

FACILITATOR'S TOOLKIT

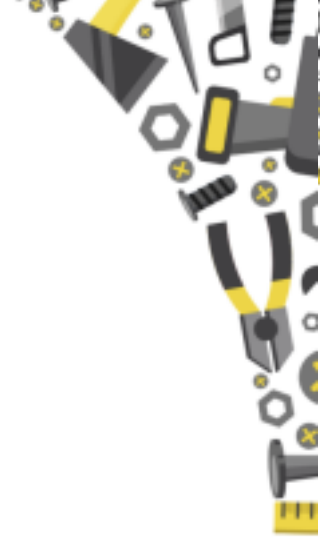
A book club, table talk, listening circle, or movie night with discussion can all be opportunities to use hospitality as activism by creating spaces for people to come together, engage in meaningful dialogue, and build community. These events can serve as a platform to address social justice, equity, and inclusion issues and provide a safe and inclusive environment where individuals can share their experiences and perspectives. By promoting active listening, empathy, and understanding, these events can help to break down barriers and foster cross-cultural relationships. Additionally, by offering a supportive and welcoming atmosphere, these events can help to counteract the adverse effects of systemic oppression and promote positive social change. Using hospitality as a tool for activism, these events can create opportunities for individuals to engage in meaningful conversations, build relationships, and work towards a more just and equitable society.

Book Club

A Book Club is a group of people who meet regularly to discuss a book they have read, explore its themes, characters, and plot and share their thoughts, opinions, and reactions with others. The format can vary, but typically a book club will choose a book in advance, and each member will read it before the next meeting, where they will engage in discussion. Book clubs may be structured, with designated leaders or facilitators or more informal, with members simply taking turns to share their perspectives.

Preparation Checklist:

- Choose the book: Select a relevant book, thought-provoking and has the potential to spark discussions. Consider different perspectives and themes to include a variety of voices.
- Set the date and location: Decide on a date and location that works for most participants. A physical site or an online platform can be used.
- Invite participants: Reach out to members to confirm their availability and send out the invitations.





- Prepare discussion questions: Review the book and create a list of open-ended questions to guide the discussion. These questions can relate to the plot, characters, themes, etc.
- Plan refreshments: If meeting in person, consider having refreshments such as snacks and drinks for the participants.
- Arrange for logistics: If meeting in person, arrange seating and other necessary logistics like parking and accessibility.
 - Send a reminder: A day or two before the book club, send a reminder to the participants with the date, time, location, and discussion questions.
- Facilitate the discussion: Facilitate the discussion by asking questions and encouraging participants to share their thoughts and perspectives on the book club day.

Movie Night

A movie night is a social gathering where a group of people watch a movie or documentary together and then discuss the film. The movie or documentary can be watched at a theater or in someone's home and often includes snacks like popcorn. The purpose of the discussion is to share reactions, thoughts, and impressions about the film. It is helpful to prepare discussion questions to guide the conversation. Encourage your guests to prepare for a follow up discussion; they may even want to take notes.

Preparation Checklist:

Choose a location:

- If attending a theater, consider a matinee showing for more time for discussion.
- If hosting at home, ensure enough seating and a comfortable viewing setup.

Prepare for the viewing:

- Ensure the movie streaming or DVD setup is functioning correctly.
- Have snacks and drinks readily available.

Arrange for discussion:

- Choose a setting that's not too public or distracting for better focus and comfort.
- Consider having backup discussion topics or questions if the movie is not well received.

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Send reminders:

- Confirm details with all attendees via a reminder list or email.
- Encourage timely arrival.

Enhance the experience:

- Consider inviting a guest speaker or starting a discussion with a related topic.
- Set a time limit for discussion to keep the event on track.

Foster open and respectful dialogue:

- Encourage all attendees to share their thoughts and opinions.

Have fun! The goal is to enjoy the movie and engage in meaningful discussions with friends.

Table Talk

A Table Talk is a social gathering where a small group comes together to discuss a specific topic or event over a meal. The event setting is usually home, and the focus is on creating a welcoming and safe environment for open and respectful conversation. The meal can either be a full meal, or participants can bring a family favorite dish to share, which can also jumpstart the conversation with stories about their family's culture. The goal of a Table Talk is to foster meaningful conversations and bring people together to share their perspectives and experiences.

Preparation Checklist:

Choose a theme:

- Decide on a current event or personal experience to discuss.
- Consider asking attendees to bring a family-favorite dish and share stories about their culture.

Set the scene:

- Choose a comfortable location for dinner and set the table.

- Don't stress about the meal. Focus on creating a safe and welcoming atmosphere for discussion.

Arrange for discussion:

- Choose a setting that's not too public or distracting for better focus a

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- Consider having backup discussion topics or questions in case the discussion doesn't flow naturally.

Send reminders:

- Confirm details with all attendees via a reminder list or email.
- Encourage timely arrival.
- Foster open and respectful dialogue:
- Encourage all attendees to share their thoughts and opinions.

Have fun! The goal is to enjoy the meal and engage in meaningful discussions with friends.

Cultural Outing

A cultural outing & discussion is an event or activity where a group gathers to experience and learn about different cultures, art, or history. This can include visiting museums, art exhibitions, theater performances, cultural events, or any other venue that provides exposure to different cultural aspects. After the outing, the group engages in discussion to share their thoughts, reactions, and insights about the experience. The goal is to broaden perspectives and foster understanding and appreciation of different cultures.

Preparation Checklist:

Choose a cultural experience:

- Decide on a play, presentation, exhibit, or museum to attend.
- Consider the type of event and schedule to determine if the outing and discussion will be in the same timeframe.

