

Dialogue Facilitator

Trainee Manual

TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE PEER DIALOGUE
IN PHILOSOPHY AS A WAY OF LIFE COURSES

“What is the good life, and how can we live it?”



Introduction

Hello esteemed dialogue facilitators!

This manual is your one-stop shop for information and strategies you will need while planning and running dialogue groups as part of a “Philosophy as a Way of Life” course. Use it to follow along during your training, but also for reference throughout the semester. At the back of the manual are appendices full of examples and activities ready to be plugged straight into your lessons! Best of luck with this semester, and may the spirits of the Ancients be with you!

~ *The Mellon Initiative Team*

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The dialogue model we use is informed by our experiences running dialogue groups ourselves, and our team’s initial training by the Sustained Dialogue Institute in 2015 and 2016. Several components of our manual have been drawn from Sustained Dialogue materials, including:

- Some of the components of dialogue and comparison to discussions on page 4,
- Some ideas found in the setting norms section on page 6, the difference between strong and weak questions and some of the tips on page 9,
- Many of the debriefing questions on page 10,
- The explanation of active listening and its verbal and nonverbal components on page 11,
- Many of the explanations of tips for resolving conflicts on page 12,
- Some of the effective dialogue techniques in Appendix A,
- Some of the sample norms in Appendix B, some of the activities found in Appendix D,
- Some of the strong questions in Appendix E.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Sustained Dialogue for helping to get our program up and running and for the excellent materials on which we drew for aspects of our own materials.



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Philosophy as a Way of Life



Once upon a time, as Athens was reaching its Golden Age and several Chinese empires vied for control of Southeast Asia, **philosophy was at the center of cultural and political affairs**, and philosophers were treated like celebrities.

These philosophers gained acclaim and had tremendous influence on world events because they conceived of **philosophy as a means of improving oneself and one's community**.

Philosophy literally means “**love of wisdom,**” and wisdom is knowledge put into action. Philosophy’s goal was thus primarily therapeutic: to help one achieve **inner peace and freedom** by **focusing attention on what truly matters** and **recognizing oneself as part of a larger whole** that exceeds the individual. Because of this latter goal especially, philosophy was **always done in conversation** with other people, and typically with a view towards the reorganization of society at large.

“We are not conducting this inquiry in order to know what virtue is, but in order to become good, else there would be no advantage in studying it.”

~ Aristotle,
Nicomachean Ethics



*Watch your thoughts;
They become words.
Watch your words;
They become actions.
Watch your actions;
They become habits.
Watch your habits;
They become character.
Watch your character;
It becomes your destiny.*

Lao Tzu



To today’s reader, the goals of ancient philosophy might sound spiritual, and that’s because they were! Over time, more and more of the spiritual element of philosophy was taken up by world religions, and the academic discipline of **philosophy was often left with abstract theories detached from real world experience** and rigorous logical argumentation strategies **devoid of the love** that once was philosophy’s guiding force.

“Philosophy as a Way of Life” (PWOL), is a method of doing philosophy today that attempts to **revive the philosophical tradition of old**. In PWOL courses, the wisdom of the ancients is brought to bear on pressing issues of our current age. Students are encouraged to formulate their own visions of the good life, and to put this vision into action in their lives and their communities.

Just like in ancient times, dialogue with peers is an essential component of any PWOL course. **As dialogue facilitators, you have the responsibility and privilege of guiding your students along this path of self-improvement.**

Understanding Dialogue

In everyday life, a “dialogue” is any conversation in which **all participants share perspectives** on a question or idea and **listen carefully** enough to **empathize** with each other and **develop** their views.

In a good dialogue, participants will practice:

Appendix Check! (Page 15)
 The following pages describe the 7 elements of dialogue facilitation that we believe are most essential. For more techniques, see **Appendix A**.



In PWOL courses, dialogue typically takes the form of **weekly conversations** about one big question:

“What is a good life, and how can we live it?”

The goal of PWOL Dialogue is **NOT** to definitively answer this question. Just like everyday dialogue, the goals are to formulate, articulate, and re-assess one’s own beliefs about the question and understand and accept why others may think differently.

PWOL Dialogue vs. Traditional Discussion Sections

Traditional In-class Discussions	PWOL Dialogues
Purpose: Participants strive for mastery of course material .	Purpose: Participants strive to understand others’ perspectives and develop their own views .
Peer leader serves as discussion leader, actively directing the conversation with frequent intervention/correction and Q&A.	Peer leaders work as dialogue facilitators, creating and maintaining an environment in which productive dialogue can occur.
A level playing field is often tacitly assumed, and differences or inequalities within the group may be ignored .	Differences and inequalities within the group are sought out and highlighted to help achieve shared understanding.

Element #1: Building Community

Ensuring participants feel **close to** and **valued by** other members of their group in the first few weeks of dialogue is a key part of your role as a facilitator. By putting emphasis on creating community, PWOL dialogue allows large classes to have the **intimate, small-class feel** which, in turn, increases students engagement with the course. A sense of community is also key to fostering rich and fluid dialogue. When participants connect with the other members of their group and feel like **their voice matters**, they become more open to sharing their ideas, and they listen with an open mind to others.

Bring them closer:

Identify and create commonalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create inside jokes when something funny comes up in dialogue ● Encourage conversation about current events on campus
Encourage the sharing of personal experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plan warm-up activities that give insight into participants' personalities and life ● Ask students how their week is going
Plan engaging and fun activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Even do activities not related to philosophy ● Ask them for any suggestions
Encourage communication outside of class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make a social media sharing doc or a group chat ● Say hi whenever you see someone
Remember that you are a member and the leader of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Share about your life, even irrelevant things. This makes them feel like they know you and models that the space is safe for sharing. ● Take responsibility for creating community

Help them feel valued:

Create an identity for the dialogue group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Do something that is unique and special that no other dialogue group does ● Create a dialogue group name, funny group chat name or photo, or a shared dialogue playlist
Show them that you care about dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You can't expect your dialogue students to care if you don't show that you care ● Go the extra mile to make them feel valued
Ask for feedback and show that they are heard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide chances for anonymous feedback ● Go over any feedback they provided so that they know that their voice matters

Setting Group Norms

A great way to help build community is to set group norms. **Group norms** are mutually agreed-upon ground rules that are aimed at fostering a comfortable and respectful environment for productive dialogue. At your dialogue group’s first meeting, you should help participants collectively identify, evaluate, and agree on group norms that they would like to practice.

Steps to Establishing Norms:

1. Accept that it might be awkward.
 - The first session can sometimes be awkward, especially when setting norms, so **come ready to meet the awkwardness with energy and enthusiasm**, and know that **the better prepared you are, the less awkward it will be**.
2. Explain what a norm is and give an example.
3. Ask guiding questions to direct the conversation towards aspects of healthy dialogue that need to be addressed.
 - **Avoid the silent “brainstorming of norms.”** Nobody will know where to start.
 - Guiding questions and hypotheticals can eliminate awkwardness and direct the conversation towards good norms without you suggesting all the norms for them.
4. Encourage specificity over generality.
 - Norms are more effective when they are as **specific and concrete** as possible. Ask participants to define general terms (i.e. “confidentiality”, “respectful”) and/or to clarify their meaning through **specific examples of what it might look like**.
 - If they’re still stuck, suggest the most relevant norm from Appendix B.
5. Strive for unanimous agreement on each norm.
6. Include an opportunity to share anonymously.
 - Participants may be pressured by the social setting, so it is always good to present the **opportunity for norms to be suggested and evaluated anonymously** (Google Forms are great for this).
 - Some norms, such as the vulgar language norm, should be **voted on anonymously** (i.e. by putting heads down and raising hands).
7. Revisit norms the next week and emphasize that they are always up for revision.
 - If any norms are submitted anonymously between sessions, they should be addressed at the beginning of the next meeting.
 - After putting the norms into practice in a dialogue, **evaluate them as a group and make revisions as necessary**.

