

BUILDING BRIDGES TOGETHER

A WORKBOOK FOR PLANNING AN INTERCULTURAL
DIALOGUE SERIES BETWEEN ABORIGINAL AND
NON-ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

MAY 2008



BUILDING BRIDGES TOGETHER
A WORKBOOK FOR PLANNING AN INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE
SERIES BETWEEN ABORIGINAL AND NON-ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

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What the Salmon Showed Smokey Joe

by Eric Ostrowidzki, Ph.D. (Abenaki Nation). This story is one of a series of stories in Eric's forthcoming book *Among Blue Mountain Lakes and Jack Pines: A Field Manual for En-Visioning our Utopian Future*

Bobby Coho, Sweet Molly Brown, and Billy Ray slid down the embankment redolent with sage and hot baked earth. Kicking up clods of dried clay, golden-pink clouds in the sunlight, the three young friends stumbled onto a broad flat area. Before the short flat plain covered with clumps of sage and stones, the brown river swept by.

The three friends all came from the same reserve, went to the same high school, shared the same friends and tastes in music and burgers and tv. They were truly inseparable and this morning they had come to dip for salmon, happy that their favorite fish pit was available.

Bobby Coho carried the dip nets. Bobby Coho almost never spoke except in history class, where he knew more about the History of the World than any other student, Native, non-Native—it didn't matter. Often Bobby Coho was moody and glum, was only truly happy when he was fishing. Bobby Coho almost lived down by the river during the summer. Long hours he would gaze at the brown moving water. Like a Shaman fallen into a trance, Bobby Coho could be found peering at the liquid green fire of the salmon swimming stealthily upstream.

Sweet Molly Brown packed the food and water for the day in her knapsack. As usual, Molly carried around a sticky glass jar of thick molasses, which she always told people was her "only vice." With her long black hair swaying behind her, Molly moved elegantly with a purity of purpose and dignity of heart. Weirdest thing, though, Molly was the only Native from the reserve who had blue eyes as if Molly's soul was a blue sky trying to squeeze its way through those eyes.

Billy Ray got his name from his father who loved Billy Ray Cyrus's music, especially that song about the "achy-breaky heart." Billy Ray carried the

canvas folding chairs and a tied bundle of wood so that they could build a small fire to heat some coffee later in the day. When Billy Ray staggered onto the broad plain before the river, he sang a prayer to the sunlight sparkling off the water as the ravens took refuge in the shady trees to escape the heat of early morning. From a nearby cove of berry bushes, the Creator smiled at the three friends while they set up their fish-camp.

∞

A short distance up the river, there were three more friends from town. They were non-Native guys who went to the same high school as Bobby Coho, Molly Brown, and Billy Ray. Freckle-faced twins, Karl and Peter were both German guys whose father worked as the superintendent for the school board. Both of the boys played hockey and there were rumors circulating throughout the town that professional scouts were coming to see the brothers play.

Their best friend, Smokey Joe—his dad was a mechanic, “the only trustworthy mechanic in town,” as most folks liked to say. Although Smokey Joe’s mom died when he was a baby, both father and son were always very close and now they were building a customized car together, a chrome-yellow 1967 Ford Mustang that Smokey Joe bragged would “blow the doors in of those newer Japanese models.”

At 11:00 in the morning, when the sun-glare shimmered off the river in dazzling bursts and sheaves of light, the three boys from town had caught only three Sockeye Salmon with their fishing rods and reels.

Plump white bellies, pinkish-green scales slick with slime . . . Looking up-river for the first time, Smokey Joe saw the three Native friends and said: “Uh-oh, wagon burners.” Offended by this comment, Karl and Peter spoke at the same time, “Hey, that’s Bobby Coho and Billy Ray and Molly Brown. They’re good friends of ours. What do you have against them anyway?” Having heard these ideas from some of the older men who hung around his father’s auto-shop, Smokey-Joe argued: It’s just that those Natives get to fish as much as they want. They get to use nets while non-Natives have





to use only rods and reels. Why can't we use dip-nets and weirs stretched across the river? It's not fair, I tell you. Not only that, but Natives get all sorts of free money and even get their education paid for. Sure it must have been tough having your land taken from you and then be told what to do. The residential schools were bad news, too. But those things happened to them a long time ago and if Natives really want to be equal than they shouldn't get special treatment. Besides, why should society have to pay when it is not us but the original settlers who are the guilty ones?"

"Hey, wait a minute, Smokey," Karl interrupted, "You act like Natives are getting this stuff for free. That's not the way Bobby Coho, Billy Ray and Molly Brown tell the story. They speak about land claims and self-governance. They say that tax exemption and things like that are important, but it is small compensation compared to what was stolen from them. Seems like you're only getting a prejudiced view of Native history. Let's go talk with those guys to see what they have to say."



Smokey-Joe didn't know how long he had been listening to Molly Brown and Billy Ray when it happened. As he later recalled and would tell his friends, the first thing that Joe heard was Molly talk about the "irreparable harm wrought by colonialism that left behind an inter-generational legacy of social dysfunction." The last thing that he heard before Bobby Coho caught the salmon was Billy Ray claiming that "social reconciliation would only be possible between Natives and non-Natives when non-Natives recognized Aboriginal Title to the land." And then, as if conjured by Billy Ray's words, Bobby Coho snagged a massive salmon, powerfully thrashing, in his dip-net.

When Bobby Coho jerked the net from the rushing brown current, the salmon, suspended in the air, began to glow. Caught in the dip-net whose webbing was strung with sparkling droplets of water, the salmon cast a supernatural light over everything. Everything seemed unreal. Brighter. Even newer. For instance, the sky was a cloudless deep blue as if it was the same sky on the first morning of the first day on earth. Overhead, the trees

towered as if they were the original inhabitants of the planet, lordly giants clad in green stalking the world.

The six young people stood together in mute astonishment watching the opposite side of the river where they saw pitched a summer camp filled with Native Peoples living as they had done since before the Europeans first came to this land. Throughout the camp, people were coming and going, busy preparing for a feast because friends from the coast had come to trade. Already across the river the weir nets had been stretched to catch enough salmon for the evening's feast. Older boys stood along the pebbly shore, hauling in nets bulging with plentiful fish that glimmered like the facets of pink-green jewels.