Arrange for discussion:

- Choose a setting that's not too public or distracting for better focus and comfort. •

If the outing and discussion are not in the same timeframe, provide thoughtful questions for attendees to process.

Send reminders:

- Confirm details with all attendees via a reminder list or email.
- Encourage timely arrival.

Foster open and respectful dialogue:

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- Encourage all attendees to share their thoughts and opinions.

Have fun! The goal is to enjoy the cultural experience and engage in meaningful discussions with friends.

Listening Circle / Café*

A listening circle is a facilitated group discussion where participants share their thoughts and experiences on a specific topic while actively listening to others in the group. The goal is to create a safe and respectful space where all participants feel heard and valued, and all emotions are welcomed and held with empathy and respect. The Talking Stick method is often used in listening circles, where a designated item (such as a stick or object) is passed around to indicate whose turn it is to speak. The discussion is often opened and closed with a moment of silence for participants to process and reflect internally. A listening circle aims to foster a deeper understanding and empathy among participants and to create a space for open, respectful communication and reflection.

The steps for conducting a Listening Circle (as outlined in "The Little Book of Racial Healing," Chapter 6) are as follows:

- Utilize the Talking Stick method to encourage active participation from all group members.
- Clearly define the topic or situation to be discussed and allow everyone to share their thoughts and emotions.
- Emphasize the importance of empathy and respect in handling emotions expressed during the circle.
- After everyone has shared their experiences, allow a brief period of silence for

participants to reflect internally.

- Reopen the circle to discuss general insights and next steps but avoid offering advice. The focus should be on listening to one another.
- Encourage members to continue processing and reflecting on the discussions from previous sessions if additional sessions are planned.

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Preparation Checklist:

- Familiarize yourself with the Talking Stick method to encourage equal participation.
- Choose a topic or situation to discuss. (i.e., When did the word “race” become more than a word to you?)
- Welcome all emotions and model holding them with empathy and respect.
- Allow everyone to share their own experiences, then provide moments of silence for reflection.
- Encourage participants to share general thoughts and insights but not to offer advice. •

Consider scheduling additional sessions for continued processing and reflection. *A

Listening Café would be when several Listening Circles are happening in the same space

Here are some tools that can help people talk across differences:

Empathy: The ability to understand and share the feelings of others is critical to bridging differences and finding common ground.

Active listening: Paying close attention to what others are saying without interrupting or getting defensive is essential to understanding their perspectives and building trust.

Communication skills: Effective communication skills, including active listening, transparent and respectful language, and the ability to express oneself clearly, can help

reduce misunderstandings and foster positive dialogue.

Knowledge and understanding: It is essential to educate oneself about different perspectives and cultures to have informed and productive discussions.

Self-reflection: Reflecting on one's own experiences, beliefs, and biases can help individuals become more aware of how these may impact their interactions with others.

Flexibility and openness: Being open to new ideas and perspectives and willing to change one's own views can help individuals find common ground and build relationships across differences.

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Curiosity: Being curious and asking questions can help individuals better understand different perspectives and cultures.

Patience and persistence: Conversations about complex topics can be challenging, but persistence and patience can help build trust and lead to meaningful dialogue.

By developing and utilizing these tools, facilitators can better understand and navigate differences and engage in productive and respectful conversations with people from various backgrounds and perspectives.

Notes:



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Round Robin Discussion and Break-Out Group Guide

Here is a discussion framework that can be used for Book Club Discussions (where there is only one conversation about the book), Cultural Outing Debrief, Movie / Documentary Debrief, Listening Circle of Café, and Table Talk. The key here is that it is not a series but one event.



Opening Statement

Facilitators introduce themselves and the process. The Opening Statement sets the energetic tone for the conversation and the group, reaffirms the program's "agreements" (goals and guidelines), and outlines what the participants can expect from the facilitator and what the process asks them.

Opening Go-Around

Participants take 1-2 minutes each to address the prompt in turn. The Opening Go-Around is frequently ripe with meaning as participants begin to name their core concerns. Even more guarded participants tend to lay out many critical indicators/signs of importance.

Facilitators should be actively and closely paying attention to what matters to each participant and what emerging threads among them. In this section, facilitators should strictly hold everyone to the allotted time limit.

Question Harvest

Participants pose questions to one another based on what they've heard in the opening Go Around, but they don't answer them immediately. The Question Harvest allows facilitators to get a read of what participants are most drawn to exploring, where the group's energy lies, the initial dynamics among participants, and indicators of similarities and differences among them.

Summary

The facilitator summarizes what's been said and suggests possible starting points for the conversation. By the end of the Question Harvest, the facilitator usually has a tremendous amount of "data" from the participants. To help give the conversation focus and s

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the facilitator aims to provide a succinct, clarifying statement encapsulating the two or three most critical relational threads and the highest points of meaning shared so far. The conversation can end here, or if it is a larger group breaking off into smaller groups (as in a Listening Café), the facilitator can offer these as potentially promising starting points for the breakout conversations, then turn it over for the group to decide how they wish to begin the open discussion.



Open Conversation

Participants may choose to pick up the threads offered by the facilitator or take the conversation elsewhere. As the conversation moves forward, the facilitator decides when and how to intervene to achieve the most productive, satisfying conversation for participants by our principles and purpose. In most cases, the Open Conversation with breakout groups should last between 40 and 60 minutes.

Closing Go Around

5-10 minutes before the conversation's time limit, facilitators close the discussion with a summary of what's been discussed and an invitation to participants to take a moment to reflect on the conversation. Participants are asked to name one thing they most appreciated or valued about the conversation.

Notes: