracked reflectively after a conversation to understand what happened. Their greater value, however, is that they are simple enough to use live and be helpful in the moment when things are not working well, and people are not ending up where they are trying to go. The four Dialogic Actions are: a Move, a Follow, an Oppose and a By-stand. Each action does a different thing. The Move gives direction, the Follow gives completion, the Oppose gives correction and the By-stand gives perspective. Each time someone speaks they will either move, follow, oppose or by-stand.

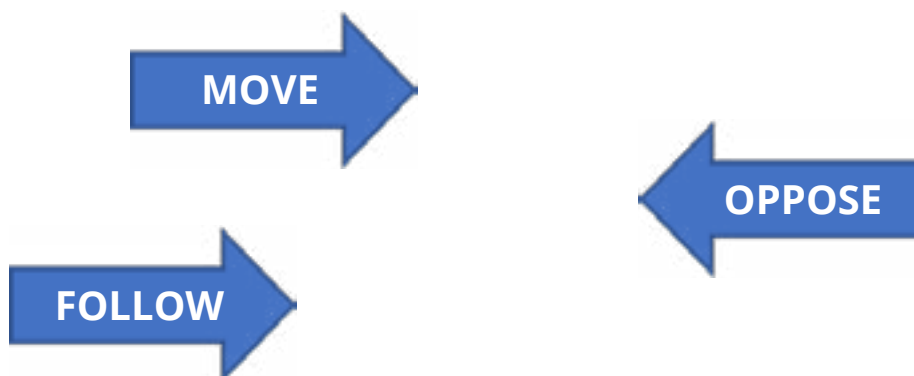
A MOVE: When someone makes a Move they introduce a subject or a topic. This is an invitation for others to go in that new direction. The opening action made at the start of any conversation or communication will be a move. It could take the form: "Let's talk about..."



A FOLLOW: Responding to that Move and going in the same direction is called a Follow. This may be a statement of agreement, or it may expand on the matter raised in the Move. This may sound like: “That is certainly of interest and concern to me...”

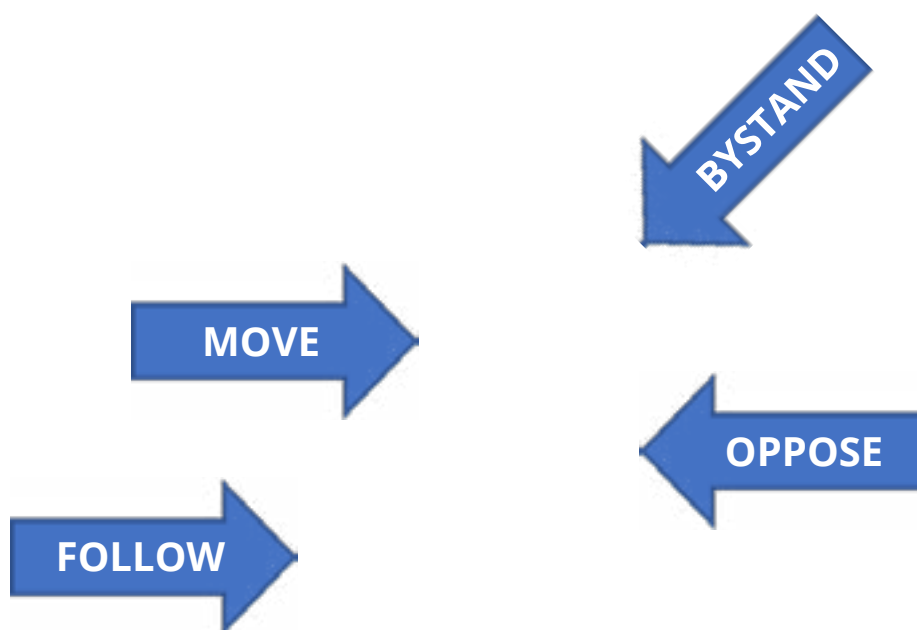


AN OPPOSE: Disagreeing with a Move and choosing not to go in the same direction is called an Oppose. This may stop the progress in the direction of the Move. It does not imply going in a different direction, just not going in the direction proposed by the Move. Perhaps: “We have talked about that so many times before that I am not prepared to do so again!”





A BY-STAND: When someone steps back to a neutral position and describes the process or dynamic they noticed, or the sequence of the various Actions they have heard, then that is called a By-stand. A By-stand is an observation about what is happening. It does not propose going in a new direction (a Move), going in the same direction someone has proposed (a Follow) or disagreeing with a direction (an Oppose). Instead, the By-stand describes what has been happening, perhaps by recalling the sequence of Actions. This is particularly helpful if the sequence is a repeated one that has or has not worked well in the past. By-standing can draw awareness to the process and its impact, relevance or helpfulness in the current situation. Perhaps: "I notice that two of you often raise this issue whilst John then refuses to consider it."



THE ACTIONS ARE SPOKEN

There is a difference between thinking and talking. The Actions become meaningful to others when they are spoken. Thinking about any of the Actions but not saying them is ineffective. That is like writing a letter or an email but not sending it. Thinking things and not saying them, and thereby not making your thoughts available to others, is one of the main causes of dysfunctional conversations. Learning how to say what you are thinking in a way that can be understood by others is part of learning how to communicate better with other people.



THE ESSENTIAL *PROCESS* OF COMMUNICATION

The process of a conversation or exchange between people is determined by the sequence in which the different Actions are made. For example, a brain storming session to generate new ideas takes the form of a series of Moves, each in a new direction. A repeated sequence of Moves then Opposes, however, is a different dynamic – namely a debate or an argument. The process of any verbal exchange between people can be described by the sequence of Actions involved. A change of sequence, and a change of which Actions are included makes all the difference. Politeness or courteous compliance is a Move and then a series of Follows. This sequence describes people agreeing in a superficial and perhaps a socially acceptable way.

THE PROCESS OF A DECISION

What about a decision? Described as a sequence of actions, a simple decision takes the form of a Move then a Follow. That is the most basic form of decision. It involves those two Actions in that sequence. “I think we are best to do X” followed by “I agree!” seals the decision between two people. It is worth noting that without the Move there cannot be a decision, and without the Follow there is no decision. If nobody makes these two actions when a decision is needed, they can be solicited. “Does anyone have a proposal for what we should do?” will encourage people to make Moves. This may be necessary because without a clear proposal (or move) there cannot be a meaningful decision. Similarly, to call for Follows, one might ask “Does anyone agree with the proposal that has been made?” It is surprising how often the decision-making process fails because there is no clear proposal (move) or no clear agreement (follow).

The sequence of move and follow is the essence of a command-and-control culture. It often takes the form: “This is what I want you to do...” and the response “Yes, Sir!”. In matters of urgent safety this may be appropriate and necessary. It may also be the case where there is the call for trust, respect or loyalty. Often, however, more of a process is required. A more carefully considered or rigorous decision amongst a group of people would involve all four of the actions, including opposes and by-stands. Opposes helpfully test the direction in which things are





going, perhaps because there is information that has been overlooked. By-stands draw attention to repeated sequences of actions which help or hinder the process. A more rigorous decision, therefore, begins with a move and ends with a follow or series of follows. In between are follows, opposes, by-stands and other moves.

A good supervisor, leader or facilitator can encourage more rigour in the group's decision-making. For example: "Before we finalise this decision, can you think of any reasons why it might not work?" That solicits opposes. "What would others say about the decision we are making?" encourages by-standing. It is helpful to take various views into account before making the decision, rather than encountering them after the decision has been made. Otherwise people may resent their views not being considered, and hearing them may necessitate a change to the decision.

USING THE ACTIONS EFFECTIVELY: CLEAN ACTIONS

The Actions work best when they are clearly understood by others. Generally, the simpler they are the better. An example of a simple and clean Follow is "Yes, I agree with your view". You might choose to pause, then to continue with an explanation that develops the thoughts and feelings behind your statement - but giving the explanation whilst missing out the clean Follow is far less effective. It is the follow that is decisive. Similarly, it is only a Follow if it is spoken. If someone asks: "Does anyone disagree with the proposal?" and is met with silence, a decision has not yet been made. They may then say "Fine, is nobody disagrees then we have agreed to proceed", but that is not really true, as may later be revealed.

USING THE ACTIONS SKILFULLY

COMPOUND ACTIONS: When a speaker contributes more than one action at a time, it is called a compound Action. This can be very effective. For example, one might say "I fully support your proposal, but I do not think your method is the best way to achieve it". That is a compound Action made up of a Follow then an Oppose. It secures agreement for part of what is said (the proposal), whilst seeking to correct another part (the method). Similarly, one might By-stand then



Move by saying “For some time we have been talking about three different proposals at the same time, and I see that we are not making much progress on any of them. I suggest we concentrate on one at a time”.

PROBLEMS THAT LEAD TO DYSFUNCTIONALITY: STUCK, DISABLED AND SPIN

STUCK: It is natural for people to have one or two stronger Actions that they are particularly effective at. A problem arises when they make one action repeatedly or exclusively, and they thus become **Stuck Actions**. Only moving, only opposing or repeatedly following or by-standing limits the exchanges that are possible. The repetition leaves everyone stuck and frustrated.

DISABLED: When people cannot make one or more of the Actions because they feel **disabled** from doing so, the situation becomes dysfunctional. Perhaps nobody can oppose because of the power differences in the room, or nobody can follow because as a group they are too proud or arrogant. If nobody by-stands, unhelpful sequences will be repeated – “here we go again!”

SPIN: Actions that are simple, clear, and put across respectfully are easy to respond to honestly and openly. It is harder when someone puts a **Spin** on the action they make. A spin doctor is someone who makes something appear to be different from what it really is. Putting **Spin** on an Action makes it harder to respond, much like in tennis, where adding topspin or slicing the ball makes it harder for the other player to return it. An example of spin is: “Well if you want to put it that way, I have no choice but to disagree with you”. That oppose has confused who is responsible for what, making it more difficult to respond. The clean version might be: “I do not agree with your idea”.

A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

The Dialogic Actions are a developmental model. The aim with the Dialogic Actions is for people to develop the skills to do all the Actions well. The value of the Dialogic Actions is that despite your natural preference or propensity to use some actions more than others, you are





encouraged to learn them all and to use each of them where needed. They are Actions, not labels or identities. By contrast, a labelling model is one where you accept yourself to be a certain type and must live with only being good at some activities whilst learning how to manage not being good at others. It would make no sense to say “I am a mover”. That would be like saying “I am a forehand”. Just as you would say “I played a forehand” so in this model you might say “I made a Move”.

GOOD DECISION-MAKING

In summary, everybody makes many decisions every day, and when people work in organisations they are employed to do so. They are responsible and accountable for making decisions, and the Dialogic Actions are particularly helpful in this regard. A simple decision in this model is a Move and then a Follow or a series of Follows. That is an efficient decision, and in times of emergency efficiency is essential – hence the command-and-control culture in such situations. A more rigorous decision, however, requires all four Actions. The Moves provide the proposals, the Follows support them, the Opposes challenge to correct or improve them, and the Bystands reveal repetitive sequences of Actions that inadvertently may be interfering with the clarity of the decision being made. A more rigorous decision begins with a move and ends with a follow or a series of follows. In between are all four of the other actions. The additional skills are to make clear actions rather than adding spin; to beware of getting stuck by repeating just one or two actions; and to use compound actions to gain common ground whilst making more rigorous decisions.







FACILITATION GUIDANCE

If doing the longer version of the course, you have 1¾ hrs for this part. Take up to 15 mins to review the fieldwork from Part 1, probably in the form of a check-in that the facilitators then by-stand.

Welcome to the second part of our course.

In this second part we are going to look at the structure and process of any decision.

Think about a challenging decision in an organisational context that you have already made, or one that you are trying to make with others. Decisions in organisations involve other people, and we must communicate with them. What are some of the challenges?

Either all together - or in small break-out groupings and then hearing an example from some of the groupings

Encourage an open conversation about the challenges of making decisions with others in an organisational context.

INTRODUCE THE DIALOGIC ACTIONS: There is a way of thinking about communication that can help avoid some of these difficulties and dysfunctions. It is derived from the work of an Academy member, David Kantor (deceased), who actively contributed to Peter Garrett and Jane Balls' work developing Professional Dialogue.

1. THE ESSENTIAL STRUCTURE OF COMMUNICATION: To simplify things, we can look at the structure of communication. In this model, when we talk and think together there are just four actions we can make. This is not the content, but the act of communicating itself.

Introduce the four Actions in sequence so that people can recognise them:

Move: Demonstrate a series of Moves

Follow: Demonstrate a series of Moves and Follows



Oppose: Demonstrate a series of Moves and Opposes

By-stand: Demonstrate a series of Moves. Follows, Opposes and By-stands

AN EXERCISE TO GET THE FEEL OF THE DIALOGIC ACTIONS: How do we use these actions all the time? Have a whole group conversation where anyone can add a sentence, then name the action (M F O or B) they used.

2. THE ESSENTIAL PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION: Once participants can identify and use the Actions, then look at the sequences, which is the process of the communication.

Brain storming = M M M M M

Argument = M O, M O, M O

Abstraction or Hall of Mirrors = M B B B B

Courteous Compliance = M F F F F F

Simple Decision = M F

Rigorous Decision = M + (Fs Os Ms Bs) + Fs

What does this tell us about decisions? To reach a decision you have to have a Move and you have to have a Follow (or Follows). Without a Move and a Follow you cannot make a decision.

How do you solicit Moves and Follows?

The simple decision is best in a command-and-control situation, for example regarding safety – “Do that! Yes Sir!”

Generally, a rigorous decision helps everyone much more. This needs all four actions within a ‘sandwich’ that starts with a Move and ends with Follows.

Some teams/organisations/cultures don’t like to Oppose, whilst others don’t like to Move or to Follow. By-standing is helpful to identify stuck sequences, but is rarely done (apart from by some consultants and facilitators who sometimes can’t stop by-standing!)





EXPLORE THE ADVERBS: The quality of the Actions can vary...

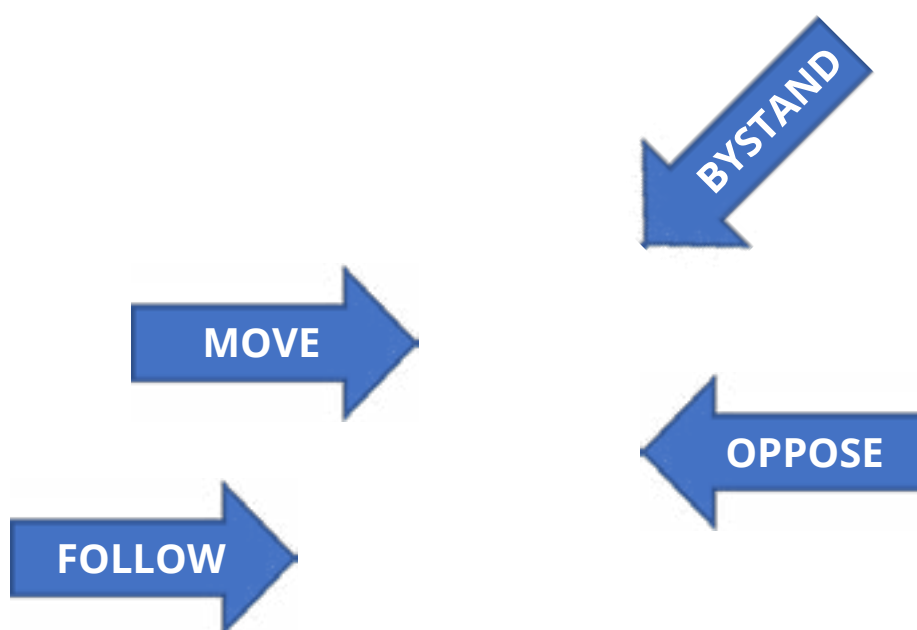
Stuck (repeating only one Action)

Disabled (unable to do one of the Actions)

Clean (simple and clear) vs **Spin** (the spin doctor makes it look different from what it is; spinning the ball in tennis makes it harder to hit back)

Single Action (simple) or **Compound Actions** (several actions together - e.g. a Follow and an Oppose)

GRAPHICS 2 & 3: THE DIALOGIC ACTIONS & THE FOUR MOVES IN THE ARTICLE



FIELD WORK: Do some self-analysis about communication. When (in what situations) do you Move, Follow, Oppose and By-stand best at work? And at home? When do you get stuck? And when are you disabled? In what situations do you spin the action?

Then consider the impact on decision-making. When do you make simple and clean Moves and Follows? When do you help others to do so? How might you confuse the decision-making process for others?







PART 3: STORIES MAKE DECISIONS

WE MAKE SENSE THROUGH STORY

To decide what to do, we draw on our understanding of the situation. Curiously, that understanding takes the form of a story. This phenomenon is so common that you may not have noticed it. If someone is asked what the situation is, they will tell a story about it. It is their version of what is really going on. These sense-making stories all have a past (what has happened), a present (what is happening now), and a future (what may or will happen). That is the nature of a story. Within that unfolding process, we make our decisions in the present to help to determine the future. By making that decision, we are determining what to do (or not to do) to affect the future in some way.

Although we may think we are making the decision, in large part it is our story that determines what decision we make. This is not problematic when everyone involved has a similar story from which they are acting. Then people will be reasonably aligned in the decisions they make and what they do. We can celebrate the diversity. It is often the case, however, that those involved have different stories or understandings that are at odds with those held by others. When people are acting from very different and conflicting stories, it causes trouble. It leads to misunderstandings, confusion, counter-productive activity, frustration, and perhaps anger.

ADVOCACY AND ENQUIRY

It is apparent that if we want to work well together, we will need to check the accuracy and validity of our own and other people's stories. To do this we need to distinguish between *advocacy* and *enquiry*. Put most simply, advocacy is telling, whilst enquiry is asking. Stories are told. They are a form of telling what we know that naturally leads to what to do next. It is our stories that are informing our decisions and telling us what to do. In contrast, enquiry is the way to find out what we don't know. An enquiring mind wants to discover more and to understand more. Enquiry is helpful where we have different stories about the same situation. We could ask: "What do our stories have in common, and in



what ways are our stories different?" Not knowing, asking, and wanting to know are different aspects of good enquiry. The stories may prove to be accurate, or they may be only partly accurate and benefit from the additional information, perspective and rationale revealed through the enquiry.

ENQUIRY AND ASKING QUESTIONS

Enquiry is a skill that is harder than it first appears as we are often conditioned by childhood experiences at school. There teachers ask the questions, and as pupils we are expected to find the 'right' (pre-determined) answer to any question we are asked. As a result, we tend to be more familiar with the focussed nature of advocating the right answer, and to be less comfortable with the openness and receptivity that is natural to enquiry. Good questions can help the enquiry. For example, an open question like: "What might I have overlooked?" may reveal things that we had not thought to ask about. Closed questions that lead to "yes" or "no" answers, on the other hand, are generally less helpful because they constrain the scope of the enquiry tightly. The least helpful questions assume the answer is obvious and are intended to confirm the pre-determined answer, such as: "Do you agree that this was the wrong thing to do?"

It is worth noting that some questions are not enquiries at all. Rhetorical questions like "It is hot, isn't it!" or "Do you really think she deserved that?" both have underlying statements (namely: *I am hot* and *She did not deserve that*) and are really statements not enquiry.

HOW TO ENQUIRE WELL

If we find ourselves in a situation where people are making conflicting decisions and actions, then we have a number of different stories. We can argue about whether one decision or action is better than another, and to do so we use advocacy. We can try to persuade or force others to yield. To end up with aligned decisions and actions, however, we need greater common ground in our stories. Put simply, to change the decisions being made we must change the story. The most helpful enquiry, therefore, is one that checks the story and tries to understand how it is informing the thinking and understanding. A question like





“What led me, or you, to interpret what happened the way we did?” is a good starting point. A simple check of the quality of our enquiry is whether we think we already have the answer to our own question. If we have the answer on the tip of our tongue, then the question is almost certainly driven by advocacy.

STORIES AND AUTHORS

We each have many different stories and we tell them every day. Some we tell other people, and some we only repeat internally within our private thoughts. There are first-hand stories (we were there) about people we know and the situation we are in. Clearly, we are the authors of our own first-hand stories, and as we tell them we may recall more relevant details that we had previously overlooked. Other stories are second or third-hand (we were not there). These are stories we have heard or read about people and the circumstances around us. Despite that, we may find ourselves with surprisingly strong views about people we have never met, and situations we have never encountered. Although these stories were written or spoken by other people, it is important to note the degree to which we author our own version of those stories. We choose what to notice, what to attribute significance to, and what to remember and repeat. It may be someone else’s story, but it becomes our version or interpretation of their account of what happened.

STORIES AND STORYLINE

Individuals have stories, and so do teams, divisions and whole organisations. This may all look rather complex at an organisational level, given the many people and stories involved. If we look carefully, however, we will find beneath the many stories are relatively few storylines. The storyline is how the story works and the storyline embodies its rationale. To get a sense of this, take the play *Romeo and Juliet* by Shakespeare. It is a story of five acts that takes hours to perform. The underlying storyline is somewhat simpler – the tragedy of how the misunderstanding between lovers from feuding families leads them to choose suicide rather than separation. It is the storyline that informs the decision about how to act. We may not need to pay



attention to every detail in the story, but we do need to check the storyline carefully.

The author's propensities make a difference. We may be pessimistic until things prove they can work – or alternatively be optimistic despite often failing. If we by-stand ourselves and the kind of stories we make, we can find the patterns of our storylines. These storylines drive our decision-making within the many situations we find ourselves. There are consequences. Things may work even less because of the pessimistic storyline we attribute to the situation and the decisions we make that affect the later outworking – or our optimism may help create the generative climate within which things succeed more often.

WHY DO WE HAVE DIFFERENT STORIES ABOUT THE SAME SITUATION?

People in the same situations can form very different stories about what is happening. How can that be? There are several reasons:

1. I might be wrong, but I doubt it!

This is a lack of awareness of one's blind spot. Why bother checking my own story with any seriousness if it is self-evidently the case? Anyone of reasonable mind would see what I see. People who do not agree are perverse and unreasonable.

Other people have other perspectives (from below not above; on entering rather than leaving; and so on) that are equally self-evident to them.

2. If I had known that!

I took everything I knew into account, but I didn't know what I didn't know. With the additional information you are now telling me I would have made a different decision.

Our stories may be different because we are aware of different participants and events from each other. We have a different content of consciousness from each other.





3. I just didn't think about it that way!

For example: "It never occurred to me that in their own way they were trying to be helpful rather than trying to prevent us succeeding..."

As authors our logic and reasoning may be faulty. We may have concentrated on the impact others had on us, and as a result made misplaced attributions about their intentions.

4. I look after my own affairs and let others look after theirs

This is the localised mentality of 'I'm alright, Jack'. I ignore the impact I may be having on others and look after my own interests: "If I didn't sell them cocaine, someone else would."

As Lead Belly sang: "We're in the same boat brother – and if you shake one end you're going to rock the other – in the same boat brother."

5. Collectively-held stories

I think the same way as many people I know and respect. This is the challenge of sub-cultural groupings that hold their stories collectively as part of their identity – religiously (Muslim or Hindu), organisationally (Management and Unions), politically (left and right), educationally (lecturers and students) and so on.

Collectively-held stories may be inherited and repeatedly reinforced collectively. An intervention is required to align the collectively held stories of different sub-cultural groupings working together in the same organisation.

WHY WE NEED DIALOGUE FOR GOOD DECISION-MAKING

Dialogue is a way of talking and thinking together to find a common meaning. **Dia** means *through* (as a diameter is a line through the centre of a circle) and **logos** is *the word or meaning*. Dialogue is a common meaning amongst a group of people. That meaning takes the form of a story, and organisationally we are seeking to establish a common story about the organisation – its direction, purpose, contribution and the way we work together to achieve that.





FACILITATION GUIDANCE

If doing the longer version of the course, you have 1¾ hrs for this part. Take up to 15 mins to review the fieldwork from Part 2, probably in the form of a check-in that the facilitators then by-stand.

The decisions we make are based on our understanding of the situation. If you pause to think about it, or ask someone else what the situation is, you will find this takes the form of a story. The story will have a past (what we believe happened), a present (what we believe is happening now), and a future (what we believe could or will happen). We want to affect the future by deciding how best to act now. It is our story that determines our decision.

To make a good decision we need an accurate story. We must check our story to be sure we are making the right decision – and to do this requires enquiry. Sometimes it is hard to check the story we hold because it seems self-evidently the case – “I might be wrong, but I doubt it!”

AN ENQUIRY EXERCISE

Have participants think of a difficult situation where at some time they will need to decide what to do. This can be organisational or personal. Then ask for volunteers who are willing to describe their problem situation.

Note: Look for genuine participants with real situations where a decision will need to be made – not ‘tricksters’ with a situation that has already been resolved, or where it is not their decision to make. Work as one whole group, or if too large perhaps divide into two groupings, one with each co-facilitator.

This is an enquiry exercise. Normally when someone has a problem, people suggest what to do. In this exercise that is unhelpful. The aim is to enquire into the story that will be the basis of the later decision.



Describe the three roles:

1. The volunteer: describes their situation by telling their story about the difficulty they face and where they will need to decide what to do.
2. The other participants: enquire into the story - but do not advocate by giving advice or telling the volunteer what to do.
3. The facilitator: intervene where necessary to ensure there is no advocacy, and keeps time.

The process: a) First hear the volunteer's story, then b) open the floor for enquiry. The volunteer is free to answer any enquiry questions, but there is no obligation to do so and they can just think about them and not respond. If they are asked a really good question they will probably be unable to respond immediately. c) The facilitator invites the volunteer to close the exercise by saying how they are now thinking and feeling about the situation. Finally, d) debrief the exercise by asking the enquirers how easy they found it to actually enquire and to ask about what they did not know.

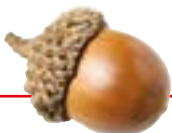
The learnings?

1. It is the story that makes the decision. We must have a story to understand any situation, and often the story is good enough. When we hit problems, check the story before deciding and acting.
2. We are the authors of the story, and we select what to include and exclude in our stories. If we by-stand our decision-making process, we will find errors and challenges that repeat themselves in the way we author our stories.

Encourage an open consideration: Where and how can our understanding of the situation be poorly formed or inaccurate? How do people in the same situation form such different stories of what happened?

Include some of the following thinking that leads to fragmented understanding:

- I believe that what I saw was self-evidently true! *It was to me from*





my unique perspective – but others have their different perspectives.

- We don't have the same information. *Others may know things that we do not*
- We heard a second or third-hand account. *It left out significant information*
- We attributed an intention that was inaccurate. *I know the impact she had on me, so I assumed that was her intention.*
- Our logic or reasoning was poor. *One swallow doesn't make a summer.*
- We overlooked our own contribution to the problem. *Well, that was not what I meant.*
- We assumed that what has happened before was happening again. *Our storyline, added by us!*

FIELD WORK:

1. Notice how your stories make your decisions! Before making a decision that affects someone else, try enquiring into their story about the situation and compare it with your own story.
2. In preparation for part 4 of the course, find a good story of a decision made within an organisation that did not work out as the decision-maker intended.







PART 4: OUR DECISIONS AFFECT OTHERS

HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU ARE MAKING GOOD DECISIONS?

Working in an organisation we are tasked with making decisions within our area of responsibility and we are accountable for those decisions, so the most basic measure of a good decision is that it is compliant with the requirements of our role. To not be so would imply incompetence. In every organisation there are areas that fall short of this basic measure of compliance, exacerbated no doubt by staff turnover and changing requirements. Beyond that it is reasonable to expect our decisions to enhance the quality and improve the quantity of our performance output. That implies that we don't need to keep amending or reversing our decisions, which would be counter-productive to better performance. Despite meeting these two measures of *compliance* and *performance*, we find that some of our decisions do not work out as well as we had intended. There may be various reasons for this, but a major cause is that our decisions affect other people in ways we had not anticipated.

ASSUMING WHAT OTHERS NEED

It is obvious that some of our decisions will have an impact on others, and no doubt there are times when we are particularly careful to consider what we assume this will be. Yet despite our intention to be helpful, people may still react and complain. The next measure of a good decision, therefore, is that our decisions *serve* others by helping them to *comply* and *perform* well. To serve others, we must take their needs into account in a way that helps them. Isn't it obvious what others need? If it were, we could assume these needs, but unfortunately it is not obvious what others need. We do not have the perspective held by others. The reason for this is inherent in the structure of all organisations of any size – namely *organisational fragmentation*.

Organisations are efficient due to specialisation (concentrating on one function and giving less attention to others), hierarchy (focussing on your own level of decision-making and leaving others to manage theirs) and location (the geographic or online communities that determine



most of our formal and informal interactions). It is the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation that inevitably leaves us uninformed about what others in the organisation are trying to do, and the challenges they are facing. We simply don't know because we interact with them so little.

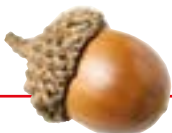
ORGANISATIONAL FRAGMENTATION AT TEAM LEVEL

What is called a team in name may lack the attributes of team in attitude and behaviour. In a well-functioning team, people support and challenge each other to serve the whole team better. In a good team the members understand their team colleagues, and where they are challenged by compliance and performance issues. It is good to ask if we know how our colleagues are managing in their different roles. What are we doing that helps or hinders them, and vice versa? The easiest way to find out is to introduce a Check-in and a Check-out at the start and close of each team meeting that asks and addresses these kinds of questions together. This is the simplest way to transform a team and its decision-making skills.

What about between teams? The solution is much the same, but the opportunities may be less obvious. The first step is to ask for feedback with open questions about where we and our team are helpful, and where we are unhelpful. As the interface challenges become more apparent, a meeting of the two interfacing teams can be very effective in shifting the quality of decision-making. Rather than assuming or anticipating what people need, why not ask them before making the decision! There are high-performing teams - ones given accolades and awards for their own brilliant performance - that are highly problematic to other teams with whom they interface. An organisation is a complex organism where each part affects other parts. When building a team, it is essential to see how it can better serve those teams with which it interfaces.

THE MODES OF TALKING AND THINKING TOGETHER

Decision-making, which is at the core of the organisation's success, is substantially enabled in teams and organisations by the use and understanding of the Modes of Talking and Thinking Together.





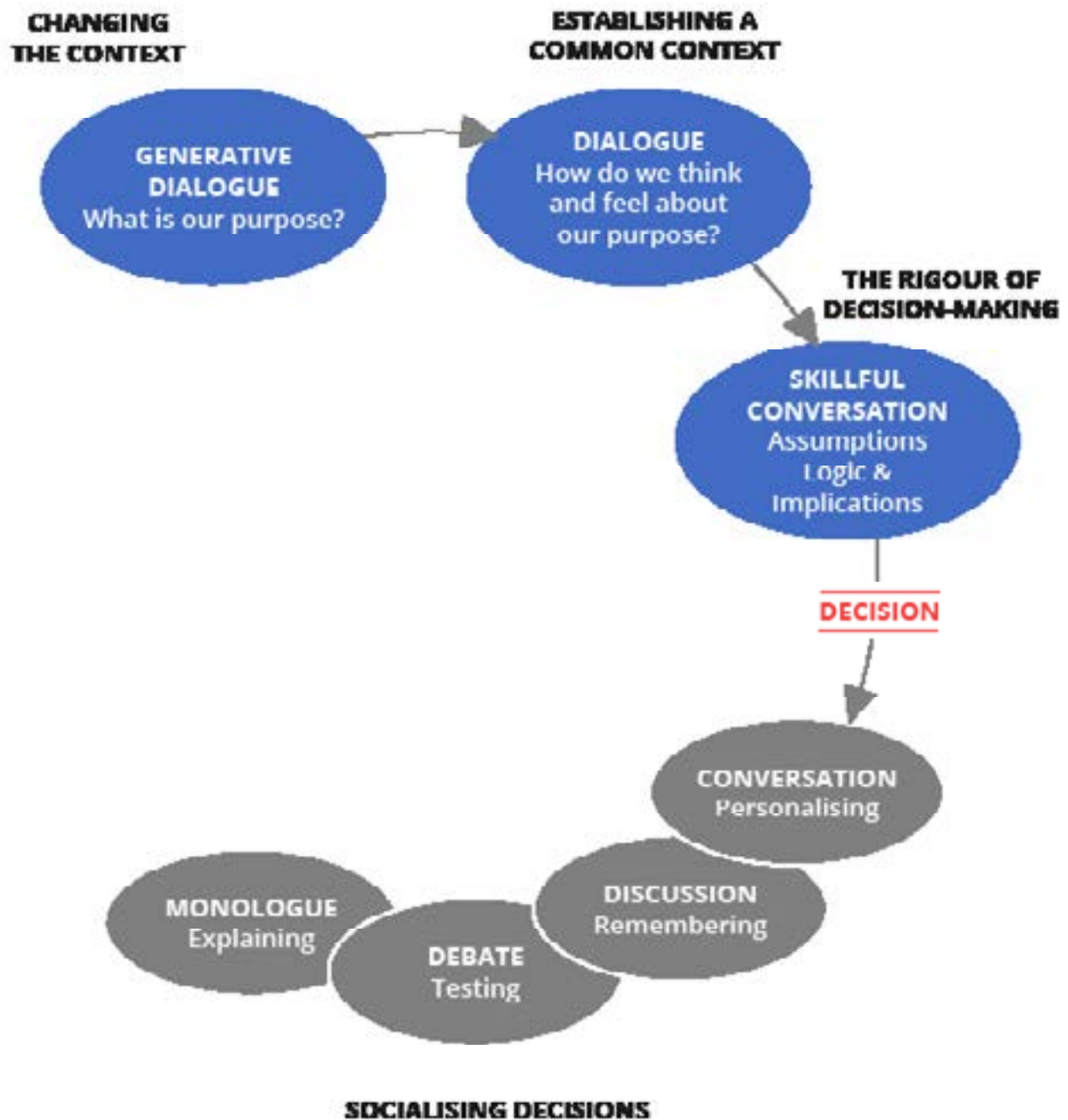
There are seven Modes or ways of talking together. Each has a different function in the decision-making process. Knowing that the decisions we make affect others, and realising the complexity and fragmentation inherent in organisations, the need is for a common context within which decisions are made. This takes us back to the root meaning of Dialogue: **dia** means *through* (as a diameter is the line through the centre of a circle) and **logos** is *the word or meaning*. Hence *Dialogue is a way of finding a common meaning in a group of people*. That is the fundamental starting point of good decisions – that they are aligned through a common understanding. People are participating in a common story about the organisation and what they are trying to do together. That is why we need to bring the little-known skills of Dialogue into organisations.

There are occasions where no single story seems able to encompass the past. Perhaps the different historical stories are held too deeply by conflictual sub-cultural groupings. Then a new story must emerge



through Generative Dialogue, changing the paradigm at times of fundamental change.

THE MODES IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS





Through Dialogue we establish the common understanding and the common sense. Without this, apparently good decisions can be made in different parts of the organisation that prove counter-productive to others. The dynamic is much like a three-legged race. However, when our commonly held understanding and story do provide a common context, then each individual, team or department can make decisions regarding their own area of responsibility and accountability, knowing that their decisions will be coherent with what others are doing. It would be unwieldy and unrealistic for everyone to be involved in every decision. Instead, the smaller groupings use Skillful Conversation for rigorous decisions in relation to their accountabilities. The common organisational story informs the many pockets of specialised, hierarchical and locational thinking and decision-making.

For decisions to take root they must be socialised. We know that we make most of our decisions on automatic, as we considered in the first part of this course. The automatic decisions need monitoring, otherwise by habit we may do the equivalent of driving to our work location when it is the weekend and we intended to go elsewhere for leisure. The phenomenon is called regression. Without individual and collective attention through socialisation, we will find ourselves regressing to patterns of behaviour based on outdated storylines. Through Dialogue, and through our decisions we have changed the storyline, but the outdated one may reappear simply through habit.

Conversation is the Mode through which we manage this individually. In conversation with others we find we can easily translate the ongoing changes into our personal experience, attitude and disposition as we go about our daily work. This is important because it allows the changing situation to be accommodated in one's personal life as well. Similarly, Discussion is an easy way for us to remind ourselves of the new situation and to accommodate it in our many meetings. Where we can't get things clear in our thinking, Debate is the useful mode to get everything out in the open by arguing for and against different aspects of our changing worlds. Last, but not least, is Monologue. We need Monologue to inspire, to guide, to include, to exhort and to bring balance to the disparate factors we are managing everyday in an organisation.



