

Thinking & Learning

Conference



BRUCE WELLMAN

Monday 25 May

**Talking to Learn: Structuring Engaging
Classroom Conversations to Support
Student Learning**

Session 3

MELBOURNE

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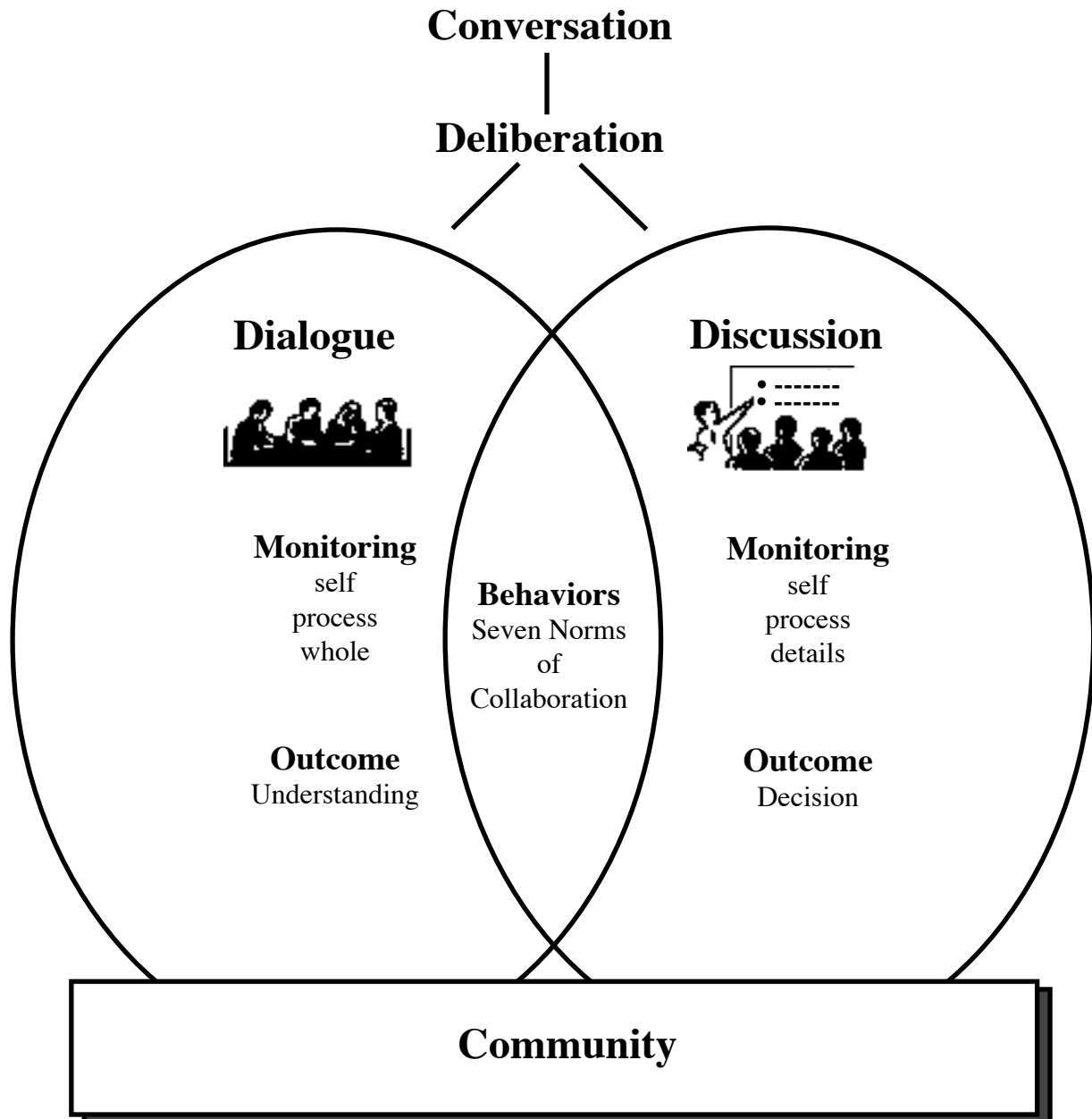
Talking to Learn

Structuring Engaging Classroom Conversations to Support Student Learning



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Ways of Talking



Ways of Talking

“In order to have a conversation with someone you must reveal yourself.”

--- James Baldwin

Communities are born and nurtured in webs of conversation. What we talk about in our schools and how we talk about those things says much about who we are, who we think we are and who we wish to be, both in the moment and in the collective future that we are creating for ourselves as colleagues and for the students we serve.

To develop shared understanding and be ready to take collective action, working groups need knowledge and skill in two ways of talking. One way of talking, dialogue, leads to collective meaning making and the development of shared understanding. The other way of talking, discussion, leads to decisions that stay made.

Dialogue honors the social/emotional brain, building a sense of connection, belonging and safety. As a shape for conversations, it connects us to our underlying motivations and mental models. This way of talking forms a foundation for coherent sustained effort and community building. In dialogue we hear phrases like “An assumption I have is...” and, “I’d be curious to hear what other people are thinking about this issue.”

Discussion in its more skillful form requires conversations infused with sustained critical thinking, careful consideration of options and respect for conflicting points of view. This way of talking leads to decision making that serves the group’s and school’s vision, values and goals. In a discussion we hear phrases like “We need to define the problem we are solving before jumping to solutions.” and, “I’d like to see the data that these assumptions are based on before we go much further.”

Conversation and Deliberation

When groups come together they “converge” and “converse”. Drawing from these words’ respective Latin roots means that group members “turn together” and “associate with one another”. Conversation is informal talking in which participants share information, anecdotes and opinions to learn from one another or simply enjoy each other’s company. When the conversation takes on an organized purpose to either deepen understanding or make a decision, a group that understands that there are two ways of talking acknowledges this point of deliberation and consciously chooses to engage in either dialogue or discussion. Deliberation in its Latin root, *deliberare*, means to weigh as in evaluate, assess or ponder.

Group members only have this choice point available to them when they have roadmaps for ways of talking and consciousness about group processes and group purposes. A significant part of this

awareness is recognizing that culturally embedded patterns shape behaviors – patterns from the greater surrounding culture and patterns from organizational and group culture. Many groups default into the western cultural habit of polarized discussion and debate. Our media-saturated world bombards us with arguments framed by commentators as point-counterpoint, pro and con, left versus right and other polarities. These models transfer to conversations in working groups; they then frame how participants listen to others and how and when participants speak. If group members are not careful, they listen not to understand but in order to hear gaps in the logic of other speakers or they interrupt to make a point, whether or not the current speaker is finished. Conversations then break down into verbal combat with winners and losers.

