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DEEPENING THE LAYERS
OF UNDERSTANDING
AND CONNECTION

A Critical-Dialogic Approach to
Facilitating Intergroup Dialogues

Biren (Ratnesh) A. Nagda and Kelly E. Maxwell

Intergroup dialogue has emerged as an educational and community-building approach that brings together members of diverse social and cultural identities to engage in learning together—sharing and listening to each other’s perspectives and stories and exploring inequalities and community issues that affect them all, albeit differently—so that they may work collectively and individually to promote greater diversity, equality, and justice (McCoy & Scully, 2002; Schoem & Hurtado, 2001; Walsh, 2007; Zúñiga, Nagda, Chesler, & Cytron-Walker, 2007). Be it involving middle or high school students, college students or community constituents, intergroup dialogue provides a structured, supportive, and sustained environment in which participants can grapple with issues and questions that may otherwise remain taboo and divisive (Tatum, 1997). Issues as broad and intractable as racism, sexism, and classism or as specific as racial health disparities, violence against women, immigration, abortion, gay marriage, racial profiling, and more, may remain silent because of fear and a lack of structured opportunities for people to engage across lines of differences in perspectives, experiences, and identities. Discussing these issues may also be taboo for questioning and challenging established norms and practices, for maintaining a social order that privileges some groups over others, or for the personal shame and guilt that the issues
evoke. Not only may we feel constrained in saying what we may be thinking, but also we often do not hear others clearly because of what we are thinking (Warner, 2009). With increasing social diversity in workplaces, communities, and educational institutions, some advocate for ignoring social identities and differences, while others advocate for embracing a multicultural perspective that recognizes differences in power and privilege. Both sides may be emboldened by their concerns for fairness and equality, yet they seem oppositional in the ways that they actualize the paths and means to justice.

But these differing perspectives and the parties holding these perspectives do not engage authentically in a public setting. Personal concerns remain separated from group-based analyses and private deliberations remain disconnected from public discourse. Intergroup dialogue intervenes in these spaces of estrangement that both reinforce and are reinforced by the ignorance, silence, or cautious discourse. It seeks to be a medium for transformative engagement that can change contentious arguments to productive dialogues. It engages participants to create ways of understanding, living, and working together that are more equal and just. It seeks to unearth barriers in thinking, feeling, and relating so that there is both a better understanding of inequalities, differences, and conflicts that divide and a stronger foundation for building bridges that may help members of different groups across separations and disconnections. Even when intergroup dialogue may not lead directly to change, it can help create the conditions to catalyze greater community collaboration among previously estranged groups.

Focus of This Book

This book, therefore, seeks to extend our understanding and knowledge of intergroup dialogue practice with a focus on intergroup dialogue facilitation. Intergroup dialogue is a co-facilitated learning endeavor that brings together members of two or more social identity groups to build relationships across cultural and power differences, to raise consciousness of inequalities, to explore the similarities and differences in experiences across identity groups, and to strengthen individual and collective capacities to promote social justice. With guidance from trained co-facilitators, dialogue groups of about 12–16 participants, meet weekly over a period of 10–14 weeks. Co-facilitators, representing the groups that are in dialogue, provide balanced leadership for the learning process. They use an educational curriculum that integrates multiple dimensions of learning: content and process learning; intellectual and affective engagement; individual reflection and group dialogue; individual, intergroup, and institutional analyses; and individual and collective actions (see Zúñiga et al., 2007, for a detailed description).
Despite a growing number of books and articles in professional journals and magazines focusing on intergroup dialogue, there remains a dearth of writing and in-depth understanding of intergroup dialogue facilitation. Other than chapters in books or a brief mention within other chapters, little has been written specifically about intergroup dialogue facilitation (see Beale, Thompson, & Chesler, 2001; Nagda, Zúñiga, & Sevig, 1995; Zúñiga et al., 2007) or facilitating social justice education courses or workshops (see Burke, Geronimo, Martin, Thomas, & Wall, 2002; Griffin & Ouellett, 2007, for exceptions). In this book, the first dedicated entirely to intergroup dialogue facilitation, we draw on our joint practice and research knowledge to define the facilitation role in greater detail, articulate the broad and specific foci of training and supporting facilitators, and share emerging research on intergroup dialogue facilitators with implications for practice. Many of the contributing authors have worked in higher education settings as well as collaborated with community organizations and youth in K-12 schools. We bring insights gained from these experiences to contribute to the overall knowledge and practice base of dialogue in a variety of contexts.

In this introductory chapter, we focus on our experiences with a particular kind of intergroup dialogue—the critical-dialogic model of intergroup dialogue that is now being used at many different U.S. colleges and universities. Rather than only discussing facilitation training and multicultural competencies as others have done previously (see Beale et al., 2001; Zúñiga et al., 2007), we seek to connect intergroup dialogue facilitation to the unique, transformative potential of intergroup dialogue and the underlying processes of change in intergroup dialogue.