It is time to let go of the idea that an organisation is like a large machine with endless cogs turning in predefined ways without awareness of or regard for each other. We are far better served by the idea that an organisation is a living form where each individual plays a part and is related to and aware of the whole organisation. The sense of connectedness with every other part - from top to bottom, across every discipline and in every area – is achieved through the common story that enables aligned decisions throughout. That is at the heart of Dialogic Decision-Making.

DIALOGIC ENGAGEMENT, ORGANISATIONAL DECISION-MAKING AND WORKING DIALOGUES

This course sits in the middle of three courses. The first course, that is called Dialogic Engagement, is a consideration of the seven Modes of Talking and Thinking together, and of their structure, process and skillful use. This course positions Dialogue and the other Modes in relation to organisational Decision-making. The third course is an applied course for use within organisations, called a Working Dialogue. The Working Dialogue is a structured and facilitated decision-making process for use in complex situations that involve different levels of hierarchy, different specialisations in the organisation and different locations. Clearly, Dialogue is at the heart of its success and it is facilitated by Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners.

A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING

These three courses open the door to a different way of working. For those who are interested, a career can be developed in Professional Dialogue through the accredited programmes approved by the Academy of Professional Dialogue. The entry programme is called A Different Way of Working and provides the skills and frameworks needed to *Bring Dialogue into the Room*. That lays the foundation for the *Dialogic Intervention* programme, and then for professional *Systemic Dialogue* work.



FACILITATION GUIDANCE

If doing the longer version of the course, you have 1¾ hrs for this part. Take up to 15 mins to review the fieldwork from Part 3, probably in the form of a check-in that the facilitators then by-stand.

Welcome the participants to the final part of the course where we want to consider how our decisions affect others. Open with small break-out groupings to find stories of decisions made in an organisation that didn't work out as intended. Hear a couple of organisational stories to ground the thinking and the widespread challenges of good decision-making.

Encourage an open consideration into *why do some decisions not lead to the intended outcomes?*

Note that these decisions may have met the organizational rule book (comply) and helped delivery locally (perform) but they did not help others (serve).

Lead into the question: *What inevitably happens when people have very different stories about the situation?* How do our actions affect them, and vice versa how do their actions affect us?

ORGANIZATIONAL FRAGMENTATION

Organisations are inherently fragmented:

- By hierarchy: more senior and more junior people have access to different information, hold different levels of authority and accountability and consequently have different perspectives
- By specialisation: people know more about their own field of endeavour whilst knowing little or nothing about the work of other departments
- By location, geographically or online: where they meet formally and informally with people they see more often, and may never engage people in other locations and divisions of the organization



As a result, decisions are often made without the awareness or input of those affected by those decisions. It is almost inevitable that different people hold different stories (understandings) about the situation in (and of) their organization. Note: the widely held assumption that people don't like change is inaccurate. It is more accurate to say that people don't like it when their story (their understanding) is excluded from the decisions made that lead to change.

Knowing that, we can start to check the way others are thinking and the stories they have about themselves, their work and us. We can test the outcomes of potential decisions with those affected before making decisions.

Within a team: Have you enquired into the stories held (and told) by your colleagues about the team you are all in? Are you all trying to do the same thing, or is it a three-legged race?

Perhaps ask through a team Check-in. Ask for examples of helpful Check-ins

Between teams: Decisions made in one team affect other teams. How is your team helpful and unhelpful to what other related teams are trying to do? What stories do they have about your team?

Perhaps ask individuals from other teams for feedback – or arrange a meeting of the two teams to explore how they are working together and could be more helpful to each other.

We use the Modes of Talking and Thinking Together for better organisational decision-making.

INTRODUCE GRAPHIC 4: THE MODES OF TALKING AND THINKING TOGETHER

- Organisational decisions require good use of the Modes

Setting the context for organisational decision-making

- **Dialogue** is the mode to incorporate all the stories into a common story about the situation
(*dia = through, logos = word or meaning, so a common meaning amongst a group of people*)





- Occasionally there are subcultural groupings that each have their own embedded story, and these stories are so fragmented that there is little common ground. Then **Generative Dialogue** may be needed to shift the context to one that enables a common story.

Making decisions

- Once there is a common story, we no longer need to tell the participants what to do and what not to do. They can each decide how to act in their own area of accountability, using the rigour of **Skillful Conversation**. Refer to Part 2: a rigorous decision $M + (M, F, O, Bs) = Fs$

Socialising decisions to put what they imply into practice and to incorporate the change into everyday work. (This addresses regression). We use the other four Modes:

- **Conversation** personalises the decision and reconciles it with personal values
- **Discussion** reminds people and breaks habitual behaviour
- **Debate** is helpful to get to the bottom of things and find resolution
- **Monologue** is good for direction and inspiration.

SHOW GRAPHIC 4: THE MODES AND DECISION-MAKING

The learnings? Decision-making is a process, and needs the right mode for the relevant part of the process: Dialogue to find a common story, Skillful Conversation to make the decision and other Modes to socialise the decision.

INFORM PEOPLE ABOUT THE WORKING DIALOGUE: Working Dialogue is a structured and facilitated intervention pattern for making good decisions in complex situations with multiple stakeholders and accountabilities. Together, Dialogic Engagement, Dialogic Decision-making and Working Dialogue cover the practice, theory and skills for



sustainable decision-making in organisations by supervisors, managers and leaders.

REVIEW THE FOUR PARTS BEFORE THE CHECK OUT

This is partly the content (as below) and partly turning points in the behaviour of participants.

PART 1: Conscious decision-making

Unconscious and conscious decision-making, ways of making decisions, Whose Decision Is It?

Show the graphic

PART 2: All decisions have a structure and a process

Dialogic Actions M F O B, Courteous Compliance, Simple Decision, Rigorous Decision

Show the two graphics

PART 3: Stories make decisions

Understanding is held as a story with a past, a present and a future. The rigour is in the story that determines the decision.

PART 4: Our decisions affect others

Organisational fragmentation, different stories, the Modes and Decision-Making

Show the two graphics

CHECK-OUT

What are you starting to understand about decision-making?

END with the Faculty

This is the beginning, not just the end. The end of the course but the beginning of learning first-hand about the decision-making process and how to make better decisions in an organizational context. What are you taking into this beginning?





REFERENCES:

[Dialogic Engagement course details](#)

[Dialogic Decision-making course details](#)

[Working Dialogue applied course details](#)

[A Different Way of Working programme details](#)

[A New Kind of Dialogue by Peter Garrett](#)

[TWND! 1 to 4](#)



ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE CERTIFIED COURSES

On completion of Dialogic Decision-Making you will be issued with a Certificate of Participation by the Academy of Professional Dialogue. A sequenced programme of further courses is available from the Academy to enable you to develop the professional skills and understanding that will be of value to you in any organisational or social setting. For details, please check the Academy's website: aofpd.org. Participation in these courses will benefit those who apply to become an accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner, thereby being authorised to deliver the Academy's educational courses.





DIALOGUE PUBLICATIONS

Dialogue Publications was founded in 2017 to make Professional Dialogue materials available internationally. The editors release an annual publication entitled *The World Needs Dialogue!* (hardback and e-book), covering the Working Papers considered by Members at the Academy's annual conference. Other publications include books authored by Academy Members, as well as supporting materials for all educational programmes and courses accredited by the Academy.

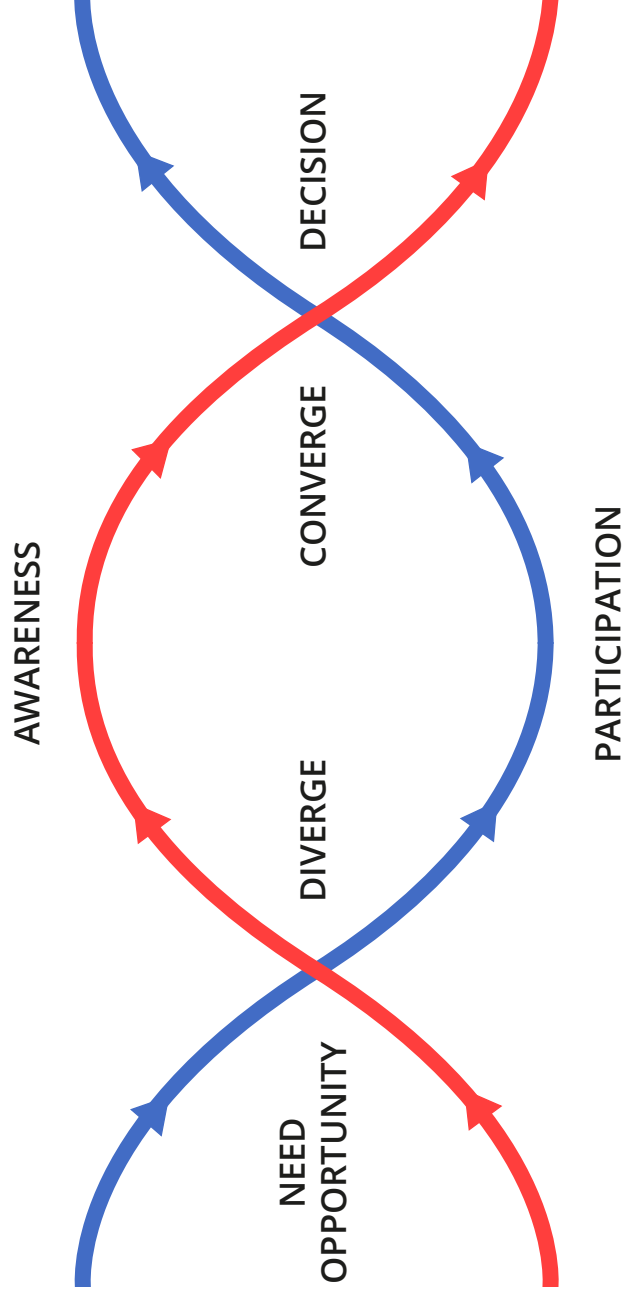




THE ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE

The Academy is an educational non-profit charity that promotes and inspires the international use of Professional Dialogue for the benefit of society. The primary aims are to inform people about the practice of Professional Dialogue in organisational and social settings, to acknowledge the work done by skilled Dialogue Practitioners around the world, to provide professional affiliation and to develop the field of Dialogue into a profession.

Decision-Making Process...



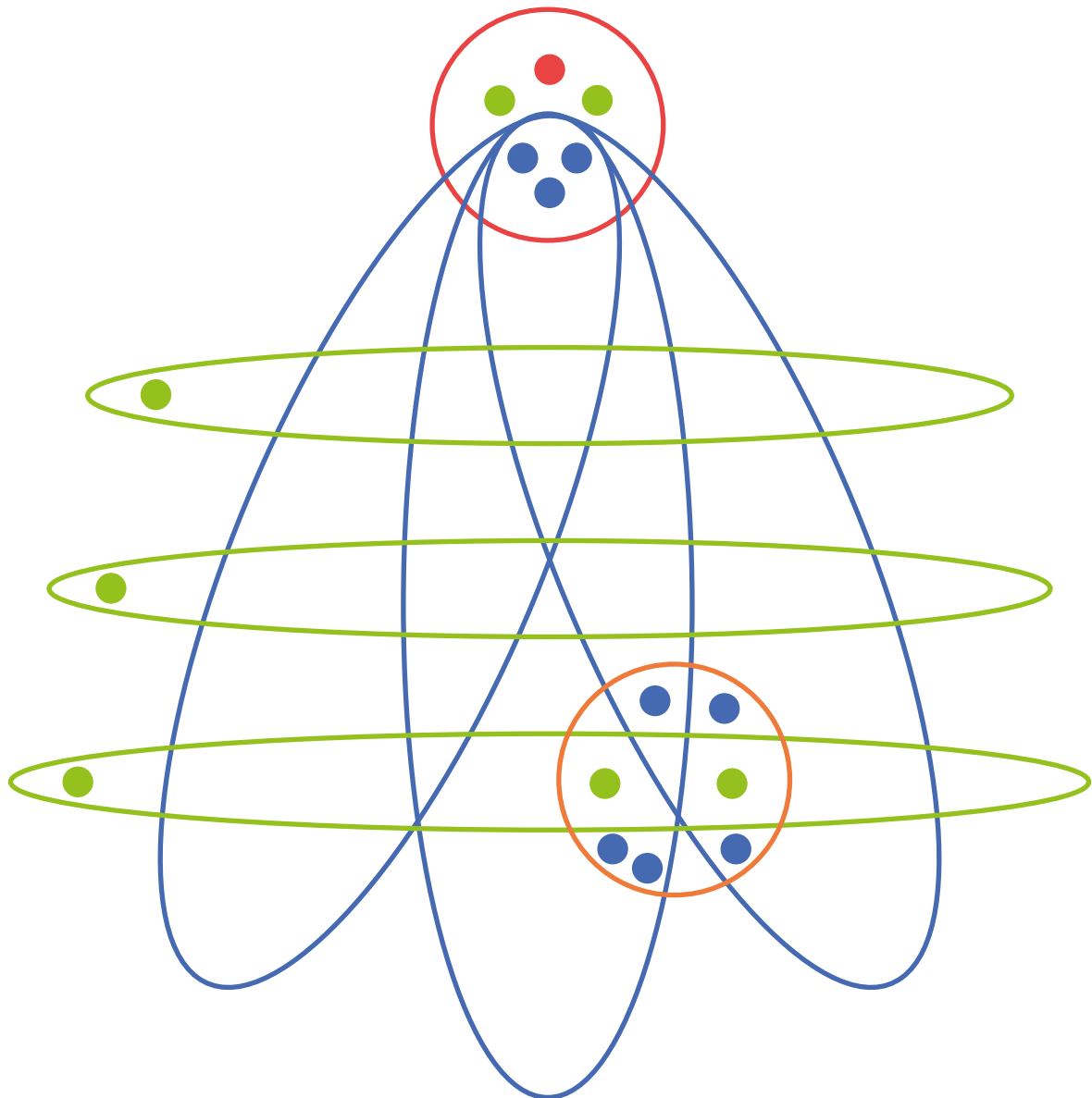
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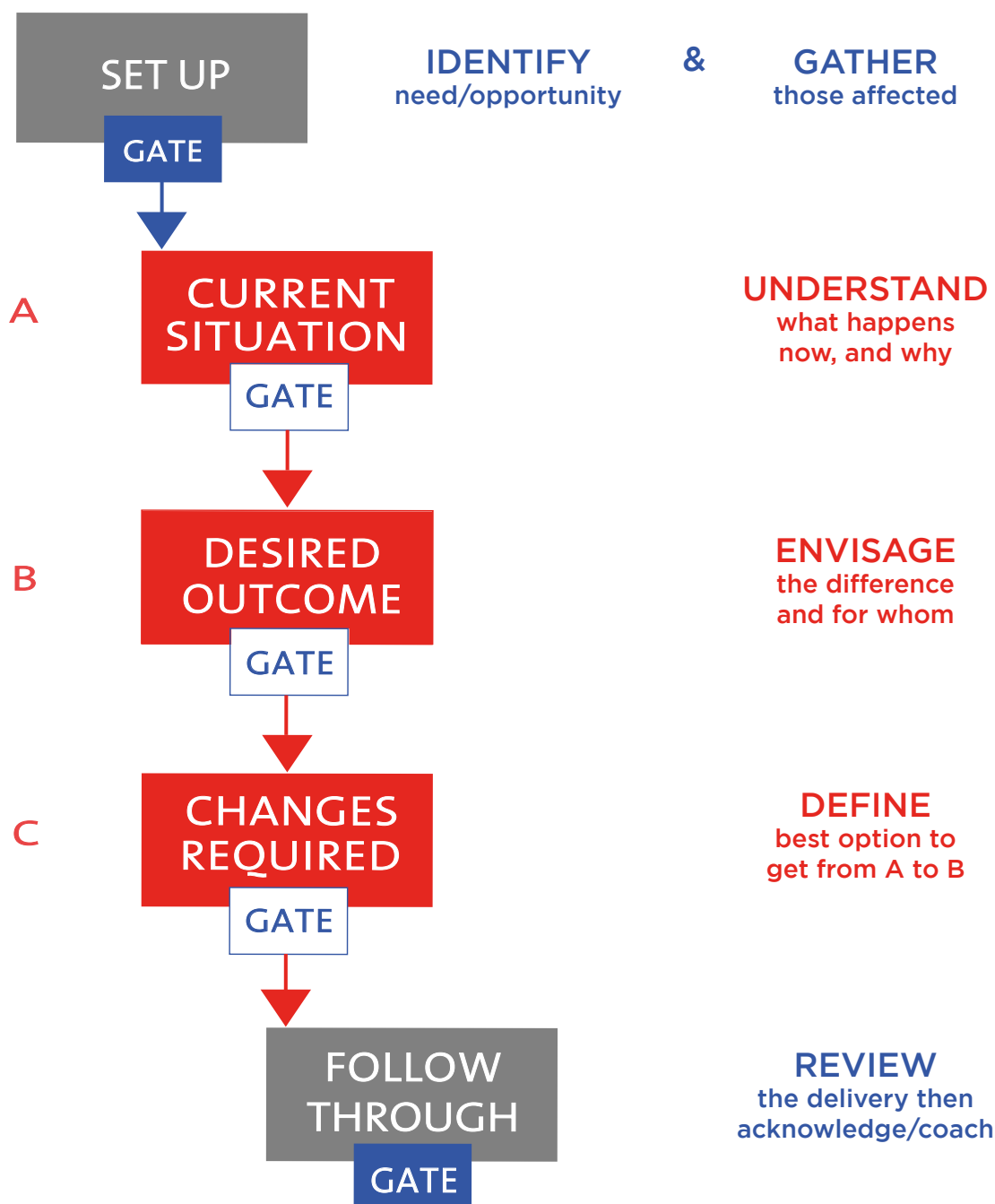
ORGANISATIONAL POWER MAP



- Structural Silos
- Cross-Grain Functions
- Leadership System
- Interface Forum



WORKING DIALOGUE



© Dialogue Associates 2016

Putting Dialogue to work...

Working Dialogue is designed to change things for the better in the everyday workplace. It is a structured way of dealing with multi-stakeholder situations, and can address difficult issues as well as taking forward new opportunities with the help of those affected. The Dialogue skills (such as Check-ins, Dialogic Actions, Dialogic Practices and Leading Energies) are used to help participants to engage with each other constructively, propose helpful and viable changes, and design and deliver an appropriate action plan. Over time this moves decision-making to lower levels in the organization, freeing up time for the executive to provide direction and coaching. The outcomes are new ways of working together for the overall benefit of the Agency that deliver better financial value, operational efficiency and lasting public safety in an ethical way.



Dialogue within Decision-Making

Peter Garrett

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The World Needs Dialogue!

Three: Shaping the Profession

ISBN-13: 978-1916191273



Dialogue within Decision-Making

Peter Garrett

This is a companion paper expanding the consideration begun by Harold Clarke and Whitney Barton in their paper, “Putting Dialogue to Work in the Virginia Department of Corrections,” that was considered at our 2019 conference. That paper described the value of the Working Dialogue as a business practice for the management of organisational change, and gives specific case studies to substantiate this. In this paper I want to explain the thinking that led to the original design of the Working Dialogue by me and Jane Ball with a small team from Virginia. The pattern involves a sequence of Dialogues with a fixed group of people in one room together, and results in a collective view about a plan of action. So it requires *in-the-room* Dialogue skills. Each Working Dialogue is also intended to be an *intervention* in the way things are currently working, so this requires further skills along with the careful placing of the Working Dialogue at the point of intervention in order to yield the most value with the right grouping of people. It is intended for use in every business unit across a large state agency, and is therefore intended to be *systemic*. This third level requires architectural thinking in the design process, as outlined in this paper.

I believe it is timely to explore the relationship between Dialogue and decision-making. Given the general levels of complexity and ambiguity we experience in society, if the world needs Dialogue, *we* surely need Dialogue to influence the quality of collectively made decisions! So I track the key factors that, if left unaddressed, would prevent us from making a difference in the world in this regard. Dialogue in the room was our starting point with David Bohm, with the theme of addressing fragmentation in consciousness and hence in the world. As we stepped into the world after his death, we had to address how decisions are made in organisations, and the decision-making process itself. The Working Dialogue is a prime example of doing just that. I believe this will be of interest to those practitioners wanting to expand their reach beyond their starting point of Dialogue ‘in the room’. Those who already use Working Dialogues in their workplace will benefit from understanding the thinking behind this pattern; this will enable them to be more effective in how they sponsor, facilitate and participate in Working Dialogues. The third and smallest grouping is those who are embarking on systemic Dialogue work and are interested in the architectural thinking required to do this well at scale.

From Dialogue in the 1980s to Dialogue in the 2020s

I believe that there has been considerable confusion amongst Dialogue Practitioners over the years about the relationship between Dialogue and decision-making. Many claim the fundamental features of Dialogue are that it has no agenda and is not a decision-making activity. If this were the case, it would not be viable to bring Dialogue into organisations, since those working in them are employed to make decisions every day, and they are accountable for those decisions. Given the proliferation of organisations, this would result in the marginalisation of Dialogue, leaving it unrelated to everyday working life. In the 20th century almost every aspect of our lives is enabled or defined by organisations – from hospital births and deaths to our food, clothing, housing, transport, education, leisure and so on. I do not see how we can ignore the pervasive presence of organisations in how we proceed.

From our earliest Dialogues with David Bohm in the 1980s, we took a transparent position on decision-making. We considered Dialogue to be a way of establishing a common meaning amongst a group of people. *Dia* means ‘through’ (as in ‘diameter’, which is a line through the middle of a circle) and *logos* is ‘the word’, or ‘meaning’. This shared meaning came about through establishing a common content in the conscious awareness of all the participants in the Dialogue, by participants ‘suspending’ or revealing their experience in the moment. With that shared understanding, people do not need to be told what to do because it is self-evident to them. It could be called ‘common sense’. Each decides what to do for themselves, based on a common understanding. The analogy of the hunter-gatherer tribe, like the Kalahari Bushmen, who lived in small social groupings of 15 to 30 people, illustrated well this way of living. They spent the smaller part of their day finding food and most of it talking together. We speculated about what organisations would be like were employees to be in a similar position of holding a common understanding and a shared content in consciousness. We related Dialogue to decision-making from the outset, and I still hold that perspective.

The hunter-gatherer society was sustainable for hundreds of millennia, but even if we in the current era wanted to, we have to accept that we could not revert to that way of life. The overall population is too great, and consequently we spend most of our days working for our livelihood. We live in a technologically driven society, in the midst of myriad perspectives and conditioning. In comparison to the hunter-gatherers whose environment was simply the undeveloped local ecology, we are both highly coordinated and fragmented. What is the relevance of Dialogue now, given the situation in which we find ourselves?

There is a simple path that runs from the early form of Dialogue that several of us developed with David Bohm prior to his death in 1992, to the Professional Dialogue that many of us now practice. That early work was an enquiry into the pervasive fragmentation in human consciousness that leads to endless counterproductive decisions with unintended consequences. The challenging complexity is that the resulting problems, are in turn, ‘fixed’ by the people using similarly fragmented thought – which leads to further proliferation of the problems in different

forms. Quicksand may be a good metaphor for the many seemingly insoluble challenges we face, including the ecological crisis, loss of species and global warming.

This path crossed over three significant ‘mountain ridges’ after David’s death. They relate to *time*, *power* and *decision-making*. Without crossing over these three passes, I believe that students and practitioners who only read about our early practice (which some now call Bohm Dialogue), will be held in theoretical and practical abeyance, unable to get traction in the world to make a difference – our primary intention from the outset. Our society is sorely in need of relief from a litany of insoluble problems and, in many ways, (but by no means all) our culture is more fragmented than it was when David was alive.

Time as a Context for Decision-Making

First, let’s consider *time*. There are many ways of conceiving of time, and I have outlined my thinking about this in *A Dialogic Model of Time* (2006). The most relevant notion for this consideration is the distinction between *seasonal* time and *chronological* time. Seasonal time is centred on the earth. It is dependent on the rotations of the earth around the sun, and of the moon around the earth. These annual, monthly and daily cycles determine opportune timings for things to happen. Migrating birds sense when to arrive and depart, and the sap rises and falls with the summer and winter weather, just as the tides rise and fall with the waxing and waning of the moon, and flowers open and close with the rising and setting of the sun. This seasonal time features strongly in agriculture, as it does in human relationships. As people establish a common meaning and a common content of consciousness it clearly has a flow, an unfolding cycle that opens and closes potential opportunities. The art of Dialogue is to be sensitive to this changing field of potential as one participates in the flow, thereby finding the timing that meets the moment. It is not by chance that many languages have the same word for time and the weather, such as *le temps* in French.

In contrast, chronological time is centred on technology and is man-made. It is derived from the clock, providing divisions of time established by the rotation of the earth around the sun. Chronological time emerged in Europe in the 1700s with the town clocks (each of which determined their own approximate time), eventually being standardised to enable the reliable scheduling of transport by coach and horses. By 1884 Greenwich Mean Time was defined along with the 24 time zones, and technological coordination became possible. We are so used to chronological time now that we hardly notice its pervasive influence. I can arrange to meet you at the entrance to the Louvre in Paris at 11:30am on 23 January, and we can do so successfully even though I may live in London and you in Rio de Janeiro. We are accomplished in the use of chronological time. We create timelines that include arbitrary deadlines (not lifelines) that may be unrelated to the rhythms in our bodies, lives or surroundings. Such timing turns our thinking inside out. We think we are caught in ‘rush hour’ traffic, when clearly it would be better called ‘slow hour’, except that our inner experience is

one of rushing and being frustrated by not getting there easily. Note the exhausting experience of sitting for two hours in a stationary aircraft on an airport runway – as against the next six hours in the same seat crossing the Atlantic.

What does this have to do with Dialogue? Understanding the source of fragmentation in human consciousness, which is where we began, requires stepping out of the external fixation of chronological time and slowing down sufficiently to become familiar with how consciousness works. There is an ebb and flow in thinking, which acts at a different speed and with a different sensitivity from memory-derived thought. Past-thinking is fast, automatic and reactionary. It is carried forward from a past experience and situation that may or may not be relevant in the present one. Hence the fragmented experience, one that is lessened as we bring our thoughts and feeling into the present situation. So – clearly Dialogue occurs in seasonal time, not chronological time? No. It may have been so for hunter-gatherers, but we are unable to step out of a civilisation and society that is based on chronological time. To my dismay, even sleeping out at night in the remotest Iranian desert and far from the nearest evidence of civilisation, I spotted the regular flashing of light from a satellite passing overhead in the starry sky. So in my thinking, every Dialogue is a compromise, or an amalgamation of the two kinds of time. Within a chronological time period (perhaps 90 minutes reserved on our calendars) we can create the space for seasonal time and thinking, or even for a sense of timelessness out of which generative thinking emerges. Then we probably dive back into chronological time as we attend to responsibilities and decisions elsewhere.

Achieving Dialogue in the world requires a set of skills which might seem alien to some practitioners. These skills include the ability to ‘paint the painting on the size of canvas available’, time-wise, by starting and ending at the predetermined hour; learning to help people to get engaged with one another (without which they cannot form a common meaning); guiding people to think together, rather than resisting and asserting by thinking separately; enabling the transition into understanding one another; and, most importantly, leaving the time and space for the emergence of the still-forming thinking that is unique to this moment. With these kinds of skills it is possible to step into the workplace to enable productive Dialogue, as we have done in prisons, industrial plants, board rooms, universities, fire stations, banks and rural agricultural settings in the so-called Third World. Real Dialogue is about rubbing shoulders with people who have to make decisions that affect themselves and others, and enhancing this process by gathering them into a common understanding of what each of them is doing and may need to do.

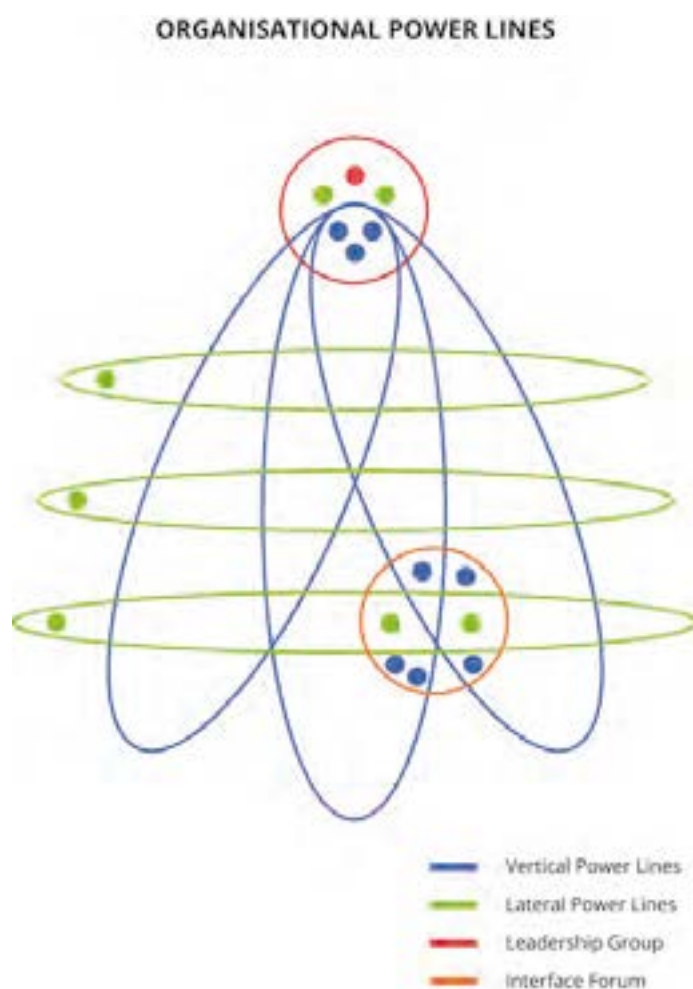
The Impact of Power on Decision-Making

Next, *power*. Why do we need to understand power to bring Dialogue into the world? By *power* I mean authority: the power of attributed authority that is, for example, fundamental to organisations. In my mind, differences of power and authority are a root cause of

violation and fragmentation. Dialogue is essentially concerned with managing power differences in a generative and productive way. There are some ways we are all equal, perhaps as human beings in the eyes of God, but in many ways we are not and cannot be equal in power. This has been the case since hunter-gatherer days and remains the case today. Our skills, experience, wealth, state of health, education, social position, dependencies, gender, age and a long list of other factors may determine who has power and authority in any situation. In my thinking it would not be possible to bring Dialogue into the world and into the workplace if we were not conversant with how to manage power.

Power differences are most evident in organisations. There are many ways to understand the structures and processes embodied in organisations, but a few simple notions will help us here. As I outlined in my paper ('Engaging Fragmentation, Subcultures and Organisational Power', written for the 2018 *The World Needs Dialogue!* Academy conference), organisations predominantly are methodically ordered power structures with delegated decision-making authority and accountability. The owners or shareholders delegate authority to the executives by assigning the authority or right to make certain levels of decision. They, in turn, delegate parts of their decision-making power and responsibility to others in the organisation. That is the nature of a typical organisation. This delegation follows two distinct lines: hierarchical power lines (vertical) and functional power lines (lateral). The vertical power lines are the chain of command, whilst the lateral power lines are the functions that may run across all the power lines, like finances, human resources, legal and regulatory expertise. The problem of fragmentation arises because the vertical power lines tend to break into competing silos. Also, there is a tension between the lateral power lines that use central control to try to standardise everything, and the vertical power lines thrive on customising their activities according to local opportunity or need.

But worst of all, everyone concentrates on their own specialised delegated responsibilities and pays less attention to those outside their



© Dialogue Associates, 2007

immediate contacts in the power lines. People are still making decisions that affect one another, but from a localised area of knowledge and a broader ignorance. Counterproductive decisions abound, impacting one another, creating unintended consequences that originate from often unseen sources. This results in discrete self-contained subcultural groupings. If one can locate a Dialogue in that fragmented situation, bringing interdependent people into a consideration of how they are managing their interdependencies, then it quickly becomes evident to them that they appreciate and need Dialogue. They want a common understanding and a common content of what to take into account as they make decisions largely independently of one another.

Essentially these Dialogues themselves are power centres. They bring together individuals from different vertical and lateral power lines to find a common understanding of how to proceed. Then each takes that common understanding back into their part of the organisation. The power centre may involve a one-off Dialogue, or the organisational structure may require regular Dialogues at a particular power centre to align different and changing needs and interests.

We have created both many times, and with great effectiveness, which I outline in some detail in my 2018 paper. In brief, one example is an ongoing monthly forum we set up for management, unions and skilled technicians within an oil refinery and chemical plant that transformed years of ugly contention. Another is the resolution of a long-running dispute between business units in the US, the UK and China that affected three hierarchical levels of management and threatened people's jobs. People might have called it a wicked problem, but the dialogic resolution was swift and long-lasting. Similarly Jane Ball and I created the architecture for power centres that straddled the prison gate when we were working with high-repeat offenders who were in and out of prison so often they were receiving no therapeutic treatment. The resulting Threshold Dialogue involved staff from prisons, police, courts, local government and hostels along with treatment counsellors working both within several prisons and outside in the local community. It was remarkably effective.

Decision-Making and a Common Understanding

What about *decision-making* itself? The original Dialogues with David Bohm assumed that a common understanding amongst a group of people, and a common content of consciousness which naturally unfolded to deepen that understanding, would lead to a kind of common-sense basis for each to act in accordance with others. It also yielded a sense of impersonal fellowship as people sought to understand each other rather than prove they were right. There was a disposition to the enquiry that was, and still is, important. This dialogic stance involves authenticity and respect, based on the understanding that things are as they are for a reason, and that reason may not yet be evident to us all. If we understand the factors being managed by those involved in any situation, then it becomes clearer how to incorporate and address them in different ways

for common benefit. These Dialogues were gatherings of individuals, mainly academics, who had a common concern about the well-being of society given its fragmented state. As we took this Dialogic approach into organisations, we found a different configuration. People employed there had a common organisational history and purpose, although they held many different opinions about them. We immediately encountered the challenges I have been considering regarding time and power. Those working in organisations pride themselves on getting the job done well and generally they value efficiency and achievement. Utilising plans and timelines, they use chronological time to achieve things and are impatient for results. The pace depends on the ambitiousness of the leadership, management and supervisors, but generally time and attention are a scarcer commodity than other resources. As a result, a mindset can easily be established where decisions are made at speed by those higher in the chain of command and those with the most expertise in the functions.

This approach has the potential benefit of speed (assuming the leadership are not a constraining ‘bottleneck’) and the handicap of ignorance about the implication for others who are not involved in the thinking. The decisions are based on the available knowledge and understanding – but the interpretation of data and information is different at every level of the organisation. Although the overview held at the executive level is essential, so too is the local perspective. That local knowledge is at the level of implementation, without which nothing gets done. The fragmentation arises from differences between intention, decision and impact. Well intentioned people make decisions without realising the impact they may be having on those affected by that decision. As a result, organisations are often fast moving and highly inefficient. This is embodied in the employee attitude of ‘tell me what to do and I will do it’ which demonstrates loyalty and hard work, combined with the unintelligent abandoning of their valuable local knowledge.

The key is to bring the decision-maker and those impacted by the decision into closer or direct relationship with one another. That is the essence of the power centres. If we find ourselves talking about ‘them’, and ‘they’ are not in the room, then we have a problem of fragmentation, and this will affect the quality and sustainability of our decisions.