Appendix Check! (Page 16)

See **Appendix B** for a comprehensive list of strong guiding questions and sample group norms.

Element #2: Writing a Lesson Backwards

When you sit down to write your lesson plan for dialogue, begin with your goals for the session. Designing your dialogue backwards from the end to the beginning will help you create a focused session that's both cohesive and formative.

Create a Goal

1. Start from who they are.

What relevant background experiences or goals do they bring to the session? Check the course curriculum to see what they recently learned in class. Is there any philosophical concept that may be challenging upon further reflection or prompting?

2. Set a goal for who they will become.

What is one idea or question worth contemplating, considering from different perspectives, and gaining awareness on? What skills, knowledge, and/or achievements will your students gain? How can you relate these to the central question of PWOL dialogue: What is the good life and how can we live it?

Appendix Check! (Page 18)

See **Appendix C** for sample lesson plans with goals.

Work Backwards

1. Measuring how they meet this goal.

How will you and your students know they've reached this goal? Will they be able to clearly articulate their view of a concept? Discover an implication that they have never considered? Explain opposing views charitably and accurately?

2. Determining what they will need from you.

What sort of experiences or activities will put students in the best position to reach the session's goal? What kind of activity, prompt, or question will help guide them to accomplishing the meeting's goal? What questions will encourage participation and vulnerability?

3. Review your agenda.

Now step back and **review your plan**. Do the components make sense? Do you have a warm-up activity, dialogue prompts or activities, and questions for debriefing or direction-setting?

4. But, remember, it's only a guide.

Dialogue meetings sometimes go in unforeseen directions that are just as fruitful as the most meticulously planned session. Ultimately, the students should have ownership of each meeting, so **remember to be flexible** when the conversation departs from the plan. You can always save the agenda for another time or survey your students to find out what they want to explore in dialogue next.

Element #3: Creating Engaging Activities

Aside from typical dialogue, activities can increase student engagement, build community, and allow participants to consider thought experiments or practice real world scenarios of philosophical ideas. As the semester progresses, the activities that your group undertakes will evolve as well.

For the first few meetings,

1. Focus on developing familiarity.

Especially in the first couple meetings, try to **incorporate name games** or exercises to help the students meet each other. In addition to names, you can also add in other fun facts like favorite food, current residence hall, course of study, or fun stories from their past to highlight some similarities or differences in the group.

Appendix Check! (Page 21)

See **Appendix D** for some ready-to-use activities.

2. Keep it fun.

Don't feel pressure to have your students doing intense philosophical reflection activities early on. Particularly for the warm-up activities, try to keep the atmosphere light so that everyone begins to feel comfortable with the group from the start.

In the middle of the semester,

1. Incorporate your meeting's goal.

Take a look at the goal of your agenda. **Is there a warm-up activity that could lead into a greater philosophical discussion?** For instance, if the goal is centered around utilitarianism, maybe MIT's ["Moral Machine" program](#) would work well to introduce the group to the topic!

2. Ask for input.

Sometimes the students themselves may have an idea for a warm up activity. Asking for suggestions helps you get a better sense of what activities would work well, and **helps the students take ownership of the dialogue and feel a part of the group.**

3. Communicate with other facilitators

Discuss your successes and failures, and share lesson plans with other dialogue facilitators. This is often the best way to add variety and creativity into your dialogue sessions to keep them interesting.

At the end of the semester,

1. Save space for reflection.

The last meeting activities of dialogue should allow students time and space to offer reflections and comment on their experience. They may want to revisit questions or topics from previous sessions, so **allow for some free space in your lesson planning for reflection, feedback, gratitude, and compliments.**

Element #4: Asking Strong Questions

By asking probing questions in response to a student’s contributions, you invite participants to open themselves up to the group and dive deeper into a topic, thus creating a fruitful dialogue.

Identifying Strong vs. Weak Questions

Strong questions sustain, weak questions stall.

Strong questions are relevant to the topic at hand, invite reflection, and promote a deeper understanding of a speaker’s remarks and the overall topic. They move the conversation forward and often evoke multiple responses. They typically begin with “How” or “Why.”

Weak questions that elicit a single, right answer or simple ‘yes-or-no’ cut off reflective thinking and stall the conversation flow.

Tips for Asking Strong Questions

Appendix Check! (Page 33)
See **Appendix E** for examples of strong questions.

1. Start from what they know.

Sometimes, the best way to lead into a deep discussion is to **begin with the students’ personal experiences**. Start with a specific reflection question that will ease the group into the greater target discussion. For instance, if the meeting’s focus question is “how do we decide what is true?” begin by asking, “where do you get your news, and why?”

2. Ask out of genuine curiosity.

Where do you want more understanding? Model intellectual virtue by focusing your questions on areas that you want greater clarity or understanding. Ask students to clarify earlier remarks, reflect, or introduce other perspectives to invite a response.

3. Ask one question at a time.

You may be tempted to ask multiple questions at once to allow many different responses, but what actually ends up happening is students get overwhelmed and don’t know which one to respond to! To minimize confusion and maximize response rate, discipline yourself to only ask one at a time.

4. Be comfortable with silence.

Silence is not necessarily a bad thing. Allow time for students to reflect and sit with the question by slowly counting to 10 in your head before breaking in. Remember, **they own the group**.

Element #5: Debriefing

Debriefing is the process of reflecting at the end of each dialogue session to achieve the following **3 goals**:

- 1) **Reflect and summarize the progress and achievements made during the session**
- 2) **Evaluate the session to improve future dialogues**
- 3) **Get on the same page with all participants and give them a chance to be heard**

Debriefing should be practiced with your group, through anonymous feedback, and with your dialogue facilitator team or on your own. The following questions are examples of things you might ask to achieve the three goals above.

With Your Group

Debrief the **content**

- Summarize the dialogue. What were your key takeaways?
- Did the dialogue cause anybody to reconsider any of their beliefs or values?

Debrief the **method**

- Did the structure of the meeting promote good dialogue?
- How well did we follow our group norms?
- [If applicable] Did you like the activity? Did the activity improve the dialogue?

Debrief the **next steps**

- How can we incorporate what we've learned today into our lives moving forward?
- What would you like to talk about next week? Do you want to move on or continue on this topic?
- Are there any tasks or assignments that need to be completed this week?

Anonymous Feedback

Anonymous feedback is the most effective way to receive honest feedback to improve on future dialogues. It is often worth revisiting any anonymous feedback at the beginning of the next session to make sure that participants feel that their voice is heard.

Some questions that are better asked anonymously are:

- How are you enjoying dialogue? (Best done using a rating scale)
- How could I (as dialogue facilitator) do better next time?
- Any ideas for dialogue topics, activities, ice breakers?
- Any other concerns, suggestions, or comments?

**Note: Google Forms is a great tool for getting anonymous feedback. For an example of an anonymous post-dialogue survey, click [here!](#)*

With Your Dialogue Facilitator Team, or On Your Own

- What went well? What could be better?
- Are all participants engaged in dialogue? Are there any tensions that need to be addressed? Are participants adhering to their group norms?
- What is the plan for the next dialogue?
- Is there anything I need to share with the lead instructor?



Element #6: Listening Actively

Facilitating dialogue is not just about asking strong questions and designing engaging activities; hearing and understanding your students is just as critical.