Intergroup Dialogue: Critical-Dialogic Engagement and Facilitation

We lay a foundation here for understanding the importance and uniqueness of intergroup dialogue facilitation. We elaborate on facilitation within a critical-dialogic model of intergroup dialogue, an interdisciplinary model informed by the fields of multicultural and social justice education, intergroup contact and intergroup relations, and communication and conflict studies.

Discursive Engagement With and Across Differences

Table 1.1 shows a critical-dialogic model of intergroup dialogue in the context of other models of discursive engagement such as debate and discussion that are also concerned with teaching and learning about differences and diversity. The framework shows the unique ways in which intergroup dialogue works...
### TABLE 1.1
**Approaches to discursive engagement with and across differences**
*(adopted from Nagda & Gurin, 2007)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding Difference and Dominance</th>
<th>Debate</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Intergroup Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Differences as diversity—differences seen as individual differences, the result of individual prejudices and stereotypes.</td>
<td>To clarify pros and cons of issues</td>
<td>To generate different perspectives on issues</td>
<td>To increase critical self- and societal awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in the context of sociocultural and power relations—differences seen to represent/emerge from cultural differences and unequal power (dominant-subordinated) relationships; analyses of structural and institutional systems of oppression and privilege; and consideration of differential social identity development processes for participants</td>
<td>To develop critical thinking skills</td>
<td>To increase perspective taking and critical thinking skills</td>
<td>To increase intergroup communication, understanding and collaborative actions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals of Discursive Engagement</th>
<th>Debate</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Intergroup Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A back-and-forth of arguments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emphasis on connected knowing (discerning similarities and differences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perseverance and advocacy of perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personalization, affective expression &amp; empathic relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One right answer, determined by force of argument, identifying flaws in other's logic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Contextualization in larger systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness to different perspectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self- and other-inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disparate or connected knowing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varies in personalization and contextualization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive inquiry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modes of Discursive Engagement</th>
<th>Debate</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Intergroup Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community not considered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Diverse community, acknowledges differences as well as similarities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fight to convince other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conflicts surfaced and normalized; treated as opportunities for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defined by positions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Search for collaborative possibilities and social justice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Nagda & Gurin, 2007, adapted with permission.*
with the dimensions of participatory learning about and across differences and sets the stage for understanding intergroup dialogue facilitation within this model (see also Nagda & Gurin, 2007). We refer to our model of intergroup dialogue as a critical-dialogic approach to differentiate it from approaches that vary between only building relationships among participants without an explicit recognition of differences, or models that focus on raising consciousness to lead to action but do not deal fully with the complexity of relationships among the participants.

The dialogic goals of intergroup dialogue are aimed at building affective self–other relationships through personal storytelling and sharing, empathic listening, and interpersonal inquiry (Kim & Kim, 2008; Young, 1997). Dialogue seeks understanding across differences through connected knowing rather than an imposition of a singular perspective (as in debate) or serial monologues (as in discussion) (see chapter 8 for further distinction between debate and deliberation). Dialogue, in a critical-dialogic approach, seeks not only an understanding of one’s own and others’ perspectives on issues, but also an appreciation of life experiences that inform those perspectives. Participants learn to listen to others, share their own perspectives and experiences, reflect on their learning, and ask questions to more fully explore differences and commonalities within and across social identity groups.

The critical goals of intergroup dialogue are centered on understanding how power, privilege, and group-based inequalities structure individual and group life as well as on fostering individual and collective responsibilities for redressing inequalities and promoting social justice (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000; Freire, 1970). Dialogues across differences do not happen in a vacuum; intergroup dialogue is centrally concerned with issues of power and privilege and their effects on personal and social identities. Intergroup dialogue takes a critical understanding of difference, one that conceptualizes difference in the context of dominant-subordinated relationships and not simply as diversity (McMahon, 2003). In the intergroup context with participants from privileged and less-advantaged groups (such as people of color and White people, or women and men), participants usually hold different understandings and experiences of identities and inequalities (Tatum, 1997). Thus, we extend the basis of dialogue to intergroup dialogue, that is, we bring a critical perspective to dialogue.

Jointly, the critical-dialogic goals seek to mobilize the power of cross-group relationships not only as a focal point of analysis of structural inequalities and the consequences on group and individual lives, but also as sites for relating in ways that advance individual and collective agency for transformative social change (Nagda, 2006; Saunders, 1999). Through sharing, listening,
FACILITATING INTERGROUP DIALOGUES

and inquiry, we aim to explore the commonalities and differences in experiences. Oftentimes, these narratives are grounded in identities, privilege, and/or social exclusion. We aim to gain a deeper understanding not only of our personal biographies but also of the contextual situations and structures that affect us similarly and differentially. Within such a critical-dialogic approach, community-building and conflict exploration are not oppositional; rather, they are important processes toward greater social justice through acknowledgment and recognition of inequalities, structuring opportunities for greater access and participation in social institutions, reforming relationships, and exploring sustainable redistribution of power.