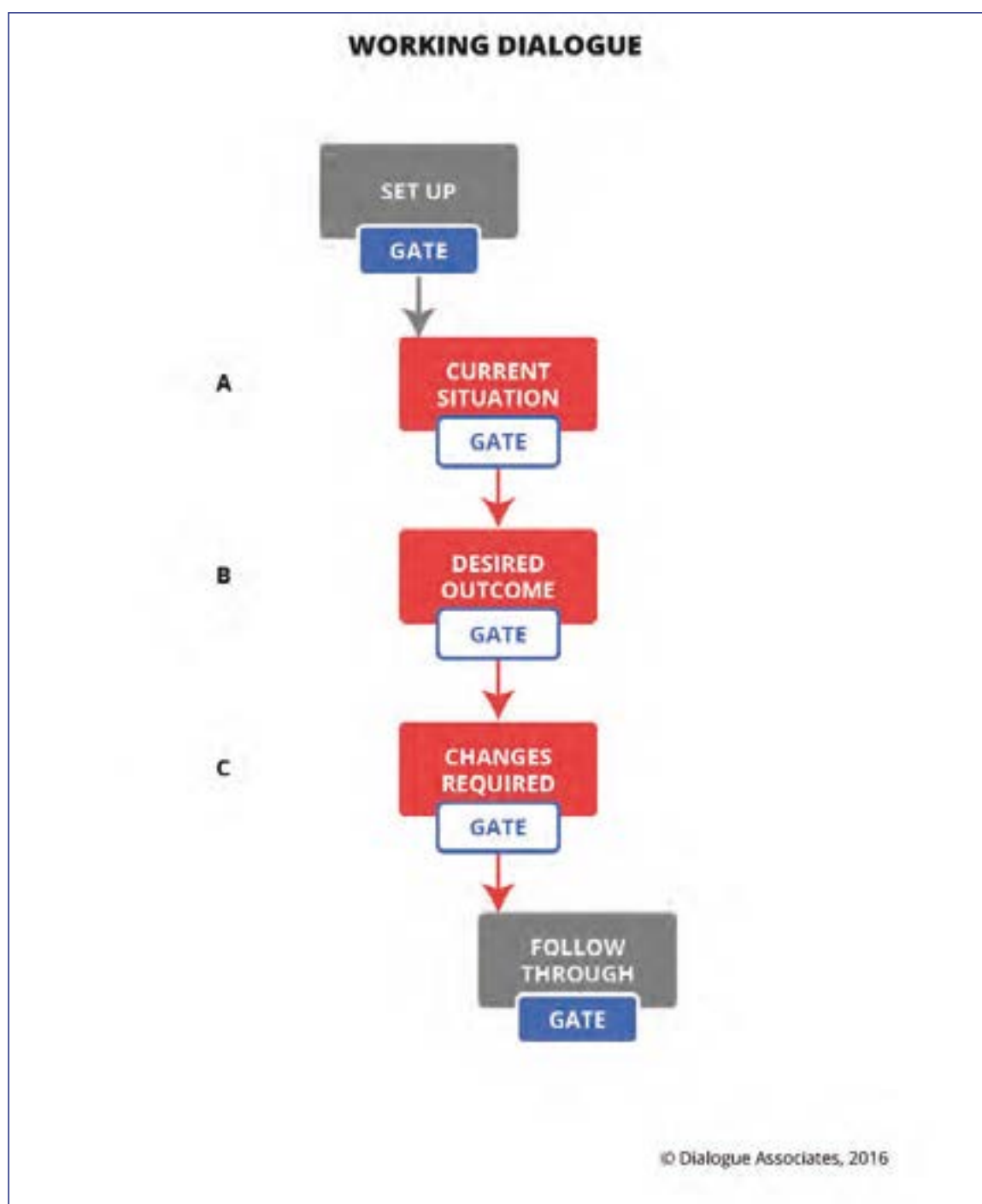
The Systemic Design of a Working Dialogue

It was an interesting challenge to design a business practice for dialogic decision-making in a large state agency. The agency was the largest employer in the state and had a high turnover of staff. How would we (Jane and I) manage the issues of time, power and decision-making in a dialogic way? We drew together a small team of Dialogue Practitioners that represented the main vertical power lines (the delivery channels) and lateral power lines (the functions) and used them as a participatory sounding board. The staff of 13,000 members had been exposed to Dialogue skills, and the infrastructure of 250 Dialogue Practitioners were both in

place to enable this to become a required business practice. We intended the pattern to be used to resolve issues and to develop opportunities at operational practice, policy and strategic levels. The Dialogue Practitioners in the design team helped to set up and facilitate the first pilots (that helped us to adapt the design in a number of ways).

First, I had to accept that at the outset staff members may not hold a dialogic stance and would use whatever pattern we designed with a normal business mentality. We needed something that would improve general management decision-making and could easily evolve into a dialogic process. We could see that whenever a problem presented itself, they tended quickly to identify a couple of options, choose one and act. This could be called a ‘fire-fighting’ mentality. So at least to improve that way of reaching decisions, we wanted to include a sequence of three parts: a) the current situation (how is it working now?), b) what do we want? (where do we want to be in the end?) and c) how can we get from a) to b) (what is a good plan?). Although this could take us in the right direction, there is nothing inherently dialogic in this three-part process to reaching a decision. It is simply good management and we knew it would help the decision-making process in the agency to adopt this. Also, the agency is a ‘closed’ organisation that likes structured steps that can be accomplished, and be seen to be accomplished, in a measured way. So this would be attractive. I recognised that it was essential to respect the hierarchical power structure, and we were at pains not to propose a consensus or voting model that could cut across the existing well-defined accountabilities.

The next step was to address the fragmentation in the decision-making process by bringing those authorised to make decisions into direct conversation with the people who would be affected by those decisions. What we proposed was different from consultation or gathering data to inform a later decision to be made elsewhere. The group gathered would actually design the plan and take accountability themselves for its implementation. This was no longer a matter of ‘tell me what to do and I will do it’, but rather it involved drawing on the local knowledge and know-how as well as that of those with expertise, authority and overview from other parts of the organisation. Given the cost of time to gather the right people, we ensured the set-up phase included a determination of the cost/benefit value of the Working Dialogue – is it worth doing? If there is enough potential value in addressing and resolving a particular challenge or issue, then let’s identify who needs to be involved and get everyone around the same table. Of course, the cost for such meetings has been significantly reduced with the advent of Covid-19 and the wider use of audiovisual online systems that are ideal for a pattern like a Working Dialogue.



We wanted to address the cultivation of Dialogue in the Working Dialogue. We had the advantage that participants would all be familiar with the dialogic skills, given the trainings that had been provided. It is also the case, however, that using those skills does not mean you are necessarily in Dialogue and thinking together to understand one another's perspective. One can be authentic and listen respectfully in a debate where you are trying to win, as well as in a Dialogue. This is a common misconception of course – we believe we are in Dialogue because we are using dialogic skills. That is a good start, but more is required – the primary interest of trying to understand each other as well as ourselves. So we introduced a specific role for a Dialogue Practitioner to play in the Working Dialogue. This would help participants to use

dialogic skills, and they would use their facilitation skills to shift the mode of conversation from monologue, debate or discussion into Dialogue when the timing was right. We went further and required the Dialogue Practitioners to work from the outset with a ‘sponsor’ (the executive or manager who was sponsoring the Working Dialogue, and who was responsible for the outcome). The two of them would think together during the set-up phase: they would consider the issue, the value of resolving it, who would need to be involved and what invitation should be issued to the proposed participants. We were starting to build the dialogic stance into the process through the Dialogue Practitioner.

Then we took a further step that makes all the difference: we introduced a ‘gate’ between each of the phases. The gate is a short set of questions that have to be answered successfully to proceed to the next phase. The questions at each gate were simple and direct. To pass the set-up gate, the sponsor and Dialogue Practitioner had to feel comfortable answering the questions positively, such as: Is it worth doing? Have we included everybody (or representatives of everyone) affected by the issue? And so on. If these could not be confirmed then they could not proceed to the next phase. Later, once the group was gathered and considering the current state (how does it work now?) they had to confirm that everyone affected by the decision was present or represented in the Working Dialogue, and that they all felt their perspective was understood by others in the room. This was achieving a common understanding. It did not mean that people had their way, simply that their perspective and situation was understood and being taken into account by everyone else present. If not, the group could not pass through the gate into the next phase. This proved quite liberating for those who had felt misunderstood and therefore unappreciated, but also led to better-informed logic in the later planning.

The Dialogue Practitioner contracted with the group to be the custodian of the gates, so it was he or she that assessed the participants’ success in answering the gate questions, and their collective readiness to pass through each gate, not the sponsor. As one senior executive said at the time, “Wow, in the past I have driven right through an awful lot of those gates!” The Dialogue Practitioners had a challenge on their hands too. They had to create a summary of the current situation (how the issue or problem works now) on a single sheet of flip chart paper. That meant perhaps five to seven bullet points. It was the same requirement for the next phase when they would determine the desired outcome. Those without the skill to see the key statements ended up with 10 or 12 sheets of flip chart paper with scores of bullet points. That meant they had not achieved a common understanding but had simply created a list of different perspectives that remained largely unresolved. This skill to précis the many words spoken into the essential points is necessary for good intervention work, and that is what we were inviting and training the Dialogue Practitioners to do.

Next, we return to the matter of *time*. The shift of emphasis on chronological time was to be managed through the gates. The gates meant the process would take as long as it takes. The time set aside for the first phase may or may not be adequate to achieve a common understanding. If it proved to be inadequate, then they would have to extend the meeting,

or adjourn and meet again with the same participants at a later date. This enhances the value of the Dialogue skills, of course, because people come to realise that giving attention through respect and careful listening, and explaining one's own perspective honestly and clearly, saves time! So then participants start to lean in the direction of encouraging the use of the skills to aid their progress. Some Working Dialogues can be completed in a day, and the most complex statewide ones involving many interested parties could run over a year or more.

Did some of the more forceful executives sometimes 'call rank' and overrule the process to get the result they wanted anyway? Yes, of course. Did some of the Dialogue Practitioners fudge things to get through a gate, or still have six flip charts rather than six points for participants to agree? No doubt they sometimes did. But still, they were in a better decision-making process, one that was more inclusive and more thorough than would have been the case otherwise. And over time they would start to learn that it is easier and faster working dialogically. I should emphasise that we were aiming for a shift across the whole organisation, in all business units, and not just with small pockets of willing Sponsors. Their executive directive, that we supported, required every business unit (of which there were around 140) to do one Working Dialogue every quarter. We were *using* the culture ("tell me what to do") to *change* the culture, which is a powerful way to achieve across-the-board change.

The planning phase also had different features from what people had anticipated. So many good plans are never implemented because some of those responsible for specific tasks do not deliver them. A good plan on its own is rarely good enough. We ensured that the plan for the Working Dialogue not only stated what would be delivered by when, but it included who was responsible – and that responsible person had to be in the room. They could delegate their responsibility to another, but they still held the accountability for the delivery. This closed a significant gap through which many plans had fallen in the past. Also, the plan had to state a review date and who needed to attend the review.

This review was the fifth and final phase. The idea here was to learn from successes and failures. If the Working Dialogue failed, was it the plan that was inadequate (and if so, why?) or was it a failure of delivery (and if so, why?). That meant people could be coached or held to account depending on the situation. When the plan succeeded, it was a fine opportunity to acknowledge those involved and to build their confidence about how to address issues well. It would not be long before more junior employees requested a Working Dialogue, as they realised it would get to the bottom of seemingly intractable problems, some of which had been stuck for a long time.

Working Dialogues in Practice

I encourage you to read Harold Clarke and Whitney Barton's paper for the 2019 Academy conference titled "Putting Dialogue to Work in the Virginia Department of Corrections",

(see references) detailing their experience of the introduction of Working Dialogues into their state agency. The case studies they include cover operational issues, such as the balancing of workloads, drug testing systems and the optimisation of offender movements. I recommend reading their paper in conjunction with this one to get a feel for the practical use of Dialogue in an organisation.

Let's revisit the question some may ask, posed at the beginning of this paper: "That is all fine, but where is the Dialogue? What you have described does not sound like the agenda-free enquiry that David Bohm advocated". The answer depends on the purpose and nature of Dialogue as you understand it. In our work with David Bohm we wanted to establish a common meaning or understanding to deal with the fragmented state of human consciousness that we saw as the cause of so much counterproductive damage in the world. In the Working Dialogue we see a common understanding established in each of the five phases. And all five phases together constitute a decision-making process that is thorough and sustainable. Each phase may involve a mixture of monologues, debates and Dialogue, as was definitely the case in our sessions with Bohm. In the case of the Working Dialogues, over time the structure and process lead participants into a dialogic disposition, with the Dialogue Practitioners judiciously holding the gates in a way that helps the overall development process.

Closing Reflections

It is worth noting that the Working Dialogue pattern can be used to turn issues and problems into creative opportunities. It is conducive to people learning how to use Dialogue to tackle more complex multistakeholder issues. Facilitated well, Working Dialogues are likely to cultivate open Dialogue as a way of doing business. This is how the muscle is developed to tackle larger and tougher issues. Already the Virginia Department of Corrections, for example, has taken Working Dialogues into the community to work with other agencies such as the courts, police, treatment centres and so on to tackle social problems of mutual concern. A huge next step would be the use of Working Dialogues in determining policy, which in turns drives the allocation of resources and measures of success. And then – who knows the limits of where this simple but thorough pattern may prove useful?

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Conference Session Extracts

From a conversation with participants considering the paper with Peter Garrett

Speaker: The demand is still there for Working Dialogues. There are always questions that need answers and things that need to be changed. We've had two or three dialogues recently, but that is a reduced number since the Covid-19 pandemic. What has not changed is people's understanding and desire because we've continued to have issues we've needed to address. We hear people from different levels of the department say, "Hey, maybe that's a working dialogue. Maybe we should use a Working Dialogue". We require everybody to get trained and it has helped us with the language. There is a common understanding. You can go into a prison on one side of the state or to a probation office on the other side, and everybody understands the same language.

Speaker: I guess there must be a whole family of Working Dialogues under the title 'What's the new normal given the pandemic?' I was part of the 'new normal' task force that was convened in Virginia to look at every aspect. We were dealing with work issues and offender work issues. Many people don't have cameras, and we want to have all the voices involved. Safety has been the biggest problem. We have no shortage of need. As a matter of fact, we probably have more because of Covid-19.

Speaker: To me, there's something about being inclusive of people to get the job done. You could get the job done without the Working Dialogue and make the decision anyway and do it. So this is about caring. People have to understand how to make good decisions, and how the process works so that they naturally think a bit more clearly when they make their own decisions.

Speaker: What do you think of the three skills that are really important for a sponsor?

Speaker: Identifying who needs to be there. And making sure that the problem is identified, so that when people are invited to come they know what they're coming to discuss, and making sure it's clear and concise. And we talked about checking your ego at the door. The sponsor needs to make sure they don't come in with predetermined decisions which shut the process down. People will simply not communicate. They're not going to share in that setting. You have to be able to suspend the judgement and allow people to work through the process. And if you can't suspend the judgement, then you might be in the wrong position. A healthy challenge to everyone.

- Speaker:** One of the skills is being able to develop rapport with people. In my role I have to figure everything out amongst 15 or so prisons. That's a tall challenge to try to meet the needs of individuals and the institution. So I have always really tried to focus on developing good rapport with staff so they're able to have conversations with you and tell you if there's concerns that I need to address.
- Speaker:** Being a new supervisor, I think that skill is trust. I think people have to trust you. I think the second thing is that you build trust by showing consistent behaviour, and I think also empowering others. Then I would say being a sponsor to any dialogue, you would need to show courage. In taking a risk to sponsor a dialogue you're showing courage in leading others.
- Speaker:** Your staff really have the working knowledge and the technical knowledge to find a lot of the solutions to what you are working on anyway. So leaning on the local experts is the way to get from A to Z. You're basically letting them define the solution, because they really have the answers.
- Speaker:** I totally agree with what was just said. It's not something that comes naturally, because a lot of leaders believe they need to have the answers and the solutions because of their position. So when they come into the room, often the conversation stops and people look towards them for the answers. I think to be a good sponsor and a successful sponsor we need to have the ability to recognise that there's a problem, something that needs addressing. Then to understand that there is value in hearing the voices of others and genuinely inviting others to participate in the process. It is not something that comes naturally because a lot of leaders think it is their position to solve the problem because generally that is how they got promoted to the position they're in.
- Speaker:** I think reflection and inquiry are the two main components. The practitioner has to take a lot of information and simplify it down to a few bullet points. There's a skill to taking half an hour's conversation and reducing it to three main points.
- Speaker:** The Dialogue Practitioner has to have the confidence to be able to stop a Working Dialogue if it's not going the way it should go, if fidelity isn't there. If you violate the rules, then people lose trust in the process.
- Speaker:** I don't think it's been said, but neutrality. Focusing on the process as opposed to being part of it and trying to insert themselves. Sometimes it's nice to have somebody who's completely uninvolved with what's going on, who has that

perspective, that unbiased perspective, to hold the process. But also to say, “Maria, I am going to oppose you”. In a respectful way, “Maria, I understand your enthusiasm to get it done, but can we slow down a bit and just make sure we’ve got all the input we need?” That that can be quite difficult, with some of the people we work with at times. So, there’s the skill of being able to deal with more senior people in a respectful way. But equally, at the same time not losing the rigor of the process, and not compromising it.

Speaker: Neutrality. It’s a tricky concept, but we need a distance between providing empathy and still being impartial.

Speaker: Curiosity. And I think a good participant is one who voices without pretense, just putting it out clearly and straightforwardly, orally. Along with that, they genuinely have to want an outcome that’s beneficial to everyone. I think there is a need for respect and a curiosity. Trying to understand why they think something different. What’s behind it? What do they see that you don’t see? It’s surprising with a group. If you allow the process to start to work with people, something emerges, which is actually pretty straightforward. And usually it’s only about letting the group find its own life. I think the dialogic practices of Voice – Authenticity – Listening, Respect and Suspension are the critical ones. But also the move, follow, oppose and bystand . . . and just simple inquiry.

Postscript

The author's reflections, written some months after the conference



I was encouraged by this session. My paper, made available to everyone before the conference, was about the Working Dialogue. In the session itself many of the participants had experience of participating in Working Dialogues, particularly sponsoring or facilitating them. The Working Dialogues clearly work, there is ongoing demand for more and it is rewarding to see this dialogic pattern being formally recognised as a business practice. Following the conference, my thoughts have centred on the value of embedding the Working Dialogue in an organisation.

One of the conference participants had pointed out that you build trust – and the consequent good flow of information through an organisation – by consistent behaviour. Well, the Working Dialogue is a structured pattern for consistent behaviour in addressing multistakeholder challenges. Thereby it has the potential to deepen the staff's trust in the workings of the organisation that employs them. The pattern provides the assurance that there is a way of addressing complex problematic issues. This is important for the culture of the organisation. Otherwise, dysfunctional patterns will simply remain stuck and reluctantly accepted as 'nobody likes it but that's how it is around here'. Now stories are shared about how 'it used to be like that until we had the Working Dialogue'.

Also, the Working Dialogue improves the overall quality of decision-making. There is a clearer definition of who will make the decision, and why they have made it. If the sponsor needs to do so, then they must participate in the Working Dialogue. If not, he or she can delegate that responsibility to those in the Working Dialogue and accept their decision. Either way, there is a structured and recorded method to solve problems – and to realise opportunities that might otherwise be missed.

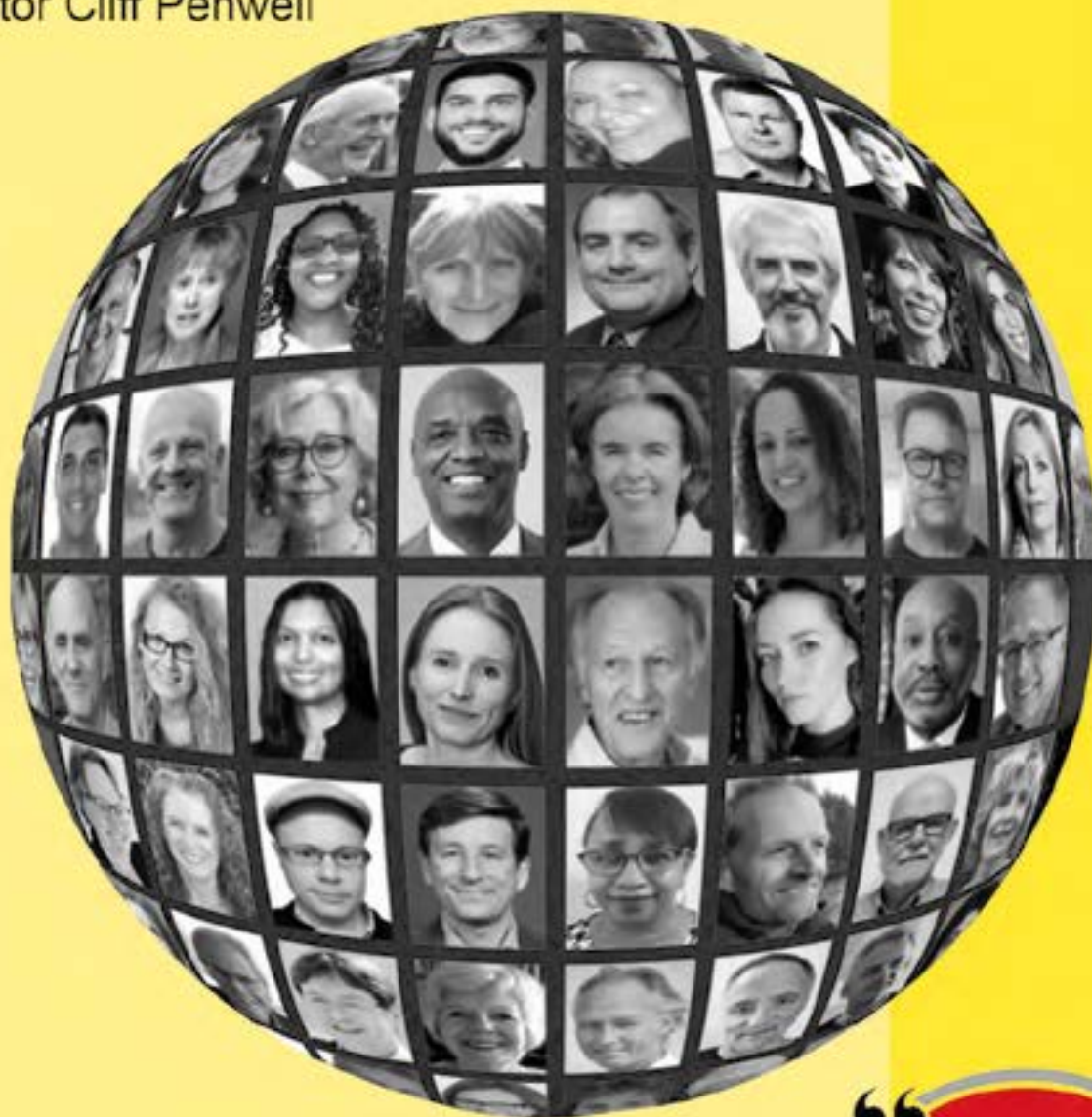
At the same time as addressing the challenge at hand, the Working Dialogue provides participants with a practice-based training for decision-making to use in other situations. Junior staff members learn about rigorous decision-making. Supervisors and leaders benefit too. Thinking on their own they make poorer decisions than when they think with others before deciding how to proceed. The Working Dialogue takes some of the pressure off the leader having to make and be accountable for all the answers. It shares this responsibility. Because the participants' views have been incorporated, they understand and are more likely to own the outcome.

The World Needs Dialogue!

Three: Shaping the Profession

The collection of Working Papers by Dialogue Practitioners
considered at the third annual international conference
of the Academy of Professional Dialogue

Foreword by Peter Garrett
Editor Cliff Penwell



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SET RESOURCES

APPENDIX I:

Set 6 - Locus of Attention and Dialogic Intention

- Facilitation: Locus of Attention
- Facilitation: Locus of Attention (One-page Graphic)
- Skill Development for Functionality, Quality, Focus and Intentions
- Practitioner: Dialogic Intention
- Practitioner: Dialogic Intention Step 1 (Graphic)





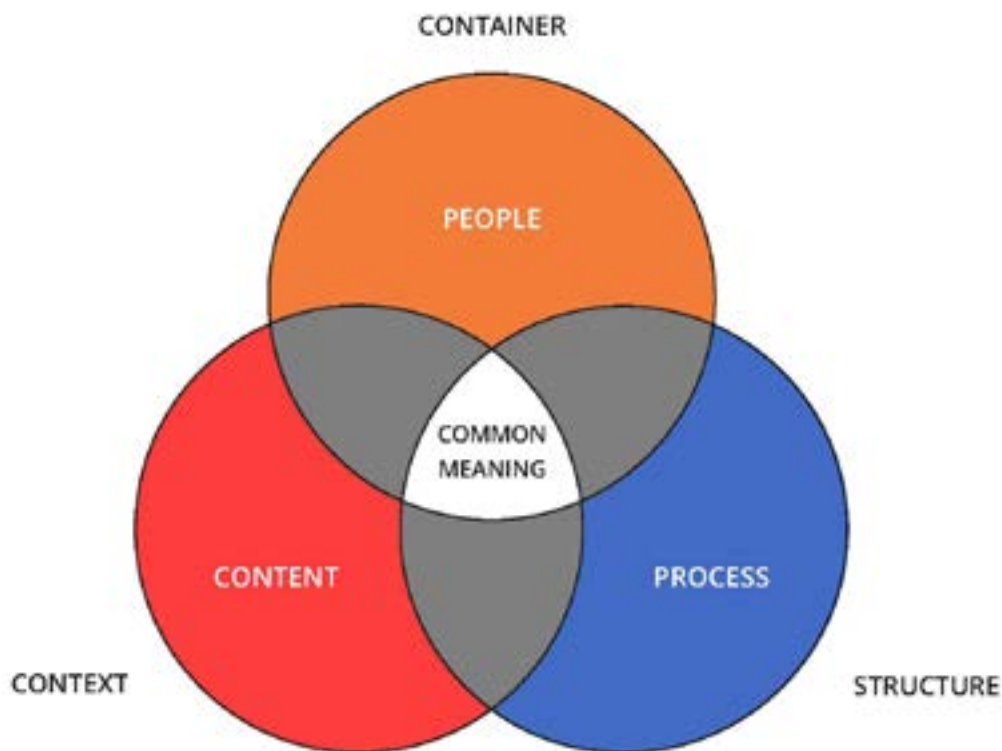
FACILITATION: LOCUS OF ATTENTION

AN INTRODUCTION

Professional Dialogue is both an art and a science. A Professional Dialogue Practitioner aims to be conversant with both. There is an art to discovering what to notice, by combining curiosity with attention to the way things emerge – and there is a science to determining how best to proceed given what has been learnt.

At the level of facilitation, we have designed a helpful framework called the *Locus of Attention*. Where you place or locate your interest is the *locus* of your attention and enables you to see what of significance is happening. There are three key aspects to attend to, namely *the content*, *the people*, and *the process*. These are distinct and they are inter-related, so the skill and capacity needed is to attend to all three at the same time. At first it may seem complex multi-tasking, but with practice it is not so difficult. It is comparable to watching a play performed in a theatre - and noting details about the different actors (the people), the intricacies of the plot or storyline (the content), and the flow of the play on stage including the choreography, changing scenery, lighting, and music (the process).

Let's consider how this plays out in a Dialogue for a facilitator trying to establish a common meaning amongst the group of people participating.



Facilitation: Locus of Attention
Developmental Intervention

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THE CONTENT

The Content is the spoken words that you can hear. They are the words that you could read if you had a transcript of the meeting. That content emerges in the way it does for a variety of reasons. Naturally it depends on the **context** within which people are meeting. This could be a group of people who know each other and the history of their common situation well, or a first meeting of people who do not have much understanding of the parts played by others. Decisions may be imminent, or not to be taken for some time. Key participants may be present or absent. These and other factors provide the context within which the Dialogue is occurring, and naturally affect the content of the considerations.

At first what is said may seem somewhat scattered or even incoherent as people speak from their different perspectives and recall their experiences. This level of fragmentation is to be expected, and the aim is to establish a common understanding where all the contributions relate to one another in an obvious way. Generalities like 'it is difficult' can become more meaningful if they are clarified as being about an individual's personal experience (*me*), the collective experiences (*us* or *them*) or views about the work being done (*it*). Unquestioned assumptions can be the source of confusion and misunderstanding. The facilitator will be interested in what is said, and more subtly in what a speaker may be implying through their words, intentionally or unintentionally. Implications are open to interpretation and misunderstanding. Successfully achieving 'difficult work' may imply greater satisfaction for overcoming the challenge, or it may be a call for greater compensation given the effort involved, or both. Increased transparency helps, with people being encouraged to be more explicit about what they mean.

Underlying all the content is an, as yet, untold common story. A circle can be drawn around the group that places everyone in the same existing situation, whilst the stories they are telling describe the participants different circumstances and memories of the past. There is a way in which these can all be incorporated into a common storyline. That is what the practitioner is listening for - the common story in which everyone has played a part, and in which everyone will continue to do in the future. As this is brought to the surface it reveals a common story that is beyond the earlier fragmented narrative. That is the establishment of a common meaning amongst a group of people, and the purpose of Professional Dialogue.

THE PEOPLE

The People are the individuals participating in the Dialogue. Their collective presence is the **container**, and that collective container in turn affects how each of them behaves individually. A relaxed container will lead some to reveal greater sensitivity, whilst others may become relaxed in a way that they tend to lose their focus. If the container has an edge of uncertainty, some will require safety before revealing what they think and feel, whilst others will thrive on the adventure of the unknown challenge at hand. Some will want to check the resilience of the container before stating their position, whilst others will deliberately work to change the container, wanting to be heard and understood.

These dispositions are revealed in different ways. One individual may repeatedly be the first to speak, whilst another may withhold their impulse to contribute until later after others have revealed themselves. One participant might typically quote others to substantiate their contribution, whilst another individual may want to be seen standing out in contrast to everyone else. There are some who find themselves compelled to challenge what they see as authority figures, whilst others hold their own counsel with confidence. Unconsciously and indirectly, individuals can reveal their need to talk



about something, for example by referring to someone or something several times. A third such signal generally reveals an unresolved pre-occupation or concern of some kind they need to address.

All the time, people display features of their general character and propensity. It is how they ‘normally’ behave. They also reveal specific patterns of behaviour by their responses and reactions to different circumstances. All this helps the practitioner to get a sense of the stage of development for an individual in the matter being considered at this stage of the Dialogue. In terms of *Container Development*, they may be Realising Themselves, Showing Up, Occupying the Ground or Affecting the Field. Their level of development will define the ability of each participant to help uncover the underlying inclusive storyline. The practitioner is therefore seeking to read the situation and to support the ongoing development of each individual, and of the group as a whole.

A compounding factor is the subcultural groupings of participants with a common identity. Each subcultural group has common values and memories that affect their interactions with other subcultural groupings, that can be helpful or dysfunctional. The patterns of behaviour may need to be named for them to be understood and incorporated into the common storyline to achieve a common feeling (*koinonia*) as well as a common meaning.

THE PROCESS

The process is the journey of the Dialogue, the path it takes and the changing pace and direction of the route. This process is dependent on the **structure** within which the Dialogue sits. For example, it depends on the numbers involved and the physical setting of the meeting – that could vary from an intimate group of 10 or 12 people meeting in a familiar private location, to several hundreds of people in a public convention. Time is also a factor. Naturally the experience would be different if this were the first in a series of meetings, the last, or the one and only meeting to be held in this configuration. A meeting for an hour is different from a meeting for a day, or a series of Dialogues, and so on.

There are defined features to the journey, each of which affects the success of the Dialogue. The practitioner knows this and supports the process according to where the Dialogue is on its journey. The emphasis and needs are different when convening the participants, then closing the door and gathering people’s attention, ensuring adequate levels of functionality, deepening the quality of participation, and drawing the Dialogue to a focus. There are frameworks to read each of these, and skills to develop or deepen them as is required at any time. Most simply, there are phases where things build or dissipate, marked by turning points. These turning points mark the passage of alignment of the various narratives as seemingly polar opposites are incorporated into the new common story.

REFLECTION ON THE CONTENT, THE PEOPLE AND THE PROCESS

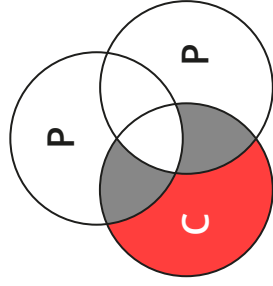
Reflecting after the completion of a Dialogue can enable everyone to notice how the **content, people and process** have changed and contributed to the overall progress of the Dialogue. Building strong reflection skills hones the attention and influences how people participate. This can gradually enable the practitioner to notice what is happening during the Dialogue. Such a shift, from awareness after the event to proprioceptive awareness - or knowing what is happening as it is happening – is the key to the practitioner’s effectiveness. Then they can intervene in the moment when all the relevant factors are accessible in the room.