All too often, valued colleagues become conscientious objectors, choosing not to participate in the fray. The group then loses perspective and potential alternative viewpoints. The loudest and most persistent voices become the policy makers, and in the worst cases, the process sows the seeds of passive noncompliance or sabotage in those who feel excluded or devalued.

When groups understand that they have more than one way of talking available to them, they can then consciously choose whether to pursue the path of dialogue or follow the path of discussion. Most important issues require explorations along both pathways. Many sensitive issues, especially those with high stakes attached for the participants, may call for separate sessions in which the dialogue and discussion are separated in time and sometimes space. One useful facilitation technique is to explicitly mark agenda items as either dialogue or discussion and offer language models to further mark the distinctions between the two forms of discourse.

As group members become more sophisticated with the ways of talking, the pathways become more malleable. For example, during a dialogue, a group member senses an emerging consensus on an issue. He or she then inquires if this is so and frames a proposal to move the item to a decision. In another case, during a discussion, emotions rise and the details become muddled. Someone then proposes that the group switch to a dialogue format for a set period of time to explore the feelings and underlying issues that are present.

The Path of Dialogue

Dialogue is a reflective learning process in which group members seek to understand each other's viewpoints and deeply held assumptions. The work dialogue comes from the Greek *dialogos*. *Dia* means "through" and *logos* means "the word". In this "meaning-making through words," group members inquire into their own and others' beliefs, values, and mental models to better understand how things work in their world. In dialogue listening is as important as speaking. For skilled group members, much of the work is done internally.

Physicist and philosopher David Bohm described dialogue as process of surfacing and altering the "tacit infrastructure of thought." As a quantum physicist, Bohm draws an analogy between dialogue and superconductivity. Electrons cooled to extremely low temperatures dramatically change their behavior, operating more as a coherent whole and less as separate parts. In supercool environments, electrons flow around barriers and each other without resistance, creating very high energy. The same electrons

radically change behavior in a new environment. At higher temperatures they operate as separate entities with random movement and loss of momentum.

Dialogue creates an emotional and cognitive safety zone in which ideas flow for examination without judgment. While many of the capabilities and tools of dialogue and skilled discussion are the same, their core intentions are quite different and require different personal and collective monitoring processes.

Monitoring Dialogue

Mindful group members pay attention to three essential elements during productive dialogue. They monitor themselves, fidelity to the process of dialogue and maintain awareness of the new whole that is emerging from and within the group.

Self

Dialogue is first and foremost a listening practice. When we “listen to our listening” we notice whether or not we are internally debating with the speaker, reviewing our mental catalogue of related information and personal anecdotes, or composing a response. Noticing these common internal processes allows us to switch them off so that we can hear others without judging.

Dialogue requires choice making. Typical choices include how and when to talk ---- Do we paraphrase prior comments as a check for understanding and or synthesis? Do we inquire into the ideas and assumptions of others? Or, do we put a new idea or perspective on the table to widen the frame?

Suspension is an essential internal skill in dialogue. To suspend judgment, group members set aside for a time their perceptions, feelings impulses and carefully monitor their internal experience. Points of personal conflict can easily emerge when we feel that others are not hearing us or that they are distorting our point of view. Points of conflict also surface when our own values conflict with those of a speaker. These areas of discomfort influence our listening and our responses, which in turn influence the thoughts and behaviors of other group members.

Peter Senge notes that suspension also involves developing awareness of our own assumptions and purposely hanging them from the ceiling – suspending them in front of the group so that all can examine them. These assumptions are beliefs – often unexamined—of why we think things work as they do. Our assumptions drive our perceptions, simultaneously opening and blinding us to possibilities in the world around us.

Process

Dialogue as a process requires focusing on the goal of developing shared understanding. In our action-oriented work environments this is often countercultural. Yet, in every group with which we’ve worked participants can all recite examples of decisions that were poorly conceived, poorly communicated, simply ignored or in the worst cases violated by many organizational members without consequence. At the root of all of these stories were group processes that were not thought out, often hurried and inappropriately facilitated. The rush to action pushed unclear decision-making processes and timelines onto the group without sufficient attention to developing shared understandings of both problems and solutions.

By going slow and honoring the flow of dialogue, groups can often go fast when they get to the choice points within decision-making. When the assumptions and the implications of those assumptions have been explored during dialogue, group members don't second-guess the motives of others during discussions.

Meetings should be safe but not necessarily comfortable. When a group confuses safety with comfort, it sacrifices productive tension for the ease of conviviality. Humor and banter can be avoidance strategies as much as they can be social lubricants. A lack of comfort with discomfort weakens dialogue and undermines the learning possibilities in that moment.

Whole

Thought is both a personal and collective process. We influence and are influenced in turn by others. During dialogue, the line between self and others blurs when we open ourselves to the possibilities within the communal thought space. This created whole is in itself a goal of dialogue. Communities move forward together. Collective understanding leads to shared goals and shared practices that tap the power of cumulative effect for student learning and for the adult learning community.

The whole is always greater than the sum of the individual parts. In many ways it is both process and product simultaneously. By learning to observe the processes, patterns and results that emerge from our dialogues we can more consciously participate and more consciously contribute to the whole of which we are a part.

Understanding as the Outcome

Well-crafted dialogue leads to understanding. This is the foundation for conflict resolution, consensus and professional community. Decisions that don't stay made are often the result of group members feeling left out and or having their ideas discounted by the group. Dialogue gives voice to all parties and all viewpoints.

Misunderstanding lies beneath most intra and intergroup conflict. Dialogue illuminates and clarifies misunderstandings when the underlying values and beliefs surface for examination. Often there is alignment at this level. It is at the solution level that opinions differ. Working from a foundation of shared understanding, group members can more easily and rationally resolve differences, generate options, and make wise choices when they move to the discussion side of the journey.

The Path of Discussion

Discussion in its Latin root *discutere* means to shake apart. It focuses on the parts and their relationships to one another – the causes, the effects and the ripple effects of proposed actions and solutions. In its most ineffective forms, discussion takes the form of serial sharing and serial advocacy without much group member inquiry into the thinking and proposals of others. Participants attempt to reach decisions through a variety of voting and consensus techniques. When discussion is unskilled and dialogue is absent, decisions are often low quality, represent the opinions of the most vocal members or leader, lack group commitment, and do not stay made.

Three elements shape skilled discussions: (a) clarity about decision-making processes and authority, (b) knowledge of the boundaries surrounding the topics open to the group's decision-making authority, and (c) standards for orderly decision-making meetings. (See Section 3 for details.) Most meetings are, in fact, structured discussions.