The Impact of Active Listening on Dialogue

1. Create a positive dialogue atmosphere.

Active listening helps **students feel heard and respected**. Dialogue becomes a safe space of suspended judgement and impartiality when students feel like all their contributions are recognized.

2. Support yourself as a dialogue facilitator.

Hearing what each participant is saying, feeling, and thinking, **helps students respect and trust you** as a dialogue facilitator. **Modeling empathy** through active listening also encourages students to similarly listen more openly to others.

Practice Active Listening by:

Verbally...	Non-Verbally...
Asking open-ended or clarifying questions to pursue understanding	Face the speaker to demonstrate interest and recognize participation
Provide verbal affirmations such as “okay” or “yep” to signify that you are following what the participant is saying	Provide non-verbal affirmations like nodding or smiling to signal your understanding
Noting and/or following up with any emotion that comes out to demonstrate empathy and care	Lean forward to listen and show interest
Check for understanding by following up with a summary of what the speaker said to verify or clarify what was said	Make and maintain eye contact ¹ to connect with the speaker and give them your undivided attention
Thank the speaker for contributing to recognize their participation in the conversation	Hold an open, but relaxed posture to express impartiality and openness
Wait for the speaker to finish before jumping in to allow them enough time to complete their thought or provide further evidence	Pay attention to body language—focusing on facial expressions, movement, and posture—to read the unspoken feelings of the group or speaker

¹ Note that eye contact does not have the same significance in all cultures (e.g. eye contact may be avoided with instructors or other “superiors,” or members of the opposite sex).

Element #7: Resolving and Preventing Conflicts

Sometimes, dialogues stray away from their goal to promote mutual understanding and self-reflection, so it's up to you as the dialogue facilitator to intervene and refocus the group.

When you start to notice growing conflict,

1. Breathe.

Participants will echo your energy, so it's important to stay calm. Focus on your own breathing for a breath or two. If participant body language and speech indicates rising emotions, you may pause dialogue and ask everyone to count to 10 slowly in their head, take one giant deep breathe where you breathe out longer than you breathe in, or close their eyes and show with their fingers 1-5 how tense they are feeling (These techniques also give you time to think about what to say next!)

2. Recall group norms, healthy dialogue skills, course goals, and/or dialogue goals

Remind participants of the rules they agreed to follow. Stress that suspension of judgment and active listening are crucial for productive dialogue. Remind participants that the purpose of dialogue is not to change minds; it is okay for dialogue to be inconclusive. Express to participants why it is important to push past discomfort and talk about this particular topic.

3. Clarify the speaker's statements.

Allow them to explain their perspective by asking questions like **"Tell me more about what you mean by that?"** or **"What experiences led you to this belief?"** Summarize the speaker's thoughts yourself to avoid a conflict arising due to a misunderstanding.

4. Diversify the voices.

Don't allow one or two students to dominate the space. **Try to call on a variety of people** to introduce different opinions and break up back-and-forth arguments.

5. Move on.

If the dialogue begins to run in circles or stray away from the core goal of dialogue, **bring the conversation to a close**. If there is still meeting time left, introduce a different topic.

In the meeting after,

1. Don't ignore, but don't linger.

Ask the students if they want to return to the previous conversation, talk about how they are feeling, or move on completely, and continue dialogue accordingly. **Run the next dialogue as normal**, entering with a positive attitude.

2. Step outside.

If tensions in the group persist and seem to revolve around a few individuals, **meet with them outside of dialogue**. Talk through their differences to find common ground and explain that they need to get along in order for effective dialogue to continue in the group.

Lesson Plan Revisions

Before dialogue each week, we suggest you run through your lesson plan using a checklist like this to target areas of improvement:

As people enter:

- Are you doing something to create a welcoming environment the second they step into the room? (i.e. greeting by name, playing a class playlist)
- Do you plan to check in with them at some point about their life, both in the course and outside?
- Is there a topic that is applicable to everyone, such as current events on campus, that can informally break the ice?

Appendix Check! (Page 34)

See **Appendix F** for some other lesson planning tips.

Icebreaker/Activity:

- What is the purpose of your icebreaker? Getting to know one another? Leading into the dialogue topic of the day in a fun, easy way? Some other purpose?
- Are all the necessary rules made explicit?
- Is the length of time you've estimated it will take appropriate?

Dialogue Questions:

- Are you genuinely interested in what participants have to say about each question you have prepared?
- Are your first questions more narrowly focused, perhaps on their personal experiences?
- Have you anticipated possible routes the conversation could go and prepared for them?
- Are most/all of your questions open-ended, requiring more than a simple yes or no or statement of fact?

Debrief:

- Are there any major assignments coming up that need to be discussed?
- What is the main goal of this dialogue meeting? Are you prepared to emphasize it here?
- Do participants have space, in the debrief and/or in a post-dialogue survey, to give you feedback on how the dialogue went for them?



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Goal Setting

When setting personal and professional goals, it is important to make them as explicit and concrete as possible, in order to increase the likelihood of implementation and success. An easy way to ensure you do this is to make your goals S.M.A.R.T.:

Specific:

State exactly what you want to accomplish, using action verbs.

Measurable:

Have a clear standard for successful completion of the goal; Use smaller, mini-goals to measure progress.

Attainable:

Your goal is realistically achievable given your time, resources, experience, etc.

Relevant:

Your goal makes sense given your job function or other goals for your life.

Timely:

Give yourself ample time to achieve your goal, but set a clear deadline of when it should be accomplished.

Appendices

Appendix A: Other Effective Dialogue Facilitation Techniques

Technique	Why do it?	Options for How to Do It:
<p>Provide a Content Advisory</p> <p>(when you are about to dialogue about a potentially emotionally charged or personal issue)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow participants to mentally prepare • Avoid putting people immediately on defensive • Set expectations for how to engage 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What to say: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Share the topic b. Say why you would like to discuss it (relate it to the course goals, a previous dialogue session, or the group’s perceived interest in the topic) c. Say what you hope participants will gain from dialoguing about this topic d. Remind participants of relevant norms e. Suggest prompts to reflect on prior to the meeting 2. When to say it: Introduce the topic at the end of the last meeting, or send an email/group message 1-2 days before the meeting.
<p>Raise Counter Points</p> <p>(when group is stuck in consensus or certain voices are missing)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote critical reflection • Validate opposing positions • Create a space for diverse opinions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask “What might someone who disagrees say/feel about this?” or “Can anyone give us an alternative perspective from which to look at this idea?” and remind the group that their arguments don’t always have to reflect their personal beliefs 2. Split the room randomly in half and, like a debate, instruct one side to discuss and propose an opposing view that the other side must respond to with fresh points 3. State an opposing view while maintaining your neutrality: “Others might have a different take on this issue. For example…” Then invite comments on this view: “Are there any advantages to this view?” “How would you respond?”
<p>Honor Silence</p> <p>(when the conversation reaches “live silence,” meaning folks are clearly reflecting, processing, or building up the courage to speak)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give people time to reflect • Create space for new voices 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reiterate that your role is not to lead discussion, only to maintain the space for dialogue. Participants own the group; you shouldn’t always have to ask a question. 2. Allow the group to sit in silence until someone speaks; it might get uncomfortable, but that tension is what will make someone finally step up! 3. Maintain eye contact with the group and give reassuring nods to show that you acknowledge the silence and are literally looking to them to resolve it.
<p>Repair Stagnant Conversations</p> <p>(when the conversation reaches “dead silence,”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revive a conversation that has stalled • provoke more engaging and interesting viewpoints 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Step back with the group: “Have we exhausted the dialogue topic? Have any perspectives not been considered?” 2. Tweak the circumstances of the question in some way, and ask if that would change folks’ arguments? If so, how? 3. Always have back-up strong questions at hand in case your planned