Peter Garrett and Jane Ball
May 2022



Facilitation: Locus of Attention

Content & Context



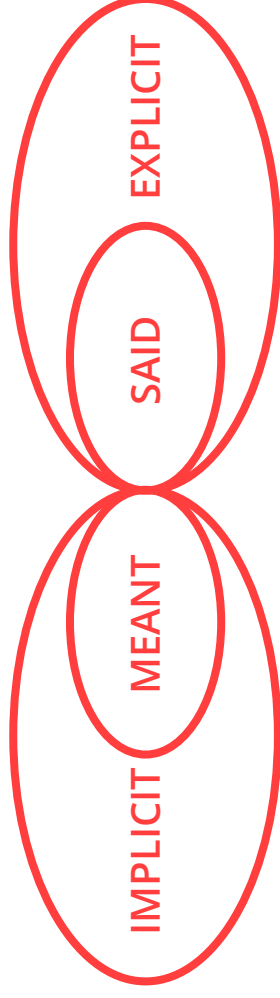
INCLUDE CONTEXT

NARRATIVE / STORYLINE

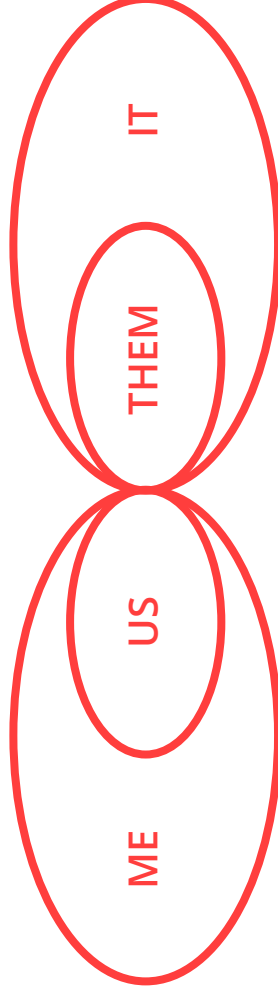
CIRCLE DRAWN

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPARENCY



RELEVANCE



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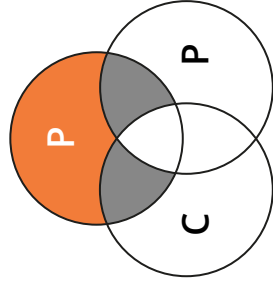
Acknowledgement: P Garrett & Jane Ball

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Facilitation: Locus of Attention

People & Container

474



INCLUDE CONTAINERS

INDIVIDUALS

SUB-CULTURAL GROUPINGS

WHOLE

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

REALISING YOURSELF

SHOWING UP

OCCUPYING THE GROUND

AFFECTING THE FIELD

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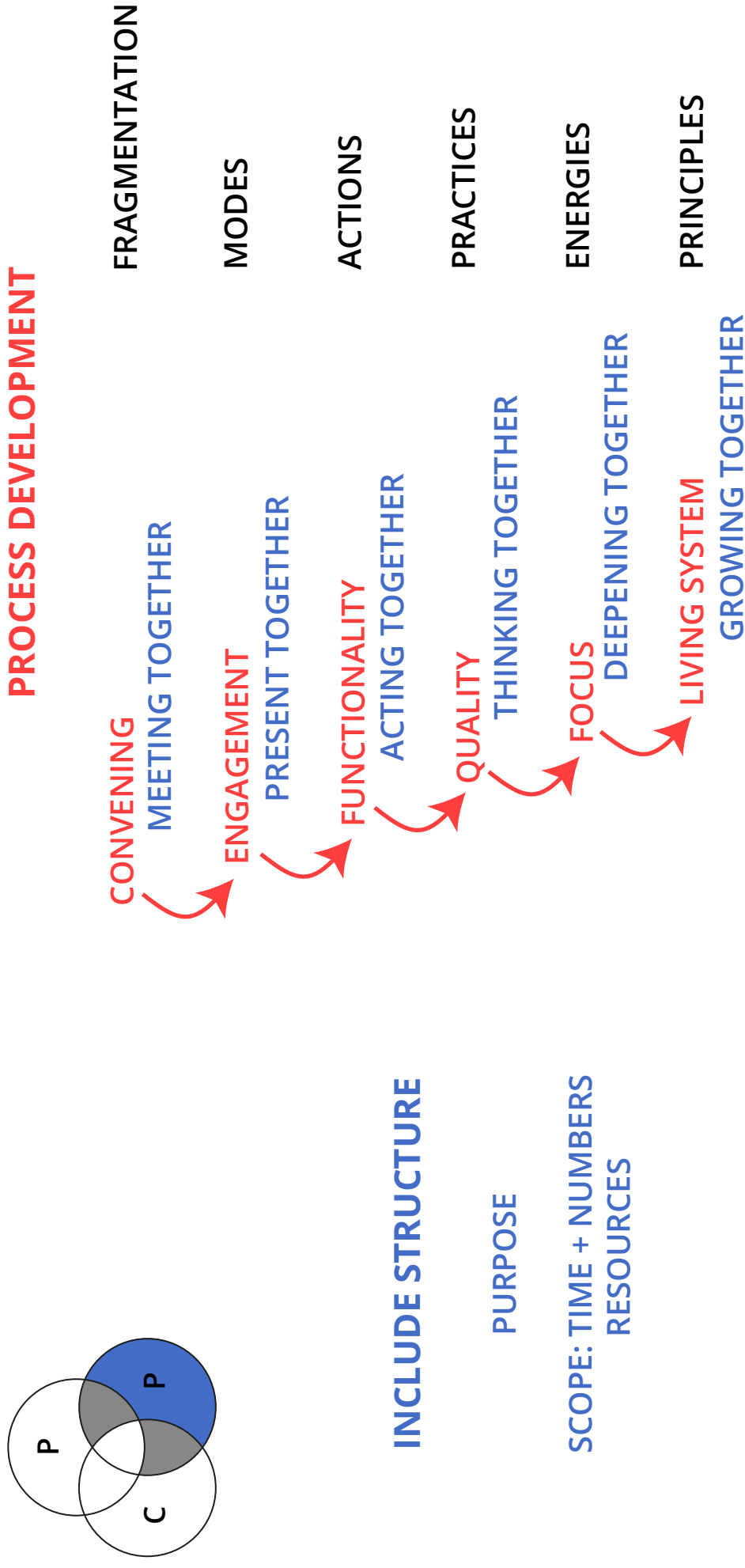
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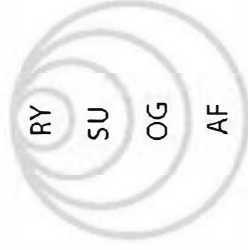
Facilitation: Locus of Attention

Process & Structure



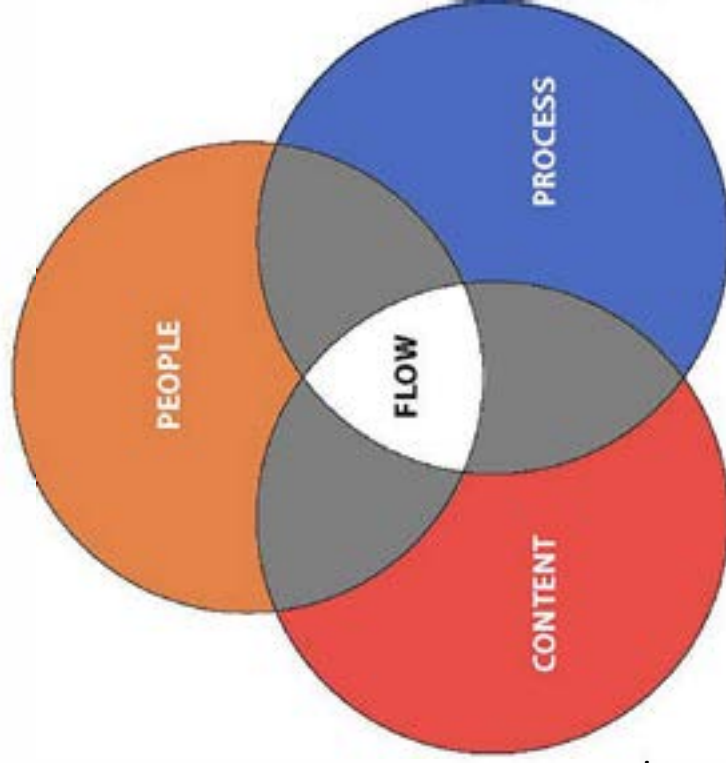
Facilitation: Locus of Attention

Making sense of a changing situation



ONGOING DEVELOPMENT
Individually & Collectively

CONTAINER



FRAGMENTATION

- SELF EVIDENT
- COMMON CONTENT
- INTERPRETATION
- LOCALISED MENTALITY
- IDENTITY
- SUB-CULTURES

COMMON STORY

CONTEXT

COMMON STORY
Implicit & Explicit

CONVENING

- ENGAGEMENT
- FUNCTIONALITY
- QUALITY
- FOCUS
- LOCUS
- INTENTION

LIVING SYSTEM

STRUCTURE

LIVING SYSTEM
Self-generating

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SKILL DEVELOPMENT

FOR FUNCTIONAL COMMUNICATION, QUALITY OF UNDERSTANDING,
FOCUS OF ENERGY & DIALOGIC INTENTION FOR SKILL TRANSFER
THROUGH CONTAINER DEVELOPMENT

VOICE

speaking
authentically



SUSPENSION

revealing &
exploring meaning

LISTENING

following what
is happening

MOVE
for direction



BYSTAND
for perspective

FOLLOW
for completion

RESPECT
providing space
for understanding

Acknowledgement: B Isaacs, P Garrett & M Jones

OPPOSE
for correction

Acknowledgement: D Kantor, P Garrett & J Ball

APX I



fragments vs. parts
DISCERNMENT
 choice of intervention



opportunity
ENERGY
 achievement

a peer
STANCE
 transparent

transfer of skill
REDUNDANCY
 transfer of power

Acknowledgement: P Garrett & J Ball

VISIONARY
 focus on
 potential



WISDOM
 focus on
 awareness

CITIZEN
 focus on
 participation

PEFORMANCE
 focus on
 coherence

Acknowledgement: D Kantor, P Garrett & J Ball

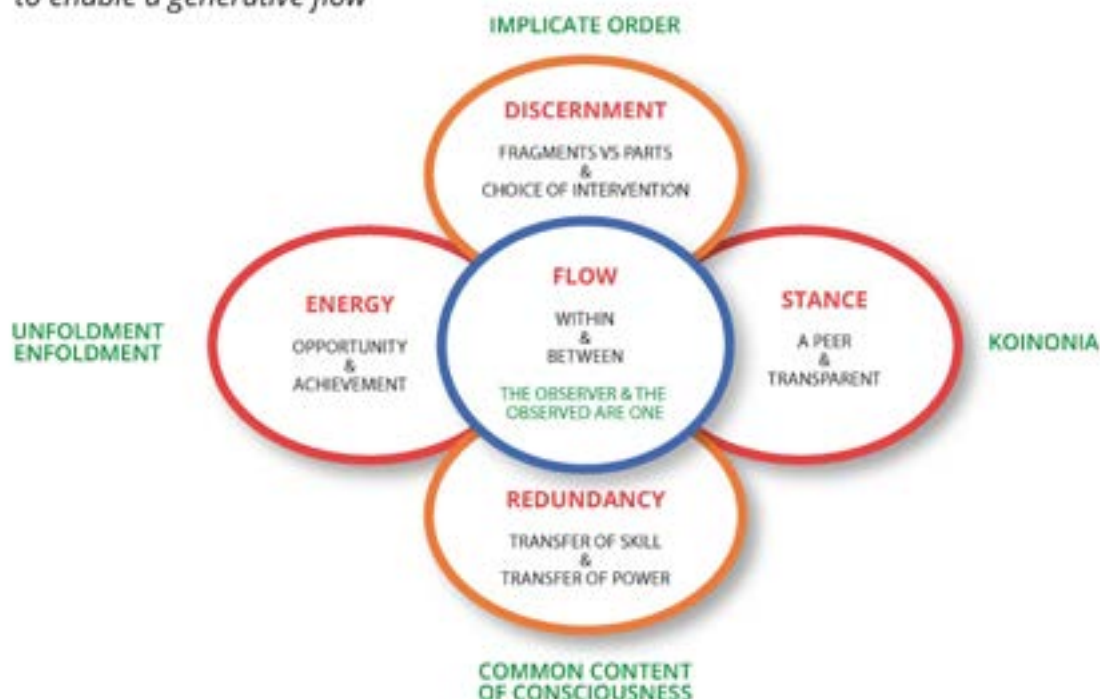


DIALOGIC INTENTION

AN INTRODUCTION

The *Dialogic Intention* has been inherent in all the material already considered in the Next Generation Programme. We now want to make the disposition of the Professional Dialogue Practitioner more explicit. It involves the right use of discernment, stance, investment and energy to enable a generative flow.

Dialogic Intention
to enable a generative flow



DISCERNMENT

Throughout the convening and facilitation of Dialogue, discernment is needed about the level of *fragmentation* amongst those involved, and therefore what is needed to realise a common understanding in the room between all the participants. The potential for this common sense is always present, but the gaps and dislocations in consciousness mean people have difficulty recognising how they are affecting one another. The practitioner is not trying to get the group together - but to enable the participants to become aware of how they are already together in the way they are interacting within a single living system. Bystanding is a means of describing how this works at one level, just as Suspension does so at a deeper level. Things are unfolding. Whatever plan might have been made in advance, the practitioner is more helpfully disposed to discern the opportunity and constraints of the dynamics in the room in the moment, and to act accordingly. This discernment naturally provides a sense of timing - of when to push the swing to maximum advantage, and when to let things freewheel and find their own way.



STANCE

The practitioner has the facilitation challenge of working with the visible interactions between individual participants. Sometimes these are enjoyable and rewarding, whilst at other times they are factious and degenerate. The dynamics of these interactions are partly driven by what happens in the room. In part, however, they are also informed by memories and shadows of past experiences. When awareness of this is lacking, the imprinted past leads to fixed assumptions, assumed identities and a variety of competing sub-cultural groupings. That is the nature of fragmentation. A particular stance is required by the practitioner to work with this. Civil behaviour can be required, and it is a responsibility of the practitioner that nobody is damaged by the behaviour of others - but rejecting, ignoring or suppressing people's attitudes will not succeed. What is required is to support the developmental growth of everyone involved by helping them to discover what is occurring. This is not as easy as it looks. It is not possible, for example, to step out of the system to somehow become an independent, neutral, and objective facilitator. Like everyone else, the practitioner is an active part of the system. Pretending not to affect and be affected by the situation, is neither realistic nor honest. Everyone is in this together. Instead, the key is for the practitioner to own their situation in the same way they would have others do so. This means being helpfully open about what one is doing and why one is doing it – a *transparent* and *developmental* stance. As participants get the feel for this, they begin to act in a similar way themselves. The natural outcome is the emergence of an informal fellowship amongst those present, or *koinonia* - a sure sign of the right collective stance.

INVESTMENT

The reward for the skillful and effective dialogic practitioner is that they are no longer easily distinguished from others in the room. Whatever skills they brought have not only been available and transferred to others, but they are used by others. The practitioner has made an investment in the longer-term well-being of those involved. As a facilitator they have become redundant. Instead, they have become a valuable participant in the group. It is worth noting that without this occurring the group cannot move from Dialogue fully into Generative Dialogue, which cannot be facilitated. There is one constraint to this occurring that is often overlooked. As well as *transferring the skills*, the practitioner or facilitator needs to release and *transfer the power* they have held. That power has been partly positional power – the authority that goes with being the designated person to facilitate the group. The facilitator and the participants may all have an interest in the practitioner being responsible for how things work out, and therefore holding the power to do so. The developmental phase of Affecting the Field means releasing both skills and power in a way that others can assume authority alongside you, or without you. This is the path of humility.

ENERGY

Without energy nothing can be done. Energy is needed to do work, and understanding energy is an important aspect of a practitioner's profession. There is always energy in any system, but the challenge is to access and activate it. Sometimes it is mainly latent energy that is locked into the way the system operates and is difficult to access. Such energy may not become available without a crisis, which will surely come to such a system due to the self-correcting nature of things. More commonly there is potential energy that can be more easily accessed. A need or *opportunity* of some kind can be identified, and that has inherent energy. By naming it, engaging the relevant people, and releasing the energy, a generative cycle starts working. It may be a small victory at first, but the sense of *achievement* is significant because it creates confidence in the process. In that regard, one should not



overlook the importance of someone successfully speaking their mind or opening their heart in an early check-in! Small achievements open the way to take on greater opportunities and challenges, building the momentum to enable people to address and move beyond deeper levels of fragmentation.

FLOW

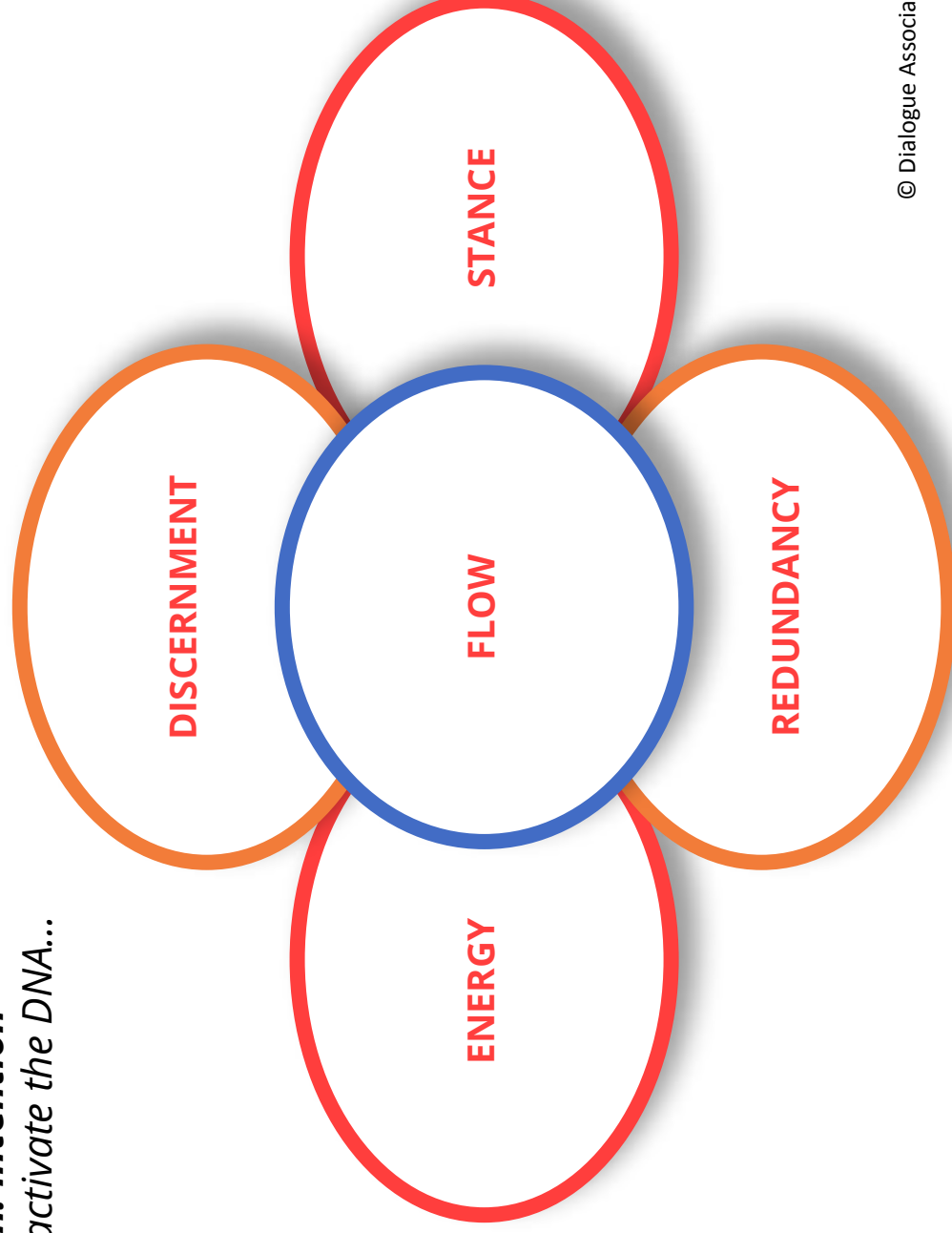
The dialogic intention has an outcome. The common sense established amongst a group of people, which is the aim of Dialogue, turns out to be a *flow* (an unfolding meaning) rather than a static or fixed thing. It is generative and yields fruit. At its heart is the flow of Generative Dialogue, which cannot be facilitated. The facilitation will need to fall away for this generative level to emerge. When it does there is no longer a fixed agenda to define the direction and scope of the Dialogue, but an emergent focus. The Generative Dialogue has a life of its own which is enriched through the awareness and participation of those present. What takes form is conceived by everyone involved. It is commonly generated and commonly owned, not the possession of any individual or organisation. This is not so much a pattern of agreement, or a resolute commitment, but a shared understanding that informs the behaviours, decisions, and actions of all involved. What is spoken about externally in the Generative Dialogue is experienced internally in the participants. The flow of meaning and feeling is *within and between* all involved. It is a self-organising flow. Clearly this is a different way of organising a community, business, or society - rather than the use of external direction and control. Here it is orchestrated by a common internal sense of what is right and appropriate.

Peter Garrett and Jane Ball
May 2022



PRACTITIONER: DIALOGIC INTENTION STEP 1

Facilitation: Intention
include to activate the DNA...



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SET RESOURCES

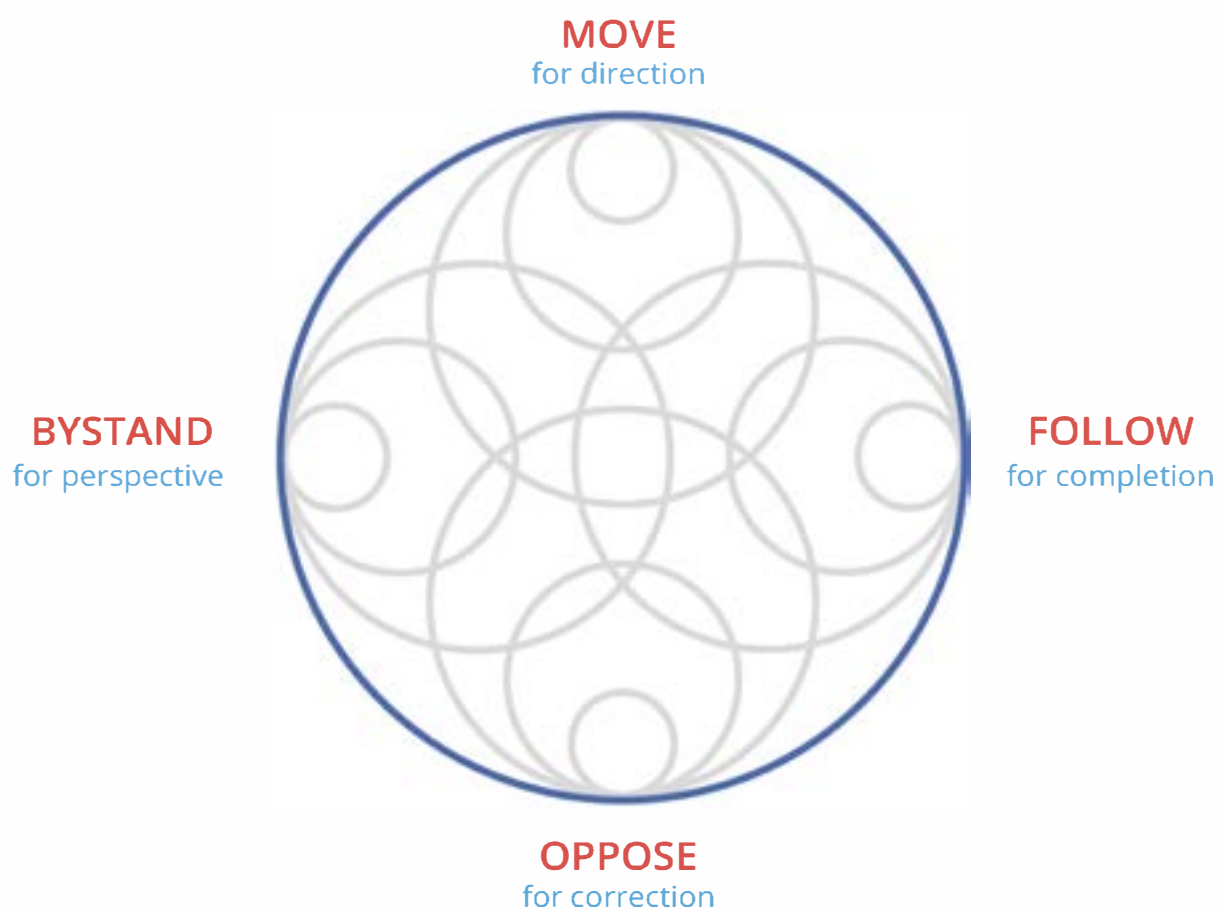
APPENDIX J:

Set 7 - The Dialogue Principles and Putting it all Together

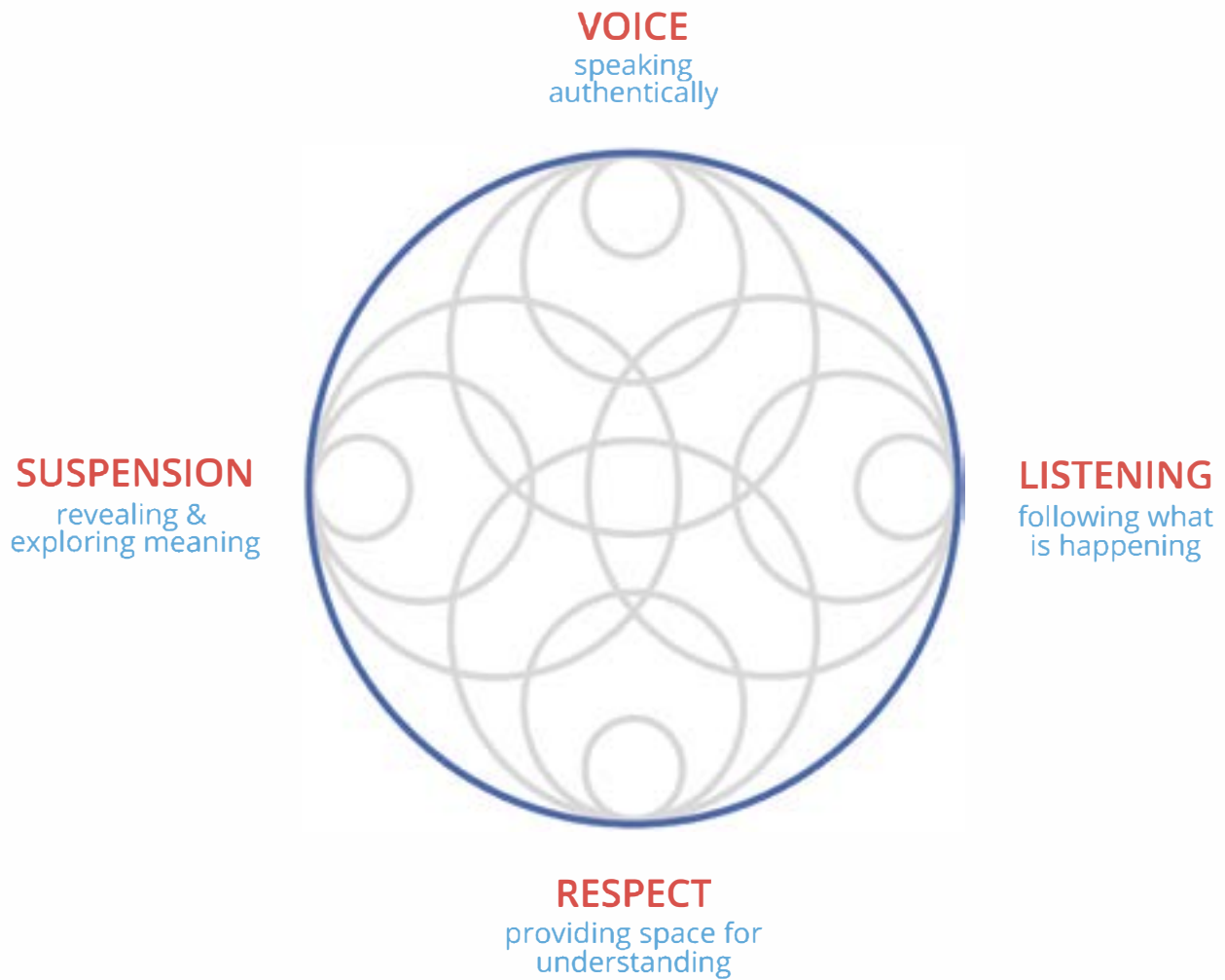
- Skill Development for Functionality, Quality, Focus, Intention & Principles
- Principles of a Living Process (Graphic)
- ADWOW Skills for Process Development – Dialogue in the Room
- Academy of Professional Dialogue Education (Graphic)
- APDP Relationship with the Academy (Graphic)



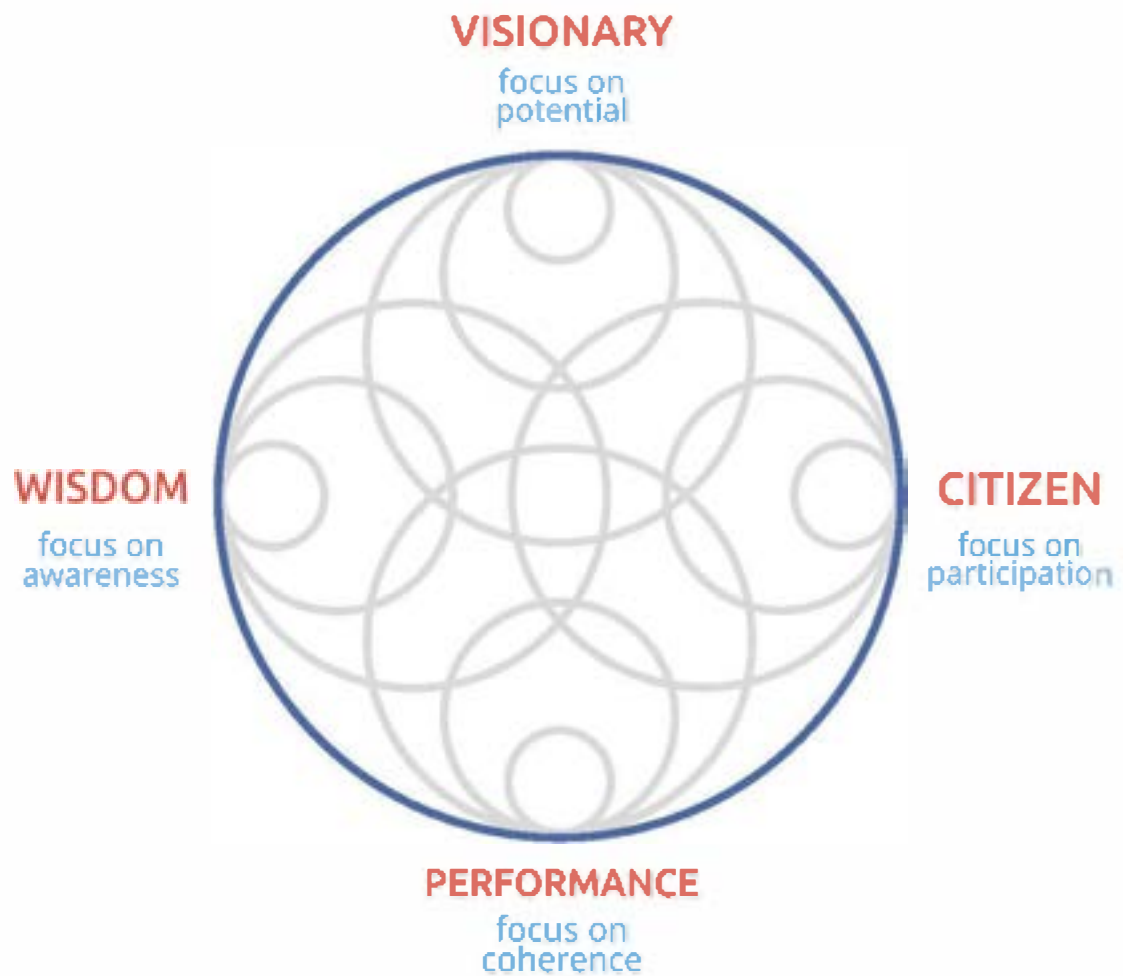
SKILL DEVELOPMENT
FOR FUNCTIONAL COMMUNICATION
THROUGH CONTAINER DEVELOPMENT



**SKILL DEVELOPMENT
FOR QUALITY OF UNDERSTANDING
THROUGH CONTAINER DEVELOPMENT**

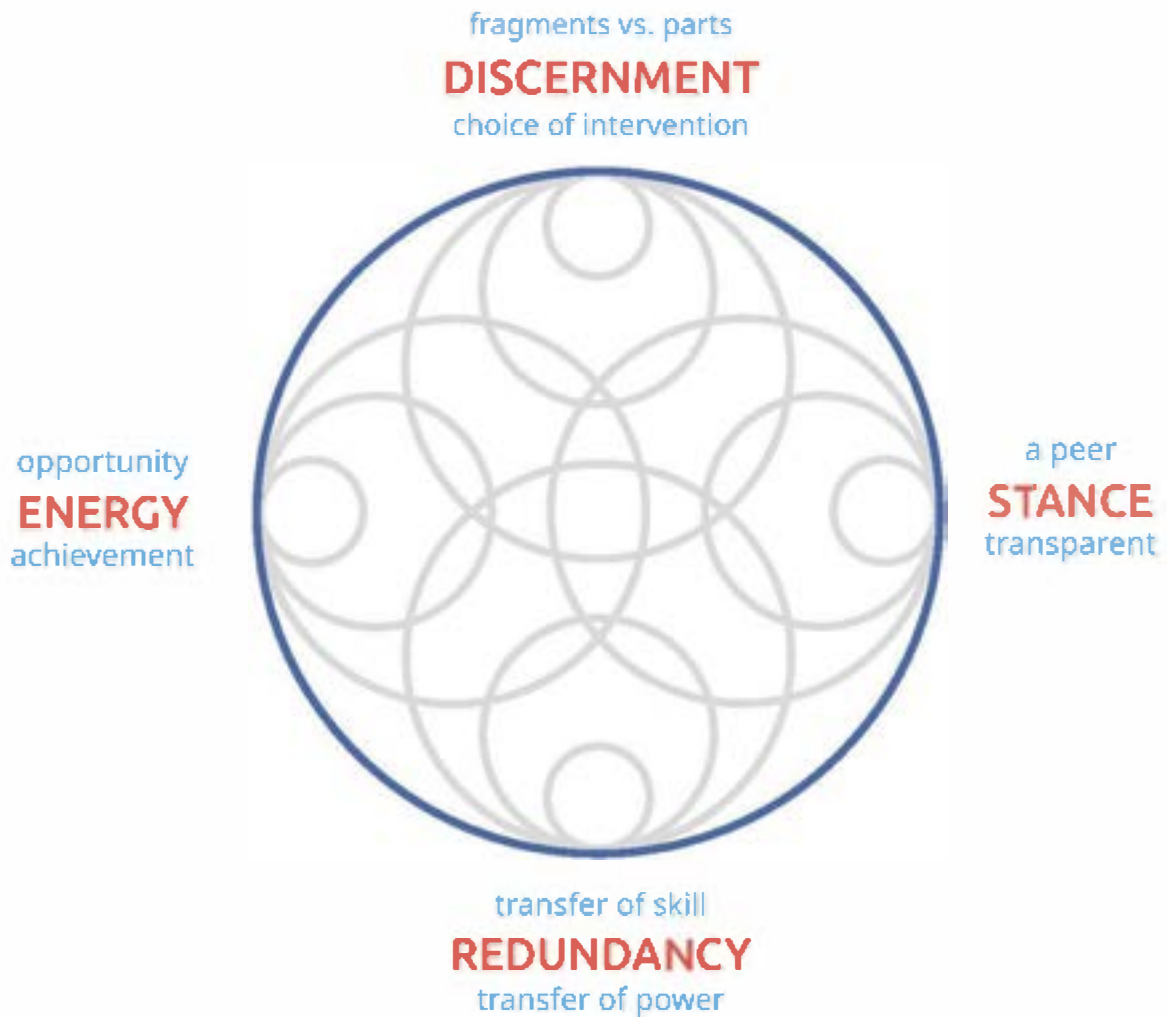


SKILL DEVELOPMENT
FOR FOCUS OF ENERGY
THROUGH CONTAINER DEVELOPMENT



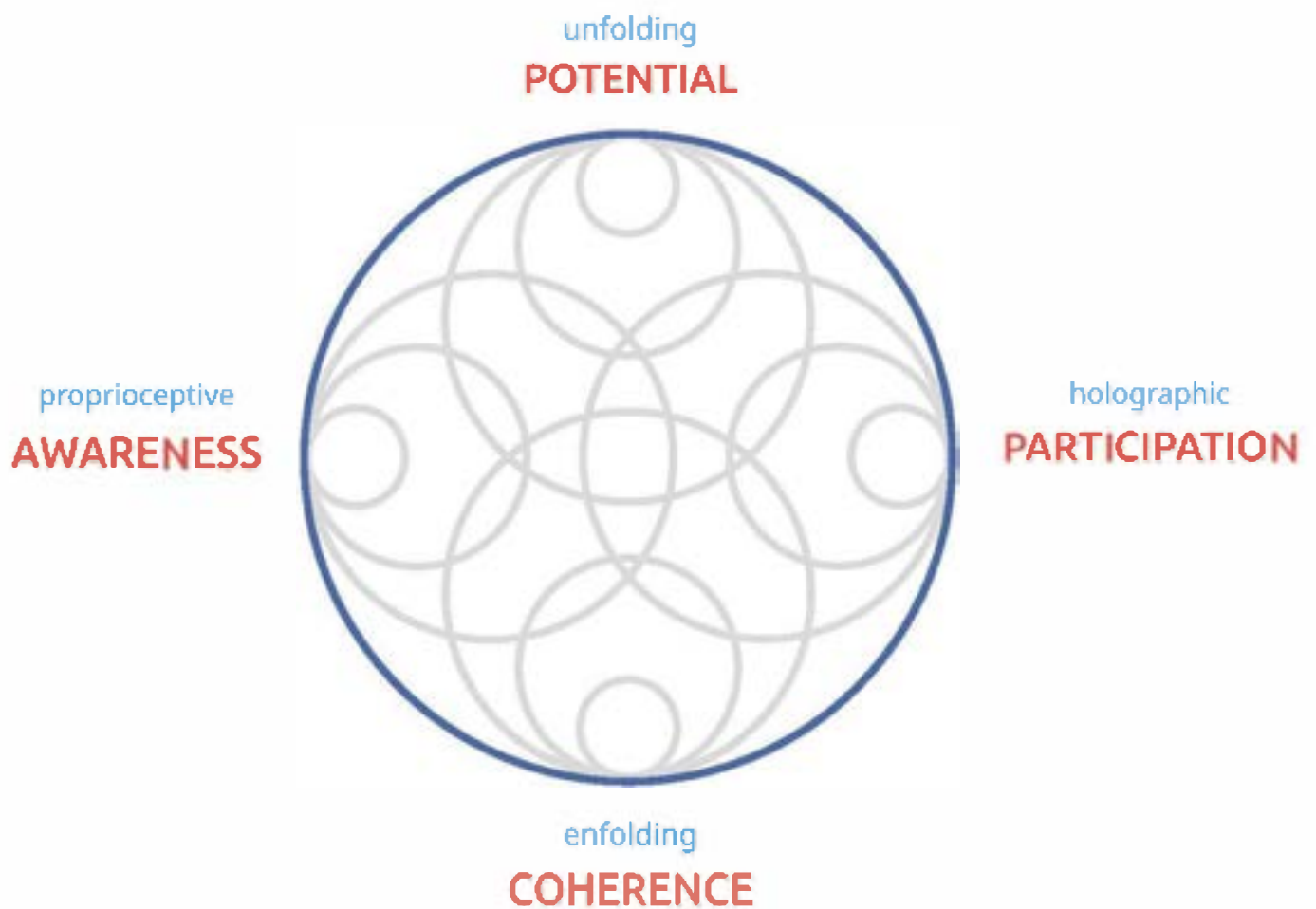
SKILL DEVELOPMENT

DIALOGIC INTENTION FOR SKILL TRANSFER
THROUGH CONTAINER DEVELOPMENT

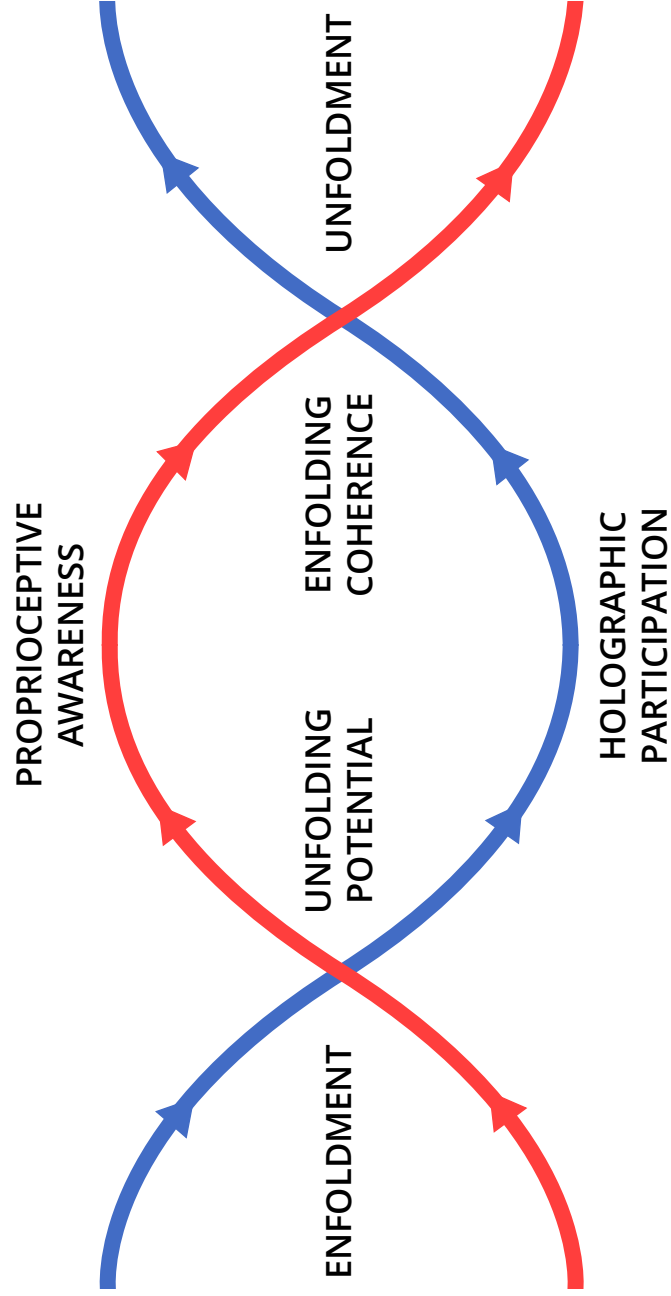


SKILL DEVELOPMENT

DIALOGIC PRINCIPLES FOR A LIVING SYSTEM
THROUGH CONTAINER DEVELOPMENT

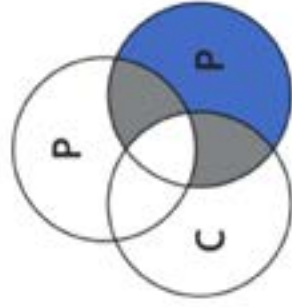


Principles of a Living Process...