Emerging research on intergroup dialogue, directly on facilitation and indirectly on what the facilitators create, leads to three conclusions. First, simply, facilitation matters! Facilitation and structured interaction in intergroup dialogue has been found to be more favorably effective in learning compared to traditional lecture/discussion methods (Nagda, Gurin, Sorensen, & Coombes, 2009). Second, psychological processes fostered in intergroup dialogues are important because people's individual experiences and internal change, both cognitive and affective, are related to positive outcomes (Nagda, Kim, & Truelove, 2004; Stephan, 2008). Third, four communication processes characterize intergroup dialogue (Nagda, 2006):

1. **Appreciating difference** involves an openness to learn from others through intentional listening, asking questions, and appreciating life experiences and perspectives different from one's own.
2. **Engaging self** speaks to active involvement of participants in intergroup interactions characterized by personal sharing, voicing disagreements, and addressing difficult issues.
3. **Critical reflection** involves students examining and understanding their own perspectives and experiences, and those of other students in the dialogue, through the lenses of privilege and inequality.
4. **Alliance building** is defined as a process that involves both talking about ways to collaborate on action to work against injustices and bring about change, and strengthening the relationship by working through disagreements and conflicts (Nagda, 2006).

Psychological and communication processes are intimately related to the work of the facilitators. We discuss below the facilitation principles involved in dialogue across differences with facilitators as guides who themselves are intimately connected to the learning process and who are committed to fostering critical-dialogic communication processes among participants.
Facilitation Principles in Discursive Engagement With and Across Difference

Like intergroup dialogue itself, intergroup dialogue facilitation is a distinct and principled approach to guiding engagement with issues of social justice that bridges the personal and the political, connects reflection and dialogue, and mobilizes relationships for collaborative action. Table 1.2 expands on Table 1.1 with an explicit focus on facilitation. In the following sections we discuss three major principles that inform intergroup dialogue facilitation.

Principle 1: Guiding, Not Just Teaching

Intergroup dialogue facilitation is mindful, responsive, and responsible guidance, not formalized teaching or instruction. Participants in dialogue are not passive receptacles to be filled with the facilitators’ knowledge, but are themselves educators of their own experiences and understandings of social reality. Whereas in debates or discussions the facilitator referees or directs the instruction and interactions, intergroup dialogue facilitators pay keen attention to the conjoint learner–educator roles that every participant plays. A mode of facilitators-as-guides rather than facilitators-as-teachers allows them to partner with students to create a joint learning experience (see chapter 6). The emphasis on guiding learning through reflection, dialogue, and action does not mean laissez-faire facilitation, but an intentionality to create an inclusive learning environment that can foster meaningful engagement.

Creating an Inclusive Space for Differences and Dialogue

Because intergroup dialogues bring together equal numbers of participants from the different groups in dialogue—usually groups situated in dominant-subordinated power relations—facilitators work to create an inclusive learning space that can hold divergent and convergent experiences and perspectives. Intergroup dialogues use intentional pedagogy that builds appreciation for and understanding of differences that are often connected to participants’ identities and positionalities. In discussions or debates, the group composition is not necessarily structured with social identities in mind, nor is there explicit attention to engaging with identities. Differences may be conceived of as simply about perspectives and information that are open to being challenged. Or, they may be acknowledged as related to group-based experiences in the larger society but engaged with only abstractly or theoretically. Views and perspectives may or may not be personalized by individual participants. Within the ground rules for dialogue, particular attention is paid to how
### TABLE 1.2
Facilitator roles in discursive engagement with and across differences
(adapted from Nagda, 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multicultural, Anti-oppression and Social Justice Learning Environments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group Membership in Learning Community</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As is in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Open invitation without intentional structuring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Small groups formed without attention to identities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As is in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Open invitation without intentional structuring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some attention to mix of small group and large group settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Intergroup Dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intentional structuring of groups with as equal a number of members of different groups as possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Members of both subordinated and dominant groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meetings in both heterogeneous and homogeneous (caucus) groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructor/Facilitator Role</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Facilitator- and teaching-directed and centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Instructor/Facilitator as moderator/referee, sets tone, agenda for group and norms of discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Procedural (rules of debate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Facilitator- and teaching-directed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Procedural to maximize participation but limited processual in terms of attention to communication dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Instructor/Facilitator as ‘neutral’ and director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Co-facilitated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Co-facilitator guided, student- and learning-centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Focused on fostering an intergroup learning community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Procedural and processual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self and Power</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* “Self” as objective and not part of engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* “Self” conceptualized in context of role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* “Self” as objective and not part of engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* “Self” conceptualized as individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Use of “self” to deepen dialogue among participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* “Self” conceptualized in context of individual, social identity and social positionality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Processes of Engagement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* clarity of argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* convincing-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* dynamic of critique-defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* close-ended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* serial monologues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* heavy emphasis on talking participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* idea-oriented, not inclusive of experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* narrative-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* asking questions and sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* grounded in experience, combined with intellectual ideas to coconstruct meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Nagda (2007) used with permission.*
participants and facilitators work to hold the differences and see them as enriching and not undermining the learning. Yeakley (chapter 2) provides helpful suggestions on how to create a foundation for an inclusive climate.