<p>meaning it has reached a natural end or folks don't know how to respond.*)</p> <p>*Note: You'll get better at distinguishing between live & dead silences with practice!</p>		<p>dialogue runs short.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Ask your group if they're interested in talking about something else, regardless of the topic at hand? If they're passionate, let them take the conversation in their own direction within reason. 5. Count to 10 slowly in your head to help you resist the urge to break the silence.
<p>Be Organized</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate rich dialogue and help the course run smoothly 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have a set method of reflecting on each dialogue and identifying areas for growth 2. Be aware of grading criteria for all assignments and of upcoming deadlines. 3. Always follow through on enforcing group norms, following up with students when you say you will, and continuing conversations week-to-week when you promise to



Appendix B: Setting Norms Guide

Component of Healthy Dialogue	Examples of Strong Norms (for when your group gets stuck on phrasing)
<p>Egalitarianism</p> <p>Think about the best conversations you have had where you disagreed with one another. What are some things that you did in that conversation that made it go so well?</p> <p>When you are offended by something that is said, what are the best ways to address the situation?</p>	<p>Share airtime.</p> <p>Be engaged in the dialogue, but leave space for others. Avoid interruptions.</p> <p>WAIT Rule</p> <p>WAIT stands for ‘Why Am I Talking?’ And serves as an unobtrusive, self-enforcement way to avoid anyone dominating the discussion. To work, participants must be frequently reminded of the rule to create a habit in their minds of speaking purposefully and avoiding rambling.</p> <p>The Ouch! Rule</p> <p>If at any time a participant is made uncomfortable by something someone said, they can say “ouch!” to signal their discomfort. In acknowledgement, the student who made the hurtful comment must say “oops!” If necessary, there can be further dialogue about this exchange.</p> <p>Yes/No to Swearing or Productive Swearing</p> <p>Is the use of swearing permitted during dialogue at all times? A group may choose to say yes to swearing if it is not directed at a person or if it is productive in the context of the conversation. This norm is sometimes better addressed anonymously since some participants may be sensitive to the group setting.</p>
<p>Self-Advocacy</p> <p>How can we make sure we all express our own views clearly?</p> <p>What if we get stuck when our ideas are not fully developed?</p>	<p>Use “I” Statements.</p> <p>When expressing a feeling, telling a story, or navigating a conflict, always express statements from the first person point of view rather than making accusations or blaming others. Say “I feel ____, when _____,” not “You do this thing that’s bad.”</p> <p>No one is the spokesperson for their identity group (race, gender, religion, etc.).</p> <p>Though they may reflect the views of the communities they belong to, participants in dialogue are not expected to nor should they represent organizations or groups.</p> <p>Challenge yourself to say what you really mean.</p> <p>Direct and honest communication is important for good dialogue. Avoid sarcasm.</p>
<p>Vulnerability</p> <p>How can vulnerability be a good thing?</p> <p>How can we create an environment for</p>	<p>Don’t just jump in when the water’s warm.</p> <p>Challenge yourself to share your reaction even when you disagree or don’t relate.</p> <p>Names stay, ideas leave</p>

<p>everyone to feel open to sharing?</p> <p>What guidelines can we agree on now in order to create a learning environment in which we can ask each other anything?</p>	<p>Honor confidentiality by continuing to discuss interesting talking points outside of the classroom, but do so without attaching participants' names to stories or beliefs.</p> <p><i>Address the statement, not the person.</i></p> <p>Participants may make statements that will offend or oppose the beliefs of others. In these situations, the group should react by addressing <i>what</i> was said, not <i>who</i> said it.</p>
<p>Active Listening</p> <p>What are some common distractions you face in conversation? How can we avoid distractions?</p> <p>How can we make sure that people feel that their voice is heard?</p>	<p><i>Put away the technology.</i></p> <p>Phones, laptops, and tablets should not be used during dialogue meetings.</p> <p><i>One speaker at a time</i></p> <p>Avoid side conversations or talking over people.</p>
<p>Suspension of Judgment</p> <p>How can we ensure that this is a “judgment free zone”?</p> <p>How can we make sure we stick to dialogue, not debate or discussion?</p>	<p><i>Assume best intentions.</i></p> <p>If something happens that causes tension within a dialogue (e.g., by offending others or derailing the dialogue), remind yourself everyone has good intentions and react accordingly.</p> <p><i>Five Minute Spotlight</i></p> <p>When someone feels a view is in the minority, is being overlooked, or is being misrepresented, they can invoke the Five Minute Spotlight. Dialogue is paused, and everyone in the group must for the next 5 minutes attempt to give the best possible case for that particular view. No one can raise objections without providing a rebuttal themselves.</p>
<p>Awareness of Background Assumptions</p> <p>How can we avoid falling victim to implicit biases?</p> <p>How can we make sure all perspectives get shared?</p>	<p><i>Look and listen for who is missing.</i></p> <p>Often, your group will reach consensus because you all share a particular background. When consensus happens, check your biases and ask what perspectives are not at the table.</p> <p><i>Ask about desired names & pronouns before using them.</i></p> <p>Don't assume you know someone's gender or name before they tell them to you.</p>
<p>Thoughtful Reflection</p> <p>How can we ensure that we are truly considering other perspectives?</p>	<p><i>Listen with an open mind.</i></p> <p>Think about what was said before formulating a response. Try to empathize with the viewpoint of the person speaking, even (and especially) if you disagree: Listen, and ask, for what experiences are behind the ideas they are expressing.</p>

Appendix C: Lesson Plans and Goals Examples

Example of a Meeting #3

Overview / Goals:

- Students will reflect on the role truth plays in their decision to practice a religion.
- Students will form a view about whether religion tends to divide or unite the campus, and will share thoughts about what -- if anything -- should be done about this.
- Students will start to think about the impact that the afterlife should have on how they choose to live today (an issue that will be picked up in class on Wednesday).

Warm-up activity (10 min)

Split into four groups, tell each other stories and agree on your craziest one. The stories can be true but they don't have to be. Pick one person to describe your chosen story and then allow the other groups to ask direct questions to your group members. The other groups should then decide whose story this truly is and who is lying.

Dialogue Intro (10 min)

Barometer and Discussion

- I actively practice a religion
- My religion influences my morality
- At some point in my life I have seriously questioned my religion
- At Notre Dame I feel comfortable and encouraged to practice my religion

Dialogue (10 min)

1. How important is religion and how can it affect our lives and decisions?
2. Can religion be restrictive or segregating?
3. How can religion bring people together? How does it bring students together here?

Afterlife activity (10 min)

Get in your same groups from earlier and pick a different person to present a concept of the afterlife you all agree on. 5 minutes to think.

Closing Discussion & Debrief

- What are we owed in the afterlife?
 - If there isn't an afterlife what happens to us when we die?
- What was interesting about today's dialogue/any topics to follow up on?