Monitoring Discussion

Mindful group members pay attention to three essential elements during productive discussion. They monitor themselves, fidelity to the processes of skilled discussion and the details of the problem-solving, planning and decision-making processes with which they are engaged.

Self

Productive discussions require group members with emotional and mental flexibility. When our outcome is to influence the thinking of others and we give up models of “winning and losing”, we are more able to notice our thoughts and actions and the affects of those thoughts and actions on others.

Mentally, this requires taking a balcony view. This perceptual position is neither *egocentric* (I am intensely aware of my thoughts, feelings and intentions and know my own boundaries) nor *allocentric* (I am aware of how something looks, feels, and sounds from the point of view of another). The balcony view is a third perceptual position, a *macrocentric* perspective, in which with compassion and detachment we try to understand the nature of the situation the group is in at the moment. It is with this view, looking down upon the group, that we gain the most knowledge about our group, the group's interactions and ourselves.

From the balcony we can make the most strategic choices about how and when to participate. Should I advocate or should I inquire? At what points should I press? When should I probe for detail or let go? How might I phrase an idea for greatest influence? These are the same internal skills that teachers employ when they “monitor and adjust” in their classrooms.

Process

Skilled discussion as a process requires mindfulness about focusing on one topic and applying one process tool at a time. When topics and processes blur group members lose focus. To maintain focus requires clear structure, purposeful facilitation, impulse control on the part of individual group members and recovery strategies if the group strays off course.

Effective group members share responsibility with the facilitator for maintaining the flow of the discussion, for encouraging other group members to share knowledge and ideas, and listening for and surfacing points of confusion or murkiness.

When working groups stray from skilled discussion, they may move to an unskilled form of debate. This occurs when group members overshoot useful advocacy of ideas and proposals and start listening for and challenging the fallacies in the arguments of others. The Latin origins of the word debate, *battuere* means to fight or beat down. When meetings descend to the level of street debate, not academic debate, we focus on beating down the ideas of others. Scoring points becomes the goal and winning comes from intimidation and intonation as much or more than from logic or reason.

Details

While successful dialogue requires attention to the whole, successful discussion focuses on the details, both in isolation and in their interactions. The path of discussion is also the path of decision. As such, groups need to identify any constraints under which they might be working such as, timelines, deadlines, budgets, product standards, the negotiable items, the nonnegotiable item, task assignments and most importantly who they are in the decision-making process.

Groups skilled in discussion employ many intentional cognitive skills. There is no set sequence for these efforts. The task before the group determines the necessary intellectual toolkit.

Groups need tools for:

- Generating ideas, including a repertoire of brainstorming and creative thinking strategies and protocols.
- Organizing ideas, including both conceptual and graphic tools.
- Analyzing ideas, including a variety of tools for surfacing assumptions and clarifying particulars.
- Deciding among alternatives, including clarification of decision-making roles and processes.

Decision as the Outcome

Decision, in its Latin root *decidere* means to cut off or determine. In practice this means to cut off some choices. The purpose of discussion is to eliminate some ideas from a field of possibilities and have the stronger ideas prevail. Groups must learn to separate people from ideas in order for this to work effectively. If ideas are “owned” by individuals, then to cut the idea away is the same as cutting the person away. Ideas once stated should belong to the group, not to individuals. In this way they can be shaped, modified, and discarded to serve the group’s greater purposes.

Professional Community

Professional community is both a cause and an effect of the two ways of talking. As a cause being in community provides the motivation and vision of ways of interacting and working together. As an effect, strong professional community results from both what is talked about and how people talk. Such talk requires courage, confidence in self and others and skillfulness in applying the maps and tools for developing shared understanding and strategic decision-making practices.

Promoting A Spirit of Inquiry

“We can make our world significant by the courage of our questions and the depth of our answers.”

----Carl Sagan

High functioning groups and group members infuse their work with a spirit of inquiry. Inquiry is central to professional communities that produce stable gains in student learning. Learning at its roots is a questioning process and successful collaboration embraces the patterns and practices of inquiry. Inquiry presumes openness to and an investment in the ideas of others. The physicist, David Bohm, has noted that thought is “largely a collective phenomenon.” These thoughts like electrons are shaped by their interactions with others. (Senge, 1990).

To inquire is to ask, be curious, invite the transmission of thoughts or feelings, confer, consult, wonder, request, examine and investigate ideas. Richard Elmore (2000) notes that “...the knowledge we need to solve problems (in schools) often doesn’t reside close at hand; it has to be found through active inquiry and analysis.” Such interactions are not always the norm in schools. Collaborative work is fraught with the tensions and the fears of being judged or of being perceived as one who might be judging others.

Teaching as a private practice has a deep cultural history. Breaking and reshaping the patterns within a culture requires both skill and commitment to the ongoing process of building community. Teaching is in many ways a telling profession. Teachers “tell” students what they need to know and “tell” students how to do the things they need to learn how to do. This telling behavior often carries over into patterns of adult communication as we “tell” each other our stories, thoughts and opinions or wait for our turn to do so. This culture of advocacy defines much of the interaction in adult groups. We are often caught up in the tyranny of “OR” (Collins & Porras, 1997). Things must be either right or wrong, true or false, yes or no.

Dichotomous thinking leads to dichotomous questions, which in turn polarize group members. The art of asking invitational questions that avoid these dichotomies is the heart of collaborative inquiry. Invitational questions form connections between people and ideas and connections between ideas and other ideas.

All group work is about relationships. Relationships shape and define patterns of discourse. These relationships are shaped by who initiates a query and the form of that query. Who responds and how they respond is a direct result of the ways in which a topic is initiated. Form, function and outcome are linked within an emotional and social system that when handled with care opens and expands thought and creates new possibilities.

The patterns of inquiry built with the tools of the seven norms lead to deeper understanding and to

better-informed action. These understandings and actions can be both internal for participants and external in their behaviors. As we grapple with ideas and perspectives we come to know others and ourselves more deeply. To do so requires us to reflect on our inner and outer reactions to data, information and events. Purposeful inquiry helps us to interpret personal and collective values and the implications of these as we live them out in our organizations. Skillful inquiry also helps us to clarify our priorities for a topic on the table. Where does this issue fit within the bigger picture? In what ways is this topic important and in what ways might this topic be a distraction?

In the end, what we talk about and how we talk to one another is a way of acting out beliefs about the world and the way it works, beliefs about the group and its purposes and beliefs about our personal place in both arenas. What we talk about and how we talk also defines who we are and ultimately who we become. By promoting a spirit of inquiry within our groups we make an investment in our personal and collective futures.