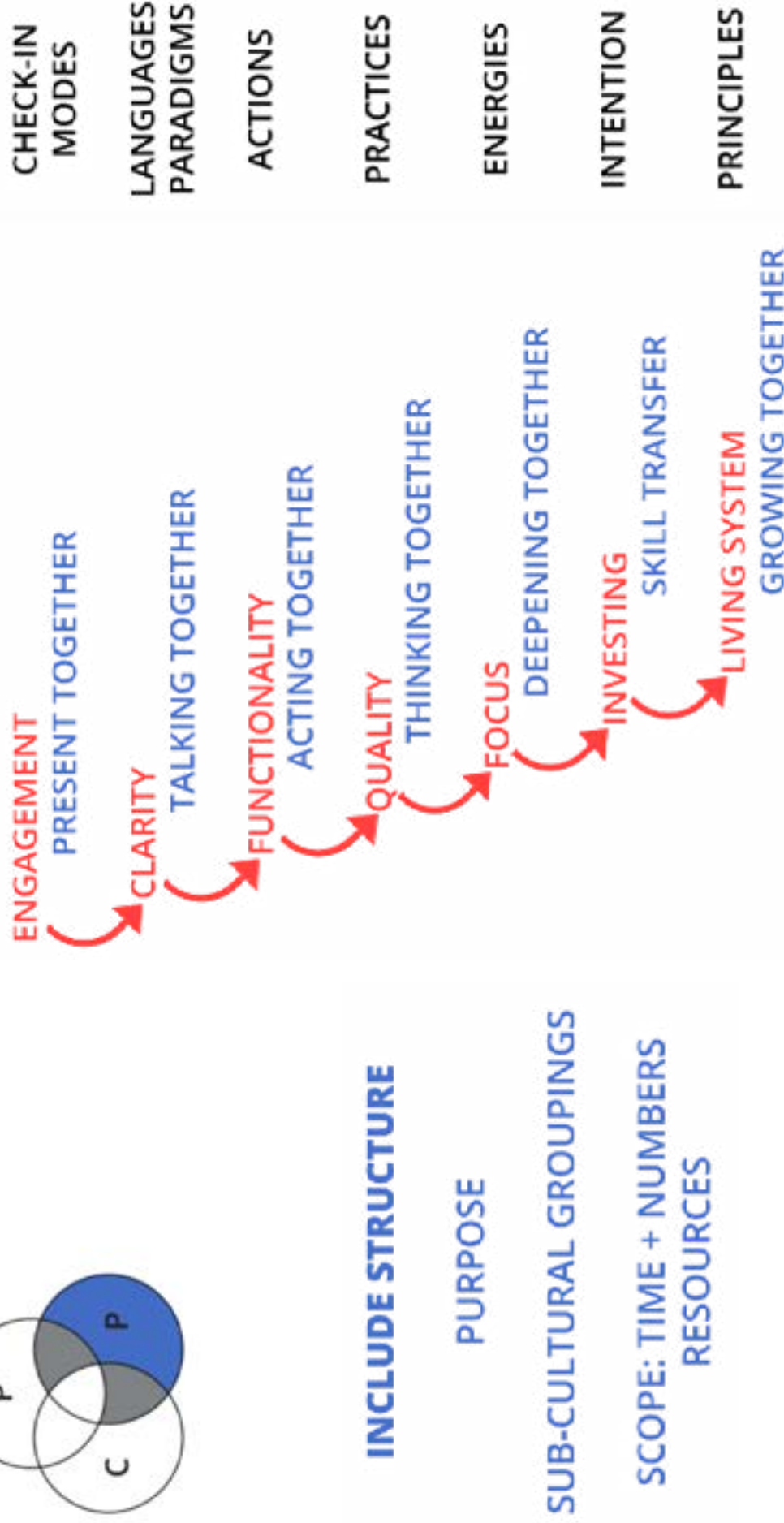


Facilitation: Locus of Attention

Process & Structure

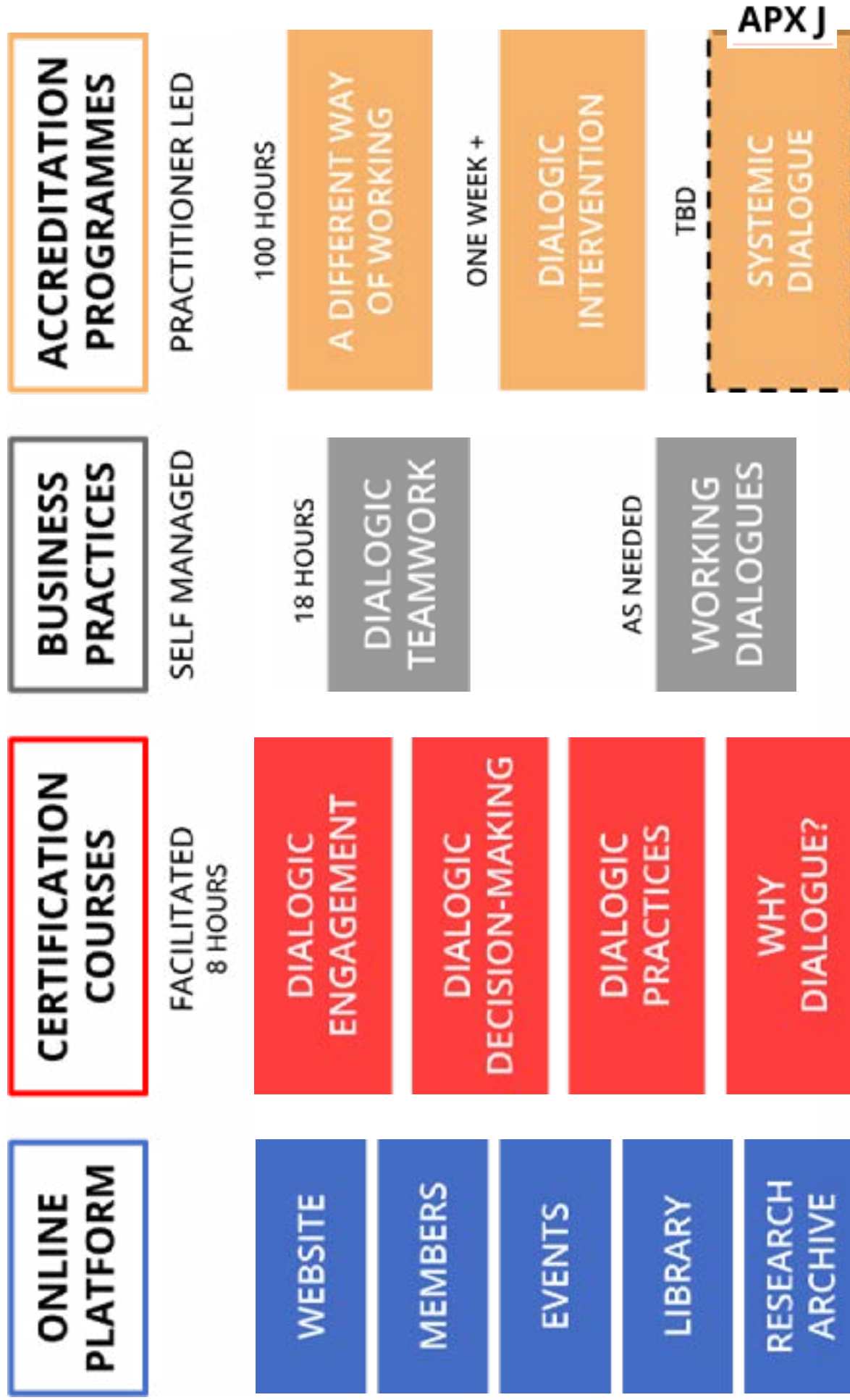


PROCESS DEVELOPMENT





ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE EDUCATION





APDP RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ACADEMY

GIVING

RECEIVING

**ANNUAL FEE
&
UPHOLD PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

ALL MEMBERS

**LIBRARY & ARCHIVE
DIRECT ACCESS TO OTHER MEMBERS
MEMBERS' EVENTS**

ACT AS AN AMBASSADOR
for professional dialogue
&
PLAY AN ACTIVE PROMINENT ROLE
in annual international conference

**ACCREDITED
PROFESSIONAL**

**PROFESSIONAL
RECOGNITION
&
APDP INITIALS & LOGO**
listing on academy website

DELIVER ONE ACCREDITED COURSE
each year (at least)
&
PAY 20% OF INCOME RECEIVED
for all accredited courses delivered

**DIALOGUE
PRACTITIONER**

USE OF ALL PROGRAMME MATERIALS
© AofPD
&
A BESPOKE LEARNING CENTRE
to manage course delivery

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
commitment
&
DEVELOPMENT OF OTHERS
and their skills with professional dialogue

**GROWTH &
DEVELOPMENT**

COMMUNITY OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTITIONERS
for collective learning
&
FOCUS TWO: DIALOGIC INTERVENTION
eligibility



SET RESOURCES

APPENDIX K:

Set 8 - Becoming an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner (APDP)

- Becoming a Professional Dialogue Practitioner





BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE PRACTITIONER

Peter Garrett – January 2025

The challenge

Mankind is suffering a pervasive distortion that David Bohm identified as the *fragmentation of human consciousness*. People have a limited awareness of human society as a whole, and little sense of being a significant and unique participant in that whole. Instead, they are more aware of themselves as individuals and put their attention and interests in their own wants and needs. Even in more local situations there is poor regard for how their behaviour affects other people, which anyway seems too complex to try to understand or accommodate. Essentially, this is an ethical crisis, where ethics means making decisions with regard for the well-being of the whole. The impact of this fragmentation on society and the ecosystem is increasingly evident. It already affects the well-being of many people, and unchecked could become a threat to our collective survival.

One humanity, one world

Dialogue offers a way through this crisis. It is a way of talking and thinking together that engenders an awareness and care for the whole. The reason to engage in dialogue is to consciously realise and experience that we are not separate, disconnected, isolated and on our own. Everyone is in the same body of humanity, and everything is in the same physical world. How we behave affects others whether we are aware of it or not. Dialogue involves an enquiry into what is happening, rather than an exchange of opinions about what people think should happen. This can lead us to see our active part in the whole, and in the flow of life.

The unfolding and enfolding flow

Newtonian physics assumes the world is made up of separate objects or 'building blocks'. Bohm's Implicate Order, that is the basis of professional dialogue, has a different understanding or ontology. It reveals that we are inherently interconnected, and that the flow of life, of which we are a part, has continuous cycles of unfoldment and enfoldment. It is the essential nature of the whole that everything is enfolded in everything else. What is unfolding from one part is being enfolded into another. Sight is an example of this. Light from the sun that is being reflected all around us is *enfolded* by the eye and then *unfolded* in consciousness into a three-dimensional version of the external world. Block the light entering the pupil of the eye and that internal image immediately disappears. Similarly, the soil



and moisture in the environment *unfold* through the acorn to become an oak tree, and years later the aging oak tree dies and is *enfolded* back into the earth. Talking and thinking together has the same cycles. As people talk together, someone may sense a proposal that they *unfold through* their words, to be *enfolded* by those listening, perhaps into a meaningful intention that is then *unfolded* by them in their actions. This is happening all the time within us and around us, whether we are aware of it or not. We will not notice the unfolding and enfolding flow of the whole when fragmented thinking dominates our awareness. That kind of thinking conceives of us and the things around us as discrete and essentially separate, rather than being alive and inextricably interconnected.

There are no accidents

To see and recognise the systemic flow requires a reframing of our disposition and attitude as well as our thinking. Take the idea that something happened ‘by accident’, as an example. Accidents are an invention of fragmented thought where apparently independent things collide unexpectedly. In fact the elements involved were always related to one another, and it was the disjointed awareness, and often the consequently inadequate communication, that was the problem. There was no accident, just an inevitable outworking given the limited awareness of the flow of the whole. Seen from the perspective of the whole, the so-called accident was a rebalancing of awareness. It ensured that the ongoing relatedness between the elements involved can no longer be overlooked. It seems that there is a continual rebalancing taking place, and what is overlooked or ignored in one cycle is corrected by enfoldment and reintegration in a subsequent cycle. There is no way to step out of this, so the invitation is to step further in, and to understand more about what is happening.

The container

The *container* is the most accessible means of experiencing and becoming consciously aware of the inherent inter-connectedness of all parts within the whole. Any meaningful dialogic work will therefore give deliberate attention to the container or atmosphere. What is a container and how does it emerge? We can trace a journey of the reintegration of awareness: from ‘separate’ individuals arriving for their first meeting as a group; to the forming of various relationships between some of them; to the fabric of relationships and rapport becoming evident in the room; to the presence or overall atmosphere thereby engendered; to the ambiance of the flow that is apparent to everyone and affects everyone in the whole room. With a rich and full container like this, timing is more sensitive, and so-called





accidents seldom occur. This flow of interconnectedness is always close at hand, within and all around. Giving our attentive awareness to the subtle changes in the container makes this unfolding and enfolding flow more evident and accessible.

The opportunity

We may all be seated in the same physical room, but we each have a different perspective or view of that room. We also each have our own internal experience and memories. We may have a favourite table in a restaurant, and changing our position in that dining room may change how we feel and what we can see and appreciate, but the room itself remains essentially unchanged by us changing our seating. It is different with the container, however, because the container itself changes as we move. Much like being in a room, we are all in the same container, each with our own perspective, internal experience and memories. The huge difference between the room and the container, however, is that changes in our perspective and in our inner experience immediately impact the container for everyone. This immediacy gives us the opportunity to explore and experience the nature of flow, and of the whole. It becomes apparent that by being aware we add our presence to the collective presence that is a significant part of the container. The container is being enfolded in us at the same time as our experience is being unfolded into the container. Realising this dynamic is occurring is a significant step into realising how our conscious awareness and participation affect the flow of the whole. It is a wonderful opportunity for us to learn how to play our unique parts with regard for the whole.

Helping others to step beyond fragmentation

I have worked over three decades to bring a wide variety of disparate groupings of people into dialogue and thereby move beyond fragmentation. This first-hand learning has been challenging, rewarding and revealing. It has exposed a series of fragmenting disconnects to be managed that otherwise interfere with or prevent our getting into dialogue together. These disconnects have a general sequence, although it is best to start with whatever is unfolding in the room at the time because that is what needs to be enfolded in that moment. Jane Ball (my business partner) and I have designed a programme to bring any group of people into dialogue that we have called *A Different Way of Working*. As a group of participants in the programme, we spend 100 hrs together working through these challenges, understanding how they arise and discovering how to take advantage of them by incorporating the fragmented thinking into the richer experience of flow and participation in the whole.



Becoming present

Unless people are engaged with one another we cannot make a start. Being in the room and being present are two different things. Our early steps involve patterned ways to get people to bring their presence into the room, and that is the beginning of making the container evident. We use a review of 'Who is in the Room?' and Check-ins to raise awareness and to get people expressing themselves. The subsequent conversations get some energy into the room and give people the chance to find how safe it is to be open and honest. As we move beyond politeness, some of the issues arise that come up in any group. We welcome that. People may be confused and feel uncomfortable, leading them to be more assertive or to withdraw. They may sense the pending dysfunctionality they have experienced elsewhere. It is often a surprise for them to find that despite the trouble caused by fragmentary thinking, some of the issues can be named, identified and managed quickly with easily learnt skills such as the Expressive Languages, Organising Paradigms and Dialogic Actions. This gives people confidence that they are learning how to talk and think together and that they have some skills that are valuable and immediately usable. It increases their desire to learn more.

Discovering dialogue

We have yet to experience dialogue. To get there we start experientially with other ways of talking and thinking together that are more familiar, like monologue and debate, working out when they are helpful and when not, and how to do each of them well. We practice seven such modes, progressing from individual oracy (monologue) to collective thinking (generative dialogue). This reveals that dialogue has a different structure and dynamic from other modes, that it is helpful in some situations and not in others, and it requires some learning and practice to be done well. Also, that a significantly different kind of container develops through dialogue compared to the other modes – a container that can appreciate and value difference, and can even enfold polar-opposite views and perspectives. The common thing in dialogue is that everyone is enquiring, not that everyone is trying to have others agree with their opinions.

For whose benefit?

Participants recognise the value of the skills we are introducing to them, and they see that mastering them could help them to get what they want in difficult situations at work and at home. We need to go a little deeper, however, if we are to shift the fragmenting self-centredness that is present in varying degrees in all of us.





This requires a change of polarity from working for *me* to working for the well-being of *the whole*. Therefore, we introduce the proposal that people also learn how to give these skills to others. Clearly you can't give away what you don't have, so first get them for yourself to be able to give them away to others. This flow, we propose, is the way to experience the full value of the skills. We encourage participants to track their own developmental learnings with each of the skills, and their success in enabling others to understand and use them. This brings people closer to the flow of the whole. Why? Because the act of the giving and receiving of the skills, from us to them and them to others, embodies the process of unfoldment and enfoldment in the flow of the whole.

Interior and exterior

Throughout our work together we are growing the sense and awareness that what is happening externally in the room and what is happening internally in ourselves are intimately related to one another. That relatedness may show up personally as pleasing (I am getting what I want!) or annoying and frustrating (this is a waste of my time!). The pleasure and frustration reveal strong links between what is without and within. We introduce some simple frameworks and skills to help get beyond this fragmenting personalisation of the situation. Beyond managing that issue, however, what is really needed is for the inner experience to be realigned. That self-centred fragmentary thinking needs to be enfolded into a way of thinking about the whole and participating in the flow of the whole.

Dialogue as a practice

We enable this realignment through the Dialogue Practices. They lead people into an ethical disposition and intention. People learn how to unfold what they have to offer, and to give it to the whole group by speaking openly and authentically. Other participants receive what they hear and enfold it through listening carefully and generously to what is meant. As these practices come into active use, their enhancing impact on the container is palpable. Participants can easily describe the turning points and changes that occurred as different participants spoke. Someone may have struggled to say something they found it difficult to disclose but did so to respect the development of the group. Others may have held back from saying what they wanted to offer, waiting for the most helpful timing for the flow of the conversation and the needs of the whole group. As this occurs, everyone benefits.

Getting to work

The door is now ajar for the potency of the dialogue to be put to work. So often



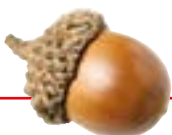
in the past I have seen the potential of dialogue arrested at this point, by people wanting to enjoy their own experience. They join and convene ongoing dialogues for their own benefit, much like a social activity or belonging to a private club. Of course there is a personal benefit for everyone involved in dialoguer, but the way to experience the enriching flow of dialogue is to put it to real work in the disjointed and fragmented world that really needs it. This requires focussed attention that we develop using the skills of the Leading Energies, unfolding and enfolding the visionary, citizen, performance and wisdom energies to extend our influence beyond the immediate participants into the wider environment.

A different kind of work

Extending the influence probably means taking the dialogue into an organization or social group to provide a different way of working. That requires a different way of thinking, a dialogic way of thinking about change and flow. The relationship needed with others is neither mechanical nor manipulative. Instead, it is developmental and requires building the container through the quality of the dialogue. The dialogue acts like a seed, or like the acorn through which the environment unfolds to become a huge oak tree. Like the seed, if we assemble the right grouping, then the dialogue contains the DNA. The group to assemble to be sure you have the DNA is a microcosm or representation of that larger grouping. That larger grouping or macrocosm is where the generative growth occurs. The work we do is to germinate the seed to allow the DNA to do its transformational work.

The true story

As we get the wider organization or community engaged, and the container extends to include more people, there is more energy but also more fragmented thinking. It becomes apparent that different people have conflicting *stories* about what has happened and is happening right now. This is a major fragmenting issue that prevents their experience of the local whole of which they are a part. Awareness and skills are needed to work with the sense-making stories that people hold, and that is what we introduce. Curiously, each person tends to believe that their version is more accurate than other people's versions. Put simplistically, 'How I see it is how it is'. One could ask if it is possible that there could be more than one accurate and true rendition of how it is. The answer, of course, it not only is it possible - it always is the case! There is a different yet true description from every one of the multiple perspectives or vantage points of those involved. The question, therefore, is not 'Whose version is right? (mine or yours?)' The real question is, 'What is the true story that fully incorporates our different renditions of the truth?' because that is the





fuller story that includes everyone's version and marginalises nobody. Is there such a story? There always is because we are one systemic whole. That all encompassing common meaning or story can only be discovered and revealed through dialogue. There is no other way. And that is why we need dialogue to address fragmentation.

The practitioner's work

The work of the Professional Dialogue Practitioner is to make dialogue available to groupings of people anywhere and everywhere, starting with where you are right now. The world needs the dialogic enquiry, and the discovery of the ways we are affecting each other and how interconnected we all are. Otherwise, people are left with the fragmentary thought and attempts to assemble a better world by connecting people who remain largely unaware. Through dialogue we can find the true story in each situation that will carry us forward together, and where each participant holds the enriched identity of being a necessary, unique and willing contributor in the whole. That is the firm ground to stand on to start enfolding our troubled world.

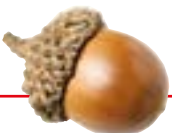
Peter Garrett
31-01-25



REFERENCES

APPENDIX L:

- David Bohm's Ontology
- Dialogue A Proposal





DAVID BOHM'S ONTOLOGY: THE IMPLICATE ORDER

By Peter Garrett



the heritage informing the
Academy of Professional Dialogue





DAVID BOHM
1917-1992



FOREWORD

David Bohm was one of the world's great conceptual thinkers, in the same echelon of brilliance as Albert Einstein, whom he knew well. Born in Pennsylvania in 1917, he worked as a theoretical physicist in the USA, Brazil, Israel and then the UK, where he spent his last 45 years at Birkbeck College in London. I first met him in 1983, and had the opportunity to work closely with him from 1984 until his death in 1992.

Certainly David was the best thinking partner I ever had. He had developed a perceptively innocent wisdom that made it easy to explore with him the inter-connectedness between an immediate situation and the most generic principles of reality. David seemed to be actively thinking and enquiring all the time. He was an undemanding man who was reluctant to say no, enjoyed routine and had a sound marriage with no children. True to his character, he worked a full day at the university on the final day of his life, dying from a heart attack in a taxi on his way home. He was a colleague and a friend, and I was honoured to be one of the pallbearers at his funeral.

My work with David Bohm was extracurricular and unpaid. We both had full-time employment, he as a university professor and I managing a building scaffolding depot. But we shared an intense passion for the work we were doing together, and we devoted many weekends and evenings to talk or meet together. It all began quite dramatically in 1984 with the conception of Dialogue as a new way of talking and thinking together, at a private gathering I had



arranged for 46 participants in a hotel near my home. Our concern was the state of society, and our interest was to explore the roots of the fragmentary thinking that causes so much damage in the world. I convened a series of further private weekend gatherings, next in Israel and then in various countries across Europe. We developed a radical and generative enquiry into the workings of human consciousness.

In the summer of 1990 we held one of these by-invitation weekend Dialogues in Oslo, hosted by Henrik Tschudi and some of his colleagues. Henrik graciously offered his comfortable apartment as accommodation for David and his wife Saral, and for me and my wife Jenny. Some 29 years later, in 2019, I was preparing for a return visit to Oslo to see Henrik again. I decided to write this short paper as a gift for him. I wanted to recall the legacy of David Bohm's ontology, his Implicate Order, and the direction our considerations took as we engaged in those early Dialogue gatherings.



DAVID BOHM'S IMPLICATE ORDER ONTOLOGY

the heritage informing the Academy of Professional Dialogue

David Bohm published *Wholeness and the Implicate Order* in 1980. In that book he introduced his underlying ontology for his resolution of a fundamental problem in 20th-century theoretical physics. There was no mathematical reconciliation of the theories of Relativity (about the cosmologically large) and Quantum Theory (about the microscopically small). Prominent theoretic physicists had adopted Bohr's Copenhagen Interpretation of Quantum Theory and, in consequence, they were convinced that no resolution of the two theories was possible. Quantum Theory recognised discontinuity and probability as fundamental features of the physical world, with energy remaining the only constant. This contradicted Relativity, which more determinately saw fields as the primary constant. Quantum Theory was also confusing to the layperson's common-sense understanding that is based on Newtonian mechanistic physics, where particles are the most basic 'building blocks' of reality.

David never accepted the impasse, believing in unbroken wholeness, which means that everything in the universe is interconnected. He came to the view that the problem arose from the different world views held about the nature of reality. He proposed a different world view, or ontology: that of the Implicate Order. Shortly after his death, his student and co-author Basil Hiley published *The Undivided Universe: An Ontological Interpretation of Quantum Theory*, in which they mathematically resolved the apparently unresolvable differences between Relativity and



Quantum Theory. The Implicate Order assumes a constant and ongoing process of unfoldment and enfoldment; that is, it assumes that reality is continually unfolding from the unmanifest (and unknowable) implicate, into the explicate universe that we experience, and then enfolded back into the implicate.

In the closing paragraphs of the book David and Basil include a simple representative description of this process. They describe the environment unfolding through an acorn into an oak tree, and then the oak tree dying and falling, to be enfolded back into the earth. I had heard David use this metaphor in one of my earliest meetings with him, and he used it again when I asked him to speak in a large conference at Warwick University. I found it easy and significant to visualise a different way of seeing the reality in and around me. Having a glimpse of unfoldment and enfoldment in this way impacted me very deeply then, and it informed my enquiry into the nature of consciousness. Indeed, it still informs my professional practice now, decades later.

This ontology of the Implicate Order enabled a breakthrough in theoretical physics. It also highlighted the importance of ontology in another area – that of human relationships. David knew Einstein and his work on Relativity well, and had written a substantial university textbook on Quantum Theory. He could see that the different world views, and the resulting assumptions and beliefs that Einstein and Bohr each held about the nature of the physical world, had led them to be unable to talk and think with each other. Apparently at a cocktail party he attended, Einstein and Bohr each stood with their followers at different ends of the room, ignoring each other.



This caused David significant pain, and he generalised that situation as the cause of many problems in society and in the world. He used the word *fragmentation* to describe the phenomenon. Within the theoretical physics community, Einstein and Bohr, along with their respective followers, simply ignored each other. They stopped communicating, and the overall community and work became fragmented. David became increasingly concerned about the fragmentation he saw in society as a whole. From 1984 to his death in 1992, I helped David to develop an experimental enquiry into the source and nature of fragmentation. This took the form of private Dialogue Weekends, generally with 30 to 50 participants, which I convened several times a year. We developed various notions within this extended enquiry.

The Unfolding Universe

As mentioned above, the Implicate Order ontology, or world view, is based on the notion of continual unfoldment and enfoldment, from the unknown implicate into the tangible explicate and back again. Developing the oak tree analogy further, acorns do not expand into oak trees, and oak trees do not look like large acorns. Like any seed, through their DNA they simply inform the environment that unfolds through the acorn, and thereby the environment unfolds into the higher order of the oak tree. The required energy of heat and light comes from the sun. Without the acorn the earth, moisture and air would continue as loosely related elements. With the acorn they unfold into an oak tree. We found the same phenomenon in the Dialogues. A small insight might unfold through the collective consideration into an exploration with



far-reaching implications. When the oak tree dies, it falls and is enfolded back into the earth, releasing its distinct form. Something similar often occurred in the Dialogues, where the consideration that had unfolded was enfolded back into a common understanding now held by each of the participants. Participation meant both unfolding and enfolding the content, process and meaning occurring in the room.

Fragmentation

We could extend this metaphor to society as a whole by considering what the equivalent of the acorn might be in the world of human experience. Where is the DNA that is creating the world unfolding around us? It most obviously lies within the pattern of social relationships between people, which could be called our culture. It is evident that in many ways our human society does not have a healthy culture or pattern of relationships. It is pervasively broken up or fragmented. Often the current situation is met with identities in discord: competing nations, political parties, religions, and communities. A chronic imbalance of wealth is worsened by the confusion of competing banks, black markets, cartels, monopolies, employers, unions, employees (and unemployed), and speculators who get rich or lose fortunes by betting on the stock markets. Competition can be healthy, but not when it is driven to extremes, where some win everything and others are unable to play.

Then there are common problems that we have caused through fragmented thought, where everyone may lose. Take global warming as an example. Even when faced with a common threat



where none win, there is little agreement on common or concerted remedial action. Global warming is undeniable, so to avoid the issue people instead argue about whether or not climate change is a natural phenomenon rather than one caused by human activity. A different nature of relationship is needed in order to shift people's fragmented identity and experience into being part of one human society and one world for which we are all responsible.

These realisations provided our early dialogic explorations with a sense of direction. We considered the way in which our attention moves *upstream in consciousness* into a more general and dynamic inclusiveness, or downstream into a chaotic competition, as if for survival. Seeing trees as the environment unfolding into sustainable woodland is an example of such an upstream concept. But seeing trees as expendable lumber for personal financial profit is a move downstream into the competing chaos of fragmentation. In the latter case, some make money whilst all suffer the unintended consequences of fewer trees to decarbonise the atmosphere. Then we struggle to agree how to mitigate the impact of our fragmented actions.

The Observer and the Observed

We also explored the idea that observing something changes it. It is inherent in the discontinuity of Quantum Theory that things become what they are when they are observed and measured. This is apparent in the way the set-up of an experiment affects the actual results. Light can be proven to be a particle if you set up the experiment to find particles, or a wave if you set it up to find waves,



even though it cannot be both. This relationship between observation and the state of being was encapsulated in the systemic notion that the observer and the observed are one unbroken system.

The deeper meaning is that our consciousness and the material world are interconnected and inseparable. We are not just seeing the world *as it is*, we are shaping it through the workings of our consciousness. This is not just a semantic or philosophical matter. The consequences of this are evident in the world around us, where human consciousness has shaped the environment extensively. Almost everything we can see and name around us results from human thought, including our dams and water reservoirs, bridges, ships, roads, street lights, cars, aircraft, buildings, walls, doors, furniture, cell phones, computers and so on.

So we embraced this understanding that what is unfolding within our consciousness and what is occurring around us is one continuous process. We had created a special situation to experience and explore the dynamics of this. We were talking and thinking together in groups of 30 to 50 people in a room, seated in a circle (or more usually in several concentric circles). This presented a most intense environment for enquiry into how what was happening within each of us, and between us all, was revealing the nature and originations of fragmentation.

Proprioception

This live enquiry into the content and process of fragmentation, including our observations and experience of the dynamics of our



collective movements upstream or downstream in consciousness, required a different way of thinking. It led us to distinguish between *thinking*, which is alive, active and occurs in the present moment, and *thought*, which is reproduced from memory. Thinking is slower, whilst thought generally takes place rapidly. The automatic and fast reproduction of memory is essential for everyday life, including crossing a road or driving a car. Fast reaction speed often is essential, as a road full of learner drivers would quickly reveal.

In fact, thought happens so fast that it is generally unnoticed. That automatic reproduction of memory may be helpful, or may cause huge trouble. The inherent assumptions and world views embodied within memory are hidden, whilst the thought process simply appears objectively to be mirroring reality. To recognise and then start to understand this, we embarked on a process of deepening awareness through a sequence of unfolding steps: first, *reflection* after a session, when we considered what had happened; then reflection during a session where, through a process we called *suspension*, we described what we had become aware of, thereby making it available to everyone for a collective enquiry; and on to an increased attention to what was happening *whilst* it was happening, which we referred to as *proprioception*.

Proprioception normally refers to an inner awareness of physical movements, but we were referring to an inner awareness of movements in consciousness. This meant that we were thinking in the moment whilst also consciously noticing, as it was happening, the automatic reproduction of thought drawn from memory. With both occurring at the same time and increasingly available to everyone in the room, a different kind of collective mind emerged.



It involved intelligence and compassion. The thinking could attend to the relevance of thought, in a way similar to the driver being alert to the roadworthiness of his vehicle. The mechanical and automatic activities of thought were thereby lifted into an unfolding flow of meaning. Spaciousness emerged for original thinking which was generative rather than self-serving.

Koinonia

Experiencing the flow of meaning, both in thinking and in feeling, began to shift the emotional depths of memory. We saw that memory was reproducing a combination of experiences, observations and ideas that were not only held together by assumptions and world views, but also by past feelings and emotions. Although sometimes profound, these emotions drawn from memory were at the same time automatic. What had previously been felt (past feelings) had been woven together with thoughts (past thinking) into an identity. This complex of interrelated past thinking and feeling is not only held in the memory, but also in the physical body and in the environment. As a result it is less rational and harder to shift. We could see identity being defended at an individual level (“Don’t call me stupid!”) and at a subcultural level, where it might take the form of nationalism or even xenophobia. Now we were touching on the roots of the fragmentation of human society and culture. We could see how the desire to feel good about oneself and one’s community, race, country or religion could be just as fragmentary as the belittling of others and the feelings of animosity towards them.