Example of an Early Semester Meeting

1. Warm-up activity (10-15 min)
 - First meeting: Name learning activity
 - After that: Any early semester warm-up activity (pages 47-49)

2. Establish/review group norms (5-15 min)
 - See pages 26-27 above.
3. Introduction to Dialogue & Dialogue Assignments [First meeting] (10 min)
 - Explain the purpose of GGL dialogue (vs. traditional discussion sections)
 - Give a verbal overview of the main course assignments that are integrated into dialogue meetings: Dialogue Experiences, the Debate Tournament, and the Insights Publication.
 - Answer any questions
4. Dialogue (10-25 min)
 - After the first meeting, you should have prompts prepared based on the previous week's direction setting. Here are some additional ideas:
 - Which of your traits is most important to your sense of who you are as a person, and why?
 - How do you decide what to believe on important issues? What sources do you consult and trust?
 - What is your most controversial belief? Why do you continue to hold it?
 - What is one commonly held belief (in the Notre Dame community or in society more generally) that you think is harmful? Why do you think it is so widely held?
5. Debrief and direction setting (10 min)
 - Remind students of what they've accomplished during today's meeting
 - Note any big-picture themes, questions, or connections you've noticed
 - Ask students what they found interesting about today's dialogue, what they'd like to follow up on, and what they're looking forward to. Use their answers to help you plan next week's meeting.
 - Ask students what you could do to improve next week's dialogue.

Example of a Meeting #5

Group Norms:

- Don't talk when others are talking
- Target the belief, not the people
- Treat others the way you want to be treated
- Technology - allowed but only for academic purposes
- Hand Raising if gets too busy
- I statements

Goals:

- Reflect on personal identity, and on the issues this raises for questions about the identity of groups.
- Get clearer on your views of personhood, and relate that view to ethical issues that are coming up in class.

Reminders:

- Did everyone turn in the religion reflection? If not, do so right now!
- Group project due next week.

Dialogue:

- Ship of Theseus:
 - There was once a ship that remained seaworthy for hundreds of years thanks to constant repairs and replacement parts. As soon as one plank became old and rotted, it would be replaced, and so on until every working part of the ship was no longer original to it.
 - Is this still the same ship?
 - At what point did it not become the same ship?
 - If one were to take all the old parts removed from the Ship of Theseus and build a new ship from them, then which of the two vessels is the real Ship of Theseus?
- How does this relate to the idea of identity?
 - The conclusion that a lot of people draw with this activity is that everything is just a sum of its parts
 - Let's split into two groups - the first group will agree with this proposition, the second group will disagree with this proposition
 - Debate! Discuss! Have fun!
 - Which arguments were the best? What made them so compelling?
 - Which arguments had you not thought of before that were interesting?
- How could this relate to the idea of a business? Is it just a sum of its parts? Or does the combination of everything create something "extra"?
- How does this relate to the idea of a person?
 - What would happen if a neuroscientist slowly took all of your neurons, or maybe all of your cells, one by one replacing them, and made another brain and you? Which one would be you?
 - Scientists tell us that our cells are completely replaced every 7 years or so. Does this mean that each person is a different person every 7 years?
 - When do you stop becoming you?
 - For the philosopher John Locke being linked by memory to our past selves is what makes us the same person through time. So, for Locke, it is not our body that makes us the same person – as this is constantly changing – but our mental life that makes us a person that lasts through change.
 - If we lost our memory, would that make us a different person?

-Potential future discussion idea: creativity, do we have it? Can we create something out of nothing?

-Potential future discussion idea: imagine a neuroscientist who spends their whole life in a black and white room learning everything they possibly can about color and how people perceive color. When they step out of the room into the real world, do they learn something about color that they didn't know while they were in the room?



Appendix D: Potential Activities for Dialogue Meetings

Early Semester (Meetings 1-3)

Name: Name Stories
Emphasis: Learning names
<p>Each person in your group should share for 3 minutes about the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the history of your name (first, middle, and last)? • What is your name’s meaning and significance? • What does it feel like to have your name? <p>Then, the full group will take around 10 minutes to discuss any of the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is it like to have your name? • Does your name reflect anything about your social identities? • Can people identify you accurately in terms of your social identities based on your name? • Do you think people make assumptions about you based on your name? • Have you ever felt discriminated against based on your name? Privileged because of your name? • Have you ever had to/wanted to change your name? Why? • How has reflecting on your name just now impacted you? <p><i>VARIANT:</i> Each person draws a picture that represents their name, then explains their drawing, then moves into the questions above.</p>

Name: Cumulative Name Game
Emphasis: Learning names
Description: Go around the room clockwise, asking the first person to say their name, the next person to say their own name and the previous name, and so on. After you have gone all the way around, change direction.

Name: The Name Play
Emphasis: Learning names
Description: Divide the group into two teams and have everyone tell their teams the meaning of their names. Then have them form a story combining the meanings of their names and act the story out in a play for the full group.



Name: Name that Tune (with 4 songs!)
Emphasis: Group bonding
Description: This icebreaker activity adds a twist to the typical “Name That Tune” activity. Instead of having only one song playing, you have four songs playing at the same time! You would award a point for the correct title of a song and another point for the correct artist, which means that each round would offer a maximum of eight points. I would recommend that you create teams of at least four people in each group because the main point of this icebreaker is to allow students to grow closer through conversation. I would recommend Garageband to create a sound clip that plays all four songs at the same time. The first step is converting Youtube videos into mp3 versions by using an online converter. Then, you download the mp3 versions and place them into Garageband to have an audio clip that plays the mp3 versions of multiple songs at once. If you need further clarification, feel free to reach out to fjang@nd.edu .

Name: Rapid-Fire Questions... but with Suspicious Individuals
Emphasis: Getting to know each other
Description: For this icebreaker, you need to come up with a list of “rapid-fire” questions. These questions have multiple short answers, and some examples of these questions are: Who is your favorite music artist? What is your favorite subject? What emotion are you feeling right now? Give me the name of a person who is not in the room right now. Hopefully, you realize that all of these questions have many different answers to them. The game consists of multiple rounds, and you start each round by having a facilitator ask one of these rapid-fire questions. You start with one student, and you make your way around the room by pointing at each individual. Each answer needs to be answered in three seconds, and a student may not repeat an answer that was already used. A round is successful if all students are able to answer the question with a unique response that accurately answers the question. A round fails if any student fails to give a response, repeats a response, or gives a response that does not make sense. However, there is a twist- there are actually individuals who are purposely trying to mess up. These individuals want to mess up because each successful round leads to a hint being revealed about their identities. I recommend that you expose the fact that there are suspicious individuals after two or three rounds have been completed. This means that you’ll have to contact these secret individuals ahead of time, and you’ll also have to make your own hints about these individuals (Potential hints: age, type of clothing that they are wearing, where they are in terms of location, letters in their first name, etc.) After about 6-7 rounds of rapid-fire questions, give a couple minutes to discuss amongst themselves and figure out who the suspicious individuals are. Then, you go around the room and ask for each person’s vote and who they think it is. Typically, I give each person the same number of votes as there are suspicious individuals in the game. For example, if there are 2 suspicious individuals, I ask each person to vote for 2 separate people. The suspicious individuals lose if they receive the most votes, and the rest of the class loses if they fail to vote for the suspicious individuals as a group.



Name: Scavenger Hunt, but with a Zombie Infection!

Emphasis: Group bonding, philosophy

Description:

When starting this icebreaker, you'll tell the students that they will participate in a scavenger hunt in teams, but you don't tell them about the zombie infection! When I did this icebreaker, students were looking for slips of paper that had multiple choice questions about specific philosophical topics that were being discussed during their respective philosophy classes. I told students that they would receive a point for each question that they answered correctly. If a student incorrectly answered a question, they would need to bring another teammate with them to have another shot at the same question. Take note of the specific person who gets the point.