From where he stood on the opposite side of the river, Smokey Joe saw grey-blue spirals of smoke drifting upwards through a thick grove of trees. Besides a campfire, filleted sheets of salmon were smoking, hardening to dark pink jerky. Tied with sinews between twin willow trees, a russet-yellow hide was being tanned by smoke, stretching tautly. Seated together in a semi-circle several feet away from the smoke, grannies and younger mothers were giggling and eating bannock and stitching together moccasins from the moose hide.

Beneath the shade of an evergreen tree, there was a man whose face was painted with a whorl of blue and orange pigments. Upon his head he wore a frightening headdress woven from cedar bark and motley bird feathers. Comical as a clown, he was hopping up and down and waving his arms like a man possessed by spirits. While performing these antics, he would speak in a squeaky or growling voice as if he were imitating the animal characters talking in a fable. Before the story-teller, a crowd of enraptured children were eating soap berry ice-cream and listening to the man's words as if they had the power to transform the world into a place of magic and mystery. In yet another part of the summer camp where this vast community of people would retire on an annual basis to prepare for winter, there was a group of Native men talking with another group of Native men who had come to barter, to trade. After the men had concluded their commerce,



exchanging salmon jerky for oolichan grease or shards of flinty obsidian, some of the men played a gambling game with bones.

∞

Though moonless, the sky was full of glittering stars. When Smokey-Joe woke, he lay without blanket or any covering on the cold hard ground, a sharp pebble pressing into the small of his back. Beside him, a sunken heap of ashes and red coals. He shivered in the dark.

He had no idea how he got there nor how long he had been asleep in the night air. Faintly, he recalled that he came to fish with Karl and Peter, and that the three of them hooked up with Bobby Coho, Sweet Molly Brown, and Billy Ray. And then it all came back to him: the salmon! It was the salmon that cast a spell over them all, turning back time to a period in history before the European explorers and fur traders and settlers had ever set foot in this ruggedly magnificent wilderness when Native people governed as independent nations.

Poking a stick to stir the coals, Smokey-Joe watched the sparks fly upward like a hectic burst of orange-red bees deserting their fiery hive. Yet what could this vision mean, Joe asked himself shivering in the chilled night air. What was the salmon trying to show him by this vision? Or was the vision even real? Maybe the whole thing was just a foolish dream and he was now at home sleeping in his warm bed.

Laughing to himself, Smokey Joe threw the stick into the nest of coals and began to leave when he noticed a half-full jar of molasses left as an offering to the Creator. At that moment, he heard a loud plop and saw, before it vanished beneath the darkly flowing water, a greenish-pink fish glowing like a magic lantern hung in an underwater garden.

Introduction

Stories can be strong bridges into worlds that maybe unfamiliar to us. *What the Salmon Showed Smokey Joe* is a story that offers a way of learning about some of the cultural differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Too often, in community development work in BC, non-Aboriginal peoples do not adequately understand the stories, interests and priorities of Aboriginal peoples. This common lack of understanding can often result in exclusive development processes. This lack of understanding can be addressed when Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples decide to engage in dialogue for the purpose of improving how each group understands one another and can act together.

From June 2006 to April 2008, the Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia (SPARC BC) and the members of the Building Bridges Together Advisory Committee worked together to develop a general method of encouraging Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in BC to engage in mutually beneficial dialogues that lead to improved cross cultural understanding and community based action. The product of the work of the Building Bridges Together Advisory Committee was two publications: (1) *Building Bridges Together Resource Guide*; (2) *Building Bridges Together Workbook*.

Building Bridges Together Resource Guide is a compilation of a wide range of resources that can inform local initiatives to engage in dialogue and action-planning between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. The resource guide was designed to help you and your community access relevant information as you engage in an intercultural dialogue series.

Building Bridges Together Workbook compliments the resource guide by outlining a three part process for creating an intercultural dialogue series with and for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Fictional stories mark the beginning of each major phase of our description of how to create a local dialogue series. The stories provide some insight into how each phase of creating an intercultural dialogue series applies to common



lived experiences in BC communities. The workbook in your hands is the 'how-to' component of the *Building Bridges Together* series and contains assessment sheets and planning worksheets to help you work with people in your community to develop a locally relevant intercultural dialogues series.

Both documents have been designed to assist community members and organizations, First Nations and government to engage in intercultural work. As such, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community leaders and people working in intercultural environments such as health, education, justice, business and social services may find the Building Bridges Together series useful.

Outline and learning objectives

In addition to this introduction, there are four parts to this workbook. In part one, we provide a series of questions that guide you through an assessment of your own intercultural work competencies. In part two, we outline the activities that are part of planning a local intercultural dialogue series. In part three, we offer some guidelines for implementing a local intercultural dialogue process. The fourth part of this workbook is the appendices.

Although this workbook does touch on a wide range of topics related to intercultural dialogue and action planning, it is by no means a comprehensive treatment of the subject. Nevertheless, it does provide a general framework for organizing a mutually respectful dialogue and action planning process for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people who are interested in working together. As such, all content in this workbook has been developed with a view to facilitating the achievement of two learning objectives for the reader:

- To understand the strengths and weaknesses of one's own intercultural work competencies;
- To gain knowledge of a general framework for organizing, implementing and evaluating an intercultural dialogue series with and for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

Part 1: Complete self assessment

Larry sits on the local hospital board of Caraway, BC. He is interested in having more involvement from the local First Nation in community health initiatives. He has tried a few times to invite members of the First Nation to events but there is no response to his emails. He'd like to do something but he's not sure how to start the process of talking together. He also knows that there has been a history of racism in the provision of health services to local First Nations, so this will definitely be an issue that needs to be discussed.

Marion is a member of the local First Nation. She is an important healer in her community and also works as a social worker. She has received some emails from Larry, who sits on the local hospital board, but isn't sure if she should respond. She'd like her community to have more input into local health initiatives, but she doesn't want to be told how they should be involved or be used as a way for the health authority to get more money. She also doesn't really know Larry so is not sure he is committed to working with her community or being open to another way of seeing or doing things.

For those, like Larry and Marion, who might be interested in working together but are unsure of what to do, a dialogue series may be a useful way of building trust and improving understanding across cultural differences. If you are like Larry, a useful first step toward engaging in intercultural work could involve assessing your intercultural work competencies.