Co-facilitation
Intergroup dialogue uses a co-facilitation approach, not solo facilitation, and embraces alliance building at the heart of its relationship. Intergroup dialogue facilitators share power with each other and with members of the dialogue group in ways that make the best use of everyone’s aspirations, skills, and abilities. For group participants, the co-facilitation model ensures, as much as possible, representation and support in the facilitative leadership. Co-facilitators are not neutral or impartial but multipartial and balanced as a team in supporting all group members (see chapter 3). Co-facilitators can support and challenge participants from their own identity groups empathically and, at the same time, model for participants ways of connecting across social boundaries. The co-facilitation alliance provides facilitators a site for enacting and modeling their commitments to intergroup collaboration, mutually beneficial learning, and a shared project to advance the learning of others (see chapters 4, 5, and 12).

Integrating Content and Process
Obviously, facilitators bring immense commitment and passion to their work in addition to the knowledge, awareness, and skills they develop in training. While they do not lecture or formally teach as part of instruction, facilitators work with both content and process to stimulate the dialogue. They draw on content by using reading materials and cognitive organizers that provide informational and conceptual foundations to guide participants to reflect on their own lives and pertinent social issues (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 2007). They generate content for dialogue by engaging participants in structured exercises and experiential activities and then guide them in connecting their individual in-exercise experiences to their lived experiences and to those of others in the dialogue. They also use the group process and group dynamics as in vivo content for a dialogue-about-dialogue whereby students are asked for their own reflections about the dialogue process and the intergroup dynamics (see Zúñiga et al., 2007). None of these sources of content are mutually exclusive and the most engaging facilitators integrate all three. Facilitators use content from readings, experiences of activities, or the group dynamics as a foundation to stimulate dialogue or a reference point for examining emergent issues and deepening the dialogue.
Principle 2: Empowering, Not Just Being Empowered

Intergroup dialogue facilitation, in seeking to promote a joint learning environment for both participants and facilitators, recognizes that learning about identities, inequalities, and social justice is a continual process. The leadership role of facilitators does not mean that they have achieved some ultimate outcome of social justice learning; rather, it often means that facilitators are committed to a process of continued learning through praxis, a cyclical process of action and reflection in dialogue. Specifically, facilitators focus on developing greater critical reflexivity that connects their understanding of power inequalities and their positionalities with their work—with participants and with each other—to promote constructive uses of power and empowerment (see chapters 6, 11, and 12). Thus, while being a part of the group and not apart from the group, facilitators must also be aware of the different levels of learning for themselves and participants. They must honor the learning trajectory of individual participants and attend to the dynamics of group development while promoting individual skills development and group ownership.

Embracing a Productive Use of Self

Perhaps the most distinctive dimension of intergroup dialogue facilitation from other modes of discursive facilitation is the use of self. By productive, we refer to how facilitators can purposefully use themselves and their experiences as a way to guide and deepen the dialogue while being mindful not to reproduce the unequal hierarchical power dynamics that the intergroup dialogues seek to challenge. Rather than seeing the self as an autonomous individual, the self is grounded in social group memberships, identities, and social relationships (dominant and/or subordinated) that influence the individual experience (see chapter 11). The facilitators model how to speak from a self-standpoint grounded in identity and status. Not only does this normalize the conversation about identities and positionalities, it also gives participants examples of experiences that connect to their own in some ways. In intergroup dialogue, the subjectivity enriches the conversation. In discussion or debate, the facilitator “self” is seen as objective and facilitator subjectivity is considered to be a distraction, or worse, a weakness. There is a considerable boundary maintained between the facilitator/instructor and participants and an emphasis on being neutral. A productive use of self also means that power dynamics in the group—between co-facilitators, among group members, and between co-facilitators and group members—are surfaced to serve as opportunities for learning for all, including the facilitators.
Framing and Naming

Learning about privilege and power, and especially how students are themselves affected by systems of inequalities and the conscious and unconscious roles they play in those systems, is not easy by any means. Facilitators, drawing on their own learning and training, are also active in normalizing the personal and group dynamics that accompany the learning process. Cognitive learning is not the only desired educational outcome; so is affective learning, as it enables a deeper and more complex understanding of the person-structure connection of inequalities (Khuri, 2004; see also chapter 3). Emotions such as ambivalence, dissonance, discomfort, anger and guilt, among others, are very much a part of the learning process. When facilitators help students name these emotions, normalize them, and dialogue about them, students are less likely to feel isolated or shameful about these emergent feelings. Normalizing does not mean colluding with participants or with inequalities, but empathizing and affirming the learning as a process that moves through different phases, emotions, and relationship dynamics. In a way, it enables facilitators to partner with and guide students through newer explorations about themselves, their relations with others, and how they are situated in the world.