While all the students are looking for these slips of paper, the zombies have two objectives: to infect as many people as possible and to also find these slips of paper as well. When I played this icebreaker, I allowed each zombie to infect one person with no requirements. Each subsequent infection was only allowed after they correctly answered a question that was hidden. **ONLY THE ORIGINAL ZOMBIES** (the zombies that you contacted ahead of time) **CAN INFECT OTHER ZOMBIES.**

After all of the questions have been answered, you call everyone back. Now, you reveal to everyone that there has been a zombie infection going around. You tell everyone to put their heads down, and you tap the individuals who were originally zombies and all the individuals who were infected. To the newly infected zombies, you also want to secretly point out the original zombies because all the newly infected zombies need to know who they are for the last part of the game.

You might be thinking, "If the actual game is a zombie infection, then why do the points matter?" It's because each point that a person earns equates to a hint about the original zombies. At this point, you would only give the hint to an individual and not an entire team. Hints can disclose the original zombie's age, clothing, hair color, etc.

The last part of the game is another accusation-based discussion. You allow the class to discuss amongst themselves and decide who they thought the original zombies are. Important: The zombies lose only if the **ORIGINAL** zombies are formally accused. This means that the original zombies should try to feign ignorance, and the infected zombies try to protect the original zombies by either giving incorrect leads or making themselves look suspicious. Again, I would give each person the same number of votes as there are original zombies.

This icebreaker is only possible if you personally contact individuals who are willing to take up the position of "original zombies." You also need to create the multiple-choice questions and their answers ahead of time.

The biggest obstacle to this icebreaker is the method of infection. You have to choose a method of infection that is not too obvious, but at the same time, it has to be decently difficult for the original zombies to carry out. Some possible methods of infection are:

Taking a selfie with another individual- the original zombie would need to take a picture with someone else with their consent

Having small stickers and sticking them onto other people's clothing

Leading individuals to a room with the facilitator- the original zombie steps into a designated area with another individual



This icebreaker is extremely flexible in terms of its execution, but the most important aspect is the aspect of informality. I wouldn't suggest this activity if the class is meeting for the first time because individuals might be uncomfortable with selfies or having small stickers being stuck onto them.

Name: Summer Highlights Dance

Emphasis: Getting to know one another

Description:

1. Ask participants to stand in a circle.
2. Ask them to take two or three minutes to think of the best thing that happened to them over the summer (or over break, when they came back to campus, during the day so far, etc.) and to pair this event with a sound and a motion/dance.
3. Ask for someone to volunteer to share their event, sound, and motion. Then ask the whole group to repeat the sound and motion together.
4. Go around the circle having each person share their positive event, sound, and motion. After each person, have the whole group do all sounds and motions shared so far in sequence. By the end of the activity, the whole group will have a "dance" composed of the movements of each participant.

Name: Philosophical Speed Dating

Emphasis: Getting to know each other

Description:

1. Divide the group into lines, or in inner circle and outer circle, so that each participant is directly facing one other person.
2. Read the questions below (or some of your own) one at a time. Pick how many to ask based on group size and time. Tell participants to make sure that both they and the person across from them get a chance to respond.
3. After ~60 seconds or when conversation starts to wane, say "rotate," and have one line/circle shift over one spot so that each person has a new partner.

For ideas for questions, see Appendix E

Debriefing suggestions:

- Did you learn something new or find unexpected things in common with others?
- Was it difficult to answer some of these questions? If so, which one(s) and why?
- Did hearing someone's answer to a question make you rethink your own?

Name: Frankenstein's Adlib

Emphasis: Getting to know each other

Description: Prepare no less than 5 prompts, ideally the amount of students in your group divided by 2



(e.g. 14 kids=7 prompts). These should be silly or interesting questions about the students' lives with short answers, e.g. What is your spirit animal? Weird quirk about your family? Irrational fear? In class, write on the board or create a doc on the projector with two columns and rows equal to the number of prompts you have prepared. Then, ask the first question to your students and write down the first two answers you hear in the first row (one in each column) along with the names of the students who answered. Once a student has given an answer, they cannot answer again until every student has given a response. Repeat with each prompt. Then divide the class into two groups, ideally one group is the students whose answers are in the first column and one is the second column, but if students have given multiple responses then divide the class in half another way. Then, in 8 min or less, the two groups are to prepare a college admissions essay for a person possessing all the traits in their assigned column (do not reveal this until all responses have been given). Once time has expired, each group will present what they have prepared, and you, as the admissions board, will decide whether they have been accepted or not.

Name: What is your struggle?

Emphasis: Group bonding

Description: Pass out a sheet of paper to each student. Ask them "What is your struggle?" Give them 1 minute to write down their response on their paper, fold it, and return it to you (they are not to write their names on their papers). Then, shuffle them and return a random paper to each person. Each person then reads the struggle they were given one by one. Then, debrief. Ask questions such as "How did you feel when yours was read? What did you learn from this?" You want to get to the point of discussing how we all have struggles though we might not want to show it, then discuss why.

Name: Privilege Walk

Emphasis: Group bonding, examining privilege

Description: For directions, click here:
<https://opensource.com/open-organization/17/11/privilege-walk-exercise>
 For a video of how it looks, click [here](#) (or search "What is Privilege?" on YouTube).

Mid and Late Semester (Meetings 4-9)

Name: Moves in a Philosophical Discussion vs. Dialogue

Emphasis: Clarifying what we're doing here

Description: Pass out or display this awesome [infographic](#) developed by Rebecca Scott at Harper College. It lays out the 16 possible moves you can make as a participant in a philosophical discussion. Ask your group to read over the list, then ask them what is missing from this list that would turn the discussion into a dialogue (i.e. share personal experience, diversify voices, honor silence, gratitude, explore potential bias, etc.). Then, with your additions included, have a dialogue today where each time a person speaks they have to identify what number move they are using. With practice, this will improve your dialogues considerably

moving forward!

Fear and Hope in a Hat

Time: 5-10 minutes (plus time for debriefing)

1. Make sure everyone has two pieces of paper and a pen/pencil.
2. Introduce the topic of *fear* and explain how it is normal and natural to experience all sorts of fears in a dialogue group. A good way to deal with these fears is to have them *openly acknowledged*, without ridicule. Having our fears expressed and heard can help us make the group as meaningful as possible.
3. Have everyone, including the group leaders, complete one of these sentences *anonymously* on their first piece of paper: “In this group, I am afraid that…” or “In this group, the worst thing that could happen to me would be…”. Give participants plenty of time to think about their responses.
4. Next, introduce the idea of *hopes* for what each person will gain from dialogue, and what the group can be/do.
5. Have everyone complete one of these sentences anonymously on their second piece of paper: “In this group, I hope that…” or “Because of our dialogue meetings, I hope that I will…”.
6. When everyone is done, collect the pieces of paper in two separate hats or bags (one for fears and one for hopes) and shuffle them thoroughly.
7. Re-distribute the pieces of paper from the “fears” hat so that each person is holding a random sheet.
8. Go around the circle and have each person read aloud the fear written on the sheet they have. No one should comment or ask questions -- just listen and move on to the next person.
9. Repeat the procedure in steps 7 and 8 for the “hopes” hat.

Debriefing suggestions:

- What did you think or feel while your fear/hope was being read aloud? After it was read?
- What did you think or feel when you heard the fears/hopes of the other group members?
- Did you notice any patterns in our group’s fears/hopes?
- What can we do individually and/or collectively to make this a group where we all feel comfortable facing our fears/striving for our hopes?

Note: You may process “fears” and “hopes” separately after completing each, or all at once at the end of the entire activity.