In this section, we offer a simple discussion of the different levels of intercultural work and provide corresponding assessment worksheets. The purpose of these worksheets is to:

- help you, at an individual level, identify those aspects of your intercultural work habits that are strong and those that are weak;
- help you to consider pathways to improve your interactions with people from a culture different from your own.





Step One: Assess your intercultural work competencies

In an increasingly interdependent world, where the possibilities of encountering cultural difference are likely, the ability to respectfully discuss ideas and act together with a person from a different culture is a vital skill for individuals. How well a person is able to work across cultural difference relates to their intercultural work competencies (ICs).

What are Intercultural Work Competencies (ICs)?

We define ICs as a combination of awareness, attitudes, knowledge and skills required to effectively and appropriately engage with members of another culture.

To 'engage' means more than communicating by talking together. It also requires the ability to empathize and participate in the exercise of making decisions together.

Intercultural work competencies are 'developed', meaning that a person builds these competencies over time – making advances and experiencing set-backs. Intercultural work is a 'process' because it is an ongoing learning experience through which one is changed and changes others. The changes are often unpredictable and transformative, often becoming the foundation for meaningful and respectful relationship-building.

Three Levels of Intercultural Work

Three levels of intercultural work have been developed to assist you in determining how effectively you relate or would like to relate to people from a culture different from your own.

These different levels of intercultural work assume that you already have some experience working across and in between different cultures. If you think this assessment would be a benefit to you, read the definitions,

locate yourself at one of the levels and fill out the corresponding self-assessment sheet for your level.

Once you have read through the three descriptions of intercultural work, use the corresponding self-assessment sheet below to learn about your current intercultural work strengths and weaknesses. The following self assessment exercise should help you to critically examine your current awareness, attitudes, knowledge and skills related to your local intercultural work and interests.¹

After assessing yourself, you may discover that you need to do some learning about your community and local history. For a wide range of related resources, see the *Building Bridges Together Resource Guide*.

¹ These self-assessment sheets have been adapted from the following article: Alvino E. Fantini, "A Central Concern: Developing Intercultural Competence" in Report by the Intercultural Communicative Competence Task Force (World Learning, Brattleboro, VT, USA, 2000).





Definition of beginner level of intercultural work

1. Beginner

I am willing to interact with people of other cultures; however, when a situation becomes confusing, I tend to take a passive role.

I am interested in learning from people from other cultures but I do not have a clear set of principles for my intercultural work.

I am aware of cultural difference but do not know much about the cultures around me. I respond to intercultural moments and have never intentionally planned an intercultural meeting.

I am reasonably tolerant of other values, customs and practices although I often do not understand them.

When people communicate in ways I do not understand I try to accommodate their way of talking but hope that they will adapt to the way I communicate and understand the world.

I have no knowledge of the language of the cultural groups with whom I work. I often seek advice from others on how to work with people from a different cultural group from my own.

Definition of intermediate level of intercultural work

2. Intermediate

I have established a set of principles to guide my intercultural work. I have developed a mental checklist of the sort of intercultural situations I am likely to encounter in my professional life.

I have intentionally planned intercultural meetings. I possess some intercultural skills for responding to the demands of unfamiliar situations involving several different cultural groups.

I can see patterns of my intercultural work and I am able to draw conclusions without having to seek advice.

I have basic speaking and comprehension skills in the language of the cultural groups that I work most closely with.

Definition of advanced level of intercultural work

3. Advanced

I am consistently prepared for intercultural situations and am willing and able to share my knowledge and skills about how to work effectively across different cultural values and practices.

I welcome and celebrate the fact that people can see things from different perspectives.

I am able to guide people through tense moments of intercultural work in which different values or practices rest in opposition to one another. As such, I am able to intercede when complications emerge and facilitate discussions that enable members of the group to better understand one another.

I have intermediate or advanced speaking and comprehension skills in the language of the cultural groups that I work most closely with.

Note: The worksheets on the following pages are starting points, designed to help you identify how you can develop your intercultural work competencies. Once you have identified general areas for development you may want to create a personal learning plan based on your findings from this assessment.

Worksheet 1: Beginner intercultural work competencies

1. Beginner

AWARENESS: To be aware does not mean understanding something or someone. Awareness is mainly an ability to be conscious of, feel or perceive someone or something.

Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
I am aware of cultural differences.		
I am aware of my negative, positive and neutral reactions to these differences (intrigue, fear, ridicule, indifference, superiority, etc.).		
I am aware of how specific cultural differences affects/alters my interaction with others.		

ATTITUDE: An attitude influences a person to act/react to people or events in neutral, favorable or unfavorable ways.

Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
When uncertainty arises from cultural difference, I adopt a tolerant attitude as long as the issue is not a sensitive one for me.		
Although I often find culturally different behavior curious, I try to make allowances for it.		
Sometimes I interpret cultural difference in an unfavorable way, which I later realize was not entirely correct.		
I express willingness to interact with members of different cultures.		
I express willingness to learn from members of different cultural groups, their language, customs and their history.		
I express willingness to communicate in the language of other cultural groups.		
I express willingness to deal with the emotions and frustrations caused by my participation in the lives of different cultural groups (in addition to the pleasures which it may offer).		

Worksheet 1: Beginner intercultural work competencies cont'd.

KNOWLEDGE: To know something is to have a confident understanding of a subject, potentially with the ability to use it for a specific purpose.		
Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
I have general knowledge about the cultures I work with. This knowledge consists of facts that are not always connected and I don't have an overall picture of the cultural groups I work with.		
I learn from intercultural experiences and add to my previous knowledge.		
I believe that all cultural knowledge should be shared with anyone who is interested in knowing about it.		
I can cite a basic definition of culture and identify its components.		
I can contrast aspects of different local languages and cultures with my own.		
I know the essential norms and taboos of different local cultures (greetings, dress, behavior, etc.).		
I know some techniques to maximize my learning of local languages and culture.		
SKILLS: To demonstrate a skill is to perform an acquired measurable behavior.		
Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
I demonstrate flexibility when interacting with persons from different cultures (active listening, question asking, accepting of different behavior, etc.).		
I behave in ways judged 'respectful' by members of the other cultural group with whom I work.		
I can convene people to participate in a respectful dialogue between different cultural groups.		

Worksheet 2: Intermediate intercultural work competencies

2. Intermediate

AWARENESS: To be aware does not mean understanding something or someone. Awareness is mainly an ability to be conscious of, feel or perceive someone or something.

Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
I am aware of myself as a 'culturally conditioned' being and as an individual with personal preferences and habits.		
I am aware of responses to my cultural identity (ancestry, class, gender, age, ability, etc.).		
I am aware of how my values and ethics are expressed in specific contexts.		
I am aware of differing cultural styles and language use and their effect on my workplace.		
I am aware of a number of useful strategies for dealing with common intercultural issues.		

ATTITUDE: An attitude influences a person to act/react to people or events in neutral, favorable or unfavorable ways.

Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
I express willingness to see the uncertainties that can arise from intercultural encounters as an interesting challenge, provided that the issues involved are not sensitive for me.		
I react neutrally to cultural differences, rather than hastily categorizing them as good or bad.		
I express willingness to learn particular aspects of different local cultures.		
I adapt my behavior in accordance to what I am learning about local cultures.		
I express willingness to grapple with multiple ways of perceiving and expressing myself.		
I express willingness to engage with others and try to understand differences in their behavior and attitude.		

Worksheet 2: Intermediate intercultural work competencies cont'd.

I express willingness to interact in a variety of ways, some quite different from those to which I am accustomed.		
I express willingness to work in solidarity with those who have been and/or are systematically excluded from meaningful participation in society.		

KNOWLEDGE: To know something is to have a confident understanding of a subject, potentially with the ability to use it for a specific purpose.

Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
I know about the cultures I am likely to be working with, paying attention not only to isolated facts, but to values, customs and practices common in those cultures.		
I know that some cultural knowledge is sacred and is not shared with outsiders. I respect cultural knowledge by accepting that I can not know everything about another culture.		
When I experience new values, customs and practices I use the knowledge to develop a general system of principles for action.		
I know at least one definition of culture and can describe the complexities of cultural systems using relevant concepts and terms.		
I know at least one model for understanding learning processes and strategies and implications for learning about and adjusting to another culture.		
I know the content of various publications about understanding cultures, including those related to the specific domain of my work.		
I utilize relevant culture-specific information to improve my working style and professional interaction with local cultures.		
I know about the history of local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations.		

Worksheet 2: Intermediate intercultural work competencies cont'd.

SKILLS: To demonstrate a skill is to perform an acquired measurable behavior.		
Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
I can communicate effectively with people from various cultures in a range of social domains, considering age, gender, social status, and other factors.		
I can respectfully inquire into the values and worldview of local cultural groups.		
I monitor my behavior by reflecting on its impact on my relations to members of different local culture groups.		
I can articulate the general history and some sociopolitical factors which have shaped the relationships between my own culture and the culture of other local groups.		
I have basic speaking and comprehension skills in the language of the cultural groups that I work most closely with.		

Worksheet #3: Advanced intercultural work competencies

3. Advanced

AWARENESS: To be aware does not mean understanding something or someone. Awareness is mainly an ability to be conscious of, feel or perceive someone or something.

Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
I am aware of factors which help and hinder the intercultural development of those I work with and ways to help them overcome them.		
I am aware of how I perceive myself as a communicator, facilitator, and mediator in intercultural/multicultural situations.		
I am aware of how I am perceived by others as a communicator, facilitator, and mediator in intercultural/multicultural situations.		
I am aware of the multiple perspectives, complexities, and implications of choices in intercultural and multicultural contexts.		

ATTITUDE: An attitude influences a person to act/react to people or events in neutral, favorable or unfavorable ways.

Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
I express a willingness to engage the challenges of linguistic and cultural diversity as they occur in professional and community settings.		
I express a willingness to be flexible in communicating and interacting with those who are linguistically and culturally different (and with limited knowledge of my own language and culture).		
I express willingness to suspend judgment and appreciate the complexities and subtleties of intercultural and multicultural communication and interaction.		
I work in solidarity with those who have been and/or are systematically excluded from decision making processes that affect their life.		



Worksheet #3: Advanced intercultural work competencies

KNOWLEDGE: To know something is to have a confident understanding of a subject, potentially with the ability to use it for a specific purpose.		
Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
I know about the history of local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations.		
I know that some cultural knowledge is sacred and is not shared with outsiders. I respect cultural knowledge by accepting that I can not know everything about another culture.		
I have developed a system of principles that can be applied reliably to almost any intercultural situation.		
I know about a range of models for understanding cultures, and the prevailing theories in the intercultural literature which underpin them.		
I know about and utilize several models for mediating and resolving conflict among people of different cultures.		
I know about the kinds of communicative difficulties that can arise in an intercultural setting and of a wide range of strategies for resolving them.		
I know about a range of alternative models for conducting education or training processes that address diverse learning styles, relevant to training and advising in intercultural settings.		

Worksheet #3: Advanced intercultural work competencies

SKILLS: To demonstrate a skill is to perform an acquired measurable behavior.		
Qualities	Yes/No/Somewhat/ Don't Know	Action Required
I can explain the complex dynamics inherent to intercultural settings involving people of diverse language and cultural backgrounds.		
I can explain a range of models for understanding cultures and the dominant and emerging theories which underpin these.		
I can empathize and celebrate with people from cultures that are different from my own.		
I research new and alternative methods that further understanding of intercultural work.		
I create new concepts, models, and strategies for presentations at professional meetings and publications in appropriate journals.		
I have intermediate or advanced speaking and comprehension skills in the language of the cultural groups that I work most closely with.		





Results of self assessment exercise

After you have completed the appropriate self assessment questionnaire, you should be more aware of your intercultural work strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, you should have a few insights into new personal learning directions.

Part 2: Bring together stakeholders and plan your intercultural dialogue series

Bob and Tina have been getting some local people together in Canwedialogue, BC. They have been meeting to discuss ways to engage youth after some racially motivated fights took place between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth last year. Bob is a successful First Nations businessman, running a local Aboriginal tourism company, and is the president of the Aboriginal Friendship Centre in Canwedialogue. He has always been interested in helping youth, particularly Aboriginal youth, who live in and around the town. Tina has been a lawyer in Canwedialogue for 15 years. Many of her clients are youth and she has spent a lot of time taking specialized courses and seminars on youth crime and restorative justice.

Tina and Bob, as well as 7 other people have been meeting once a month for the last couple of months trying to think of ways to bring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth together in the community. Everyone in the group has a lot of good will and wants to start a project. However, the group recognizes that not everyone is open to getting together and a lot of work will need to be done. They believe that having a community dialogue would be a good pathway to local action.

