

# TAKE-HOME FRAMING EXERCISE

## Citizen Research in Framing an Issue for Deliberative Forums

**Instructions:** When NIF or local groups create an issue guide for deliberative forums, they begin with two kinds of research: 1) a review of popular and scholarly/scientific sources, as well as interviews with experts on the issue, to get an idea of the current situation and what can be done, and 2) interviewing and surveying the general public.

For this exercise, you'll get experience in the second technique. In your free time between our OMRA sessions, connect with at least 3 members of the general public using the questions below. Collect their responses in any of the following or similar ways:

- one-on-one personal or telephone interviews or in a focus group interview
- distribute the survey (just the part below the line) via paper copy, email, texting, tweeting, Facebook etc.

Feel free to try multiple methods. Be prepared to share your experience on Day 2.

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**Issue: Oklahoma's Water Future.** Much has been in the news lately about water in our state: Many Oklahomans would like to be part of this important dialogue. The Oklahoma Partnership for Public Deliberation (OPPD [www.OKdeliberates.org](http://www.OKdeliberates.org)) is creating an issue guide for use with deliberative forums throughout the state. **Would you please help us by sharing your thoughtful responses to the questions below?** All responses are anonymous. Thank You!

When you think about this issue, what concerns you? How are you and your family being affected?

What actions would you take (or want to see taken) to address your concerns?

What consequences might follow from the actions you favor that could adversely affect something you consider valuable?

Other thoughts?

# The Three D's: Debate, Dialogue & Deliberation

## Purpose:

- Stimulate a discussion of debate versus dialogue as a stepping off point to define deliberation.

## Steps:

1. Pass out note cards or sheets of paper. Ask each participant to draw a picture of debate on one side of the note card and a picture of dialogue on the reverse side. Do not label the sides "debate" or "dialogue."
2. Ask the participants to go to someone else in the room (you can make these pairings if you wish.). This gets participants talking one-on-one with those who are not sitting in their immediate vicinity.

Let them have three to five minutes to compare their pictures. Can they identify which side belongs to debate and which to dialogue without help from their partner?

## Alternatives:

- a. Have groups of three compare pictures (instead of pairs).
  - b. Have participants choose a one-word descriptor for debate and one for dialogue (instead of drawing a picture.)
3. While groups are meeting, write "Debate" and "Dialogue" at the top of two side-by-side columns on the board or easel sheet. ("Debate" on the left and "Dialogue" on the right.)
  4. Have the group report what happened with their pictures, using this to get descriptions to list in the appropriate columns for "Debate" and "Dialogue."
  5. When the distinction between "Debate" and "Dialogue" is clear, ask them to imagine a scenario in which they are pressed to make a decision with their family that does not seem to have any answer that is perfect for everyone. Possible scenarios include a job offer to one of two working members of the household that will require the entire family to relocate and the remaining spouse to find another job in a new community. Other scenarios include choosing to go back to school at a financially precarious moment in life, a parent trying to get a son or daughter to deliberate the consequences of teenage sex or dropping out of school. These are all examples of when people deliberate. What is the difference between deliberation and dialogue? Why do these situations demand deliberation?

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# Debate   ■   Discussion   ■   Deliberative Dialogue

Deliberation, also called deliberative dialogue, is a particular kind of talk. It is the kind of talk people do when they realize they are responsible for making decisions and choices—or giving guidance to decision makers – on difficult issues or problems that affect many people. Public deliberation requires that people face up to the costs and consequences of each potential approach to the problem. Deliberation invites, even challenges, people to do this. It is hard work. People work at looking at the pros and cons of each approach, or perspective. That means making a real effort to find out how other people see the issue and, more importantly, *why* they see it the way they do. In deliberation, this means listening to the people you do not agree with as carefully as to the people you do agree with.

Of course it is possible to have a great discussion about issues and problems; sharing opinions, personal experiences, and favorite solutions. And that’s a fine, and often satisfying, thing to do. Or it is possible to debate an issue; presenting evidence supporting your chosen view, countering and undercutting the arguments that others present for their chosen views, persuading, and trying to win by presenting the best and most eloquent argument. But with deliberation, talk goes beyond just discussion or debate. It focuses on trying to understand the problem together and on finding solutions that will be best for everyone. Deliberation happens when a group of people work on a problem as if solving it is up to them and no one else. Further, deliberation occurs when people recognize that they and many others will have to live with the consequences, both good and bad, of the choices they make.

<b>Debate</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Deliberative Dialogue</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winner and loser</li> <li>• Search for glaring differences</li> <li>• Counter another’s position at the expense of the relationship</li> <li>• Invest wholeheartedly in your beliefs</li> <li>• Listen to find flaws and counterarguments</li> <li>• Is oppositional and seeks to prove the other wrong</li> <li>• The goal is winning</li> <li>• Defend assumptions as truth</li> </ul> <p><b>Most useful when: A position or course of action is being advocated and winning is the goal.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange of information, stories, experiences, viewpoints,...</li> <li>• May focus on a topic, theme, idea, problem, issue, etc.; may be broad or focused</li> <li>• A generic term meaning talking together</li> <li>• Focus on the experience of talking without any particular goal or desired outcomes</li> <li>• May mean many kinds of talking together (such as a deliberative discussion, informative discussion, debate, dialogue, etc.)</li> <li>• Usually implies participants are not adversarial or competing as in debate</li> </ul> <p><b>Most useful when: People want to talk together about something without desiring any particular outcome form conversation.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move toward a shared sense of direction or purpose</li> <li>• Examine costs and consequences of even most favored approaches</li> <li>• Assume many people have pieces of an answer and workable solution</li> <li>• Listen to understand and find meaning</li> <li>• Present assumptions for re-evaluation</li> <li>• Open possibilities for new solutions</li> <li>• Lead to mutual understanding of differences and ways to act even with those differences</li> <li>• Explore what’s important to them and others by asking questions</li> </ul> <p><b>Most useful when: A decision, or criteria for a decision, about the best way(s) to approach an issue or problem is needed.</b></p>

# Practice Forum

## Directions

To give you an opportunity to practice moderating and recording, you and the other members of your small group will hold your own practice forum. During this practice forum, group members will rotate moderator, recorder, observer, and participant roles. You will wear more than one hat during the course of your practice forum.