Take a Stand (Barometer)

Introduction: “We’re going to use this room as a spectrum. That wall (point) is the ‘Strongly Agree’ wall. *That* wall (point to opposite side) is the ‘Strongly Disagree’ wall. I’m going to read a statement. Once you hear it, decide how strongly you agree or disagree with it and then move to a physical location on the spectrum that accurately represents how you feel. (For example, if you agree but don’t



feel strongly, stand closer to the ‘Strongly Agree’ side, but not all the way against the wall.) You can’t stand exactly in the middle, and there should be no side-conversations during this exercise.”

Example Statements for Barometer

- **Practice round:** Chocolate is the best ice cream flavor.
- Chivalry is oppressive.
- Responsible people do not accept government handouts.
- Affirmative action based on class is a better way to ensure diversity in society than affirmative action based on race.
- Stores that exploit their workers should be boycotted.
- One person can change the world.

Debrief: You may allow your group to dialogue after each statement or wait until the end of the entire exercise. What questions do you have based on what you saw? What surprised you? What do you want to talk further about with the group?

Note: If doing online dialogue, make a [slide](#) and put a circle on it for each student with their name. Share the slide with the students and have them move their bubble to whichever side of the slide they agree with.

Name: 5 Minute Spotlight
Emphasis: Empathizing with a Minority Viewpoint
<p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This can be used as a norm in your group or as an empathy activity ● When someone feels a view is in the minority, is being overlooked, or is being misrepresented, they can invoke the 5 Minute Spotlight. Dialogue is paused, and everyone in the group must for the next 5 minutes attempt to give the best possible case for that particular view. No one can raise objections without providing a rebuttal themselves. Ask questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What might we who hold this view say about what was just shared before the 5 Minute Spotlight was invoked? ○ What reasons might we give to justify this view? ○ What experiences may have led us to this view? ○ What values underlie this view? ○ What contexts or institutions may have contributed to forming this view?

Name: Fishbowl
Emphasis: Empathizing with the Opposing Viewpoint
<p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NOTE: Only do this activity if you know the statement you make will get a relatively equal number of agrees and disagrees

1. Similar to the Barometer Exercise, start by stating some claim that participants will either agree or disagree with.
2. Have those who agree with the statement sit in a small circle in the center of the room. Have those who disagree form a larger circle around that inner circle.
3. For 5 minutes, those in the inner circle will dialogue about their view amongst themselves, and the outer circle will practice active listening. The outer circle may not say anything besides short verbal affirmations, and may not make any faces or gestures that could be perceived as rude.
4. When 5 minutes are up, outer group expresses gratitude to inner group for sharing.
5. Then, the groups switch places, so the outer circle of participants who disagreed with the original statement go into the middle and become the inner circle.
6. Repeat steps 3 and 4
7. Debrief:
 - a. What was something that surprised you about what the other group shared?
 - b. What was something the other group said that you agreed with?
 - c. What common ground could both groups likely stand on?

Walk a Mile

Time: 20 minutes (plus time for dialogue)

1. Distribute the checklist below and ask participants to check the boxes that apply to them. The checklists should be left anonymous and should be filled out silently.
2. Once everyone has filled out their own checklist, they should trade checklists with at least five other people, until nobody knows who has their sheet or whose sheet they have.
3. Ask everyone to stand in a circle.
4. “I will read a statement. If it is checked on the sheet that you are holding, please walk into the circle. Then take a moment to look at who is inside the circle, who is outside the circle, and then step back to the original, large circle. There should be no comments or conversations during this activity. Remember, you will step into the circle for statements that are checked on the sheet that you are *holding* (not what you checked for yourself).”
5. After going through all statements, ask participants to reflect silently about the exercise. You may use prompts like the ones below, or simply ask them to reflect in a general way. If you wish, you may ask participants to write down their reflections.
6. Dialogue about the exercise (either as a full group or in two smaller groups).

Sample Prompts:

What surprised, challenged, or stuck out to you? How did this exercise affect the way you think about our group? What questions do you have for others in the group based on this exercise?

Walk a Mile Checklist

Read through the following statements and check the ones that apply to you. If you have a question about a statement, interpret it the way you prefer. Please do this activity silently and anonymously.

- I have at times felt discouraged from a choice of education or career path because of my sex, race, or ability.
- My family took vacations outside of my home country while I was growing up.
- No matter how far away my parking spot is, I know I can handle the walk.
- I have been expected to attend school or work on my religious holidays.
- I can walk hand in hand with my partner in most communities that I want to go to without being afraid of being harassed or attacked.
- I have been harassed because of my gender expression, race, religion, ethnicity, ability, or sexual orientation.
- I don't rely on scholarships to help me pay for college.
- I can look in the mainstream media and find people of my race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender or religion represented fairly in a wide range of roles.
- I can walk across campus at night and not worry about my safety.
- There are dimensions of my identity that I have to hide from most people in order to feel safe.
- I grew up in a home owned by my family.
- If the authorities stop me, I can be sure that I haven't been singled out because of my race, ethnicity, or religion.
- If I want to worship with others who practice faith similarly to me, I can easily do it on or near my campus.
- I can be confident that people do not think that I got into college because of my class or because of my race.
- I am the first generation of my family to go to college.
- I don't have to worry about my physical protection on a daily basis.
- When I go to a class, the professor teaching it will likely be of my race.
- I have felt pressured to alter my appearance, mannerisms, or language to avoid being judged based on my race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender expression.
- I can go out to eat or go out to party more than once a week without having to worry about how to pay for it.
- I can go to a store near my home or work and easily find the kinds of hair and/or cosmetic products I want.
- I do not have a physical, psychological, developmental, or learning disability.
- I have attended private school.
- I had to skip a meal or was hungry because my family did not have enough money to buy food when I was growing up.
- On campus or in my community, I can talk about my relationship without having to think about how I will refer to my partner.
- I or many of my ancestors did not voluntarily migrate to/within the United States.
- I have, for the most part, had a full outfit that I could wear confidently to job interviews or professional events.
- There were times during this activity when I did not check the box, though the statement applied to me.



The Moral Machine

Time: 20 minutes (plus time for dialogue)

Introduction: Check out this link (<https://moralmachine.mit.edu/>) or simply search “MIT Moral Machine” to load a group morality game that can serve as a great introduction into a discussion of utilitarian ethics.

1. Have the game loaded on your computer/presenting screen before the meeting
2. Take a minute or two to introduce the game in which the students must work together to agree upon which way a car will swerve on a crowded street
3. Click through the game, making sure the group’s consensus is informed by all the students, not just the loudest voices
4. Follow-up after completion by asking for the students’ rationale in choosing to kill a certain group of pedestrians over another

Name: Bucket List
Emphasis: Life/Death/Meaning
<p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Everyone writes out a bucket list. While you’re doing this, consider your motivations behind the items you write down.” ● After a few minutes, ask everyone to read an item from their list. ● Then say: “Let’s say you have a week to live, starting now. How does this change the way you approach your bucket list? What becomes most important?”

Name: Meaningful Life Scenarios
Emphasis: Meaning
<p>Description:</p> <p>Write down what a meaningful life would be for you if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) You were the only person on earth (2) You believed the opposite about God (3) You knew you will live at least to 100 <p>Go around sharing a thought for each scenario.</p>

Name: Pushes, Pulls, and Blocks
Emphasis: Free Will
<p>Description: Make a three column table on the board or projector and label the columns ‘Pushes’, ‘Pulls’, and ‘Blocks’, respectively. For the Pushes column, prompt students to call out a list of</p>

things they feel obligations towards (i.e. government, community, family, god). For Pulls, ask for things which they feel motivated by (i.e. fame, happiness, hunger, power, reproduction, helping others). For Blocks, ask for things which inhibit their physical movement or things which they can't do (their physical form, laws of nature, they can't teleport, etc.).