Tina and Bob have a group in place and know that they want to host a series of dialogues in their community. They have completed the self-assessment and so have members in their group. They feel ready to move forward but don't really know how to go about planning a dialogue series. They have decided to use the *Building Bridges Together Workbook* to plan their dialogue series.

In part 2 we review the eight basic steps in planning a local intercultural dialogue series. The key considerations and tasks for each planning step are discussed below.

Worksheets are also provided for you to use during the planning process, including a sample evaluation model for you to use to plan ahead for the evaluation of your dialogue series.

Step One: Develop draft dialogue series idea and hold a feasibility meeting

One of the first steps in the process of planning an intercultural dialogue series involves hosting a meeting with a small number of committed community members to create your dialogue series idea.

You can use the workbook content to inform the development of the dialogue series idea. The dialogue series idea should be articulated in a short document of two to four pages. Ideally, the document will indicate how the dialogue will be designed as a partnership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples and how it will address the related issues of racism, cross-cultural misunderstanding and mistrust.

Although each community will determine for itself exactly what it wants to achieve through an intercultural dialogue series, we propose that there are at least three overarching outcomes that can be expected:

1. Improved cross cultural understanding of values, beliefs, worldviews, the history, present issues and future hopes of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members;²
2. The development and implementation of a local Intercultural Action Plan;

² David Kahane, "What is Culture? Generalizing About Aboriginal and Newcomer Perspectives," in Catherine Bell and David Kahane, eds., *Intercultural Dispute Resolution in Aboriginal Contexts* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004) 28-56.

3. Enriched and sustainable local dialogue processes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

Once you have developed a two to four page description of your dialogue series idea, you are ready to bring together a diverse group of leaders from local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities to explore the possibility of hosting a local intercultural dialogue series.

At this meeting, you are seeking to establish consensus among interested people about whether there is merit to engaging in an intercultural dialogue process.

Important: Without the full and informed consent of key stakeholders and other participants, the dialogue series should not go ahead and the group may want to consider alternative ways of engaging in intercultural work. If the group agrees to proceed, then it is a good idea to ask for volunteers to help plan and coordinate the dialogue series.



Step Two: Establish a group of coordinators

Your next task is to establish a group of coordinators to work with you throughout the dialogue series.

Although it is helpful to have some expertise in your group of coordinators, it is important to remember that you do not need to be an expert in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations to plan, deliver and evaluate a local dialogue series between the two groups.

Key considerations for establishing a group of coordinators

The group of coordinators should include representatives from local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities and organizations. The size of the group of coordinators should be proportionate to the scale of the community that would engage in your dialogue series.

- For a dialogue series related to your place of work or an area in your city or town, two or three should be enough.
- For a community wide project, you will want a larger group of coordinators (10-15 people) that represent a wider range of viewpoints and backgrounds.

In order to ensure that the project runs smoothly, it is important to develop Terms of Reference for the group of co-ordinators so each member understands the scope of their respective roles and responsibilities.

Terms of Reference for the group of co-ordinators should include discussions about the following items:

- Membership
- Chairing
- Attendance
- Voting
- Minutes

-
- Quorum (number of members needed for an official meeting of the Committee)
 - Meeting times⁴

In addition to the aforementioned items, the group of co-ordinators should also engage in discussions about the following questions and include relevant responses into their terms of reference.

⁴ For more guidelines on running effective committees, see: Fishel, D., (2003), *The Book of the Board: Effective Governance for Non-Profit Organizations*, The Federation Press, Sydney.

Worksheet # 4: Preliminary questions for group of coordinators

Questions	Responses
What voices need to be included in the planning stages of the dialogue series?	
What are appropriate meeting times, locations and protocols for the group of coordinators?	
What are possible barriers to some coordinators attending the meetings? What ways can these barriers be addressed ?	
Is the group of coordinators reflective of the diversity in our community? Who is missing?	
Do the coordinators of the proposed intercultural dialogue series understand the local history of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations? Are there opportunities to learn this history as a small group?	
Are there significant power differences among the coordinators? How might this influence the planning and delivery of the dialogue?	
How widespread is the vision of bringing Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples together in our community?	
Who else has been discussing the idea of hosting a dialogue series? What concerns have they expressed?	
Have there been previous attempts to improve relationships between local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples and communities?	

Key considerations for developing a context statement

Assuming that the group can develop terms of reference and agree to continue their work together, we suggest that the second task of the group is to develop a context statement.

The context statement could include:

- brief overview of local historical relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples
- definitions of local intercultural issues
- relationships of the issues to different aspects of the community (i.e. schools, business, health, etc.)

In general a context statement should not exceed five to ten pages in length. Use the questions in the following worksheet to develop your context statement.

Worksheet # 5: Questions to consider when developing your context statement

Questions	Responses
What issues do you see in the relationships between local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples?	
What evidence supports your definition of the issues? (i.e. stories you've heard, official reports, etc).	
Why are these issues important and what exactly is at stake?	
How are these issues impacting schools, organizations, businesses, etc. in the community?	
What are the different perspectives on these issues? How can these different perspectives be included in the context statement?	
What is not known about these issues?	
How would a local intercultural dialogue series address the issues that have been defined?	

Step Three: Choose a dialogue process for your community

Once you have defined some local intercultural issues, you are in a position to select the best dialogue process that works to address the issues.

Choosing how to structure a local dialogue series is not easy since you need to find a process that fits with your resources, context and intentions for change.

- The decision making process for this part of your work requires creative and critical thinking skills because you will likely need to change a standard dialogue model or create a dialogue model to suit your particular circumstances.
- The dialogue design should be an intercultural ‘creation’— it should include practices and representations of the involved cultural groups.
- The coordinating group may need to invest a significant amount of time in the process of developing the most appropriate model (i.e. location, sequence etc.)
- The act of discussing the right model should involve negotiations back and forth across different perspectives.

If you and your group of coordinators decide that the local dialogue series should be a highly structured process that aims to inform specific policies and programs, then you will want to consider developing a sound research plan, including plans for analysis, interpretation and dissemination of results.