The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work

Pausing: Pausing before responding or asking a question allows time for thinking and enhances dialogue, discussion and decision-making.

Paraphrasing: Using a paraphrase starter that is comfortable for you: “So...” or “As you are...” or “You’re thinking...” and following the starter with a paraphrase assists members of the group to hear and understand each other as they formulate decisions.

Posing questions: The intentions of posing questions are to explore and specify thinking. Questions may be posed to explore perceptions, assumptions and interpretations and to invite others to inquire into their own thinking. For example, "What might be some outcomes we are envisioning?" Use focusing questions such as, "Which students specifically?" or "What might be an example of that?" to increase the clarity and precision of group members' thinking. Inquire into the ideas of others before advocating for one's own idea.

Putting ideas on the table: Ideas are the heart of a meaningful dialogue. Label the intention of your comments. For example, you might say, “Here is one idea...” or “One thought I have is...” or “Here is a possible approach...”.

Providing data: Providing data, both qualitative and quantitative, in a variety of forms supports group members in constructing shared understanding from their work. Data have no meaning beyond that which we make of them; shared meaning develops from collaboratively exploring, analyzing and interpreting data.

Paying attention to self and others: Meaningful dialogue is facilitated when each group member is conscious of self and of others and is aware of not only what she/he is saying, but also how it is said and how others are responding. This includes paying attention to learning style when planning for, facilitating and participating in group meetings. Responding to others in their own language forms is one manifestation of this norm.

Presuming positive intentions: Assuming that others' intentions are positive promotes and facilitates meaningful dialogue and eliminates unintentional put-downs. Using positive intentions in your speech is one manifestation of this norm.

Putting Inquiry First

Thinking is a biochemical processes that engages the molecules of emotion and the molecules of cognition. We are wired to detect threat in the communications of others. Reducing the potential for threat in our questions means that how we inquire is as important as the topic of our inquiry. To keep others open and thinking we need to pay attention to several important features in our communication.

Attending Fully

The invitation to think begins with full attention to others in the group signalling that our full presence is available for this conversation and that we intend no harm. This physical message meshes with several important verbal elements that form an invitation to think together and think about the ideas being explored.

Approachable Voice

Using an approachable voice is the first element of the invitation. This voice is well modulated and tends to rise at the end of a statement, summary or question (Grinder 1997). This tonal package wraps around our questions and comments indicating the intention to invite and explore thinking and not to interrogate or challenge.

Plural Forms

Two important syntactical choices invite colleagues to think with us and increase the options and possibilities for thinking. The first is to use plural forms; *observations* instead of *observation*, *options* instead of *option*. The use of plural forms sets aside the need for evaluation and the sorting of ideas. Often group members need to hear their ideas aloud before they know which are most central to the issues before the group.

Exploratory Language

The second syntactical element is the use of exploratory phrasing in statements, paraphrases and questions. Words like *some*, *might*, *seems*, *possible*, and *hunches* widen the potential range of responses and reduce the need of confidence and surety. Words like *could* and *why* may decrease the confidence of listeners by seeming to ask for premature commitment or a need to defend ideas and actions that are not yet fully developed.

Nondichotomous Questions

Invitational and mediational facilitators and group members frame their questions using the elements listed above. In addition, they frame their questions by using open-ended, nondichotomous forms. These are questions that cannot be answered yes or no. For example, instead of asking a group, “Did anyone notice anything unusual in this data set?” they ask, “What are some interesting our unusual things that you noticed in this data set?” By eliminating dichotomous stems such as, “Can you,” “Did you,” “Will you,” or “Have you,” facilitators and skilled group members invite productive thinking promote a spirit of inquiry within the group.

Adapted with permission from: B. Wellman & L. Lipton, (2004). *Data-Driven Dialogue: A Facilitator's Guide to Collaborative Inquiry*. Charlotte, VT: MiraVia LLC.

INVITATIONAL INQUIRY

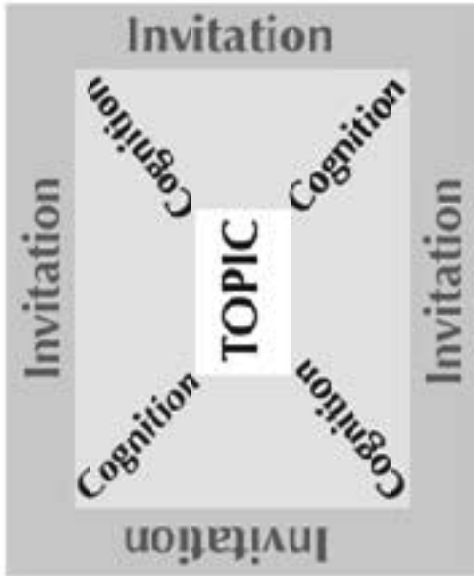
INVITATION	COGNITION	TOPIC
How might ...	Predict	Outcomes
What would ...	Recall	Curriculum
What are some ...	Summarize	Instructional strategies
What might be some...	Identify	Student readiness
In what ways ...	Describe	Student behavior
How might you ...	Compare	Student work
What seem(s) ...	Contrast	Student engagement
Given your ...	Prioritize	Performance standards
Based on ...	Interpret	Assessment results
Reflecting on ...	Infer	Expectations
As you ...	Conclude	Lesson
	Generalize	Materials
	Connect	Groups
	Apply	Classroom climate
	Evaluate	Procedures

EXAMPLES

What are some ways you are comparing this student's work to the performance standards?
 (Invitation) (Cognition) (Topic)

Recalling your concerns, how might you address this student's behavior?
 (Cognition) (Invitation) (Topic)

As you consider these assessment results what seem to be priorities for next steps?
 (Invitation) (Topic) (Invitation) (Cognition)



The Elements of the Invitations

- Attending Fully
- Approachable Voice
- Plural Forms
- Exploratory Language
- Non-dichotomous Forms
- Positive Presuppositions

Syntactical Substitutions

- the—some
- could—might
- is—seems
- why—what

Sample Stems

Given your knowledge of...
 Based on your experience with...
 Reflecting on...
 As you consider...

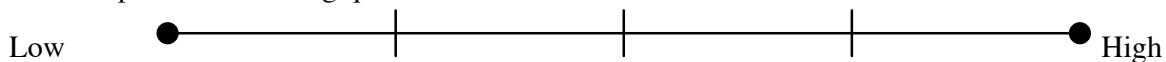
Norms Inventory

Rating the Consistency of My Personal Behavior In a Specific Group of Which I am a Member

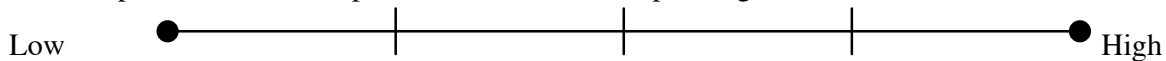
Place a mark on each scale, to reflect your perception of your personal behavior in a group of which you are a member.