Facilitators also use intergroup dynamics that occur in the intergroup dialogue as learning moments. Whether it is a reversion to debate or discussion-oriented engagement, an imbalance of who is talking and who is listening, an asymmetry in cognitive and affective engagement, or a pattern of who connects with or diverts from whom, facilitators surface the dynamics in order to deepen the dialogue. Oftentimes, facilitators may pause the dialogue process and ask the group for their in-the-moment observations or feelings. They may then name what they saw and invite students to examine it through the frame of dynamics of inequalities, internalized oppression, and internalized dominance that may be playing out in the dialogue. Facilitators are intentional in not calling out or blaming individuals but contextualizing their observations in systems of socialization and inviting participants to dialogue from their own standpoints. Facilitators also reinforce the opportunity to learn from such moments or conflicts in the group such that it enables students from diverse backgrounds to build authentic understanding and collaborations.

Cultivating Facilitative Engagement and Skills

As much as they are a part of the group and the learning process, facilitators’ primary responsibility is to advance the learning of others. They do so not only by performing particular facilitator behaviors and techniques, but also
by guiding students to develop facilitative mindsets and behaviors that contribute to relational learning (see chapter 8). For example, not only should the facilitators ask for elaboration or more questions to engage participants but they can also encourage participants to do the same with each other. Or, not only should the facilitators respond to participants’ questions seeking the “expert answer” to an issue, but also redirect the question to the participants by opening the floor for everyone’s thoughts on the issue or engaging the participants in reflecting on the origin and assumptions in the question. Or, facilitators should support participants’ own naming of issues and dynamics in the dialogue. Instead of seeing this as a criticism or failure on their part in equalizing power in the group, facilitators can encourage participants to own that responsibility and help facilitate a constructive dialogue. Interactions in the dialogue group then become less facilitator-centered or facilitator-directed and more participant-centered and guided jointly by participants and facilitators.

**Principle 3: Attending to Processes, Not Just Procedures**

Procedural issues in any form of discursive engagement have to do with following the rules of engagement, while processes refer to the collective sense making and learning derived from the engagement. Of the three discursive modes, debate is likely to be the most procedural with a clear set of rules to follow in terms of presentation of arguments, rebuttals, and more. Discussion may vary in terms of following the procedures of maximizing participation and the processes of deepening the discussion. The power of intergroup dialogue is in deepening the reflection and dialogue process through interaction and inquiry. As much as procedures are important in getting participants involved in structured activities, the subsequent debriefing process deepens and expands the learning through reflection, dialogue and probing inquiry. Many intergroup dialogue facilitators are enamored by the power of structured activities. The active involvement and the affective and experiential learning sparked by the activities is a strong memory for facilitators from their time as dialogue participants. Such learning is often contrasted with their educational experiences in other courses and workshops. They are reminded of the critical lessons they learned in those activities. Furthermore, new intergroup dialogue facilitators may depend more on structure and activities as a semblance of certainty and safety rather than be comfortable with ambiguity of the organic process that unfolds through open dialogue. The dilemma here is in getting caught on the procedures for the dialogue activities versus using the activity to generate a process of dialogue.
As discussed earlier, recent research and practice in intergroup dialogue has centered on the important role of communication processes—engaging self, learning about others, critical reflection, and alliance building—to promote learning (Nagda, 2006; Nagda, Gurin, Sorensen, Gurin-Sands, & Osuna, 2009). By integrating content and structured interactions in intergroup dialogues, facilitators are responsible for cultivating these communication processes geared toward equalizing exchanges and interrupting unequal power dynamics in intergroup interactions. In many ways, facilitating intergroup dialogues is social justice in action. Facilitators see their work with students in intergroup dialogue as a way of acting on their social justice commitments, and students see their own work with each other and the work of facilitators with them as examples of working toward social justice. The critical-dialogic framework of intergroup dialogue helps facilitators focus their attention on fostering specific communication processes.