As we developed greater skills to move upstream, a different quality emerged in the room. We referred to this as *koinonia*, the Greek word for an impersonal kind of love. Although many of the participants hardly knew each other, we felt and upheld a common respect and appreciation of one another. We wanted to understand each other, and we increasingly respected people's integrity in holding their views, even when we disagreed with them. This impersonal fellowship enabled the emotionally locked memories to loosen, and their relevance or irrelevance to be more easily understood in the light of the current situation. Our memories – including ideas, emotions and identities – became a resource. They became the available material, like the environment (of earth, water and air), to move through the acorn (our collective conscious awareness) and be informed by our intelligence and emotional sensitivity. It became apparent that the presence of *koinonia* was a significant factor in the collective ability to think intelligently.

Participatory Awareness

All of this revealed the requirement for first-hand, experiential learning rather than relying on what had been written in books. We had professors and even Nobel laureates in our Dialogues. Although they were armed with the best knowledge in the world, these men and women were no better equipped in this enquiry than the poorly educated participants. Undoubtedly their learnt knowledge had value, yet it often left them in the world of memory recall. Without the participatory awareness of proprioception their automatic recall of knowledge from memory often distracted them from what was



emerging in the room. It took a while for them to recognise that the contributions they were making were automatic reactions.

It became apparent that if people followed the unfolding process in the room, rather than chasing the rabbits of associative memory, then anyone and everyone could make a valuable contribution. This was liberating. A non-judgemental sense therefore emerged of participants being peers in a shared pursuit, based on a deepening common understanding of what everyone was thinking and feeling, individually and collectively. This proprioceptive learning is very different from trying to apply book learning. Reading a book involves a private consideration of someone else's past thought, perhaps in order to acquire knowledge, and it is very rarely a proprioceptive activity. In our Dialogues we were increasingly involved in an immediate awareness where learning depended on the participation of everyone in the room. This yielded benefits for all, and led to an interest in the well-being of all.

A Common Content of Consciousness

We were establishing a common content of consciousness, and we started to uncover and reveal things that had been intentionally or unintentionally concealed from our conscious awareness. The implications of this became evident as we proceeded, and we came to understand more about each other and about ourselves. The fragmentation was through the lack of a common content of consciousness, even as each was responding or reacting from the best of their awareness.





These dynamics in the room enabled us to see how problems were arising in and beyond the room. Memory both aided and interfered with the unfolding process. At times the whole group felt like it was caught in quicksand, where every attempt to resolve things made it worse. When suspension and proprioception were absent, people inadvertently and unconsciously caused problems – and then would spend their energy and attention trying to solve the problems they were causing. Of course problems do have to be solved, but we were clear that the sustainable approach is to stop causing the problems in the first place. During these few years the need for Dialogue in a fragmented world had become self-evident to us.



POSTSCRIPT

After David Bohm's death I felt charged with energy and commitment to take what we had discovered privately into active use in the world. Of course we had not developed a practice model for how to do this, so it was to be a steep learning curve.

I began in a maximum-security prison in England where I held Dialogues for a day every week for almost ten years. I relished the different context, and this is where I matured my facilitation model. It was a closed system with deeply-set social identities and a fixed culture. Any transgression was seen as a violation, and violence was always nearby. The largest difference was the feedback. With the single weekend Dialogues with David Bohm we had little feedback apart from some correspondence. Now the reflection by the prisoners and staff between the Dialogues (of 15 to 20 participants) was brought back into the room each week. They started to suspend their thoughts and feelings rather than acting them out, and this shifted the way those who lived and those who worked in the prison heard and understood each other. Some of the participants became surprisingly articulate, and then adept. We began to establish koinonia, participatory awareness and a common content of conscious. And it made a tangible difference to the prison culture, replacing violation with respect.

Concurrently, I worked with a complex conflict between three management teams and four trade unions on a petro-chemical plant in Scotland. Over a couple of years I established a transparent monthly dialogic forum (of 24 representative participants) to enable



a common content of consciousness for the whole industrial complex. We addressed things like strategy, safety incidents, staff layoffs and shift pattern redesigns. I extended my contract with the same multinational company with divisions in Europe, Asia and North America. This was followed by engaging two further multinationals, each for four to six years.

The opportunities abounded to address culturally and commercially fragmented situations of many kinds – including joint-venturing and acquiring, starting up, expanding, merging, separating, contracting and closing down different businesses and initiatives. Alongside that, the prison work thrived. I went on to work with whole prisons, then clusters of prisons, and then state-wide prison systems in the UK and USA. I partnered with different people over the years, most notably Jane Ball for the past two decades. We had learnt how to enter a new organisation or system, how to read the power structure and subcultural identities, and how to bring complex and fragmented situations into a generative state through Dialogue.

The groupings I worked with varied from 10 or less to 400 people in the room at any time. The variety of participants was surprisingly broad. For example, I worked with 60 competing philosophers; with 45 poor and uneducated farmers in Orissa (India) who did not speak English; with groups of MBA students at several universities; with multiple government, NGO and business groupings in United Nations forums in Africa, South America, Asia and Europe; with 12 church ministers in the UK; with 18 entrepreneurs; with manual workers; with serial rapists and murderers; with state government employees in the USA; with gang leaders in Trinidad; and with many different boards of senior executives of large corporations.



The surprising discovery? I found them all to be responsive to Dialogue. Once I had learnt whom to bring together and how to structure the sequence of Dialogues within their peculiar power system, I was increasingly able to be effective in addressing complex, multi-stakeholder, fragmented situations.

Although fragmentation was multifaceted and pervasively present in every organisation, community and system I encountered, I discovered there was one peculiar characteristic they had in common. The structure and process of fragmentation was always the same, and the way into a generative state was always the same. It involved reflection, suspension and proprioception; experiencing that the observed and the observer are one interrelated system; koinonia; and participatory awareness. The key, however, was to establish a common content of consciousness, where people are acting from a shared understanding of the situation for everyone involved.

By 2015, I realised I and my colleagues had established a profession – a profession to address complex, multi-stakeholder, socially fragmented situations. It had taken some 30 years since the conception of Dialogue with David Bohm, and every one of them brought significant new learnings. So with others I set up the international Academy of Professional Dialogue as an international educational non-profit charity to make Dialogue more widely available. The initial Trustees and Members are from the UK, USA, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Germany, Austria, Spain, Argentina, Canada and South Africa.





We are currently designing the participatory programmes to develop the skilled Professional Dialogue Practitioners we need to extend our reach to intervene in fragmented situations in organisations and communities around the world. Henrik Tschudi has offered his help with this educational endeavour, for which I am grateful. With these in place we can assist with the architecture of Dialogic Organisations and Dialogic Communities. Response has been good and we have some fine people involved. The next seven years are the critical ones to lay the foundations for this social provision, and I have committed my time and energy to support what is emerging.

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www.aofpd.org



DIALOGUE

A PROPOSAL

David Bohm, Donald Factor
& Peter Garrett

We are proposing a collective inquiry not only into
the content of what each of us says, thinks and feels
but also into the underlying motivations,
assumptions and beliefs
that lead us to do so.

DIALOGUE — A PROPOSAL

Dialogue, as we are choosing to use the word, is a way of exploring the roots of the many crises that face humanity today. It enables inquiry into, and understanding of, the sorts of processes that fragment and interfere with real communication between individuals, nations and even different parts of the same organization. In our modern culture men and women are able to interact with one another in many ways: they can sing, dance or play together with little difficulty but their ability to talk together about subjects that matter deeply to them seems invariably to lead to dispute, division and often to violence. In our view this condition points to a deep and pervasive defect in the process of human thought.

In Dialogue a group of people can explore the individual and collective presuppositions, ideas, beliefs and feelings that subtly control their interactions. It provides an opportunity for them to participate in a process that displays their successes and failures of communication and it can reveal the often puzzling patterns of incoherence that often leads them to avoid certain issues or, on the other hand, to insist, against all reason, on standing and defending their opinions about them.

Dialogue is a way of observing how hidden values and intentions can control our behaviour, and how unnoticed differences in culture or gender can clash without our realizing what is occurring. It can therefore

be seen as an arena in which collective learning takes place, and out of which a sense of increased harmony, fellowship and creativity can arise.

Because the nature of Dialogue is exploratory its meaning and its methods continue to unfold. No firm rules can be laid down for conducting a Dialogue because its essence is learning — not as the result of consuming a body of information or doctrine imparted by an authority, nor as a means of examining or criticizing a particular theory or programme, but rather as part of an unfolding process of creative participation between peers.

However, we feel that it is important that its meaning and background be understood.

Our approach to this form of Dialogue arose out of a series of conversations begun in 1983 in which we inquired into David Bohm's suggestion that a pervasive incoherence in the process of human thought is the essential cause of the endless crises affecting mankind. This led us, in succeeding years, to initiate a number of larger conversations and seminars held in different countries with various groups of people which in turn began to take the form of Dialogues.

As we proceeded it became increasingly clear to us that this process of Dialogue is a powerful means of understanding how thought functions. We became aware that we live in a world produced almost entirely by human enterprise and thus by human thought. The room in which we sit, the language in which these words are written, our national boundaries, our systems of value and even that which we take to be our direct perceptions of reality are essentially manifestations of the way we human beings think and have thought. We realized that without a willingness to explore this situation and to gain a deep insight into it

the real crisis of our time cannot be confronted, nor can anything more than temporary solutions to the vast array of human problems that now confronts us ever be found.

We are using the word "thought" here to signify not only the products of our conscious intellect but also our feelings, emotions, intentions and desires. It also includes such subtle, conditioned manifestations of learning as those that allow us to make sense of a succession of separate scenes within a cinema film or to translate the abstract symbols on road signs along with the tacit, non-verbal processes used in developing basic, mechanical skills such as riding a bicycle. In essence thought, in this sense of the word, is the active response of memory in every phase of life and virtually all of our knowledge is produced, displayed, communicated, transformed and applied in thought.

To further clarify this approach we propose that, with the aid of a little close attention, even that which we call rational thinking can be seen to consist largely of responses conditioned and biased by previous thought. If we look carefully at what we generally take to be reality we begin to see that it includes a collection of concepts, memories and reflexes coloured by our personal needs, fears and desires all of which are limited and distorted by the boundaries of our language and the habits of our history, sex and culture. It is extremely difficult to disassemble this mixture or to ever be certain whether what we are perceiving — or what we may think about those perceptions — is at all accurate.

What makes this situation so serious is that thought generally conceals this problem from our immediate awareness and succeeds in generating a sense that the way each of us interprets the world is the only sensible way in which it can be interpreted. What is needed is a means

by which we can slow down the process of thought in order to be able to observe it while it is actually occurring.

Our physical bodies have this capacity but thought seems to lack it. If you raise your arm you know that you are willing the act, that somebody else is not doing it for or to you. This is called *proprioception*. We can be aware of our body's actions while they are actually occurring but we generally lack this sort of skill in the realm of thought. For example, we do not notice that our attitude toward another person may be profoundly affected by the way we think and feel about someone else who might share certain aspects of his behaviour or even of his appearance. Instead, we assume that our attitude toward him arises directly from his actual conduct. The problem of thought is that the kind of attention required to notice this incoherence seems seldom to be available when it is most needed.

WHY DIALOGUE?

Dialogue is concerned with providing a space within which such attention can be given. It allows a display of thought and meaning that makes possible a kind of collective proprioception or immediate mirroring back of both the content of thought and the less apparent, dynamic structures that govern it. In Dialogue' this can be experienced both individually and collectively. Each listener is able to reflect back to each speaker, and to the rest of the group, a view of some of the assumptions and unspoken implications of what is being expressed along with that which is being avoided. It creates an opportunity for each participant to examine the preconceptions, prejudices and the characteristic

patterns that lie behind his or her thoughts, opinions, beliefs and feelings, along with the roles he or she tends habitually to play. And it offers an opportunity to share these insights.

The word "dialogue" derives from two roots: "dia" which means "through" and "logos" which means "the word", or more particularly, "the meaning of the word". The image it gives is of a river of meaning flowing around and through the participants. Any number of people can engage in Dialogue — one can even have a dialogue with oneself — but the sort of Dialogue that we are suggesting involves a group of between twenty and forty people seated in a circle talking together.

Some notion of the significance of such a Dialogue can be found in reports of hunter-gatherer bands of about this size who, when they met to talk together, had no apparent agenda nor any predetermined purpose. Nevertheless, such gatherings seemed to provide and reinforce a kind of cohesive bond or fellowship that allowed its participants to know what was required of them without the need for instruction or much further verbal interchange. In other words, what might be called a coherent culture of shared meaning emerged within the group.

Dr. Patrick de Mare a psychiatrist working in London has conducted pioneering work along similar lines under modern conditions. He set up groups of about the same size the purpose of which he described in terms of sociotherapy. His view is that the primary cause of the deep and pervasive sickness in our society can be found at the socio-cultural level and that such groups can serve as micro cultures from which the source of the infirmity of our larger civilization can be exposed. Our experience has led us to extend this notion of Dialogue by emphasizing and giving special attention to the fundamental role of the activity of thought in the origination and maintenance of this condition.

As a microcosm of the larger culture Dialogue allows a wide spectrum of possible relationships to be revealed. It can disclose the impact of society on the individual and the individual's impact on society. It can display how power is assumed or given away and how pervasive are the generally unnoticed rules of the system that constitutes our culture. But it is most deeply concerned with understanding the dynamics of how thought conceives such connections.

It is not concerned with deliberately trying to alter or change behaviour nor to get the participants to move toward a predetermined goal. Any such attempt would distort and obscure the processes that the Dialogue has set out to explore. Nevertheless, changes do occur because observed thought behaves differently from unobserved thought. Dialogue can thus become an opportunity for thought and feeling to play freely in a continuously engaging movement. Topics of a specific or personal nature will become entwined with areas of deeper or more general meaning. Any subject can be included and no content is excluded. Such an activity is very rare in our culture.

PURPOSE AND MEANING

Usually people gather either to accomplish a task or to be entertained, both of which can be described as predetermined purposes. But by its very nature Dialogue is not consistent with any such purposes beyond the interest of its participants in the unfoldment and revelation

of the deeper collective meanings that may be revealed. These may on occasion be entertaining, enlightening, lead to new insights or address existing problems. But surprisingly, in its early stages, the Dialogue will often lead to the experience of frustration.

A group of people invited to give their time and serious attention to a task that has no apparent goal and is not being led in any detectable direction may quickly find itself experiencing a great deal of anxiety or annoyance. This can lead to the desire on the part of some either to break up the group or to attempt to take control and give it a direction. Previously unacknowledged purposes will reveal themselves. Strong feelings will be exposed, along with the thoughts that underlie them. Fixed positions may be taken and polarization will often result. This is all part of the process. It is what sustains the Dialogue and keeps it constantly extending creatively into new domains.

In an assembly of between twenty and forty people extremes of frustration, anger, conflict or other difficulties may occur, but in a group of this size such problems can be contained with relative ease. In fact they can become the central focus of the exploration in what might be understood as a kind of "meta-dialogue" aimed at clarifying the process of Dialogue itself.

As sensitivity and experience increase, a perception of shared meaning emerges in which people find that they are neither opposing one another, nor are they simply interacting. Increasing trust between members of the group — and in the process itself — leads to the expression of the sorts of thoughts and feelings that are usually kept hidden. There is no imposed consensus, nor is there any attempt to avoid conflict. No single individual or sub-group is able to achieve dominance because every subject, including domination and submission, is always available to be considered.

Participants find that they are involved in an ever changing and developing pool of common meaning. A shared content of consciousness emerges which allows a level of creativity and insight that is not generally available to individuals or to groups that interact in more familiar ways. This reveals an aspect of Dialogue that Patrick de Mare has called *koinonia*, a word meaning "impersonal fellowship", which was originally used to describe the early form of Athenian democracy in which all the free men of the city gathered to govern themselves.

As this fellowship is experienced it begins to take precedence over the more overt content of the conversation. It is an important stage in the Dialogue, a moment of increased coherence, where the group is able to move beyond its perceived blocks or limitations and on into new territory. But it is also a point at which a group may begin to relax and bask in the "high" that accompanies the experience. This is the point that sometimes causes confusion between Dialogue and some forms of psychotherapy. Participants may want to hold the group together in order to preserve the pleasurable feeling of security and belonging that accompanies the state. This is similar to that sense of community often reached in therapy groups or in team building workshops where it is taken to be the evidence of the success of the method used. Beyond such a point, however, lie even more significant and subtle realms of creativity, intelligence and understanding that can be approached only by persisting in the process of inquiry and risking reentry into areas of potentially chaotic or frustrating uncertainty.

WHAT DIALOGUE IS NOT

Dialogue is not discussion, a word that shares its root meaning with "percussion" and "concussion" both of which involve breaking things up. Nor is it debate. These forms of conversation contain an implicit tendency to point toward a goal, to hammer out an agreement, to try to solve a problem or have one's opinion prevail. It is also not a "salon", which is a kind of gathering that is both informal and most often characterized by an intention to entertain, exchange friendship, gossip and other information. Although the word "dialogue" has often been used in similar ways, its deeper, root meaning implies that it is not primarily interested in any of this.

Dialogue is not a new name for T groups or sensitivity training, although it is superficially similar to these and other related forms of group work. Its consequences may be psychotherapeutic but it does not attempt to focus on removing the emotional blocks of any one participant nor to teach, train or analyze. Nevertheless, it is an arena in which learning and the dissolution of blocks can and often do take place. It is not a technique for problem solving or conflict resolution, although problems may well be resolved during the course of a Dialogue or, perhaps later, as a result of the increased understanding and fellowship that occurs among the participants. It is, as we have emphasized, primarily a means of exploring the field of thought.

Dialogue resembles a number of other forms of group activity and may at times include aspects of them but in fact it is something new to our culture. We believe that it is an activity that might well prove vital to its future health.

HOW TO START A DIALOGUE

SUSPENSION of thoughts, impulses, judgments, etc., lies at the very heart of Dialogue. It is one of its most important new aspects. It is not easily grasped because the activity is both unfamiliar and subtle. Suspension involves attention, listening and looking and is essential to exploration. Speaking is necessary, of course, for without it there would be little in the Dialogue to explore. But the actual process of exploration takes place during listening — not only to others but to oneself. Suspension involves exposing your reactions, impulses, feelings and opinions in such a way that they can be seen and felt within your own psyche and also be reflected back by others in the group. It does not mean repressing or suppressing or, even, postponing them. It means, simply, giving them your serious attention so that their structures can be noticed while they are actually taking place.

If you are able to give attention to, say, the strong feelings that might accompany the expression of a particular thought — either your own or another's — and to sustain that attention, the activity of the thought process will tend to slow down. This may permit you to begin to see the deeper meanings underlying your thought process and to sense the often incoherent structure of any action that you might otherwise carry out automatically. Similarly, if a group is able to suspend such feelings and give its attention to them then the overall process that flows from thought to feeling to acting-out within the group can also slow down and reveal its deeper, more subtle meanings along with any of its implicit distortions, leading to what might be described as a new kind of coherent, collective intelligence.

To suspend thought, impulse, judgment, etc., requires serious attention to the overall process we have been considering — both on one's own and within a group. This involves what may at first appear to be an arduous kind of work. But if this work is sustained, one's ability to give such attention constantly develops so that less and less effort is required.

NUMBERS: A Dialogue works best with between twenty and forty people seated facing one another in a single circle. A group of this size allows for the emergence and observation of different subgroups or subcultures that can help to reveal some of the ways in which thought operates collectively. This is important because the differences between such subcultures are often an unrecognized cause of failed communication and conflict. Smaller groups, on the other hand, lack the requisite diversity needed to reveal these tendencies and will generally emphasize more familiar personal and family roles and relationships.

With a few groups we have had as many as sixty participants, but with that large a number the process becomes unwieldy. Two concentric circles are required to seat everybody so that they can see and hear one another. This places those in the back row at a disadvantage, and fewer participants have an opportunity to speak.

We might mention here that some participants tend to talk a great deal while others find difficulty in speaking up in groups. It is worth remembering, though, that the word "participation" has two meanings: "to partake of", and "to take part in". Listening is at least as important as speaking. Often, the quieter participants will begin to speak up more as they become familiar with the Dialogue experience while the more dominant individuals will find themselves tending to speak less and listen more.

DURATION: A Dialogue needs some time to get going. It is an unusual way of participating with others and some sort of introduction is required in which the meaning of the whole activity can be communicated. But even with a clear introduction, when the group begins to talk together it will often experience confusion, frustration and a self-conscious concern as to whether or not it is actually engaging in Dialogue. It would be very optimistic to assume that a Dialogue would begin to flow or move toward any great depth during its first meeting. It is important to point out that perseverance is required.

In setting up Dialogues it is useful at the start to agree the length of the session and for someone to take responsibility for calling time at the end. We have found that about two hours is optimum. Longer sessions risk a fatigue factor which tends to diminish the quality of participation. Many T Groups use extended "marathon" sessions which use this fatigue factor to break down some of the inhibitions of the participants. Dialogue, on the other hand, is more concerned with exploring the social constructs and inhibitions that affect our communications rather than attempting to bypass them.

The more regularly the group can meet, the deeper and more meaningful will be the territory explored. Weekends have often been used to allow a sequence of sessions, but if the Dialogue is to continue for an extended period of time we suggest that there be at least a one week interval between each succeeding session to allow time for individual reflection and further thinking. There is no limit to how long a Dialogue group may continue its exploration. But it would be contrary to the spirit of Dialogue for it to become fixed or institutionalized.

LEADERSHIP: A Dialogue is essentially a conversation between equals. Any controlling authority, no matter how carefully or sensitively applied, will tend to hinder and inhibit the free play of thought and the often delicate and subtle feelings that would otherwise be shared. Dialogue is vulnerable to being manipulated, but its spirit is not consistent with this. Hierarchy has no place in Dialogue.

Nevertheless, in the early stages some guidance is required to help the participants realize the subtle differences between Dialogue and other forms of group process. At least one or, preferably two, experienced facilitators are essential. Their role should be to occasionally point out situations that might seem to be presenting sticking points for the group, in other words, to aid the process of collective proprioception, but these interventions should never be manipulative nor obtrusive. Leaders are participants just like everybody else. Guidance, when it is felt to be necessary, should take the form of "leading from behind" and preserve the intention of making itself redundant as quickly as possible.

However, this proposal is not intended as a substitute for experienced facilitators. We suggest, though, that its contents be reviewed with the group during its initial meeting so that all the participants can be satisfied that they are embarking upon the same adventure.

SUBJECT MATTER: The Dialogue can begin with any topic of interest to the participants. If some members of the group feel that certain exchanges or subjects are disturbing or not fitting, it is important that they express these thoughts within the Dialogue. No content should be excluded.

Often participants will gossip or express their dissatisfactions or frustration after a session but it is exactly this sort of material that offers the most

fertile ground for moving the Dialogue into deeper realms of meaning and coherence beyond the superficiality of "groupthink", good manners or dinner party conversation.

DIALOGUE IN EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS

So far we have been primarily discussing Dialogues that bring together individuals from a variety of backgrounds rather than from existing organizations. But its value may also be perceived by members of an organization as a way of increasing and enriching their own corporate creativity.

In this case the process of Dialogue will change considerably. Members of an existing organization will have already developed a number of different sorts of relationship between one another and with their organization as a whole. There may be a preexisting hierarchy or a felt need to protect one's colleagues, team or department. There may be a fear of expressing thoughts that might be seen as critical of those who are higher in the organization or of norms within the organizational culture. Careers or the social acceptance of individual members might appear to be threatened by participation in a process that emphasizes transparency, openness, honesty, spontaneity and the sort of deep interest in others that can draw out areas of vulnerability that may long have been kept hidden.

In an existing organization the Dialogue will very probably have to begin with an exploration of all the doubts and fears that participation will certainly raise. Members may have to begin with a fairly specific agenda from which they eventually can be encouraged to diverge. This differs from the approach taken with one-time or self-selected groupings in which participants

are free to begin with any subject matter. But as we have mentioned no content should be excluded because the impulse to exclude a subject is itself rich material for the inquiry.

Most organizations have inherent, predetermined purposes and goals that are seldom questioned. At first this might also seem to be inconsistent with the free and open play of thought that is so intrinsic to the Dialogue process. However, this too can be overcome if the participants are helped from the very beginning to realize that considerations of such subjects can prove essential to the well-being of the organization and can in turn help to increase the participant's self-esteem along with the regard in which he or she may be held by others.

The creative potential of Dialogue is great enough to allow a temporary suspension of any of the structures and relationships that go to make up an organization.



Finally, we would like to make clear that we are not proposing Dialogue as a panacea nor as a method or technique designed to succeed all other forms of social interaction. Not everyone will find it useful nor, certainly, will it be useful in all contexts. There is great value to be found in many group psychotherapeutic methods and there are many tasks that require firm leadership and a well-formed organizational structure.

Much of the sort of work we have described here can be accomplished independently, and we would encourage this. Many of the ideas suggested in this proposal are still the subjects of our own continuing exploration. We do

not advise that they be taken as fixed but rather that they be inquired into as part of your own Dialogue.

The spirit of Dialogue is one of free play, a sort of collective dance of the mind that, nevertheless has immense power and reveals coherent purpose. Once begun it becomes a continuing adventure that can open the way to significant and creative change.

THE END

DIALOGUE - A PROPOSAL

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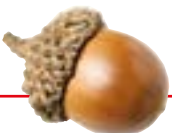
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REFERENCES

APPENDIX M:

- A Different Way of Working
Migration Laboratory, Global Leadership Academy





A different way of working

Multi-stakeholder dialogues to implement global policy frameworks on migration and development

A publication on the value and potential of the Migration Laboratory

THE MIGRATION LABORATORY

The Migration Laboratory brought together international thought leaders from different sectors, representing all world regions to enable new perspectives and to facilitate the co-creation of ideas and innovative practices guided by the question:
How can we act together across sectors so that migration is beneficial for all actors in society?

33



PARTICIPANTS

18



COUNTRIES

*“In the process of being immersed
into the Laboratory I said: This is different.
There’s more potential in this one, because after the talk
there is a passion for everyone to do the walking
and make tangible changes.”*

Levinson C. Alcantara, Philippines

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MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT: A POLICY FIELD IN NEED OF INNOVATION

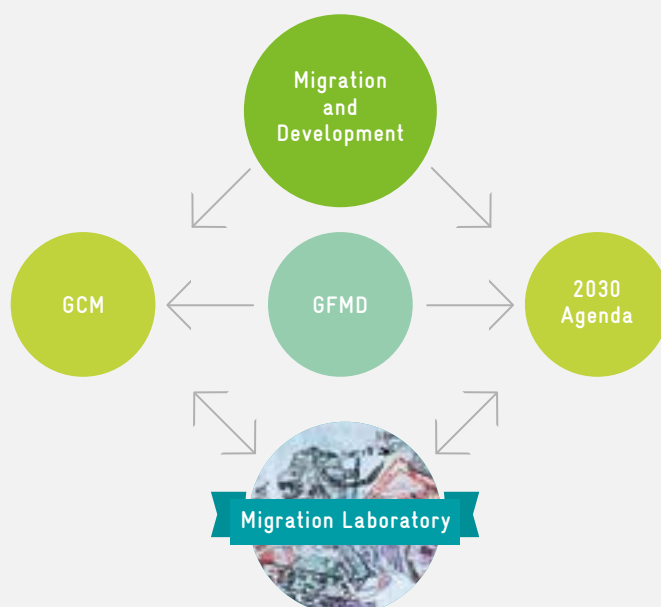
Human mobility is an increasingly important global reality that affects the future of all countries across the globe. Safe, regular and orderly migration and brain circulation offer significant development opportunities for both the origin and receiving societies as well as for migrants themselves. At the same time, migration can bear risks, especially if it is not managed. There are an estimated 258 million international migrants¹ and the majority of these people move across countries in a safe, orderly and regular manner. However, a considerable number of international migrants find themselves in situations of forced labor and other forms of irregularity. The challenge is **what can be done to minimize the risks of irregular migration, and how to better harness the enormous development potentials of migrants**. This is among the main objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). The commonly identified solution is increased international cooperation among different stakeholders, including states, civil society and the private sector.

To achieve a so-called ‘multiple-win’ effect, governments will need to develop their migration policies in close cooperation with partner countries and other actors, guided by a fair and mutual consideration of interests.

Therefore, the GCM calls for a whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach. At the same time, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants² acknowledges that **multi-stakeholder dialogues** on migration and development are of particular importance, especially in light of the SDG 17 – “Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”.

Hence, the international community is presented with an important opportunity to make a real difference in the lives of migrants. Against this background, Bangladesh and Germany as co-chairs of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) ad-hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda and the GCM, set up the Migration Laboratory – **an innovative way to implement global policy frameworks, in particular the GCM and 2030 Agenda, through Professional Dialogue**.

In an exchange between the Lab participants and the Swiss-Mexican GCM co-facilitation team, the Lab was requested to work on concrete initiatives and proposals to address the GCM goals and take these forward-looking actions to the Migration Week in Marrakesh in December 2018 to be presented as innovative approaches for implementation.



¹ 2017 International Migration Report, UN DESA

² <http://refugeesmigrants.un.org/declaration>

“Migration is the hot button topic of the current age and probably will be for another 30 years at least. Different sectors have been quite disconnected and operating in silos in relation to migration and development policy and practice.”

Paul Asquith, United Kingdom



A RESPONSE: THE MIGRATION LABORATORY

The Migration Laboratory brought together 33 leaders and change-agents from 18 different countries, representing governments, civil society (including diaspora) and the private sector. It was launched in the framework of the German-Moroccan co-chairmanship of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, and implemented by the Global Leadership Academy and GIZ's Sector Project Migration and Development on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The Migration Lab aimed at:

- engaging critically with the challenges and potentials of ensuring that migration is beneficial for all actors in society
- bringing the diverse interests in the migration system into dialogue and supporting a better understanding of mutual perspectives
- encouraging cross-sectoral collaboration and new forms of cooperation on concrete change initiatives tackling critical issues in the field
- fostering a global network of change agents
- impacting upon national and global discourses on migration

“The methodology allows every single person to contribute in a short time, with full respect to the others.

There was no conflict, but at the same time it doesn't mean that we had one dominant opinion.

In other settings, people come with ideas in their minds and are ready to defend them.

But here, we are just discovering all of us together what we are going to be contributing.”

Ilyas Azzioui, Morocco

THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The Migration Lab is designed on the basis of the **Social Lab methodology**. Social Labs represent a new format for international cooperation that enables the tackling of complex challenges which no actor can successfully solve on their own. They have a distinctive **multi-stakeholder nature**, meaning that senior representatives from government, civil society and private sector gather and converse on an eye level and with equal responsibilities. They are also characterized by a specific **intervention architecture**, entailing multiple face-to-face meetings as well as active phases of reflection and collaborative implementation of new ideas in participants' home contexts, supported by professional coaches. Importantly and in contrast to many standard approaches in international cooperation, Social Labs use an **experimental** or so-called **emergent approach**, which does not prescribe outcomes but rather facilitates and fosters the knowledge, potential and opportunities that a group holds. Social Labs are known to create deep ownership and enable the collaborative development and implementation of new ideas and solutions. Finally, Social Labs enable results and **impact on different levels**: New impulses and lasting changes go beyond individuals, to the level of the group and network, to participants' organizational contexts and ultimately, to a systemic level.

PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE

In order to work constructively towards migration that is beneficial for all actors in society, the Migration Laboratory used the Professional Dialogue methodology. Professional Dialogue is a mode of talking and thinking together that helps groupings of people with very different views and assumptions to find a common understanding and purpose, and to act in an aligned way. In the Migration Laboratory, Dialogue Associates – represented by Jane Ball and Peter Garrett – have made available a set of practical and easily-learned Dialogue Skills. These enable people to become aware of how to express their views, needs and aspirations constructively, as well as how to listen, respect others, and to agree and disagree, in order to support and challenge ideas about the best way forward.



PREPARATION &
INTERVIEWS

PERSONAL
ACCOMPANIMENT

PERSONAL
ACCOMPANIMENT

GERMANY
19 – 22 OCT
2017

MOROCCO
15 – 18 FEB
2018

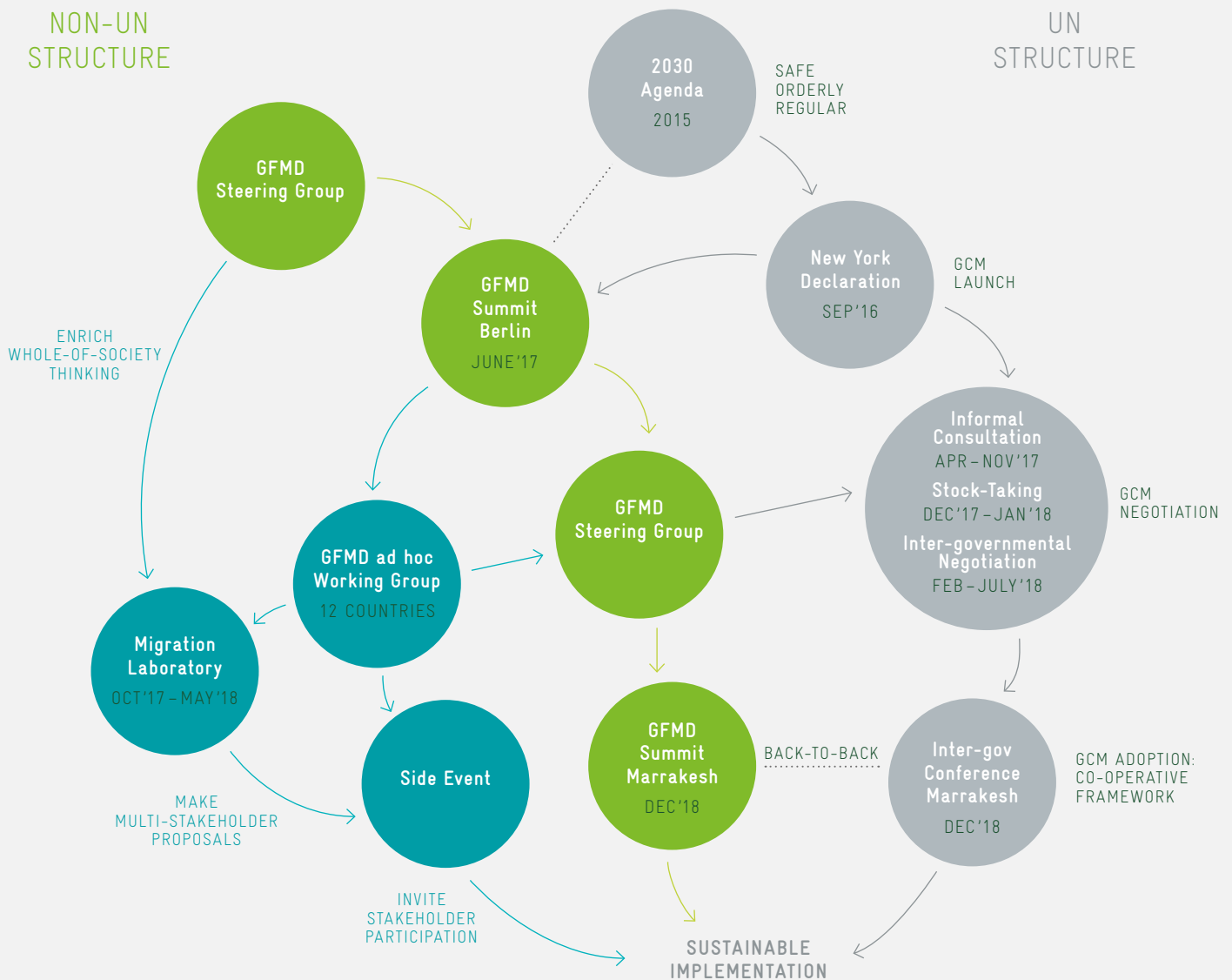
ECUADOR
10 – 13 MAY
2018

TRANSFER INTO WORK CONTEXT

Finding new solutions to complex multi-stakeholder challenges requires an atmosphere and method that is distinctively different from the typical top-down decision-making. The development of migration policy often takes place in silos where each sector follows its own approach. Even in settings where all stakeholders are present in one room, the meetings usually follow similar patterns: Government stakeholders may be cautious about revealing their personal views and thinking aloud because they represent their government's positions. Civil-society actors may have a strong passion for their work and find themselves criticizing or petitioning the government for funding and resources, whilst the private sector's crucial contribution in the field of migration and development is often not sufficiently taken into consideration, neglected or even ignored.

In order to break through this silo-thinking, participants of the Migration Laboratory met in selected countries and venues that were supportive of changing perspectives and engaging in an open way. The engagement with Professional Dialogue helped people engage genuinely, without fear of judgment, and to recognize the potential of failing, learning and collaborating across sectors and speaking openly in the development of adaptive solutions to burning challenges in the field of Migration and Development.