1. Pausing

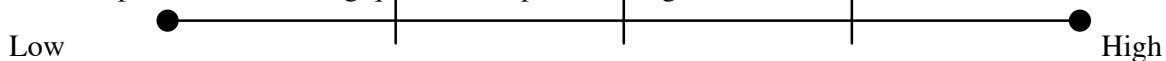
A. I pause after asking questions.



B. I pause after others speak to reflect before responding.

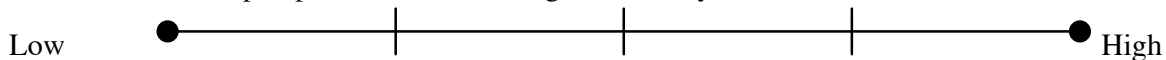


C. I pause before asking questions to permit thoughtful construction.

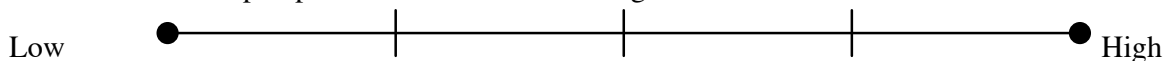


2. Paraphrasing

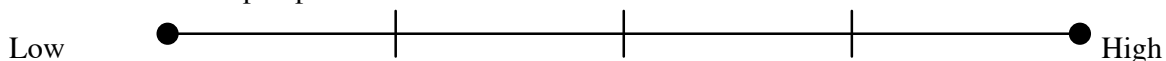
A. I listen and paraphrase to acknowledge and clarify.



B. I listen and paraphrase to summarize and organize.

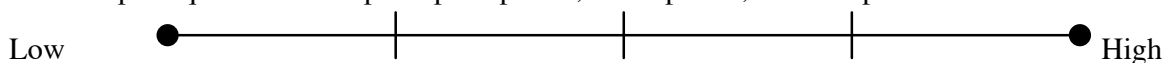


C. I listen and paraphrase to shift levels of abstraction.

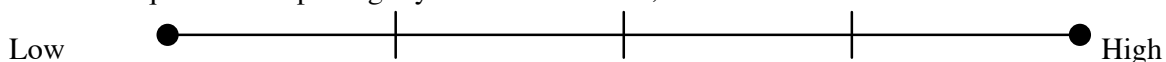


3. Posing Questions

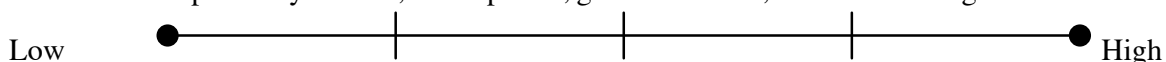
A. I pose questions to explore perceptions, assumptions, and interpretations.



B. I inquire before putting my ideas on the table, or before I advocate

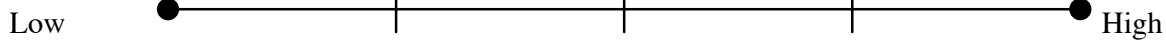


C. I seek specificity of data, assumptions, generalizations, and the meaning of words.

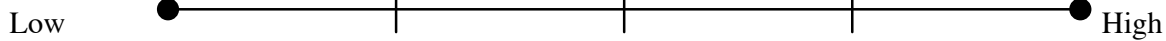


4. Putting Ideas on the Table and Pulling Them Off

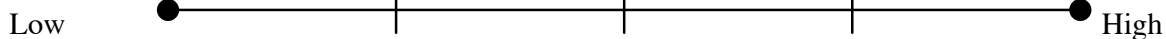
A. I state the intentions of my communications.



B. I provide relevant facts, ideas, opinions, and inferences.

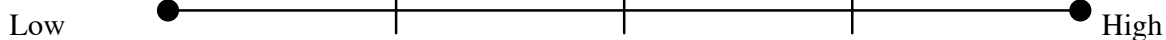


C. I retract or announce modification of previously offered ideas, opinions, and points of view.

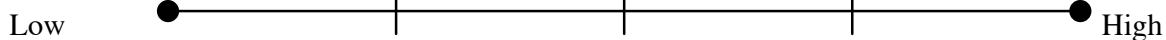


5. Providing Data to Structure Conversations

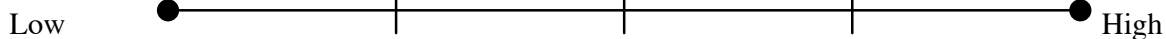
A. I present specific, measurable, and observable data.



B. I present data without judgments, opinions, or inferences.

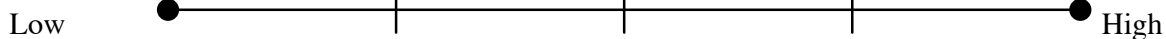


C. I explore the implications and consequences of proposals and plans.

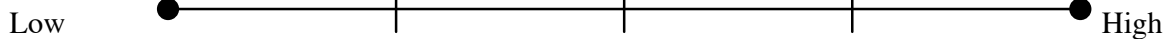


6. Paying Attention to Self and Others

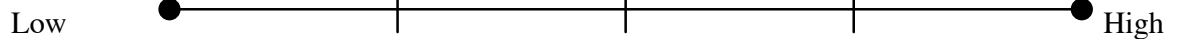
A. I balance participation and open opportunities for others to contribute and respond.



B. I restrain my impulses to respond, react, or rebut at inappropriate times & in ineffective ways.

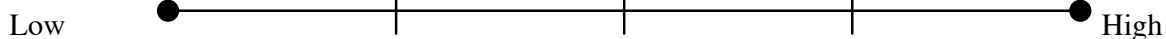


C. I maintain awareness of the group's task, processes, and development.

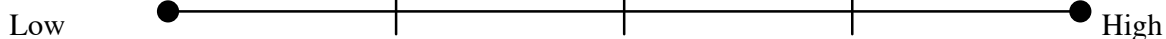


7. Presuming Positive Intentions

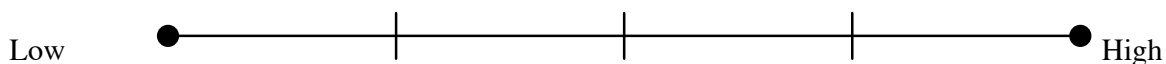
A. I communicate respectfully, whether I agree or disagree.