### **Moderator:**

As moderator, you are responsible for that portion of the forum. You can either keep track of your own time or ask someone else to keep track of your time. You are also responsible for communication with your recorder. You may want to speak briefly with the other moderators in advance to coordinate your transitions. When you are not moderating your portion of the forum, you are a participant (unless you are in some other role such as observer or recorder).

### **Observer:**

When you are an observer, you are responsible for keeping track of ways that moderator and recorder are effective and suggestions you have for improvement. If you can participate in the forum and act as an observer at the same time, feel free to take on both roles. If you are more comfortable, feel free to simply observe and take notes during the portion of the forum for which you are signed up. During the rest of the forum, you are a participant (unless you are in some other role such as moderator or recorder).

### **Recorder:**

You are responsible for recording during that portion of the forum. You are also responsible for communicating with your moderator to coordinate your roles. When you are not recording your portion of the forum, you are a participant (unless you are in some other role such as moderator or observer).

### **Forum Participant:**

When you are not serving as a moderator, observer, or recorder for any part of the forum, you are always a participant and have the responsibility to consider consequences, pros and cons of the approaches, listen to what others think, and contribute your perspectives. Please be yourself and do not role-play

# Practice Forum Sign-up Sheet

<b>Sign-Up Sheet for the Exercise</b>		
<b>Moderator</b>	<b>Recorder</b>	<b>Observer</b>
Moderator – Opening	Not Recorded	Observer -- Opening
Moderator -- Approach 1	Recorder -- Approach 1	Observer -- Approach 1
Moderator -- Approach 2	Recorder -- Approach 2	Observer -- Approach 2
Moderator -- Approach 3	Recorder -- Approach 3	Observer -- Approach 3
Moderator – Closing/Reflections	Recorder	Observer

Moderator - Open	Explains the purposes. Reviews ground rules. Introduces the approach. Facilitates personal stake.
Moderator - Approach Work	Encourages deliberation by working through the pros and cons of approach.
Moderator - Close	Brings closure by assisting group in identifying common ground for action and areas needing further work.
Recorder	Captures key ideas expressed by forum participants and documents these accurately and clearly.
Observer	Carefully observes the moderator and recorder. Provides feedback to the group that includes good points as well as suggestions for improvement.

## **Exercise**

### **Choice Program - Considering the Role of Values in Public Policy**

At the heart of deliberation on a public issue is the consideration of values. Although we do not all work from the exact same value system, we tend to share some values or beliefs. It is because we prioritize our commonly held values in different ways, and mix them with others that we do not share, that we often disagree on policy steps. This conflict in values is an important part of the deliberative process; it helps us work through the tension of an issue. When we realize we can't have it all, we begin to place a higher priority on some values over others.

By looking beneath the surface of our disagreements on public policy choices and finding our commonly held values, we can often find areas of common ground. Identifying commonly held values is helpful as we try to understand the views of others and work together to find ways to form policy despite our seeming disagreement.

Our own values can often be in conflict with each other as we deliberate an issue. We often see this when we find ourselves having difficulty in choosing a position or wavering on an issue or statement. For example, someone might say they place a high priority on individual freedom and oppose laws that prohibit talking on cell phones or texting while driving, but at the same time they also value their safety on the road.

**Directions:** Give each participant a sheet of cards, each with a word from the list below (see example on next page)

- Freedom
- Tolerance
- Equality
- Cooperation
- Security
- Justice
- Self-reliance
- Community
- Democracy
- (one blank card)

Have them separate their sheet into individual cards (or hand them a stack of prepared cards). Read two words from the list and have them put these two cards in order with the one on top being the one they consider most important. Read a third and have them reorder their list. Continue reading the list until each person has a stack of nine cards organized in order of priority to him/her (they will be arranging them as they might a hand of cards.) Invite them to add a value that was not on the list and reorder their values with this tenth card.

When they have finished, ask the group for their thoughts about this exercise. What was hard about it, what was easy? Ask for volunteers to read their lists and share how they made their decisions. Discuss the different ways to define certain values and how their priority may change depending on how they are defined.

The point of this exercise is to realize that some of these values will be easy to prioritize while others will involve trade-offs that make prioritizing very difficult.

If participants found it difficult to prioritize the list of values, using one of the scenarios below might be helpful.

## **Card Game Scenarios**

Directions: Put your value cards in order by priority as you consider how you would address the following problems or issues

1. You have just been put in charge of a committee that will address underage alcohol use in your community.
2. You are the president at a small college where there is an outbreak of the H1N1 virus.
3. You've just received a large grant (with a promise of more to come) to start your own business, but you have six months to show it can be successful.
4. You've just been offered \$550,000/year to take a job in Saudi Arabia.
5. You started your new job as a school superintendent last month. Yesterday rumors were circulating that some students have been talking about bringing weapons to school.

Ask participants how the task of prioritizing their values with a specific problem in mind compared to the earlier assignment of prioritizing a random list of values.

<b>Freedom</b>	<b>Justice</b>
<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>Self-reliance</b>
<b>Equality</b>	<b>Community</b>
<b>Cooperation</b>	<b>Democracy</b>
<b>Security</b>	