**Dialogic Facilitation to Build Self–Other Relationships within and Across Differences**

With the potentially contentious and emotional issues raised in intergroup dialogues, building relationships across differences brings forth the challenge of creating reciprocal and mutual self–other relations. In many intergroup dialogue situations, participants are coming together carrying histories of separation, estrangement, and ignorance of each other. For disadvantaged groups, the coming together may represent an opportunity to talk about the social inequalities, while privileged groups may want to talk more about commonalities (Abu-Nimer, 1999; Dovidio, Saguy, & Schnabel, 2009; Walsh, 2007). For the former, intergroup contact entails acknowledgment of social identities and statuses and a desire to be respected for their opinions. For the latter, such contact may be defined more interpersonally with the desire to be liked as a motivator in engagement (Shelton, Richeson, & Vorauer, 2006). Be it due to inexperience in intergroup situations and the real fears of appearing prejudiced or being the target of prejudice (Shelton, Richeson, & Salvatore, 2005), the conversation can also become stilted with the predominant participation of members of just certain groups depending on the content or process of the conversation.

Facilitators focus on instilling a practice of *engaging self* and *appreciating difference* as the important communicative actions to build relationships across differences. Such an emphasis necessitates not only clear communication but also a connected speaking-and-listening among participants. Narayan (1988) details the emotional cost of disconnected conversations across differences. Oftentimes, in sensitive conversations among people with diverse experiences,
certain stories may not be acknowledged due to a lack of understanding or, at worst, due to overt marginalization. Even when acknowledged, they may not be reciprocated with how the story was received by other participants, or met with interest or curiosity. Facilitators work to ensure that there is acknowledgment of what someone says, perhaps encouraging more sharing by the original participant or opening up the floor to others who may have had similar experiences. In essence, there needs to be a validation that the contribution was heard. It is also important that facilitators work to balance the processes of engaging self and learning about others. Examples of facilitator phrases and questions to encourage engaging self are Please say more, or Can you help me understand your thinking here? or Seems like that really affected you. Can you share some about how you felt and the impact of that experience on you? Examples of cultivating appreciation of differences may be What is something that each of us appreciates about what others have been sharing? or What is something new or different that each of us has learned from all the perspectives in our dialogue? or What are some questions that you would like to ask each other based on what you all have heard? Furthermore, some questions to bridge learning from others and engaging self may include the following:

- How is everyone affected by what has been said?
- How does that resonate with something of your own experience?
- As you all listen and take in what everyone has shared, what are the commonalities and differences you see emerging?

Critical Facilitation to Connect Personal Experiences and Structural Inequalities

Intergroup dialogue not only brings people of diverse identities together but also the participants themselves hold different perspectives and ideologies related to difference and equality. Members of disadvantaged and advantaged groups usually differ in their endorsement of multicultural or color-blind ideologies (Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004), construction of self-identity through social identities or personal attributes (Tajfel, 1974), and understanding of intergroup conflict situations through structural and/or individual analyses (Jones, Engleman, Turner, & Campbell, 2009). Because intergroup dialogues are situated within and seek to surface differences within the dynamics of inequalities, facilitators pay particular attention to the communication processes of critical reflection and alliance building. Facilitators encourage participants to both personalize and contextualize experiences and issues vis-à-vis systems of power, privilege, and resistance/empowerment. Personalization refers to examining the issues of social identities and inequalities and the affective and
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Recognizing the cognitive impact on participants, individually and collectively. Contextualization involves questioning personal biases and misinformation, and understanding differences in experiences that flow from differential societal locations (see chapters 5 and 12 for examples). Facilitators support and challenge participants to step beyond simply appreciating diversity from a distanced perspective to examining how social inequalities impact groups differently, and how they too are a part of the larger social structure (Nagda, 2007). Facilitative inquiry may involve asking:

- What feelings come up as we examine the systematic nature of inequality?
- Some people are expressing ideas that seem to be very different from others. What do you think accounts for the different experiences and perspectives?
- What insights and new questions emerge as we listen to all the different perspectives in the group?

Within the dialogue group setting, participants can be encouraged to engage in actions that counter the cycles of socialization or oppression. Facilitator responsiveness, such as affirmation or empathy, may be critical when participants exercise agency by voicing their experiences and feelings in a mixed group. In other cases, when some participants may exhibit privileged or dominating behaviors, facilitator intervention can challenge them to listen more to other group members as a way of enacting social justice. When interactions in the group reflect larger sociopolitical processes (e.g., members of privileged social groups dominating the dialogue session or members of oppressed groups retreating into silence or erupting in anger), the facilitators may guide the group in a “dialogue about the dialogue” (Nagda, 2006):

- What is facilitating and hindering participation for each of us?
- How are the dynamics of inequalities that are the content of learning being manifested and/or challenged here?
- How can our dialogues be deepened in more socially just ways?

In addition, facilitators may also remark on changes in the group dynamics that show how the group itself has broken through the barriers and restrictions of dominating and oppressive behaviors to more inclusive and equalizing ways of engagement.