B. I embed positive presuppositions in my paraphrases, comments, and summaries.



C. I embed positive presuppositions when I inquire or probe for specificity.



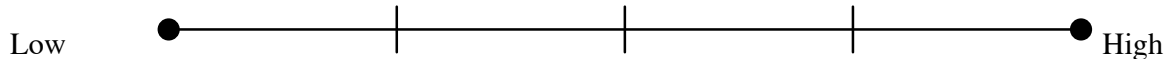
Norms Inventory

Rating Our Perceptions of Our Group

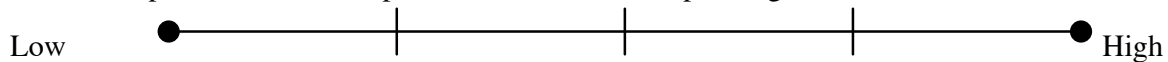
Place a mark on each scale, to reflect your perception of your personal behavior in a group of which you are a member.

1. Pausing

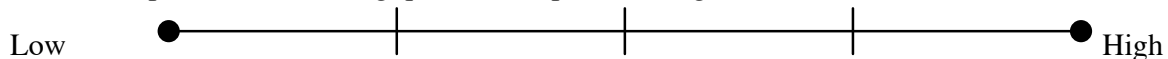
A. We pause after asking questions.



B. We pause after others speak to reflect before responding.

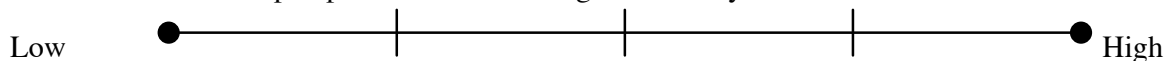


C. We pause before asking questions to permit thoughtful construction.

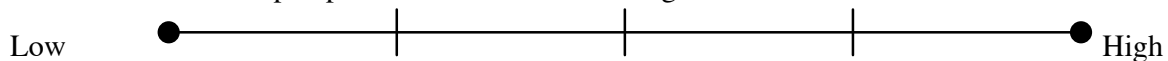


2. Paraphrasing

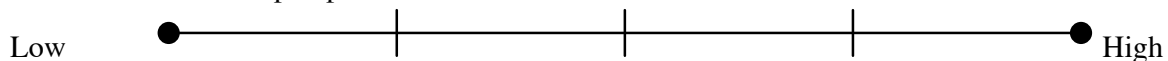
A. We listen and paraphrase to acknowledge and clarify.



B. We listen and paraphrase to summarize and organize.

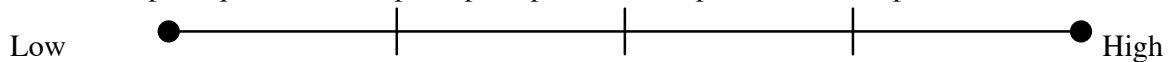


C. We listen and paraphrase to shift levels of abstraction.

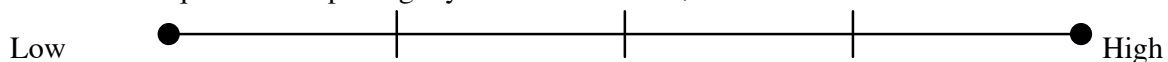


3. Posing Questions

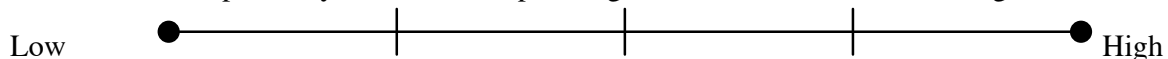
A. We pose questions to explore perceptions, assumptions, and interpretations.



B. We inquire before putting my ideas on the table, or before we advocate

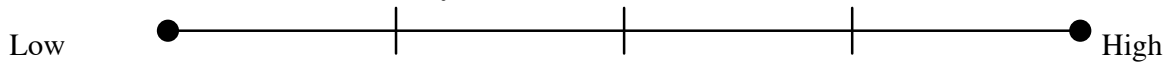


C. We seek specificity of data, assumptions, generalizations, and the meaning of words.

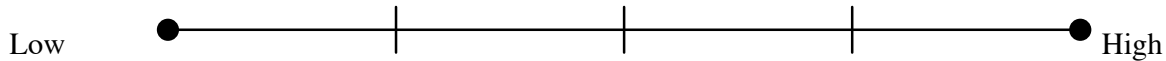


4. Putting Ideas on the Table and Pulling Them Off

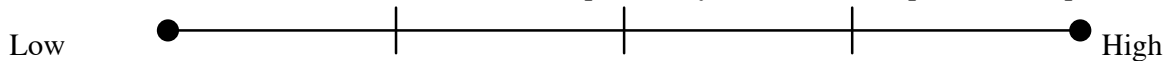
A. We state the intentions of my communications.



B. We provide relevant facts, ideas, opinions, and inferences.

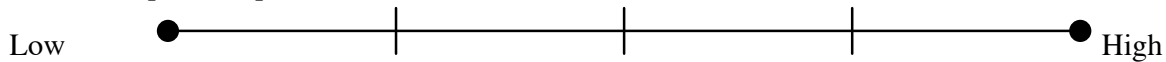


C. We retract or announce modification of previously offered ideas, opinions, and points of view.

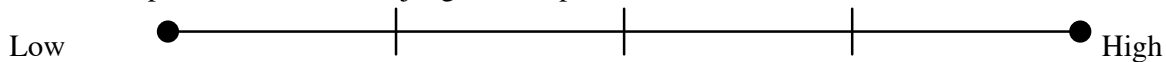


5. Providing Data to Structure Conversations

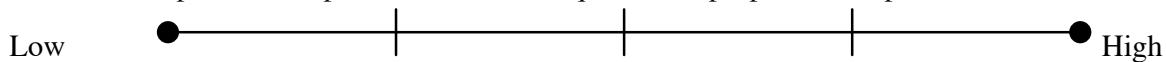
A. We present specific, measurable, and observable data.