A useful guidebook has been developed by Canadian Policy Research Networks to assist you in the process of designing a research-focused local dialogue series. The title of the resource is called *Public Dialogue: A Tool for Citizen Engagement*. The manual focuses on public dialogue and provides the tools to help start developing the plan and materials for a local public dialogue. The manual is based on the lessons learned from *The Society We Want*, a national public dialogue project of the Canadian Policy Research

Networks. It provides information about how the materials to support public dialogue are developed and anchors public dialogue in a research methodology and analysis plan. Here is the link: <http://www.cprn.com/doc.cfm?doc=118&l=en>.

Here are some guiding questions you may want to consider as you develop your own method or work to amend our proposed method to fit your communities' needs and interests.

Worksheet #6: Questions about selecting a dialogue process

Questions	Responses
Is the dialogue method proposed in this workbook suitable for our community? If not, what method is appropriate?	
What barriers to participation do members of the community face?	
What types of inclusive practices need to be built into the model so that these barriers to participation are removed?	
How can different language preferences be accommodated in the dialogue series?	
When should the dialogues take place?	
Where should the dialogues take place?	



Step Four: Select host organization and write the proposal

Once you have a clear sense of the type of dialogue series that would benefit your community, you will need to select a host organization and write a proposal and secure funding for the work.

The type of proposal that you write will depend on the funding sources you are pursuing. You are welcome to use as much of the general method in this book as you see fit. Regardless of the type of proposal you write, you will need to develop a budget.

Key considerations for selecting a host organization and developing a budget

The budget should be developed with the sponsoring organization. The following guidelines for developing a budget assume that a local organization would serve as an institutional home for the dialogue series. Here are a couple of guiding questions for you to consider when selecting a host institution for your dialogue series.

- Does the organization have a history of working with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people?
- Does the organization have the capacity and commitment to support the dialogue series?
- Does the mandate of the organization harmonize with the vision of the dialogue series?

On the following page is a table that will help you estimate the cost of the dialogue series. You can use this list to assess:

- how much money it will take to conduct your local dialogue;
- how much money is available locally;
- how much money needs to be raised from other regional, provincial or federal sources.

Worksheet 7: Budget items to consider for a dialogue series

Budget Item	Total Activity Cost	Sources of funding
Facilities Telephone Office supplies Rent Use of equipment—computer, desk, photocopier, etc. Travel		
Advertising: Radio, newspaper, flyers,		
Venue for Dialogues		
Food for dialogues		
Food for group of coordinators		
Child-minding		
Transportation allowance for out-of-town participants		
Honorarium for elders for contribution to dialogue series		
Consultant fees (i.e. community based researchers)		
Administration		
Total		



Step Five: Conduct community-based research and develop an information package

In this section, we propose some key considerations for conducting community-based research that you may want to undertake as part of your intercultural dialogue series.

The result of this research would be a background research paper and corresponding information package for dialogue participants.

Before undertaking any community-based research it is important to have a clearly defined set of ethics to guide the research that are agreeable to all parties concerned. For examples and guidelines on research ethics, see the appendices.

Types of Research

We suggest three possible forms of community-based research that could be undertaken prior to implementing an intercultural dialogue series:

- literature review
- key stakeholder interviews
- a community survey

Literature Review

The goals of a literature review for the purposes of a dialogue series are threefold:

1. The review will serve to identify and confirm existing intercultural issues in the community as well as provide some background about the scope of existing issues and some potential solutions or ideas that might contribute to addressing those issues.

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2. The review will seek to identify existing intercultural services and/or programs in the community, including existing committees and roundtables that focus on particular issues, as well as identifying potential invitees for the intercultural dialogues series.
 3. The review will explore intercultural processes from other communities in BC and abroad, with the goal of identifying potentially valuable ideas and 'road-tested' approaches that might be useful in your community.

The results of the literature review can inform the content of your dialogue series. This important stage of the project can help you to ensure that you do not duplicate work that has already been done, and that you are able to avoid any mistakes or pitfalls that might have occurred in other communities.

The type of literature review that we encourage involves a review and synthesis of previous research and community development work on intercultural issues in your community. This might include community reports, news articles, as well as any other documents the local project leaders may find appropriate.

As part of a literature review, it might be useful to consult the supplementary literature that is featured in Appendix 1 in the *Building Bridges Together Resource Guide*.

Interviews with Stakeholders

The second type of background research that may be useful for your dialogue series are interviews with key stakeholders. These key informant interviews can provide 'on the ground' knowledge and perspectives about local intercultural issues.

To ensure that diverse stakeholders are included in the interviews, you may want to consider including representatives from the following groups:

- First Nations
- senior levels of government
- the health authority
- school board and administrators
- school Parent Advisory Councils
- city staff
- key community service agencies
- those from the local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal business community
- local museum and archives

In our experience, it is also useful to engage with representatives or agencies serving marginalized populations as those voices can sometimes be overlooked in a community dialogue process. These populations include youth, newcomers, persons with disabilities and others. By deliberately engaging with these groups you can help ensure that the community dialogue process ultimately reflects the diversity of the community.

A Survey

A third option for local research is to engage the community in a survey to assess Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal attitudes toward cultural difference.

Attitude survey research may demonstrate a local need to improve how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples relate. Survey results may also help your community set baseline attitudinal measures which allow for ongoing monitoring of attitude changes over time.

For complete details on how to conduct a community survey, see the following website. The following site explains the basics of survey work: www.whatisasurvey.info.

Key considerations for creating an information package for participants

It may be useful to provide each participant with an information package of materials prior to the first dialogue in the series.

Since you will have already developed a context statement earlier in the planning phase of the dialogue series, you can use it to inform the content of your information package.

The information package can include a wide range of information and, depending on your group's stated objectives, it might be one of the most central aspects of your dialogue process.

It is important to consider what is needed to put an information package together and whether you have the resources to do so, since this work can be time consuming and costly.

The package can be as specific and detailed as the coordinating committee thinks is appropriate. In general, there are four possible pieces that you may want to include in the information package:

- definition of the issues;
- an overview of the dialogue series (including intended outcomes);
- a list of related resources for participants to learn about on their own time.
- results of community-based research



Step Six: Develop an outreach plan

Ideally, your intercultural dialogue series should be an inclusive process that involves all sectors of the community and anyone who is keen to participate. Since not all people respond to the same kind of invitation it is important to have different ways of inviting people to participate in the dialogue series. It may be useful for you to develop an outreach strategy so you can make sure that all relevant stakeholders are invited.

Efforts should be made to include immigrants, youth, seniors, people with disabilities, people with 'decision-making power', the LGBT community and individuals and families on a low income.