Critical-dialogic Facilitation to Bridge Dialogue and Action

For many, engaging in dialogic relationship building and critical analysis may be enough in itself as a sign of improved intergroup relationships. The
critical-dialogic approach, however, is geared toward redressing inequalities and promoting social change, not just building friendships across social identity groups (Nagda, 2006; Wright & Lubensky, 2009). Thus, facilitators in intergroup dialogue push to connect critical analysis to actions that promote diversity and social justice. *Alliance building* as a communication process helps bridge dialogue to action and bridge learning in the dialogue group to applying learning outside the group. Facilitators often have to demystify actions simply as social protest or civil disobedience and have participants appreciate the range of actions from reducing individual prejudice and interrupting misinformation and derogatory comments, to educating others and to collective organizing for wider and more sustained impact. Examples of facilitative inquiry may include the following:

- Based on what we have learned about inequalities and the different spheres of influence in our lives, what actions can we take to bring about change?
- As members of disadvantaged or privileged groups, what are our responsibilities to connect the dialogue to actions both within our own group and across groups?
- What are the personal risks and rewards of challenging inequalities?

As a communication process, alliance building involves more than just taking action; it also involves working through conflicts and deepening trust by intentionally examining individual and group issues related to collaboration (Nagda, 2006). Facilitators can further alliance building by integrating dialogic relations and critical analysis and action. Facilitators can foster a deeper dialogue about how participants bring their different conceptions for change and self-assessed abilities to a collective mix as well as examine the relational impact of action. There exists a tension, also informed by status relations, between change as prejudice reduction and change as collective action to redress inequalities (Wright & Lubensky, 2009). From a relationship perspective, this tension parallels that of being friends and being allies (Nagda, 2006; Tatum, 2007). Thus, dialogue about the relational impact means understanding how actions of one group (or its members) affect another group (or its members), the nature of relationships that engender or hinder individual and collective capacity for change, and the participation and leadership opportunities that can sustain commitments to action and learning. For example, facilitators may create opportunities where participants can dialogue in intragroup settings about the impact of internalized oppression and internalized dominance.
on working across differences. Participants from disadvantaged and privileged groups can each dialogue about the following:

- What is the impact of internalized oppression [dominance and superiority] on our relationships with each other and with members of privileged groups?
- How does internalized oppression [dominance and superiority] affect our approaches to collaborative social change?

Reflections and insights from these intragroup conversations can be brought to the intergroup setting so that participants can negotiate collaborative relations that are mutually empowering and also attend to the unequal power relations, and thus the different and common responsibilities each group has to advance justice. Honest dialogues stimulated by these questions are important in deepening the relations between groups and developing understanding about the important individual and collective needs in collaborative efforts.

Facilitators also encourage students to talk about actions they have taken outside the dialogue setting. Talking about actions allows participants to inspire and be inspired by each other, to appreciate their own and others’ efficacy in applying their learning from the dialogues through actions, to be honest about the risks of interrupting or intervening in incidents of power abuses, and perhaps even to challenge each other to reflect on their own complicity or collusion in injustices. Facilitators continue to encourage critical reflection on actions and alliance building through questions such as the following:

- How do our individual actions toward interrupting injustices affect our collective efforts?
- How can we work together so that we are all empowered to act?
- How do we work together for sustained social justice (as allies) and build strong relationships (be friends)?

Intentional dialogues about actions and continued learning can help participants negotiate what is important to them in collaborative efforts to advance social justice and not reproduce the dynamics that they are seeking to challenge.

In summary, intergroup dialogue facilitators bring their learned expertise to guide the critical-dialogic process, but do not reproduce a hierarchy of expert teachers and passive learners. As facilitator–participants, they foreground
their roles as facilitators but use their selves and their own life standpoints as appropriate, and in strategic ways, to generate the learning in the group. Allowance for such subjectivity carries an ethical responsibility to maintain the focus of learning on participants, and not simply for the sake of the facilitators’ own learning process. The power of facilitation lies in the processual work of intergroup dialogue, that is, fostering communicative exchanges that bridge self and other, person and structure, and dialogue and action. Facilitative inquiry related to the communication process enables participants to take active responsibility and approach learning in intergroup dialogues with a spirit of openness, curiosity, and commitment to collective learning. Furthermore, because intergroup dialogue facilitators usually work in partnership, the co-facilitator relationship models for participants the promises, possibilities, and challenges of collaborative social justice action. Intergroup dialogue facilitation training, the focus of this book, includes attention to the facilitation principles and inquiry skills highlighted in this chapter as well as other specific facilitator roles and techniques necessary in social justice-based group work on campus (chapter 7) and in the community (chapters 9, 10, and 13) (Burke et al., 2002; Griffin & Ouellett, 2007; Zúñiga et al., 2007). As a whole, the contributions in this book help paint a fuller picture of facilitation roles, skills, and training.

