*Kavana Tree Bressen ✶ Facilitation & Workshops*

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# *A Sampler of Process Skills*

## Listening & Reflecting practice (~15 min.)

Explain basic guidelines for reflective listening
Divide the group into pairs, then explain the exercise
Offer a theme for sharing that is relevant to this particular group and where it's at, or what the focus is today
1st person talks for 3 minutes, while 2nd person listens without saying anything
2nd person repeats back what s/he heard & 1st person corrects any misunderstandings (<2 min.)
Ring bell or give sign at all time changes
Switch roles and repeat
Back together in one big group, briefly discuss, how was it?

## Power of Listening Exercise (from Sky Blue)

Pair up. Determine who will be A & B. A is first listener. B, you are going to tell A about something you are feeling excited about. A, your job is to be distracted, don't listen well, do whatever you can to nonverbally signal that you are completely uninterested in what this other person is telling you. B, notice how this feels. Then, B you get to tell your same story again, and this time, A, listen as well as you possibly can. Hang on every word, you can't wait to hear what they are telling you. B, notice how that feels. Then switch.

## What is Truth? Exercise (25 min.) (from Randy Schutt)

*(Deals with diversity, assumptions, multiple truths, etc.)*
Divide into groups of 5-6 people.
Tell the groups that you are going to give them a statement, and their assignment is to come up with:

- 3 ways the statement is true,
- 3 ways the statement is false,
- 3 ways the statement is ambiguous.

(All the groups will be working with the same statement.)
Once everyone is ready and all questions have been addressed, write the statement on the board, and say aloud.
Sample statements: "The Earth is round." "There are 24 hours in a day." "The U.S. is governed by a democracy." "This town is a great community to live in." "Money is evil."
Back together in large group, ask for some examples of ways the statement is true, false, and ambiguous. Then share share insights and highlights. What does it mean for something to be "true"? What assumptions are underneath? Notice your process.

## Being Right (30 min.) (from Randy Schutt)

*(Diversity, assumptions, multiple truths, inter-relationship of issues)*

*Preparation:* Write the set of 3 statements that you are working with onto a flipchart or some such.

Break into groups of 3-5, with at least one person you don't usually hang out with.

Invite people to reflect on the statements on the board, and consider how they personally feel about the issue. Then ask them to lay aside their personal opinion, because that's not actually what is going to be discussed!

The discussion topics are:

- What kind of past experience might cause someone to agree with each statement?
- What common values might be held by people holding contrasting viewpoints?
- Why do various kinds of people believe what they do?

Back together in one big group, share highlights, discuss: What does it mean to be "right"?

*Sample sets of statements*

**(A) Regarding White Supremacists (neo-Nazis, KKK) parading through your town:**

(1) White Supremacists are abhorrent

(2) citizens have the right to demonstrate peaceably even on behalf of unpopular causes

(3) people should have some control over what goes on in their community

**(B) Regarding property destruction as an activist tactic**

(1) "direct action gets the goods"—it does real damage to corporations and the media cover it when they refuse to cover 50,000 people in the streets

(2) alienates many the middle-of-the-road folks, whose support is essential to a successful social movement; makes the cause look bad

(3) hurting property is not violent because it doesn't actually cause any being physical pain

(4) destruction feels instinctively or morally wrong; ecologically wasteful, feels like more of the same violence that our society is already producing

## Reaction/Inaction (by Rob Sandelin)

Take a dozen potential group issues, write them on a whiteboard for all to see in a numbered list: 1, 2, 3, etc. Put two columns next to the items: "RE" and "IN." Then give everyone a card and have them evaluate that issue either two ways: Reaction or Inaction (they can mark "RE" and "IN" after each number). Reaction means, "YES I would willingly put two hours of energy into this issue." Inaction means, "NOPE, I would not be willing to put 2 hours of energy into this issue."

Then make a RE and IN graph of the responses. It is a fascinating study to see the differences. More importantly, it can teach the point that not everybody cares about different things and *that is normal*. I usually follow this up with a discussion about how to care take and work on things that *you* care about but that others don't. This discussion often brings out some great stuff and I have been told by participants that it really changed their whole understanding of how to be in a group.

## Doubles (10-15 min.) (from "sharing consensus," anonymous author)

This game offers an opportunity for participants to practice saying No in a situation where no justification is required. By lowering the bar, we hope to make safe space for dissent, to remind people that Yes is only meaningful when No is a real possibility.

1. The player who chooses to start the game says a word or compound made up of two words, such as "attorney general" or "out/law" or even "con/tact."

2. The next person to speak takes the second word of the first player's double and uses it as the first word of a new double: "general hospital" or "law firm" or "tact/less."

3. Players choose for themselves when to take a turn. Players can take as many turns during the course of the game as feels comfortable.

4. The chain of doubles continues until everyone who wants to play has had a turn.

5. If for ANY reason you don't accept someone's double, simply say "No." Any player may do this at any time to the most recent double. When this happens, the player who gave the word that got declined must come up with a replacement double, or else say "No" to the person who gave the previous double. If necessary, go clear back to the beginning of the chain.

6. Try to play quickly; if the group seems stuck, players should not hesitate to say "No."