Step Seven: Plan for evaluation

By evaluation, we mean the practice of asking dialogue participants questions about the dialogue series so that you can learn what did and did not go well, and what you could do next time.

It is especially important to think about evaluation if seeking outside funding, since most funders require any projects they fund to be evaluated.

How you evaluate your dialogue series will depend on how you have defined your outputs (the work that you do) and the specific outcomes that you want to achieve (the change that results from your work).

One way of thinking about how to evaluate the success of your dialogue efforts is to explain your project in terms of an evaluation model. This model may not be appropriate for all projects but is a useful starting point.

Key considerations for creating an evaluation model

On the next page, we provide the basic parts of an evaluation model that you can use to organize how you will evaluate the outcomes of your dialogue series.

The sample model has been developed to work with the intercultural dialogue series developed in this workbook, which includes four dialogues and one community forum. To 'measure' your success, you will need to create feedback forms for each one of your dialogues. The feedback forms should ask questions about each outcome you hope to achieve for each dialogue. The dialogue participant responses to your questions ought to be included in a proceedings report after each dialogue, as well as the discussion points and any other relevant information that was expressed in the dialogue.

The model below will provide you with some examples of the type of outcomes that can be expected of each dialogue in our proposed dialogue series.

Sample evaluation model

Output	Outcomes	Indicators	Data Collection Plan
Delivering Dialogue 1	<p>Increased awareness of local histories</p> <p>Increased awareness of colonial practices in Canada and legacies of colonialism</p> <p>Increased understanding of differing beliefs, world views and values</p>	<p>Number of participants reporting an increase in awareness of local histories and the effects of colonialism</p> <p>Number of participants reporting an increase in awareness of differing beliefs, world views and values and how these influences relationships with place and people</p>	<p>This data can be collected through a post-dialogue evaluation sheet</p>
Delivering Dialogue 2	<p>Increased understanding of the dynamics at play in local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations</p> <p>Improved understanding of personal coping strategies related to colonial legacies</p> <p>Increased interest in working together to envision healthy relationships across cultures</p>	<p>Number of participants reporting an increased understanding of the dynamics at play in local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples</p> <p>Number of participants reporting improved understanding of personal coping strategies related to colonial legacies</p> <p>Number of participants reporting increased interest in working together to envision healthy relationships across cultures</p>	<p>This data can be collected through a post-dialogue evaluation sheet</p>
Delivering Dialogue 3	<p>Increased appreciation for different visions of the future</p> <p>Consensus around some aspects of a vision for future relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples</p>	<p>Number of participants reporting increased appreciation for different visions of the future</p> <p>Number of working groups developing action plans for working toward visions for better relations</p>	<p>The data related to participants appreciation of different visions of the future will be collected through a post-dialogue evaluation sheet</p> <p>The project leader will track the number of working groups</p>

Sample evaluation model cont'd.

Delivering Dialogue 4	Improved sense of direction among participants for working together across cultural differences Improved trust between participants who have participated in all four dialogues	Number of participants reporting improved sense of direction among participants for working together across cultural differences Number of participants reporting improved trust between participants who have participated in all four dialogues Number of participants reporting satisfaction with community vision and action plan for improving intercultural relations The Intercultural Action Plan can also serve as a measurement of these anticipated outcomes	The data related to participants satisfaction with the vision and plan, sense of direction among participants for working together, and trust between participants can be collected through a post-dialogue evaluation sheet
Delivering Community Forum	Increased confidence in the idea of local collaboration between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples Increased interest on behalf of participants in maintaining the practice of intercultural dialogues	Number of participants reporting increased confidence in the idea of local collaboration between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples Number of participants reporting increased interest in sustaining the practice of intercultural dialogues	The data related to these indicators can be collected through a post-forum evaluation sheet

Step Eight: Recruit intercultural facilitators and/or an implementation manager

One of the most important parts of your local dialogue series are the facilitators.

Given the focus of the dialogue that we are proposing in this workbook, it is important that all dialogue sessions are co-facilitated.

- This means that an Aboriginal and a non-Aboriginal person work together in a collaborative effort to improve understandings across cultural differences.
- Any other arrangement will not model the exercise of working across cultures and will not reflect the composition of the dialogue participants.

You may want to use the same team of facilitators throughout the entire dialogue series or you may want to use several different facilitators.

Regardless of the number of facilitators that you choose, it is important that the select facilitators have intermediate to advanced intercultural work competencies and are familiar with the dynamics of local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations.

If local facilitators are selected, it is important for both facilitators to be respected members of the community and to have good relations with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal persons. See the appendices for more discussion about intercultural facilitation.

Some intercultural dialogue series will require an implementation manager, especially if the dialogue series is going to involve a large number of people or involve a lot of complexity.

The implementation manager should have a good track record managing multi-phased community development initiatives and should be able to liaise effectively with the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community.

In the event that you and your group of coordinators choose 'outsiders' to facilitate and manage the project, then it is important to provide training about the local context. This may require some additional work since it will involve collecting relevant materials and distributing them to the facilitators and implementation manager.

Results of planning an intercultural dialogue series

If you followed our guidelines for planning a local dialogue series, you will have completed three tasks before implementing the dialogue series:

- developed a proposal and secured funding (i.e. implementation plan for your dialogue series);
- a background research report and an information package
- a community outreach plan

Once you have developed these resources, you are ready to host the dialogue series. In the following sections we explain each of the seven steps in delivering and evaluating an intercultural dialogue series.

Part 3: Deliver and evaluate your dialogue series

Julie, Yolanda and Kevin are from the local First Nation. They are part of a group that is protesting the building of a new waterpark and swimming pool on the edge of I don't understand you, BC. The proposed site for the pool is a very important sacred site to their First Nation. They have been holding ceremonies on the site forever, according to local Elders.

In town, there has been a lot of animosity toward the protest group and a lot of misunderstanding about why this land is so important to the local First Nation. Julie, Yolanda and Kevin would like to have a dialogue in I don't understand you so local townspeople could learn more about the history of the local First Nation. They have been meeting with some people in town and the group has decided to host a series of dialogues about history, the present and the future. Julie, Yolanda and Kevin, as well as the group of coordinators from the local First Nation and the town of I don't understand you have done most of the background steps for hosting an intercultural dialogue series. They are getting ready to host the first dialogue.