B. We present data without judgments, opinions, or inferences.

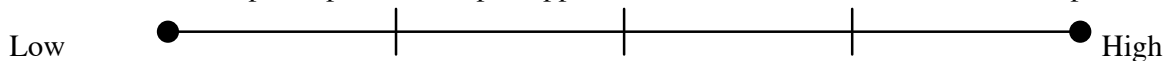


C. We explore the implications and consequences of proposals and plans.

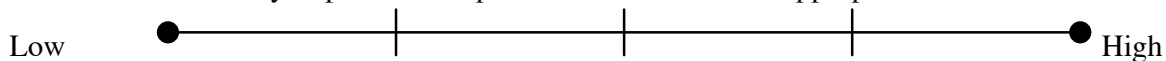


6. Paying Attention to Self and Others

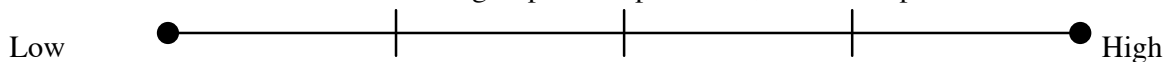
A. We balance participation and open opportunities for others to contribute and respond.



B. We restrain my impulses to respond, react, or rebut at inappropriate times & in ineffective ways.

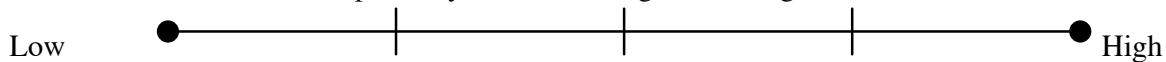


C. We maintain awareness of the group's task, processes, and development.

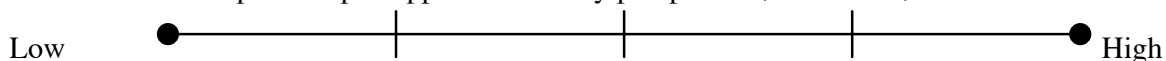


7. Presuming Positive Intentions

A. We communicate respectfully, whether we agree or disagree.



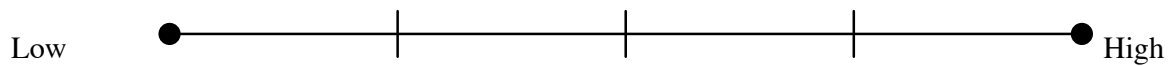
B. We embed positive presuppositions in my paraphrases, comments, and summaries.



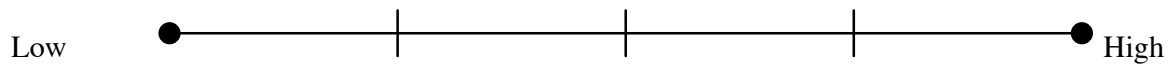
C. We embed positive presuppositions when we inquire or probe for specificity.

Personal Seven Norms Assessment

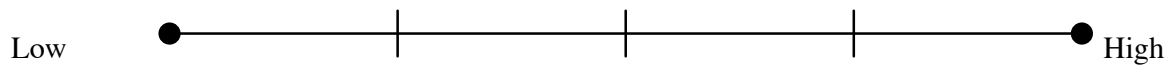
1. Pausing to allow time for thought



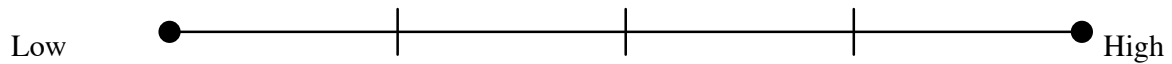
2. Paraphrasing within a pattern of pause - paraphrase - inquire



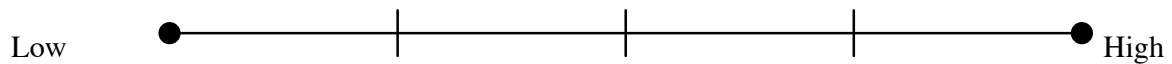
3. Posing questions to reveal and extend thinking



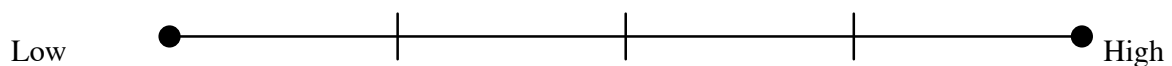
4. Putting ideas on the table



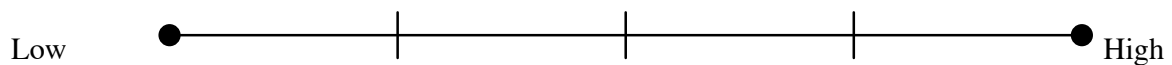
5. Providing data to structure conversations



6. Paying attention to self and to monitor our ways of working

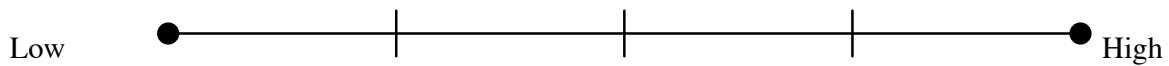


7. Presuming positive intentions to support nonjudgmental atmosphere

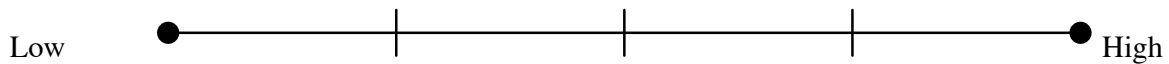


Group Seven Norms Assessment

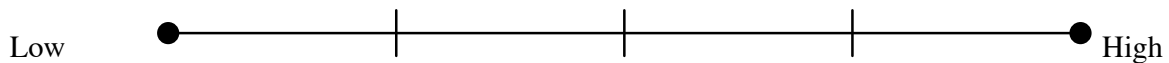
1. Pausing to allow time for thought



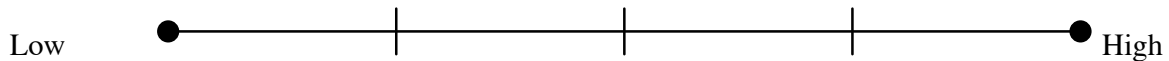
2. Paraphrasing within a pattern of pause - paraphrase - inquire



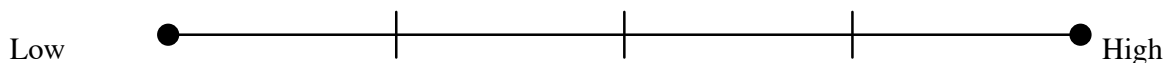
3. Posing questions to reveal and extend thinking



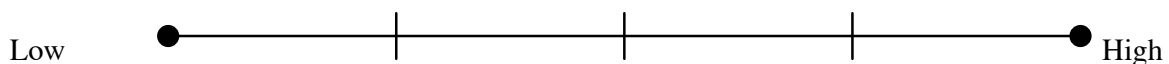
4. Putting ideas on the table



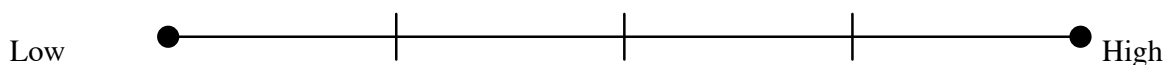
5. Providing data to structure conversations



6. Paying attention to self and to monitor our ways of working



7. Presuming positive intentions to support nonjudgmental atmosphere



Mediational facilitators pay attention to:

Paraphrasing

Content

- Verbal calibration
- Physical referencing
 - characters in space
 - concepts in space
 - sequence of events
 - sequence of ideas
 - time orientation

Empathy

- Physical reflection
- Voice tone
- Positive presuppositions

Logical Level

- Acknowledge/clarify
- Summarize/organize
- Shift level of abstraction

Stems

- “You’re feeling...”
- “In other words...”
- “You’re saying that...”
- “You’re hoping...”
- “So, what you want is...”