Organization of This Book

This book is organized into three sections. The introductory chapters (1 and 2) seek to provide foundational, conceptual, and practical considerations about intergroup dialogue facilitation that directly influence facilitator training. Yeakley, in “In the Hands of Facilitators: Student Experiences in Dialogue and Implications for Facilitator Training”, draws on her qualitative study of positive and negative experiences in intergroup dialogue as well as her practical experiences to provide guiding implications for facilitation training.

Section I elucidates some of the critical issues raised in training intergroup dialogue facilitators, bringing together the breadth and depth of intergroup dialogue facilitation in college classroom settings. Intergroup dialogue facilitators can be undergraduate peers, graduate students, and even professional staff and faculty. Chapters 3 and 4 in this section describe undergraduate peer facilitation training models at two very different institutions: a large public university and a small liberal arts college. In “Training Peer Facilitators as Social Justice Educators: Integrating Cognitive and Affective Learning,” Maxwell, Fisher, Thompson, and Behling highlight a focus on undergraduate
peer facilitation training at the Program on Intergroup Relations at the University of Michigan. Rodríguez, Rodríguez-Scheel, Lindsey, and Kirkland, in “Facilitator Training in Diverse, Progressive Residential Communities: Occidental College as a Case Study,” distinctively examine three classic training themes: setting the context; guiding inclusive, reflective practice; and nurturing constructive co-facilitation relationships. Chapter 5, “Preparing Critically Reflective Intergroup Dialogue Facilitators: A Pedagogical Model and Illustrative Example,” describes a graduate training course in education. Zúñiga, Kachwaha, DeJong, and Pacheco provide an in-depth case study of co-facilitation to illustrate their core training method of critically reflective practice. Finally, Wong(Lau), Landrum-Brown, and Walker, in “(Re)Training Ourselves: Professionals Who Facilitate Intergroup Dialogue,” write in first-person narrative about the tacit theoretical and practical knowledge that faculty and practitioners in social justice-related disciplines bring to intergroup dialogue work, as well as the distinctive challenges these same professionals face when conducting intergroup dialogues in a classroom setting.

Section II includes facilitation training for contexts that have adapted intergroup dialogue pedagogy to wider campus and community settings. “Training Students to Change Their Own Campus Culture Through Sustained Dialogue,” by Parker, Nemeroff, and Kelleher, focuses on training student moderators for a student-initiated and student-run deliberative dialogue program on college campuses. Knauer’s “Democracy Lab: Online Facilitation Training for Dialogic Teaching and Learning” speaks to a unique program of online deliberation and self-facilitation training that connects classroom experiences with community deliberation. Chapter 9, “Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation for Youth Empowerment and Community Change,” by Fisher and Checkoway, emphasizes a community adaptation of intergroup dialogue where undergraduate facilitators act as community organizers working with youth to break down barriers created by residential segregation. Spencer, Martineau, and Warren’s “Extending Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation to Multicultural Social Work Practice” describes their adaptation of intergroup dialogue facilitation training in graduate-level social work education for clinical, community-based, and policy settings.

The final section of the book presents lessons from research studies highlighting learning through the experiences of facilitators. For many facilitators, especially undergraduate students, intergroup dialogue facilitation is perhaps one of the few opportunities they have had to exercise leadership in a classroom for a sustained period of time, to work across difference intensively, and to learn with fellow facilitators. In “Identity Matters: Facilitators’ Struggles and Empowered Use of Social Identities in Intergroup Dialogue,”
Maxwell, Chesler, and Nagda examine the role of social identities at the intersection of intergroup dialogue facilitation and implications for consultative support. In “Not for Others, but With Others for All of Us: Weaving Relationships, Co-Creating Spaces of Justice,” Nagda, Timbang, Fulmer, and Tran combine poetry, prose, and narrative to understand how facilitators conceive of being in alliance and how they deepen both their co-facilitation relationship and their facilitation practice. Finally, Vasques-Scalera’s “Changing Facilitators, Facilitating Change: The Lives of Intergroup Dialogue Facilitators Post-College” discusses the impact of facilitation on facilitators’ postgraduate lives and considers training implications that can sustain them long-term.

Intergroup dialogue facilitation can be a transformative, democratic approach to teaching and learning about social identities, social inequalities, and social change. For former participants, becoming an intergroup dialogue facilitator provides one pathway for building on their learning in intergroup dialogues and for exercising their passion and commitments for social justice. Themselves committed to lifelong learning, intergroup dialogue facilitators—undergraduate students, graduate students, staff, faculty, and/or community members—foster learning for others that necessarily involves support and challenge, safety and discomfort, triumphs and tribulations. Facilitating intergroup dialogues is a form of learning that goes beyond the dichotomies of learner–student and educator–teacher, self–other, privileged–oppressed to the hopeful and integrative possibilities of alliances where we are interconnected in learning, cognizant of the personal and social impact of structured inequalities, courageous in pushing the boundaries of relating across differences, and regenerative in pursuit of justice.

References
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FACILITATING INTERGROUP DIALOGUES