CREATING A GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR A MIGRATION THAT BENEFITS ALL REALISING GCM COMMITMENTS & 2030 AGENDA MIGRATION-RELATED SDGS



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*“In the Migration Laboratory,
the institutional background is somewhat secondary.
What you bring together is the knowledge and ideas.
I think this is something
that can enrich global policy processes.”*

Sophia Wirsching, Germany

Over the course of one year, the Migration Lab was convened at three face-to-face meetings in Berlin, Rabat and Quito, which were designed along three themes:



LAB MEETING 1

BERLIN

19 – 22 OCTOBER 2017

TOGETHER UNDERSTAND

The first Lab meeting offered a space for participants to get to know each other in a way that enables mutual understanding and builds bridges beyond institutionally and sector-specifically defined responses. It also provided opportunities to explore critical challenges in the field of migration and development from different perspectives on the ground in Germany, allowing for a new and systemic understanding of the field.



LAB MEETING 2

RABAT

15 – 18 FEBRUARY 2018

TOGETHER INITIATE PROPOSALS

The second Lab meeting in Rabat focused on deepening participants' mutual understanding on common areas of interest and concerns in the field of migration and development. The Dialogic modes introduced in the first meeting were complemented with Dialogic Actions, laying the basis for constructive and inclusive conversations and the initiation of multi-stakeholder project proposals.



LAB MEETING 3

QUITO

10 – 13 MAY 2018

TOGETHER SUPPORT AND TRACK IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS OF PROPOSALS

In the third Lab meeting, the participants focused on advancing project proposals, aiming at putting the objectives of the GCM and the migration-related goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into action. Emphasis was further put on reviewing the insights and collective learnings from the Lab process as a whole, while envisioning and planning the future beyond the Lab.

The Lab led to eight tangible project proposals that reflect the cross-sectoral and cross-regional insights and experiences in the Lab. These outcomes will enrich the efforts of the GFMD in support of the implementation of the GCM and migration-related Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, it created a network of change agents that will continue to support each other across world regions and sectors with the objective of making migration beneficial for all.

Read the reports on all three Lab meetings at
→ www.we-do-change.org/what-we-do/the-migration-laboratory/#c1084



THE IMPACT

Going beyond usual conferences, roundtables and workshops in terms of process and outcomes, the Migration Laboratory enabled lasting transformations in capacities at different levels:



HUMAN CAPACITIES

On a personal level, participants developed new knowledge, deepened leadership skills, innovation and facilitation skills, and attitudes that are favorable for effective collaboration.



SOCIAL CAPACITIES

On a social level, participants created cross-sectoral networks characterized by trust and an increased capacity for collective action with systemic leverage.



PHYSICAL CAPACITIES

Building on transformations on the personal and social level, participants developed tangible new products, infrastructures and services, such as the Laboratory's eight project proposals.



Jessica López Mejía, Mexico
Ministry of Governance,
Migration Policy Unit



Ilyas Azzioui, Morocco
National Center for Scientific and Technical Research

“I am lucky, because I got to know people that come from different backgrounds – and sometimes that help you to explode your own creativity!

I need that, because I have to design policies for protection and integration.

When you have different perspectives, you can imagine different things.

And you might realize that, what you were proposing is not what is needed.”

“The Lab helped us to get a deeper grasp of what’s going on in migration – because everyone has his/her own particular perspective. Here, we started to understand the complexity of migration issues and to become a little bit more humble about our own opinions.”

“I want to replicate this exercise in my own field in Mexico. Because this format actually gives you the opportunity to think out of the box. We need that!”



Paul Asquith, United Kingdom
*African Foundation for Development;
 Africa Europe Diaspora Development Platform*

*“This is an alternative way of doing things
 and really making policy ideas crystallize into workable,
 feasible projects on the ground.”*

“I consider the participants to be the seeds.

*They will go on to initiate dialogue and discussions
 and propose a range of different schemes
 and interventions, ranging from high level policy right
 down to grassroots projects and programs
 to help make migration work for the benefit of all.”*



Levinson C. Alcantara, Philippines
*Philippine Overseas
 Employment Administration*

*“At the Lab, I see a potential
 by which things can be done.*

*I see a group that can break away
 from the norm and put things into action.”*



Estrella Lajom, Switzerland
Global Forum on Migration and Development Support Unit



Efrain Jimenez, Mexico
Federacion Zacatecana A.C.

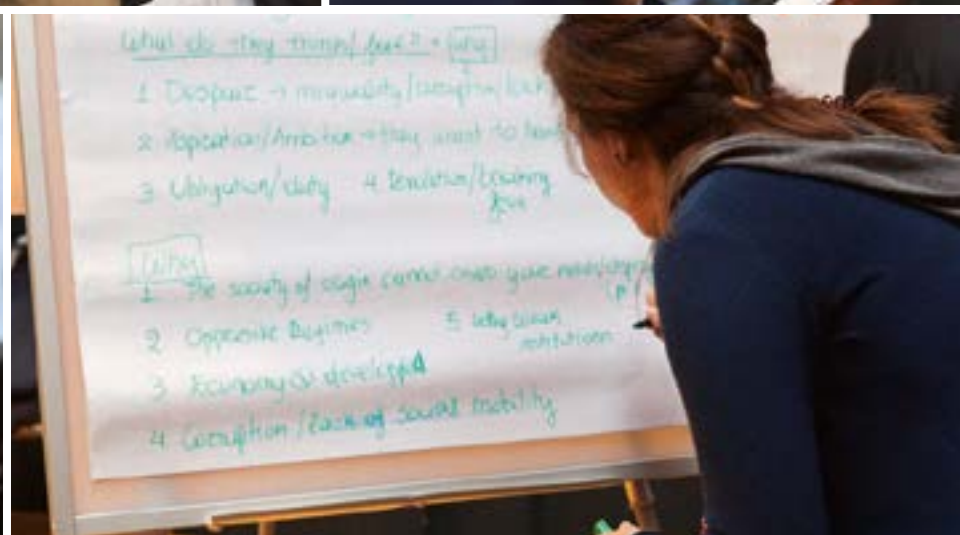
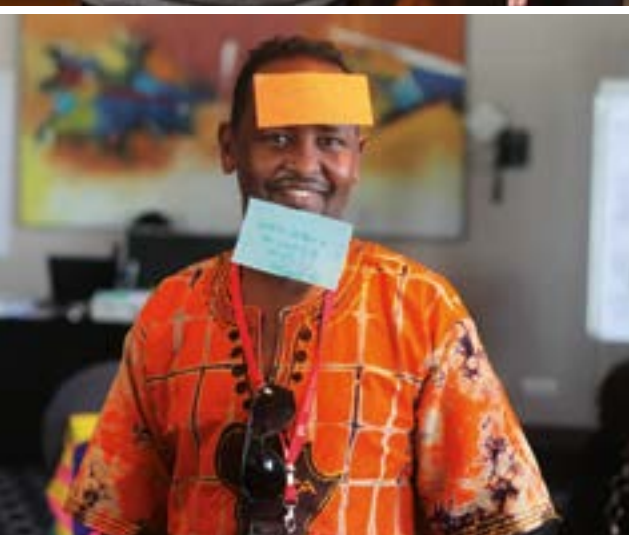
*“Usually, you have roundtables,
 you have plenaries, you have everything – and
 you end up with a very good academic exercise paper,
 but not necessarily with tools that you can really
 apply back home with your own people.*

*The Migration Laboratory definitely
 gets to a point where you have very specific proposals.
 You have various specific recommendations,
 and you end up with a lot of different tools that
 you can apply back home.”*

More voices from the Migration Laboratory

→ www.we-do-change.org/what-we-do/the-migration-laboratory/#c1172





*“In the GFMD, we say that we want a dialogue
that is action-oriented.*

*I think there is a lot of hope that has come out
of the Migration Laboratory, because we have developed concrete proposals.*

*Hopefully, with some support for the next steps
like funding and advocacy, these proposals will be realized.*

*They are anchored in the Global Compact for Migration
objectives and possible actionable commitments,
so there is a big framework
that can be pursued with these proposals.”*

Estrella Lajom, Switzerland

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PROJECTS PROPOSED BY THE MIGRATION LABORATORY

On the basis of the experimental approach of the Migration Laboratory, its members have developed, in concrete cooperation across sectors, proposals that tackle critical current challenges in the field of migration and development, thereby creating new physical capacities. From the Lab, eight cross-sectoral groups have been established, proposing projects on topics such as reintegration, the inclusion of private sector actors, and the protection of particularly vulnerable migrants. The projects are designed to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Global Compact on Migration

and migration-related SDGs. Laboratory participants are continuously working towards the realisation of all eight projects, and they need the participation and support of individuals and organisations from the fields of government, civil society, academia, media and private sector to create synergies and enable optimal impact. Below each project, you will find an email address at which you can contact the groups. We invite you to add your creativity and commitment to this joint undertaking of change-makers aiming at tangible actions that will help make migration beneficial for all actors in society.

MIGRANTS' PROTECTION UMBRELLA

Enabling Evidence to Protect Migrants in Vulnerable Situations

NEED AND OPPORTUNITY

Since 2005, a set of protection indicators for refugees has been established by UNHCR. The indicators have been put to use by the international community in policy and operations for refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons and other similar people of concern. To date, however, there have been no dedicated indicators that could describe the level of protection for migrants at all stages of migration (origin, transit and destination). A set of migrant protection indicators would help, as a common reference for all stakeholders, when assessing the provision of sufficient protection for migrants in varied and complex migration contexts. The indicators can provide stakeholders with a wider lens for viewing migration and providing appropriate protection initiatives in a more comprehensive and coherent manner. The proposed indicators would take into account qualitative and quantitative parameters according to different contexts and situations. With such evidence-based indicators, there is an opportunity to create targeted policy recommendations and programme designs that address migration realities effectively.

LINK TO GCM OBJECTIVES AND MIGRATION-RELATED SDGS

The proposed identification and development of indicators directly responds to the GCM Objectives 4, 7, 10 and 14 and SDG 88.

MAIN TARGET GROUP / STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

- Migrant workers and families
- Academia
- Governments
- Civil Societies
- Private sector
- International organisations
- Media
- Faith-based organisations

HOW? KEY POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

As a preliminary process, we would like to invite international organisations, think tanks, universities and academia to express their interest in delving deeper into the development of migrant-protection indicators. A Dialogue will then be convened as the first opportunity to consider, both the substance and the process of developing these indicators. It is expected that the first meeting would produce a road map and programme of activities for the project. A series of Dialogues and research fora are needed to ensure that the indicators are validated, substantiated and taken into account the details and complexity of migration processes.

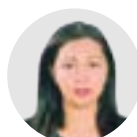
CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

The Migrant Protection Working Group reaches out to the governments of Egypt, Indonesia and the Philippines, as well as other partners and stakeholders to join us to develop a pilot study for migration protection indicators. Please contact us to participate in this crucial task at Protection.Miglab@gfmd.org. We would welcome potential partners with an expertise and interest in designing the general layout of the project and arranging the first Dialogue forum – please send us a short CV and write up of your views on the topic to the email address above.

THE PROPOSAL TEAM



LEVINSON C. ALCANTARA
Philippine Overseas
Employment Administration
Director, Labor Market Development Branch



FATIMA ABDELRAHIM SAEED IDRIS
Tadamon Council
General Manager



ANIS HIDAYAH
Migrant Care
Founder – Head of Center
for Migration Studies



JUDHA NUGRAHA
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic
of Indonesia, Directorate for Protection
of Indonesian Nationals and Legal Entities
Deputy Director for Institutions and
Protection Diplomacy

GLOBAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY

From Policy to Action!

NEED AND OPPORTUNITY

This proposal addresses the gap in the implementation of policies on migration and development (MnD) among the government, business, international development agencies, NGOs and diaspora organisations. There are policies and recommendations being presented in the GFMD and GCM, but the challenge is transforming these policies into concrete actions that are relevant and practical at ground level. This project harnesses the expertise of MnD practitioners from different world regions.

LINK TO GCM OBJECTIVES AND MIGRATION-RELATED SDGS

The proposal will contribute to the SDGs 5, 8, 11 and 17 and GCM Objectives 18, 19, 20 and 21. Also, it will contribute to the Capacity Building Mechanism (GCM para. 43), which will help to implement the GCM.

MAIN TARGET GROUP

The main target groups for the proposal are national and local government units, NGOs (working on MnD), businesses, diaspora, and migrant organisations.

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

The proposal needs the support of, and collaboration with, international development agencies, national and local governments and experts from various backgrounds with practical knowledge and expertise in implementation, including return migration, diaspora engagement and local development initiatives.

HOW? KEY POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

We will develop training-like Global Classrooms that assist participants in developing and implementing programmes. These will focus on return migration and diaspora engagement, diaspora entrepreneurship and investment mobilization, financial inclusion and remittances, addressing social cost of migration, triple win migration and mainstreaming migration in local economic development.

At a later stage, the Academy will offer training programmes, among others, on engaging migrants as actors in the value chain, protecting rights of migrants and families, evaluating impact and outcome of MnD initiatives, improving migration narratives, and setting up a web-based MnD training programme.

- We will set-up Global Classrooms in origin, transit and destination countries with existing innovative MnD practices by governments, NGOs, MnD organisations, and private sector actors. We will initially set up in countries participating in the Migration Laboratory namely: Philippines, Mexico, Indonesia, Ecuador, Germany, Netherlands, Bangladesh, Morocco, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Greece.
- We will offer short courses, blended learning (combination of web-based and classroom), study missions and mentoring sessions to share the innovations for possible replication or adaptation to other interested countries or organisations.
- We will include new editions of the Migration Laboratory on regional or national level in the Academy's curriculum. The Migration Laboratory format of learning and consensus building through Professional Dialogue between government, civil society and private sector on migration and development themes is one of the methodologies that will be offered by the Academy. An example is the ASEAN Migration Laboratory on Triple Win MnD Initiative.
- We will organize the Global Migration and Development Academy and will be the teachers and facilitators of the initial offerings of the Global Classrooms. We are also looking for additional experts in the field of MnD who are interested in sharing their expertise and experience.

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

If you are an individual or organization interested in organizing a Global Classroom in your country, in enrolling in the Global Migration and Development Academy, or in participating in the initial mapping of experts and organisations implementing good initiatives on return migration and diaspora engagements, please send us a short bio or write up of your experience Academy.Miglab@gfmd.org.

THE PROPOSAL TEAM



MOHAMED ALI
Swedish Djiboutian
Development Agency
Founder and Chairman



ESTRELLA MAI DIZON AÑONUEVO
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ANNE HITZEGRAD
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Advisor



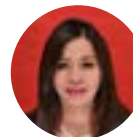
EFRAIN JIMENEZ
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Executive Director



BIKASH CHOWDHURY BARUA
BASUG – Diaspora
and Development
Chairman



JOSE IBAN GALVEZ
Impresa Etnica
Director



FREESCA SYAFITRI
The House of Representative
of the Republic of Indonesia
Expert Staff on State Budget

SHAPING POSITIVE NARRATIVES OF PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

A Value-Based Approach

NEED AND OPPORTUNITY

The international community is widely acknowledging the massive domination and damaging impact of negative narratives about people on the move and the need to dramatically change them. Most attempts to improve the narratives in the public space start with data and statistics, whereas our approach is different: we will address the issue based on values. Our proposal introduces a new method to craft a positive image of migrants, refugees and their families: creating narratives based on the values of the stakeholders we want to engage, and inspired by the rule of law, democracy, human rights and human dignity.

LINK TO GCM OBJECTIVES AND MIGRATION-RELATED SDGS

- GCM Objectives 1, 7, 10, 16, 17 & 19.
- SDG 8.8

MAIN TARGET GROUP

Those who would like to shape positive narratives through an innovative approach, including national, regional and local governments, migrant organisations, civil society organisations, international organisations, media and influencers of public opinion around the world.

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

The optimal implementation of this proposal would require its launch by governments, local authorities, regional organisations and international organisations. Financial support may come from these stakeholders and other international and national private donors and foundations.

HOW? KEY POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Identification of common positive and negative narratives across different regions and population segments (including sending and receiving countries).
- Analysis of the key strategic communication components of those narratives.

- Analysis of the motivations and feelings on which the creation of the negative narratives are based with a view to understand what makes them attractive, and to whom.
- Overview of the components to consider when preparing a value driven campaign to craft more engaging messages for key stakeholders (or audiences) in influencing public opinion.
- Description of a strategic communication method to create campaigns that can have a positive impact on the perceptions of people on the move, including adaptation of content to different audiences.

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

- If you work for the government, and are interested in promoting an inclusive and buoyant society, that improves the well-being of people and enriches their everyday life and creativity, please contact us – together we have the power to achieve change through strategic communication campaigns with a wide range of means and actors involved.
- If you are promoting change through your work in an international organisation and would like to join this innovative effort in close cooperation with states and localities, let us work together to craft new narratives. Together we can change lives, also in host communities! Many innovative communication tools and means will help us do so.
- If you are promoting the rights of people on the move through a private donor institution or a migrant / civil society organization, let us show all your contributions across borders! Civil society organizations can contribute to this target by providing personal stories of migrants to the media from their work on the ground, and encourage migrant associations to actively participate in the overall strategy.

If you would like to join the piloting, please contact us at: Narratives.Miglab@gfmd.org. We will be organizing a set of (video) conferences to get a shared understanding of our model, aim, and desired outcomes of this innovative strategic communication approach.

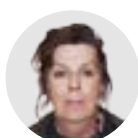
THE PROPOSAL TEAM



ANTIGONI ANGELAKI
United Nations Children's Fund
Child Protection Specialist



RODOLFO CORDOVA ALCARAZ
Impacto Social Metropolitan Group
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ATHANASIA IOANNOU
Ministry of Migration Policy
Head of Social Integration Division



MARKUS REISLE
Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN
Deputy Head of the ECOSOC Team



HAMID ROCHDI
German-Moroccan Competence Network
Leader of the working group
on migration and integration

PRIVATE SECTOR MENTORING

Partnering for Economic Opportunities for Migrant Entrepreneurs and Returning Diaspora

NEED AND OPPORTUNITY

There is growing interest among diaspora and migrant communities in seeking economic and business opportunities in their countries of origin and/or heritage. The private sector is also keen to access new markets and returning entrepreneurs can provide a ready access point – as well as local knowledge and expertise – to facilitate this. Government development agencies also have an increasing focus on enterprises that foster job creation and local development. This has the potential to address lack of viable economic opportunities in some regions of the Global South, which is one of the drivers of migration, especially irregular migration, in particular for young people (other drivers include conflict/lack of security, political unrest; also climate change).

LINK TO GCM OBJECTIVES AND MIGRATION-RELATED SDGS

This proposal responds to the implementation of the GCM Objectives 2, 16, 18 and 19.

MAIN TARGET GROUP

Returning diaspora and migrant entrepreneurs.

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Private sector firms interested in accessing developing markets as well as governments

HOW? KEY POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

Identify skills gaps among returning diaspora and migrant entrepreneurs:

- Through engagement with governments and existing programmes, identify priority skills gaps and sectors among returning entrepreneurs (Sept 2019–Dec 2020).

- Develop an online platform to connect diaspora & migrant entrepreneurs with private sector mentors, as well as inform local business and young people of opportunities for training, mentoring, and employment (Sept–Dec 2019).

Build mentoring partnerships with 20+ private sector companies operating in Africa:

International companies operating in Africa will be approached to provide mentoring in specific sectors (e.g. IT, engineering, finance) to returning diaspora and migrant entrepreneurs (Jan–Jun 2020). In return, diaspora entrepreneurs will advise on local market conditions, especially in their business sector.

Recruit 200+ private sector mentors:

20 Partner Companies recruit 10+ mentors each from their staff base in specific sectors or areas of expertise. Mentoring opportunities may include remote support, short-term visits while on business, or longer-term placements linked to where mentors are posted overseas (Apr–Oct 2020).

Pairing 200+ mentors with 200+ returning diaspora and migrant entrepreneurs:

Diaspora and migrant entrepreneurs who have returned or are returning to countries of origin to set up businesses will be offered mentoring support from the mentors identified; this could include franchising opportunities in local markets. Mentorship opportunities should include some training for mentors and mentees (Apr 2020–Apr 2021).

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

If you are a private sector firm or development agency or NGO interested in working with returning diaspora and migrant entrepreneurs, or a development agency looking to support job creation, please contact:

PSmentoring.Miglab@gfmd.org.

THE PROPOSAL TEAM



PAUL ASQUITH

African Foundation for Development; Africa Europe Diaspora Development Platform
Engagement & Policy Manager



KYERETWIE AKWASI OSEI

African Union Commission
Diaspora Desk Officer – Americas and Caribbean



STEVE TCHOUMBA

ActivSpaces Association
Business Development Manager and Hub Manager

MIGRATION & CITIES

Socio-economic Integration of Migrants and Diaspora by Municipal Authorities

NEED AND OPPORTUNITY

The management of migration has the dual aim of dealing effectively with its challenges and costs, and taking advantage of its many opportunities and benefits. Local authorities are key actors when it comes to the social and economic reality of hosting newcomers and their interaction with the host community. However, migrants often lack access to basic services (housing, education, health, employment, ICT infrastructures). At the same time there is a disconnect between local and national planning/policy processes, and a need for greater involvement of municipal authorities in order to strengthen local and national planning and policy processes.

Cities and municipal authorities across the Mediterranean region have developed successful examples of managing migration and in particular socio-economic integration of migrants. There is an opportunity to learn from this good practice, and build on it to develop innovative partnerships between governments, civil society, the private sector and international organizations to improve how cities in Morocco, and beyond, plan and provide services for migrant communities.

Morocco has developed the so-called 'Houses of the Moroccan World and Migration Affairs' in four cities. They welcome and guide Moroccans of the world and migrants in Morocco, deal with their complaints, accompany and support Diaspora to carry out local investment and development projects and ensure cultural monitoring of activities and programs, in collaboration with local authorities, institutions and civil society.

LINK TO GCM OBJECTIVES AND MIGRATION-RELATED SDGS

GCM Objective 15 and SDG 10.7 and SDG 11.

MAIN TARGET GROUP

Policy makers at local, national and international level.

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

Local/municipal authorities, cities, private sector, national and international organisations

- Migrants themselves!
- Governments and international organisations might be able to provide financial support, e.g. EU, AU in the Mediterranean region
- Civil society organisations with experience of supporting migrants

HOW? KEY POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

We plan to organise a series of round table meetings with a broad range of stakeholders to enable sharing of ideas, experiences, and good practices from other cities in the Mediterranean, in order to strengthen implementation of the new 'House of the Moroccan World and Migration Affairs' in the city of Khourigba.

One objective of these round table meetings will be to build a global network of member cities that can learn from and help each other, exchanging good practices in relation to managing migration, involving public and private institutions at the local level in the migration issue and supporting socio-economic integration of migrants.

They will also facilitate information transfer between local and national levels to strengthen policy and planning processes.

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

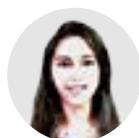
We invite governments, private sector, and civil society groups involved in the socio-economic integration of migrants to share ideas and experiences and to learn from each other in order to overcome the existing disconnect between local and national migration planning. If you want to support or participate in the round table meeting about 'House of Moroccan World and Migration Affairs', or subsequent round table meetings, please contact us at: Cities.Miglab@gfmd.org

THE PROPOSAL TEAM



PAUL ASQUITH

African Foundation for Development;
Africa Europe Diaspora Development Platform
Engagement & Policy Manager



NAJLAE BAKIR

Delegate Ministry in charge of Moroccans
Living Abroad and Migration Affairs
Task officer in the General Secretariat

MIGRATION INTELLIGENCE

Beyond Data Analysis for Better Policy Making

NEED AND OPPORTUNITY

A lack of accurate data and profound analysis leads to policies that are detrimental to migrants and complicate policymakers' work. To achieve the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda, the objectives of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) offer an opportunity to use Migration Intelligence for better insights by different stakeholders to inform policy-making. This proposal is designed to support smart and coherent collaborations.

LINK TO GCM OBJECTIVES AND MIGRATION-RELATED SDGS

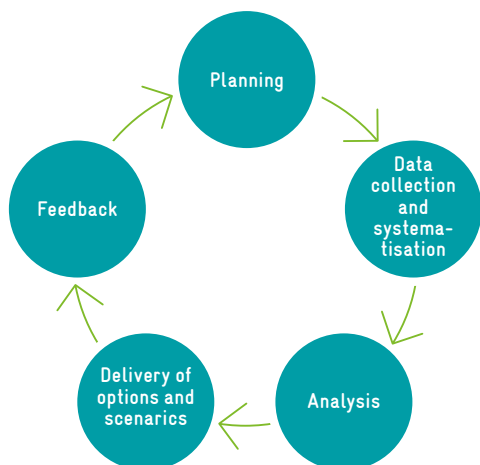
This proposal responds to the implementation of the GCM Objective 1 and contributes to the implementation of the other GCM Objectives.

MAIN TARGET GROUP

Policy makers at local, national, regional and global levels.

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

International organisations, governments, civil society, private sector, academia and migrants – irrespective of legal status and reasons for migration – who should be invited to participate depending on the context or situation to be studied.



HOW? KEY POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

Migration Intelligence is a process that can improve skills for smart migration data collection and analysis. To provide understanding of special situations or different themes this approach convenes a powerful learning process for stakeholders, increasing both skills and capacity. The process can also lead to improved methods and tools. It is therefore important to document good practices and lessons learned.

The proposal is for the Migration Laboratory members to stimulate an appetite for data intelligence within the United Nations 2030 Agenda and Migration governance system. Also, to promote and initiate workshops using Migration Intelligence to improve skills for smart migration data collection and analysis with appropriate stakeholders, aiming at better policymaking towards a migration that benefits all.

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Possible situations where accurate data provided by a range of actors, handled and analysed intelligently, could improve policy-making include:

- Migration from Venezuela,
- The situation of Rohingya in Bangladesh and
- Return migration from Dadaab in Kenya.

The Migration Intelligence team is looking for partners who are interested in hosting a workshop where the concept can be applied.

Initiating workshops on these cases, and documenting good practices and lessons learned, would be beneficial to advance the concept of Migration Intelligence further. The Migration Intelligence team welcomes ideas on other situations where the concept could be applied and workshops organised.

THE PROPOSAL TEAM



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BUSINESS WITHOUT BORDERS

Migration as a Vehicle for Entrepreneurship, Investment and Employment

NEED AND OPPORTUNITY

The discourse around migration tends to characterise migrants as job-seekers who would take away employment opportunities from native populations, thereby creating a negative narrative on migration. Far less attention is paid to the role of migrants as job-creators, investors and entrepreneurs who contribute to the local economies of their host societies through the creation of small medium enterprises; or indeed the employment-creating benefits of large-scale enterprises being able to move and operate across borders.

LINK TO GCM OBJECTIVES AND MIGRATION-RELATED SDGS

Decision-makers in origin, transit and destination countries have an opportunity to devise new policy frameworks that can maximize the potential of business-minded migrants, and commercial enterprises, as drivers of transnational economic growth and employment, in accordance with GCM Objective 19 and SDG 8.

MAIN TARGET GROUP

The business community (through its national associations and chambers of commerce), migrant organisations, civil society, academia and policy-makers – at local, national, regional and international levels. It is critical for these key stakeholders to collaborate in the creation of policies, partnerships and narratives that support and enable the realisation of migration as an essential asset for employment, employability and the reduction of poverty across borders.

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

The Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD) plays a key role in facilitating international discourse around the role of migration as an economic driver and in advocating for the creation of policy and political conditions that promote business development and entrepreneurship through migration. Also, the Business Mechanism of the GFMD (GFMD Business Advisory Group, GFMD Business

Meeting, GFMD Business Roundtable, GFMD Business Fair) should be utilized to put forward policy recommendations and advocacy tools that highlight the economic growth benefits of migrants and business enterprises.

HOW? KEY POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Business Mechanism can serve as a de-facto think-tank that undertakes research and analysis of the intersections between migration and economic growth and proposes evidence-based policy directions to decision-makers at both ends of the migration corridor.

To strengthen this platform, we recommend:

- A meeting of our group with the GFMD Business Mechanism in autumn 2018 to agree on a strategy and modus operandi.
- The creation of a multi-stakeholder **task force** under the GFMD Business Advisory Group to undertake some particular tasks, including research for solutions on skills recognition and matching, labour rights and exploitation, security and protection accessibility of migrant workers, monitoring and issuing recommendations on labour mobility, thus contributing significantly to Business and Human mobility policies. Our group can play a major role in this task force.
- Common fora for business and other stakeholders, reinforced by the GFMD working through the Business Mechanism, in order to make the benefits of migration more visible as an accelerator of transnational economic growth.
- The **implementation of a GFMD Business Fair**, using the GFMD Summit in Marrakesh as a case study. This may be extended alongside other major events that bring together relevant stakeholders.

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

We invite the GFMD Member States and the members of the GFMD Business Mechanism to engage with our group of business and migration experts to develop and work towards the implementation of this proposal. If you are interested in collaborating with us on this project, please contact us at Business.Miglab@gfmd.org.

THE PROPOSAL TEAM



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GFMD: DARING DIALOGUE FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA AND THE GCM THROUGH MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Inspired by the Migration Laboratory

NEED AND OPPORTUNITY

Global policy frameworks, including the GCM and the 2030 Agenda, call for partnerships and for adopting a whole-of-society approach. GFMD already includes a variety of stakeholders from governments, civil society and business community. There is a real opportunity for the Forum to deepen Dialogue and collaboration among these and other actors in order to implement solutions to common challenges, particularly with regards to subjects that remain controversial.

LINK TO GCM OBJECTIVES AND MIGRATION-RELATED SDGS

SDG target 17.17, GCM Objective 23.

MAIN TARGET GROUP

The main target group is the GFMD community, including participating states, civil society, business community and international organisations. The proposal also addresses actors who are not or not adequately represented in the Forum.

STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED

The GFMD ad hoc Working Group on the 2030 Agenda and the GCM, consisting of 12 Member States, that mandated the Migration Lab, as well as the GFMD Steering Group and the GFMD Friends of the Forum.

HOW? KEY POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

We believe that the GFMD needs to make a difference if it wants to remain an innovative and instrumental actor in the field of international migration and development. With a view to fostering multi-partner cooperation, as foreseen by the Global Compact for Migration's capacity-building

mechanism (GCM para. 43), GFMD might choose to sharpen its character as a platform for effective Dialogue in an environment of trust, and to attract participants from various backgrounds. Our reflection on possible ways to boost the GFMD's potential in this regard, summed up in a multi-page document, works along the following lines:

- 1) Strengthen diversity and inclusiveness within GFMD, by
 - a) Enhancing the participation of all stakeholders (i.e. line ministries and policy practitioners, as well as civil society, private sector and other actors)
 - b) Engaging in a Dialogue on governance reforms for a meaningful partnership of all stakeholders
- 2) Strengthen the effectiveness of GFMD Dialogue formats, by
 - a) Inviting professional facilitators as a support to GFMD sessions' chairs
 - b) Building capacities for participatory Dialogue and action within GFMD
 - c) Providing tailored methodological support to GFMD Dialogue formats
 - d) Developing new Dialogue formats
- 3) Establish future Migration Laboratories as a tool for Dialogue within GFMD.

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

We invite all interested GFMD community members who believe in the GFMD spirit and the potential of the process to make meaningful contributions towards the implementation of the GCM and migration-related commitments in the 2030 Agenda. You may get in touch with us via gfm-d-gcm@gfmd.org. We will be glad to share our reflections and to exchange ideas with you on innovative approaches to implement the proposed activities.

THE PROPOSAL TEAM



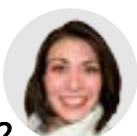
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OUTLOOK

THE MIGRATION LABORATORY ... AND YOU!

The aim of this publication is to show that excellent outcomes can be achieved when people work together in the way we did: using the participatory Lab approach and Professional Dialogue across sectors to be truly inclusive and talk genuinely at eye-level. It creates trust, ownership and reinvigorates energy. We think that there is substantial potential for this approach to be used to the benefit of many of the existing formats in international cooperation. We believe it is a way to help people build more effective partnerships and move forward to create sustainable whole-of-society solutions for complex and pressing challenges.

With this publication, we acknowledge what has been achieved by the Migration Laboratory. Inspired by our experiences, we want to encourage you to use the principles of this approach to inspire your own work, improve your partnerships and lay the ground for more fruitful dialogues that generate effective results. We hope that this publication – and the conversations it will spark – will provide insights into this unique way of working and cooperating. A way of working and cooperating that can support the GFMD to attain its goals as the leading global platform on migration and development, and to fulfill its potential to respond to the needs of the future, including effective implementation of the GCM and the migration-related SDGs of the 2030 Agenda.

The multi-stakeholder project proposals presented in this publication are proof of the effectiveness of this approach. They are a contemporary response to the challenges faced by states, the private sector and civil society – and to the call of the Swiss-Mexican GCM co-facilitation team for the Migration Laboratory to propose concrete innovative actions that contribute to the implementation of the GCM on the ground. The realization of these projects has begun and will move forward in the coming months and years. We see the impact at individual, organizational and systemic levels, multiplying the positive outcomes of the Migration Laboratory, and leading to tangible improvements on the ground for those in need.

The participants in this first round of the Migration Laboratory are further innovating their work and improving the effectiveness of their organizations by applying their insights into Professional Dialogue and the participatory methodology of the Lab. Some of them are planning to use the Lab methodology to tackle greater challenges in their region.

We invite you to do so, too. Be inspired by the trust built between stakeholders from different sectors and world regions, and by the ambitious projects they have initiated together. Contact us to talk about how a Lab approach and Professional Dialogue could be used to build trust, create ownership, enable learning and reach new solutions in your context. And feel free to get in touch with any of the Lab members through the proposal group email addresses to add your creativity and commitment to this joint undertaking of change-makers who believe in Dialogue to achieve effective action. Because:

“... whether you represent a government, civil society, or a business or you are a migrant yourself, we have many things in common. We have the same aspirations. We want a better world and a migration that works for all.”

Estrella Lajom, Switzerland



More information about the Lab

→ www.we-do-change.org/what-we-do/the-migration-laboratory



The Migration Laboratory's proposed multi-stakeholder projects aim at the implementation of the objectives of the Global Compact on Migration and the Sustainable Development Goals



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- 1 **NO POVERTY.** End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
- 2 **ZERO HUNGER.** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
- 3 **GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- 4 **QUALITY EDUCATION.** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- 5 **GENDER EQUALITY.** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- 6 **CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION.** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- 7 **AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY.** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
- 8 **DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH.** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- 9 **INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE.** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
- 10 **REDUCED INEQUALITIES.** Reduce inequality within and among countries.
- 11 **SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES.** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- 12 **RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION.** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- 13 **CLIMATE ACTION.** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- 14 **LIFE BELOW WATER.** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
- 15 **LIFE ON LAND.** Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
- 16 **PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS.** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
- 17 **PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS.** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION



- 1 Collect and utilize accurate and disaggregated **DATA** as a basis for evidence-based policies
- 2 Minimize the adverse **DRIVERS** and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin
- 3 Provide accurate and timely **INFORMATION** at all stages of migration
- 4 Ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate **DOCUMENTATION**
- 5 Enhance availability and flexibility of **PATHWAYS** for regular migration
- 6 Facilitate fair and ethical **RECRUITMENT** and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work
- 7 Address and reduce **VULNERABILITIES** in migration
- 8 **SAVE LIVES** and establish coordinated international efforts on missing migrants
- 9 Strengthen the transnational response to **SMUGGLING** of migrants
- 10 Prevent, combat and eradicate **TRAFFICKING** in persons in the context of international migration
- 11 Manage **BORDERS** in an integrated, secure and coordinated manner
- 12 Strengthen certainty and predictability in **MIGRATION PROCEDURES** for appropriate screening, assessment and referral
- 13 Use migration **DETENTION** only as a measure of last resort and work towards alternatives
- 14 Enhance consular **PROTECTION**, assistance and cooperation throughout the migration cycle
- 15 Provide access to **BASIC SERVICES** for migrants
- 16 Empower migrants and societies to realize full **INCLUSION** and social cohesion
- 17 Eliminate all forms of **DISCRIMINATION** and promote evidence-based public discourse to shape perceptions of migration
- 18 Invest in **SKILLS** development and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences
- 19 Create conditions for migrants and **DIASPORAS** to fully contribute to sustainable development in all countries
- 20 Promote faster, safer and cheaper transfer of **REMITTANCES** and foster financial inclusion of migrants
- 21 Cooperate in facilitating safe and dignified **RETURN AND READMISSION**, as well as sustainable reintegration
- 22 Establish mechanisms for the portability of **SOCIAL SECURITY** entitlements and earned benefits
- 23 Strengthen international cooperation and global **PARTNERSHIPS** for safe, orderly and regular migration



A Leadership and Innovation Lab within the framework of the GFMD and on behalf of the Federal Government of Germany as Co-Chair of the 2017-18 GFMD, implemented by the Global Leadership Academy and the Sector Project Migration and Development of German Development Cooperation (GIZ).