Filters

- Acuity: nonverbal - verbal
- Choosing: matching - stretching
- Responding: nonverbal - verbal



Questioning

Content

- Inquiring for:
 - details
 - values
 - beliefs
 - sources
 - generalizability

Invitation

- Attending fully
- Approachable voice
- Plural forms
- Exploratory language
- Positive presuppositions
- Nondichotomous questions

Cognitive Operations

- Analyze
- Synthesize
- Compare
- Contrast
- Evaluate

Three Types of Paraphrasing

Acknowledge/Clarify a brief statement in the listener's own words.	Summarize/Organize a statement that offers themes or containers	Shift level of abstraction a statement that shifts the conversation to a higher or lower level of abstraction
Metaphorically: a mirror	Metaphorically: baskets /boxes	Metaphorically: elevator/ escalator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You're concerned about.... • You would like to see.... • You're feeling badly about.... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You seem to have two goals here: one is about ____ and the other is about _____. • We seem to be struggling with three themes: where to ____, how to _____, and who should_____. • On the one hand we _____ and on the other we_____. 	Shifting up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • value • belief • goal • assumption • concept • category • intention Shifting down: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • example • nonexample • strategy • choice • action • option

Inquiry

Invite others to make their thinking visible --creating psychological safety

- **Attend fully**- by being physically and emotionally present with others.
- **Use an approachable voice** - tonal quality signals our intention to inquire not interrogate.
- **Use plural forms** - plurals open the questions, producing more than one possible appropriate answer.
- **Use exploratory language** - to qualify your questions and make them "safer" to answer. "What are some of ... How might you... What are your hunches about...?"
- **Use nondichotomous questions** - these are questions that cannot be answered "yes" or "no" or "true" or "false".
- **Use positive presuppositions** - these language forms assume capacity and positive intentions. "Given your knowledge of....", "As an experienced professional...."
- **Use a pattern of pausing, paraphrasing and inquiring or probing for specificity.**

Inquire for the elements of the advocacy template that the speaker has not yet illuminated.

- **Describe the focus of your advocacy.** "What are some of your assumptions about this issue?"
- **Describe your reasoning.** "Given your concern and knowledge of this issue, what are some of the observations and data that are influencing you?"
- **Describe your feelings.** "What are some of your feelings about this issue?"
- **Distinguish data from interpretation.** "Help us to understand some of your interpretation of the data?"
- **Reveal your perspective.** "What are some of the perspectives you are considering as you reflect on this issue?"
- **Frame the wider context that surrounds this issue.** "As you consider the bigger picture, what are some of the factors and possible ripple effects that might be involved?"
- **Give concrete examples.** "What are some examples that occur to you about how this might play out?"

Advocacy

Make your thinking and reasoning visible

Describe the focus of your advocacy. “An issue that is important to me is...” “My assumptions are...”

Describe your reasoning. “I came to this conclusion because...”

Describe your feelings. “I feel _____ about this.”

Distinguish data from interpretation. “This is the data I have as objectively as I can state it. Now here is what I think the data means.”

Reveal your perspective. “I’m seeing this from the viewpoint of _____ or _____ or _____.”

Frame the wider context that surrounds this issue. “Several groups would be affected by what I propose...”

Give concrete examples. “To get a clear picture, imagine that you are in school X...”

Test your assumptions and conclusions

Encourage others to explore your model, assumptions and data. “What do you think about what I just said? Do you see any flaws in my reasoning? What can you add?”

Reveal where you are least clear. “Here’s one area you might help me think through...”

Stay open. Encourage others to provide different views: “Do you see it differently?”

Search for distortions, deletions and generalizations. “In what I’ve presented, do you believe I might have overgeneralized, or left out data or reported data incorrectly?”

Adapted from Senge, P., et al. (1994). *The fifth discipline fieldbook*. New York: Doubleday.

From Inquiry to Advocacy

Signal your intention to shift from inquiring to advocating

Gesture, posture, voice qualities and silence have contextual meaning based on the setting and verbal message. Mark your intentions to transition from inquiry to advocacy with some of these forms of paralanguage. For example:

- **Shift your body.** To signal a shift in the direction of the conversational energy.
- **Break eye contact.** To momentarily break rapport.
- **Pause.** To "gently interrupt" the speaker and refocus attention.
- **Employ a frozen gesture.** To nonverbally hold the pause.
- **Use an approachable voice.** To maintain psychological safety.
- **Use transition stems.** To relate your new thought to the flow of the conversation.

Use transition stems

"Here is a related thought..."

"I hold it another way..."

"Hmmm, from another perspective..."

"An additional idea might be..."

"An assumption I'm exploring is..."

"Taking that one step further..."

Learning Partners

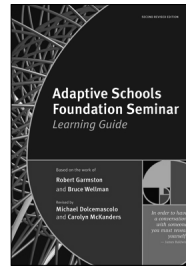
Make an appointment with 3 different people—one for each image. Be sure you each record the appointment on your page. Only make the appointment if there is an open slot at that spot on each of your forms.





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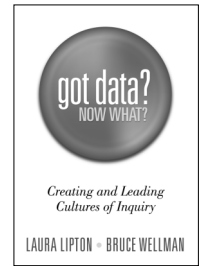
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	114007	How Teachers Can Turn Data into Action	\$27.95
	SOT3344	Got Data? Now What?	\$25.95
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Total (plus freight) \$			



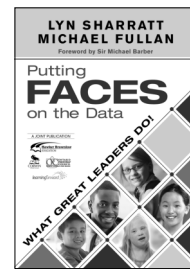
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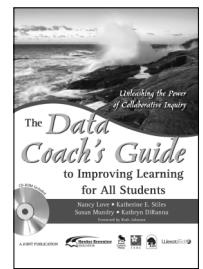
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