Then ask: Given these constraints on your behavior - these pulls toward certain behaviors, pushes motivating you, and blocks inhibiting your physical movement - in what sense do we have free will? Possible routes for discussion: Break the question down into its parts - ask what 'free' and 'will' really mean? Ask about the implications for morality - do we need a completely free will to be held accountable for our actions? Should we punish bad behavior if we don't have completely free will?

Name: Piss Christ

Emphasis: Blasphemy, Free Speech, Art

Description: Put up a picture of the artwork entitled "Piss Christ" by Andres Serrano. Tell students that it was created in 1987 in New York, it is an image of a crucifix submerged in a jar of the artist's own urine, entitled "Piss Christ". Then, ask for initial reactions to this artwork. You can go with wherever this conversation takes them. You can also add that it was created as a commentary on the commercialization of religion, then ask questions about whether the artist's intent matters when discussing the meaning of a work or the feelings it evokes. You can also add that the artist received funding from The National Endowment for the Arts, then ask questions about censorship and whether or not controversial art should be funded.

Name: Prisoner/ Civilian Boat Dilemma

Emphasis: Utilitarian Ethics, Movie Enthusiasm, Death Penalty

Description: Show the class the Boat Scene from the classic Batman movie, "The Dark Knight." Be sure to end the scene just before the reveal of what the civilians and prisoners decide. For those of you who have not seen this cinematic masterpiece, the dilemma begins when the Joker plants bombs on a boat full of civilians and a boat full of convicts. The detonator for each boat's explosives are on the other boat, so the civilians can blow up the prisoners and vice versa. The Joker tells each boat that they have one hour to blow up the other boat, but if neither boat blows, he'll blow up both of them. Ask your students whether or not they would push the button if they were a civilian; then ask if they would do the same if they were a prisoner. Discuss the differences between the two scenarios (if they are different at all!) and whether or not previous life experiences warrant one person to die over another.

Name: Quick Compliments

Emphasis: Fast Warm-Up, Community Building

Description: Each person says a compliment to the person on their right one-by-one, until everyone has given and received a compliment.

Final Dialogue Meeting

The following activities help participants acknowledge how much they've learned from one another and will serve as a great final memory for the group.

Kudos Bags

1. Before dialogue, get as many paper bags or envelopes as you have dialogue members (including facilitators). Write one member's name on each.
2. Bring in the envelopes, and make sure that everyone has plenty of paper. Each dialogue member should have one slip of paper for each other dialogue member.
3. Ask everyone to write one dialogue member's name on each slip of paper.
4. "Write a couple sentences to the person whose name is on each slip of paper. Tell them something specific you appreciate about them."
5. Put the appreciations in their respective envelopes. Distribute the envelopes, but don't open them.
6. Instruct everyone to read their appreciations on their own after the meeting, and to keep their envelope to remind them how much of an impact they had on the group and how much of a contribution they made to these people's lives.

Smile Posters

1. Participants sit in a circle.
2. Give each participant a blank piece of paper.
3. Each participant should write their name in the center of their paper.
4. Pass all papers to the left.
5. Anywhere on the paper, write one complimentary word or phrase to describe the person whose name is on the paper. These should be anonymous, so do not write your name next to your word.
6. Pass to the left and repeat until each participant has their own paper back.
7. Allow a minute or two for participants to read their papers to themselves to see what other people wrote about them.

Tap someone who...

1. Participants sit on the floor in a circle, with their backs to the center of the circle
2. Explain: "This activity is an anonymous opportunity to show how you all have touched each other's lives and made lasting impressions on each other. You will have everyone close their eyes, and you will select a few people to get up and stand in the center of the circle. Then, you will read a series of prompts, such as 'Tap someone who made you smile,' and the participants in the center will silently move around inside the circle and tap the shoulder of anyone who made them smile throughout our time together. I'll read a few prompts, then I will swap who is in the center and read new prompts."

Sample Prompts:



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Tap someone who...

Made you smile.

You hope you will stay friends with after this semester.

Shared something that changed your perspective.

You wish you could have heard more from.

Made you laugh.

You admire.

Is a great role model.

Is a great leader.

Asked thought-provoking questions.

Is the closest to living the good life.

Brought you closer to living the good life.

Helped you with homework or papers.

You will miss.

You enjoyed spending time with.

Appendix E: Strong Questions Examples

Get to Know You Questions

- What are you proud of regarding your identity?
- What is the best book you read in the last 6 months? Why?
- What is the best movie you've seen recently? Why?
- What was the craziest dream you had in the last few weeks?
- What do you most like to do with a free hour? Why?
- How did you meet your best friend(s)?
- If you could choose to be an animal, what animal would you choose? Why?
- What do you think you will be doing ten years from now?
- What is the most significant thing that has happened in your life in the last three months? Why?
- What one personal object would you keep if you could take only one thing with you in a move? Why?
- What is your earliest memory of feeling different from others? How did that experience impact your beliefs?
- What person has influenced your life the most? Why?

Strong Dialogue Questions

- What are three things that others don't know about your identity from looking at you that you wish that they knew?
- What types of courage do you see lacking on our campus?
- Describe a time when you were offended by someone's question about your identity. Why were you offended? What did you do? How do you think social power and privilege were involved in the situation?
- How have gender roles impacted your choice of study/career, interests, and/or daily life?
- Who were you taught to look up to? Who were you taught to look down on?
- What problems in our community compel you to take action or do you find to be in need of urgent change?
- What do you wish every student who graduated college knew more about?
- Describe a time when you were in the minority. What did you think/feel in that situation?
- What is your earliest recollection of feeling different from others? Did that experience impact your attitudes and beliefs? If so, how?
- How do you seek out the truth in your own life and learning habits?
- Where does the classroom end?
- What aspects of your identity do you hide?
- In what settings or around whom do you tend to stay silent about issues you care about?
- What have you seen in your community that gives you hope for improved race relations? What discourages you?
- What and/or who do you think of when you hear "mental disability"?
- What comes to mind first when you hear the word "reality"? Why?
- Why should we care about the truth? Should truth be the primary end of the classroom?
- Has your faith/lack of faith ever been challenged? When?
- When do you feel the most alive? Why?

- If you had one hour before the world ended, what would you do? Why?
- Who would you turn to in a time of need? Why?
- What is your biggest worry? Why?
- What is the most beautiful thing you have ever seen? Why?
- Who challenges you the most?

Clarifying or Responding to a Student

- “Can you repeat what *student x* just said?”
- “What experiences inform that belief?”
- “Can you explain what you mean by ‘responsibility’ in this context?”
- “What might someone on the other side of this issue think?”
- “How else could this be interpreted?”
- “If you could summarize your thought in one sentence, what would it be?”
- “What responses do you hope others would have next time that happens?”

Sample questions for reflection on accomplishments:

- What do you think we accomplished this semester?
- How has being in this dialogue group affected you personally?
- How will you behave or think differently as a result of an experience in this group?
- How could our group have been better? What things could facilitators have done better?
- How have our group dynamics evolved over time?



Appendix F: Lesson Planning Tips

Keep these helpful hints in mind as you write your lesson plans:

1. Picture yourself as a student.

What would you find interesting to talk about? When do you feel encouraged to add to the conversation?

2. Brainstorm everything, then edit.

Don't worry about coming up with the perfect lesson plan right away. Try writing down every possible question or icebreaker that comes to mind about a topic first, then you can go back after and revise it all to fit the flow and goal of the meeting.

3. Relax!

You'll get better with every lesson you write and every meeting you run. Focus on doing your best to help your students and always feel free to ask them, the instructor, or your dialogue facilitator peers for advice or feedback.