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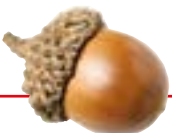
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REFERENCES

APPENDIX N:

- Dialogue as Story



DIALOGUE AS STORY

By Peter Garrett

The Academy is breaking new ground with its 2022 annual conference on the theme *Dialogue as Story*. Participants will have the opportunity to extend and deepen their experience through a participatory exploration of this innovative perspective on Dialogue. People may be more familiar with *Dialogue as a Mode*, which is distinct from monologue, discussion, debate, conversation and so on. Others have concentrated on the experience of *Dialogue as a Practice*, involving a life-long journey with voice, listening, respect and suspension. Those who work primarily in organisations may be using *Dialogue as a Process*, where having a voice in generating a common understanding can provide a context for better decision-making. *Dialogue as Story* is a way of learning how to move beyond social and organisational fragmentation, to experience the value of Dialogue to generate new understanding and meaning. It is intended as an addition to (not a replacement for) Dialogue as a Mode, Practice and Process. This paper describes some of the background thinking that led to Dialogue as Story being proposed as the theme for this conference.

Key Words

Dialogue, sense making, story, storyline, culture, identity, disposition, intention, capability, diversity, fragmentation, consciousness, form, practice, by-standing, suspension, proprioception, generative dialogue.

What is Dialogue?

The word Dialogue is derived from ***dia*** which means ***through***, as a diameter is a line drawn through the centre of a circle, and ***logos*** which is ***the word*** or ***meaning***. Dialogue, therefore, as it is used in the Academy, is a way of talking and thinking together to find a common meaning through and amongst a group of people. This is important because when people do not hold a common understanding or meaning, the many decisions they make are disjointed and they inadvertently trip each other up through the actions they take. In the absence of a common context or meaning to guide decision-making, organisations often try to align people's actions through procedures and rules that are intended to guide and determine people's actions. Some organisations have a rule book as thick as an encyclopaedia and expend a significant amount of time and resources in training and enforcement to try to achieve compliance. It is not difficult to see that a different way of working that incorporated Dialogue could make a significant contribution to the smooth functioning of an organisation.

We make sense of things by generating stories about them

If we want to use Dialogue to find or generate a common meaning, then it would help to understand how meaning comes about. Meaning emerges from the way we make sense of the disparate things we encounter, and that we hear or read about. That sense-making takes the form of combining things into a kind of story. We might expect someone at a meeting and if they don't arrive at the anticipated time, we find ourselves with a story about why not. This is an automatic process that we hardly notice and cannot stop happening. I see the wind blowing the trees, I hear a door bang shut, and I assume there may be a relationship between the two, and that the wind blew the door shut.

The connecting story might be: 'it was such a windy day that the wind even blew the door shut!' Or perhaps I hear two people arguing, followed by a door slamming shut, and the story that appears in my mind is: 'it was quite an argument, because I heard one of them slam the door as they left!' It is natural to connect the things we see and hear. We need to do so to operate our daily lives. We form stories that connect things meaningfully to one another. We do it all the time without noticing that we are doing so. The assumptions involved in the story can seem so self-evident that they must be true. "I was there. Let me tell you what really happened!" The stories are perhaps reinforced or modified by new observations or information, building story upon story into a broader meaning and understanding of the situation. Some aspects of our stories appear more significant and we attach greater value to them, whilst other parts seem irrelevant to us, although not necessarily to others.

These sense-making stories combine the past, the present and the future

These accumulated stories have other features that are easily overlooked. The stories are about what has happened in the past. Without our noticing it, however, they continually inform what we notice, influence our interpretation of the current situation and shape how we decide to act in the present. They also carry implications that lead us to anticipate that certain things are likely to happen in the future. 'If the wind blew the door shut, perhaps I should close the windows...' or 'if they are having a serious disagreement, perhaps I should be quiet and keep out of sight...' In this way, stories connect the past with the present and the future. That is a peculiar achievement, because essentially the past is present through our memory, and the future is present through our anticipation based on projection or imagination. Although it does not seem to be that way, we are forever stuck in the present. I visited a bar/restaurant in Cape Town that understood this well. It had a never-claimed offer, flashing enticingly in neon lights: *Free beer served here tomorrow!*

Beneath the story there is a simpler storyline that holds the active meaning

This connection between the past, the present and the future contributes to the 'storyline' that lies beneath the story or set of stories. Removing the details, it is the essence of the story. The storyline is the way in which the story develops, including its assumptions, logic, implications and consequences. It is the active underlying meaning. Storylines can become habitual and repeatedly applied in different circumstances, forming a general pattern. For example, speaking about their workplace, people might say: "In this organisation we never do things the easy way!", or "it may take time, but we always get there in the end!" Another favourite is "nobody likes change." Some storylines are re-used again and again in the myriad of short stories formed about the vignettes of daily life. Any good practitioner will recognise the repeated storylines that are an integral part of the culture. They storylines generally involve success or failure, joy or pain, luck or misfortune, skill or error. There are relatively few storylines that are repeatedly used in most books, plays and movies. The storyline of a comedy, for example, typically involves misunderstandings that surprise and confuse people in a way that turns out to be harmless (as in Charlie Chaplin movies), whereas the storyline of a tragedy involves misunderstandings that end in pain and suffering (as in Shakespeare's play, *Romeo and Juliet*). There are individual storylines, and there are underlying and commonly held storylines in families, organisations, sub-cultural groupings, communities and nations. They actively bind people together in a common sense of success and failure by being replicated in the apparently logical outworking of endless incidents. They do not necessarily hold up to 'factual' scrutiny, but they actively contribute to how people make sense of things.

Changing the culture is changing the storyline – otherwise things regress to what they were

This way of thinking about sense-making, story and storyline gives us an insight about how to change a culture. Leaders, and their advisors, often talk about the challenge of changing the culture of their organisation or community. It is seen as a difficult task because that culture can seem so pervasive and nebulous that it is not clear where to start. You cannot get your hands on it. Well, at the core of that culture, or subculture, are the relatively few collectively held storylines. They lie unnoticed, authoring the tone (and to some degree the content) of the description of the many incidents that occur every day. If you can recognise these storylines, and successfully intervene to generate new ones, then you will change the culture. On the other hand, if you make organisational and procedural changes without changing the primary storylines, things will quietly regress to their original state. That is the power of the storyline.

Sense-making stories reveal much about us, the authors of the stories

Our stories, embodying their underlying storyline, are a rich form of narrative. They convey far more than the 'facts' contained in an apparently 'objective' report. They describe more than is happening in the situation around us. In telling a story we reveal elements of what has value and significance to us, and the sense-making process we use in connecting things to one another. This is the wonderful thing about stories. As well as describing the key characters and the plot, we reveal essential elements about ourselves as authors and story tellers. Through our stories we display our predisposition and how we feel about things. How we are disposed is a story about how we feel about the situation. Whether we mean to or not, we reveal our intention and what we are trying to do. It is the story of where we are headed. And we disclose how capable we are, the combination of our skill and capacity to do what we intend to do. At a deeper level, we reveal who we experience ourselves to be. Our identity is not a label or role, it is a story with a storyline. If we lose touch with our storyline we falter, uncertain how to proceed. A loss of employment, a divorce, an incarceration may be a broken storyline.

Identity is not a thing, it is a story and has an underlying storyline...

These elements of *disposition, intention, capability and identity*, are inherent in any story. They are the very things that coaches seek to address individually with their clients, and that practitioners seek to address collectively within organisations. At an organisational level, the stories may vary in emphasis in different teams, departments, or sub-cultural groupings, but they have a common source, which is the collective sense making of the organisation. We start to see that the stories told everyday across an organisation are not just descriptions – they are interpretations based on an underlying storyline. In total, they **are** the disposition, intention, capability and identity, of the organisation. Take capability, which is a combination of skill and capacity. 'If you think you can, you probably can – but if you think you can't, you definitely can't!' It is one large, disjointed organisational story, variations of which are continually being told locally in every part of the organisation.

When is it healthy diversity, and when is it dangerous fragmentation?

When people talk and think together, each participant is telling their story of how they understand the circumstance and the situation, what they believe about things. Although these stories may be

about the same incidents and activities, they differ according to the author and the pockets or collective understanding. Naturally there are differences between people and what they think, feel and say, since every individual is unique and has their own way of expressing themselves and their views. Sometimes these differences can be celebrated as diversity, at other times they are more obviously experienced as confusion. When the individual stories are differentiations of a commonly held story, then that is evidence of a healthy diversity, where different people are respected for their different ways of describing much the same inner experience. On the other hand, when the various stories are so disjointed that they share little in common, then we have fragmentation. They are not descriptions of the same thing, but stories with fundamentally different storylines. That fragmented state leads to conflict, that can escalate into violation and (in the extreme) into violence. The source of the violence is an attempt to 'kill' the opposing storyline. This is a dilemma. We may not be able to accept or accommodate a conflicting storyline, but attempts to destroy it damage our own storyline. We need to find or generate an underlying sense wholeness that can only come about through inclusion, not exclusion. Fragmentation cannot be transformed into diversity without changes in the conflictual storylines. Recognising Dialogue as story, authored by underlying storylines, better disposes us to realise with a different awareness we can interpret the situation in a different and more generative way.

Fragmentation can only originate in consciousness

If we take the time to ponder on it, we discover the obvious – that fragmentation is in human consciousness. Things are interconnected everywhere, apart from in our conscious awareness. For example, there is only one earth, with an atmosphere whose state we describe in terms of the climate and the weather. Acting without this awareness, we can ignore the pollution we create and its impact causing the deterioration of the only atmosphere we have. The atmosphere is fully interconnected, hence the impact of pollution that drifts across human borders. It is our awareness that may be partial or fragmented, leading to disjointed action. Similarly, there is only one human race living on earth. Are our nations and communities expressions of enriching diversity? Or are there conflictual storylines for different nations and communities that display the consequences of fragmentation? Both are visible. We can recognise that both diversity and fragmentation are evident at different times and in different places. Another example is the economy. We can recognise that there is a single worldwide economy, with interlinked trade, currencies and banking systems. Yet taking currency, each country may try to strengthen its currency without regard for the directly linked impact it has of weakening the exchange rate of other currencies. Things are inherently interconnected despite our disconnected stories.

Fragmentation in consciousness becomes evident in form in the world around us

There is a compounding problem. Fragmented human consciousness leads to actions that disrupt the inherent patterns of interconnection. The external fragmentation is more visible and distracts from the originating internal cause. That leads us to attend to the problem out there, rather than the source of the fragmentation that is in consciousness. This fragmentation in consciousness is deeply rooted in commonly held storylines. Nationality is one example. A nation is a story with a storyline. It is good to be proud of one's country and its contribution to human civilization. It is natural to celebrate when one's country is victorious in sport or receives awards for artistic or human endeavour. But along with that there is a commonly accepted underlying storyline that is the root of

huge problems in the world. Patriotism says that our country comes first and must be defended to the point of death. Despite the geographic, climatic, fiscal and social interdependence, we uphold the sovereign right of nations to make decisions and to act independently of each other. Sovereignty has a storyline to it that does not respect the whole. It puts us and our nation before other nations. Humanity is an international identity that is also present, and engenders responsible diversity, but the sovereign right of each nation is far more deeply embedded story. Sovereignty, held independently of humanity, confuses our disposition and intentions, what we can do and what we believe it is necessary to do. Clearly, we need to understand more about the roots of fragmentation in human consciousness.

Fragmentation in consciousness originates in different ways

The stories we tell (and hold) lead to our experience of the world and the experiences we have in our lives. Many are good enough for us to manage well. There are times, however, when things are not working out as we anticipated. Then, instead of reproducing our stories more forcefully (like playing our memory tapes more loudly) we need to check the validity of them. This requires that we think, and that we enquire. We need to check what we believe - even when we are so convinced that we 'know' it is true. In our stories we may be putting things together that are not as directly related as we hold them, or we may not be relating things in our awareness that are more directly related to each other than we have them. The relatedness may have been valid when the stories were first formed, but things may have changed since then. A mother may see her son through childhood stories although he may now be a mature man in his 50s! A business or family may have been prosperous in the past, but circumstances may have changed and economising may be necessary.

This problem of the relevance and validity of the stories we hold in active memory occurs in various ways. All of them are easy to overlook. The generic outcome of unreconciled stories is fragmentation. Indeed, the problem of our age is social fragmentation. We can trace deepening levels of fragmentation.

First there is the illusion that how I see it is how it is...

The primary source is the deceptive experience that the reality I see is unaffected by and independent of my sense-making. In other words, it is not a story. That first level of fragmentation is summed up in the phrase *How I see it is how it is*. That is true from one angle, of course, but how it is may be seen in a multitude of ways from many other perspectives. It seldom really feels that way. The more prevalent disposition is 'I might be wrong, but I doubt it...' When we each recognise that what we say is a part of *our story* about how things are, then we make a step in the right direction. I can ask why my story is different from your story. Even if we disagree, we can both enquire into that together.

Without a common content of consciousness, it is natural to hold unreconciled stories...

Perspective is one significant factor, but why else do people have different stories? Fragmentation easily arises when we are not all aware of the same things. We have different information. We do not all have a *Common Content of Consciousness*. Some have experiences that others have not had

or heard about. We may have read about events and hold stories that have not been available to others. The differing information available to the participants leads to different stories. On discovering new information that was previously lacking, one might exclaim “well if I had known that, of course I would have formed a different opinion and made a different decision!”

A localised mentality leads to a disconnected experience...

Then there is a third form of fragmentation that relates to scope, and to a parochial or narrowminded self-centredness. This involves a lack of feeling inter-connected with the whole. It is a pre-occupation with one's own affairs. ‘In our team or organisation (community or country) we do it this way, and we are not too concerned how others do things. It easily leads to an attitude of NIMBY (not in my back yard). Don't put your problems on me! Yet, how each of us acts affects others directly and indirectly. My cutting down trees leads to your lack of clean air. It is a single system, but my *localised mentality* leaves me disinterested and therefore unaware of that. Within a localised mentality it seems common sense to get on with one's own affairs and to look after one's own interests, as every populist politician knows. But through restricted scope, a localised mentality is anything but a common sense – it is an isolated sense, and it fosters fragmentation in an insidious way.

Interpretation involves starting from the same place and arriving in very different places...

There is often significant fragmentation through the assumptions, logic or rationale, implications and consequences incorporated in making sense of things. It is not uncommon for people to be present at the same event and to interpret what happened quite differently. That is why we have enquiries or investigations. We have *different interpretations* of what happened. Rather than debating who was right and who was wrong, it is more productive to explore why my story is different from your story. In this way we are not essentially disagreeing with each other. Instead, we are exploring why our stories are different. Understanding another person's story requires attention, listening and respect. Understanding one's own story, and why one holds it as valid and true, requires suspension.

The fragmenting impact of subcultural thought is widespread and embedded...

Thought is rarely held individually. Memory is largely a collective process where our stories or interpretations are shaped and reinforced by those with whom we associate. The most obvious form of this is subcultural groupings and they are a significant source of fragmentation. A subculture is self-reinforcing because the validity of the views held are checked with those in the sub-culture who hold similar views. This can easily lead to erroneous and outdated stories that are still informing the thinking, disposition and actions of those in the subcultural group. These memories are reinforced by the emotions present at the time the story was formed, making them difficult to shift. This is the root of much of the social and organisational fragmentation in the world. Shifting the storylines of sub-cultural groupings requires particular skills to counter collective regressin.

Putting Dialogue as Story into action

We have been considering the theory behind Dialogue as Story. Next is putting this into practice. How do we use *Dialogue as Story* to become aware of our sense making, and to enhance our sense making skills? The primary interest is not the noble art of storytelling. That is a form of monologue. With Dialogue as Story, we are exploring how story emerges through a group of people talking and thinking together. Typically, the Dialogue starts with a question (not a topic or statement) so that people are actively enquiring. Even when they advocate a view in the Dialogue, they are encouraged to do so in an enquiring way - checking why they hold it and thereby deepening or changing its meaning. At the outset the participants may hold different attitudes and positions about the question being considered, and they may agree or disagree with one another. Dialogue as Story is looking for something beyond that kind of exchange of opinions. It is an exploration into what happens when the participants give attention to the collective voice. This means attending to the whole, rather than hearing distinct individual voices and interactions between different individuals. Usually, people listen to some speakers more than others, and want to exchange views with those they find more interesting. From the perspective of Dialogue as Story, participants are instead asked to listen to what is being said by every person, and to hear their words as a contribution to the collective voice of the group, as if the group was telling a single story. Rather than addressing other individuals, each speaker deliberately speaks to the whole group and listens to the whole group expressing itself. Everyone is invited to participate by considering what is happening in the room and enhancing the collective story by contributing from the story that is emerging in their own thoughts and feelings. Gradually what is occurring inside and what is occurring outside become obviously inter-related as one process. In this way a new understanding is generated together.

By-standing, suspension and proprioception

There is a sequence of awareness skills needed to do this well. The first is *by-standing*, which is one of the four Dialogic Actions. Whilst most people easily understand *moving, following and opposing*, fewer are comfortable with by-standing. They wonder what it is, how to do it and why. By-standing, requires speaking, and stating one's observations about what has been happening. Not assessing or judging the situation but stating the sequence of activities that occurred. It is not a matter of simply repeating what was said – that would give evidence of competent listening – but telling the essential story. It is the skill that enables you to precis what has been said – to abstract the key points made in the last half hour of conversation of Dialogue, and to say why noticing them is meaningful and relevant. The practitioner who cannot by-stand will have pages of notes, not a few salient points. A good by-stand will reveal the storyline underlying the detail of the conversation or Dialogue - making available to everyone what has been influencing the thinking and feelings in the room.

Whilst by-standing involves reflecting about the past, there is a more immediate awareness-based skill called *suspension*. Suspension is the act of enquiring into your story as you describe it to others. This is less reflective and more immediate. Whilst still speaking, the speaker might notice the potential assumptions they have made, the logic they have used, how they reached a conclusion if they did, and the general validity of the view or opinion. Suspension, then, is holding one's story loosely and making it available for an enquiry into its relevance and validity. I cannot do that if I am certain I am right. An alternative meaning of suspension is to stop (like being suspended from going to school) but that is not what is meant here. Suspending a story helps to reveal the sense making process in use. Suspension is the key to entering Dialogue together. Suspending views together collectively takes the group directly into a dialogical enquiry.

As people become skillful at suspension, they may find their views are confirmed, or they may be less certain about their validity. They may see evidence of fragmentation in their sense making. Indeed, they may find themselves in the unusual position of disagreeing with themselves! It is an achievement to disagree with oneself. Agreeing and disagreeing with oneself is part of a process where memories are refreshed and updated. Being aware of what is happening as it happens may be called proprioceptive awareness. This is crucial because it enables adjustments to occur live in the moment, rather than through later reflection. Proprioception is the means of addressing fragmentation in consciousness. Collective proprioception is the aim of Dialogue as Story.

Incorporating all the stories into a common story is a form of Generative Dialogue

A common meaning through a group of people cannot be achieved through exclusion of some of those present. It has to result from inclusion. If we experience Dialogue as Story, we recognise that everyone has a part to play in the collective story. For this to change from an intention to the experience, we will need to discover a new storyline which includes the many storylines, and to participate in generating a new story that incorporates the many stories. This is a form of Generative Dialogue. Generative Dialogue creates different outcomes.

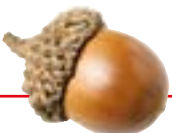
Peter Garrett, 23 Sept'22



REFERENCES

APPENDIX O:

- ADWOW Brochure
- Registration Agreement 2025 - ADWOW







Professional Dialogue in Practice 1

A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING

Five-month international online programme to become an Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner

Facilitated experiential learning providing the skills and personal development needed to enable any group to work dialogically

Accredited by Academy of Professional Dialogue





This program has been **a phenomenal experience** for me. Being able to meet new people who share a passion for dialogue like me was truly rewarding. Going deeper into the functionality of dialogue and seeing the benefits of it all has **opened my mind to so many exciting possibilities.**

BH, 2023 ALUMNI



2025 programme



Dialogue Associates is pleased to announce dates for the 2025 Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner development programme. This is your invitation to apply to join the programme and thereby become accredited as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner with the Academy of Professional Dialogue.

This invitation addresses the following questions:

- What is Professional Dialogue™?
- What is the basis of the Academy's accredited educational programme?
- What are the details of the A Different Way of Working programme, the faculty leads, the dates, fees, and time commitment?
- How do I apply?
- How will I benefit?
- What is expected of me as an accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner?
- What is the Academy of Professional Dialogue?



What is **Professional Dialogue™?**

Dialogue is a skilful way of talking and thinking together that establishes a common meaning amongst a group of people.

The spirit of the engagement is to understand rather than to convince, and the process changes the ground out of which the various relationships arise. Professional Dialogue™ is a transparent way of learning together and humanizing an organisation or community.

Through Professional Dialogue™ organizations and communities are able to engage the collective intelligence of the participants to make better decisions, and to realise the creative opportunities inherent in any problem.

The ongoing practice of Professional Dialogue™ at a systemic level generates sustainable strategic and operational change. In a Dialogic Organisation or a Dialogic Community this is underwritten by the ongoing regeneration of its culture, including shifting historically stuck patterns of behaviour, for the constructive benefit of the whole.

Scope and applicability of **Professional Dialogue™?**

Professional Dialogue™ enables the development of individuals, teams, organisations, and communities in a multitude of situations around the world including:

- multi-national organisations, SMEs, and business supply chains
- government, the public sector, and non-governmental organisations
- education in schools, universities, and research
- communities, neighbourhoods, and civic settings
- healthcare, criminal justice and social services
- international development, migration and so on

Professional Dialogue™ is more than the 'soft' skills that are required for good communication. The Academy's educational programme also covers the development and use of structural or 'hard' skills to address fragmented multi-stakeholder situations, where participants are challenged to engage with one another. In these circumstances there is no more effective way to proceed than using Professional Dialogue™.



Professional Dialogue™ programmes

The developmental educational programme for Professional Dialogue™ has three parts, each with a different Focus, competencies, and accreditation:



“

The programme has **exceeded my expectations**. Working with a cohort that is different from my usual working environment in location; expertise and intention has been hugely interesting and fundamental in developing me as a person and as a dialogue practitioner.

I find myself thinking, talking and implementing Dialogue in all of my work, looking for the opportunities to use it to help people think and talk together.

It is **life changing at a deep level** and I feel that it is in the top three approaches that I have learnt in my professional career. This has been a very enjoyable, encompassing experience.

CM, 2023 ALUMNI

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Focus One

Bringing Dialogue into the Room

This Focus One programme leads to accreditation as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner and formal acknowledgement of the practitioner's capability to bring Dialogue into any grouping of participants, in an organisation or related organisations, to help them to develop a common understanding.

Accreditation requires:

- learning through first-hand experience and second-hand accounts
- working with Dialogue as a mode, a practice, and a process
- using Professional Dialogue™ foundational skills to facilitate generative outcomes and reach sustainable decisions

The intention of Professional Dialogue™ is to transfer skills from the Practitioner to others thereby making their role redundant, requiring these additional competencies:

- introducing Professional Dialogue™ to new groupings using an experiential and participatory process
- using facilitated learning to enable people to use Professional Dialogue™ foundational skills in their practice
- coaching others to put Professional Dialogue™ to work

Accreditation as a Professional Dialogue Practitioner opens the door to become a Professional Dialogue Consultant (Focus Two: Intervention).

Based on the **Integrated Dialogue Model**

The Professional Dialogue™ developmental programmes offered by the Academy are based on the Integrated Dialogue Model, a design realised through first-hand research and practice over the past 40 years¹

This tried-and-tested methodology incorporates the Implicate Order ontology, by which the work was first conceived with David Bohm², and takes the process into action through practical systemic decision-making. In a fractal-like way, each element of the model reveals and reinforces the overall understanding of the work and its ongoing development.

¹ A New Kind of Dialogue by Peter Garrett, Dialogue Publications, 2021

² Dialogue – a Proposal by David Bohm, Don Factor and Peter Garrett, 1992



2025

programme details

RECOGNITION AS A PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE PRACTITIONER

- Assessment:** Accreditation will be awarded by assessment. We use a three-stage developmental process of self-assessment, followed by peer assessment and faculty assessment against developmental criteria endorsed by the Academy's *Professional Standards and Accreditation Board*.
- Accreditation:** Participants will be accredited as *Professional Dialogue Practitioners* by the Academy and will be entitled to run Academy-certified Programmes for others, as well as awarded the right to use the Academy accreditation logo on their correspondence, business cards and website.
- Capability:** On accreditation, participants will be acknowledged to be confident and competent in bringing Dialogue into a room (Focus One) amongst a group of people who are unfamiliar with this approach. Accredited practitioners are expected to undertake ongoing professional development with the accredited community. They are eligible to participate in the developmental programmes for Dialogic Intervention (Focus Two) to become an accredited Professional Dialogue consultant, and Systemic Dialogue within organisations (Focus Three) to become a Professional Dialogue architect.
- Location:** The Dialogue Associates' online Learning Centre

Dates:	Feb 18-20 Apr 1-3 May 13-15 June 24-26	Mar 11-13 Apr 22-24 June 3-5 July 15-17
Sessions:	The programme has eight sets of three sessions (24 sessions in total), each with a different theme. The sets are three weeks apart. Each session lasts for four hours, and participants are expected to attend all sessions.	
Between-sets work:	During the three-week period between sets, participants are expected to study the materials provided and complete field work (preparation, practice and reflection in their workplace or community) to enable their ongoing practitioner development, personally and professionally.	
Programme Fees:	£5,750 including all materials £4,750 early bird if registration secured before Sept 30th Alternative pricing information, based on the Big Mac Index, is available on request. <i>Once registered, we assume you intend to participate fully in the programme. Fees are only refundable in exceptional circumstances, and before the start of the programme.</i>	
Application:	Please <u>complete the application form</u> to tell us about your experience and why you want to join the programme. The faculty will meet with you to consider your participation before confirming your registration.	
Registration:	Registration is secured by payment of a non-refundable deposit of £1,250. Balance of the fees is payable by 1 st January 2025	
Scholarships:	Some financial support towards the costs of the programme is available from the Academy of Professional Dialogue on application.	

Faculty and Accreditors

The programme is delivered by Dialogue Associates. The faculty are accredited practitioners, registered as accreditors by the Academy and belong to the community of Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners. The lead faculty members and accreditors are Jane Ball and Peter Garrett from Dialogue Associates. Between them they have six decades of continuous experience with Dialogue in a myriad of situations and contexts, and reaching back to work with David Bohm, Patrick de Maré and David Kantor. Support faculty and visiting faculty members are drawn from Academy-accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners.

Lead faculty publications:

A New Kind of Dialogue (2021) by Peter Garrett

Various Working Papers, Case Studies and chapters in The World Needs

Dialogue! 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 & 2022) by Jane Ball and Peter Garrett

Broadcast media:

A New Kind of Dialogue - the Podcast (2022)



Peter Garrett



Jane Ball

“

I thought I was well informed about Dialogue as I am a facilitator and trainer, but the understanding and experience I gained in this program let me know there is more I needed to understand dialogue on a deeper level.

PJM, 2023 ALUMNI

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The benefits of **A Different Way of Working**

- Professional skill development, supported by a substantial Participant Manual (theory and practice)
- External accreditation by the Academy of Professional Dialogue
- Entitlement to use the Academy Accreditation Logo
- Admission to the Community of Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners for continuing professional development
- Use of the Academy's Intellectual Property in your own Practice
- Entitlement to deliver Academy Accredited Professional Dialogue Courses in your work and to the Public
- Use of your own customised Learning Centre for online work

And...

- Access to Focus Two: Dialogic Intervention to become a Professional Dialogue Consultant
- Opportunity to use Professional Dialogue as a methodology in Research Projects
- Opening to use Professional Dialogue as an educational methodology

Expectations of an **Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner**

- Maintain membership to the Academy of Professional Dialogue (see Relationship Agreement)
- Participate in continuing professional development with the Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioner community
- Advocate the use of Professional Dialogue™ for the benefit of Society
- Abide by the Academy's professional standards
- Make examples your work available to inform and inspire others through the annual conference
- Help the skill development of others through the annual delivery of at least one Academy-accredited educational course to the public
- Support the future of the Academy by contributing a percentage of earning from your use of the Academy's Intellectual Property

And...

- Participate in developing the whole field of Professional Dialogue.

The Acorn is the symbol for the Academy's educational courses. The structure of the Dialogue is represented by the Acorn. The participants provide the DNA and the considerations are the process of the soil and moisture passing through the Acorn to unfold into the oak tree. This is a symbol of Generative Dialogue.



Academy of Professional Dialogue

an educational charity

The Academy is an international non-profit educational charity promoting the use of Professional Dialogue™ for the sustained well-being of organisations, communities, and society as a whole.

The Academy inspires and informs a generative way of working through Professional Dialogue™ by:

- Holding an annual conference: ***The World Needs Dialogue!***
- Acknowledging the work and contribution made by skilled Professional Dialogue Practitioners through publishing accounts of their Dialogue work
- Providing certificated training courses and accredited developmental programmes for those wanting to become Professional Dialogue Practitioners
- Deepening and extending the scope and applicability of the whole field of Professional Dialogue™

At the heart of the Academy is a Community of Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners who are working together to establish the steady growth and global contribution of this unique professional work. This programme is an opportunity to join the community. The roots of the Academy stretch right back to the inaugural work conceiving of Dialogue with theoretical physicist David Bohm in the late 1980s and early 1990s based on his Implicate Order ontology.

“

This program provided new insight, breathed life and brought renewed energy, and new perspectives to the knowledge I had. It **generated vigorous thinking** that helped me discover things that were hidden in plain sight. Participating in this program will help me to be **a better supervisor and a better teammate.**

TPD, 2023 ALUMNI

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Professional Dialogue in Practice 1

A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING

APPLY TO JOIN

ARRANGE A CALL

Accredited by Academy of Professional Dialogue





A Different Way of Working Professional Dialogue in Practice 1



Congratulations, your application for A Different Way of Working has been successful. You are invited to register for the 2025 programme, led by Peter Garrett and Jane Ball from Dialogue Associates. Please read the details below and confirm your agreement. In January 2025 you will receive details to register for the A Different Way of Working online Learning Centre. Once you have completed this registration process, and paid a deposit, your place on the programme is secured.

*This agreement is to be considered in conjunction with **the invitation to Professional Dialogue in Practice 1: A Different Way of Working.***

PARTICIPATION

Location: Online Learning Centre, for which you will receive registration details in January 2025. Meeting room uses Zoom

Time: 6am to 10am Pacific / 9am to 1pm Eastern (US) / 2pm to 6pm UK / 3pm to 7pm Central Europe / 4pm to 8pm South Africa / 5.30pm to 9.30pm Iran

Dates: Feb 18-20, Mar 11-13, Apr 1-3, Apr 22-24, May 13-15, June 3-5, June 24-26, July 15-17

Between-sets work: Workplace Action and Reflection learning is required during the three-weeks period between sets.

Participants are expected to attend all sessions and complete between-sets work (unless they have the explicit agreement of the Accreditors)

PAYMENT

Fees: £5,750 including all materials
Early-bird (before Sept 30) £4,750
Deposit £1,250

The balance of the fees is payable by 31st January 2025

Alternative payment arrangements by agreement only

Where there is a scholarship from the Academy, the registrant requests that the Academy pays this scholarship directly to Dialogue Associates to cover their registration on this programme.

Once registered, we assume you intend to participate fully in the programme. Fees are only refundable in exceptional circumstances, and before the start of the programme.

FACULTY

The Faculty and coaching staff are Academy-accredited and belong to the APDP (Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners) Community for continuing professional development. The lead faculty members, Jane Ball and Peter Garrett from Dialogue Associates, are Academy-authorised Accreditors.

COMPACT REGARDING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

If during the A Different Way of Working programme someone chooses to share confidential information with other participants, it is their responsibility to declare this to be the case.

Information that is declared confidential will be treated in the strictest confidence throughout the period of the programme and the subsequent three years.

Confidential information may not be used by other participants to their advantage, or be disclosed to anyone else without the permission of the participants who shared that information. The only exception is to meet the obligation of a court of law or governmental regulatory body to disclose such information.

RESPECT

Issues raised in the A Different Way of Working programme may be talked about with others outside the programme for the purposes of individual and organisational learning and development, but not in a way that identifies or implies anything about particular individuals or companies participating in the programme.

RECORDING

Programme sessions will be recorded. These recordings will be placed in the Learning Centre Library and will only be accessible to the participants and faculty in the A Different Way of Working programme. Recordings will not be released beyond this group without the explicit permission of those recorded. It is forbidden to take screenshots during the course, and to record the sessions privately on any device. Closed captions functionality on Zoom are used during sessions to support the understanding of those for whom English is not their first language. The closed caption transcripts are subject to the same permissions as audio and video recordings.

COPYRIGHT

All copyrighted materials will be respected and only reproduced with the written permission of the copyright owner.

ASSESSMENT

Accreditation will be awarded by assessment through a participatory three-stage developmental process of self-assessment, followed by peer assessment and faculty assessment against developmental criteria endorsed by the Academy's *Professional Standards and Accreditation Board*

THE BENEFITS OF THE A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING PROGRAMME AND ACCREDITATION

- Professional skill development, supported by a substantial Participant Manual covering both theory and practice
- Academy of Professional Dialogue accreditation and entitlement to use the prestigious Academy Logo
- Admission to the Community of Accredited Professional Dialogue Practitioners for your continuing professional development
- Use of the Academy's Intellectual Property in your own Practice
- Entitlement to deliver Academy Accredited Professional Dialogue Courses in your work and to the Public
- Use of your own customised Learning Centre for online work

And...

- Access to Focus Two: Dialogic Intervention to become an accredited Professional Dialogue Consultant
- Opportunity to use Professional Dialogue™ as a methodology in Research Projects
- Opening to use Professional Dialogue™ as an educational methodology

AN ACCREDITED PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE PRACTITIONER IS EXPECTED TO:

- Advocate the use of Professional Dialogue™ for the benefit of Society
- Abide by the Academy's professional standards
- Make examples their work available to inform and inspire others through the annual conference
- Help the skill development of others through the annual delivery of at least one Academy-accredited educational course to the public
- Support the future of the Academy by contributing a mutually agreed percentage of earnings from their delivery of Academy-copyrighted courses or the use of Academy-copyrighted materials beyond their individual professional practice

And...

- Participate in developing the whole field of Professional Dialogue

Accredited Practitioners enter into a **relationship agreement** with the Academy of Professional Dialogue that formalizes these benefits and expectations. See page 4.

Please complete this form to accept the terms of the registration agreement

Your full name

Your email

☐ I agree to the terms of the programme as detailed above

Once you have submitted this form you will receive an email with confirmation, a copy of the terms and a link to register on the Learning Centre.



DIALOGUE PUBLICATIONS

Dialogue Publications was founded in 2017 to make Professional Dialogue materials available internationally. The editors release an annual publication entitled *The World Needs Dialogue!* (hardback and e-book), covering the Working Papers considered by Members at the Academy's annual conference. Other publications include books authored by Academy Members, as well as supporting materials for all educational programmes and courses accredited by the Academy.





THE ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DIALOGUE

The Academy is an educational non-profit charity that promotes and inspires the international use of Professional Dialogue for the benefit of society. The primary aims are to inform people about the practice of Professional Dialogue in organisational and social settings, to acknowledge the work done by skilled Dialogue Practitioners around the world, to provide professional affiliation and to develop the field of Dialogue into a profession.