In this part of the workbook, there is a discussion of the general components of delivering an intercultural dialogue series, including:

- key considerations and tasks involved in delivering and evaluating an intercultural dialogue series;
- general objectives and types of activities for each one of the dialogues in the series; and
- key considerations related to the celebratory community forum at the end of the dialogue series.

The following sections only provide mentions about specific content for a intercultural dialogue series. For content sources related to our proposed intercultural dialogue method, see the *Building Bridges Together Resource Guide*.

Step One: Host a dialogue to remember history

Let us now begin a walk together through history to establish common perceptions of where the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people who share this land have come from and to search out common ground on which to build a shared future.⁵

History has many sides and manifests itself in our daily interactions, as well as through the activities of our public and private lives. Often, local history is overlooked in current community development discussions or it is dismissed as unimportant and something on which people get 'hung up'.

Since the first dialogue is focused on the past, it may involve formal presentations about local history and should also include time and space for community leaders to engage in group discussion on the histories of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada and the community in question.

Objectives

Some potential objectives for the first dialogue could include:

- To learn about the different worldviews and belief systems of early settlers and Aboriginal people during first contacts;
- To establish guiding principles for the dialogue series;
- To examine different modes of intercultural communication between early settlers and Aboriginal people;
- To learn about the role that myth plays in our understanding of history;

⁵ Royal Commission on Aboriginal People, Volume 1: Chapter One, Getting Started (1996).

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- To examine the historical use of documents and pictures in the practice of constructing misrepresentations of Aboriginal peoples and culture;
 - To review colonial strategies of assimilation and historical moments of resistance in BC and Canada;
 - To review historical moments of respectful interaction between Aboriginal peoples and early settlers;
 - To evaluate the effectiveness of the dialogue by having participants complete a post-workshop questionnaire;

Activities

There are several possible activities to choose from for this first dialogue, including:

- participating in an Indigenous talking circle (this could include an overview of local First Nations' protocols);
- listening to presentations about local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal history and participating in small group discussions.

Upon the completion of the first dialogue, as is the case with all of the subsequent dialogues, the intercultural facilitators should write a summary report. The summary reports ought to be distributed to all participants immediately following each dialogue and ought to serve as the first item for review at the beginning of the next dialogue. In so doing, each new dialogue will build on the previous dialogue.

Step Two: Host a dialogue to reflect on the present

After the dialogue on the historical context of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, it may be appropriate to move participants into a dialogue about the current relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

When establishing the basic design for the dialogue on the present context, it is important to consider both contemporary challenges as well as successes of recent local intercultural efforts.

Objectives

Some general objectives for the second dialogue could include:

- To share personal stories and experiences about local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations;
- To talk about recent local efforts to work across cultural differences and the strengths and weaknesses of such efforts;
- To define the current dynamics at play in local relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups;
- To learn about and reflect upon the factors which prohibit, limit and/or foster healthy Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the dialogue by having participants complete a post-workshop questionnaire.

Activities

An interactive way of structuring this part of the dialogue series is to use the World Café approach to local dialogue. This approach has proven to be very inclusive and allows for participants to comment on a select area of community life. As the website site notes, a world café is a way to “awaken and engage collective intelligence through conversations about questions that matter.” For complete details on this method, see the following website: <http://www.theworldcafe.com>.

Similar to the end of the first dialogue, the project team should consider developing a proceedings report about the second dialogue that can be distributed to all participants.

Step Three: Host a dialogue to imagine and plan for the future

The foregoing dialogues on the current state and history of local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations sets the foundation for the last two dialogues, which are forward-looking.

Because a review of the past and present can lead to an overwhelming feeling of hopelessness regarding the future, it is important for dialogue participants to:

- find creative ways to chart a different course for future relations; or
- set the stage to continue the current course of action wherever both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants agree it is mutually beneficial.

Therefore the third dialogue should be designed to offer dialogue participants the time and space to imagine a future in which both groups are able to create respectful and mutually beneficial relationships.

Since the creation of visions for the future of intercultural relations will build on the specific circumstances identified in Dialogues One and Two, we offer broad guidelines as to what type of objectives and content should be part of dialogue three.

Objectives

Some general objectives for the third dialogue could include:

- To build consensus around priority areas and begin to develop visions for desirable relationships between local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in these areas;
- To establish a set of working groups to refine the priority areas and visions that were started in dialogue three;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the dialogue by having participants complete a post-workshop questionnaire;
- To create a proceedings report that summarizes the dialogue.

Activities

The activities for this dialogue could be designed according to what is called Open Space Technology (OST), which is defined as a way of structuring open meetings that include a diverse group of people who must deal with complex and potentially conflicting material in innovative and productive ways.

According to Harrison Owen, OST is a facilitation method in which people can identify specific issues on a given topic, self-select into discussion groups, and work on the issue with people who have similar concerns. See the following site for details on OST: www.openspacecanada.org.



Step Four: Meetings of working groups

Regardless of the method, the participants will need to identify a set of intercultural priority areas and establish working groups to develop visions for their area of interest.

Each group will work to develop a vision statement for each priority area and what they would like to see in terms of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations with respect to the select area.

During their independent meetings, the working group will refine their vision statement for their assigned priority area and will draft a set of strategic directions that lead toward the vision. Each working group could also suggest some intercultural initiatives to be carried out locally. Assuming there is sufficient interest, the working group should identify who will be involved in developing the initiatives.

Ideally, each working groups will meet independently on 2-3 occasions before dialogue four. The products of their separate meetings should consist of:

- vision statement for a priority area in the community;
- some strategic directions for meeting the priorities that have been set out;
- a list of specific initiatives and identification of who will be involved.

Important: It is important to ensure that there is money in the budget to cover the cost of the lunch or dinner for these separate working groups. You may also want to consider providing support for child-minding and transportation for participants.

Step Five: Host a dialogue to share visions and solidify action-plans

The fourth dialogue will serve as an opportunity for the working groups to share their vision statement, corresponding strategic directions and list of specific initiatives and responsibilities.

Participants will be given an opportunity to discuss one another's work and how the different pieces fit together. This final dialogue will provide the space and time to refine the pieces for inclusion in the Intercultural Action Plan. See the appendices for a brief description of an Intercultural Action Plan.

Objectives

General objectives for the fourth dialogue could include:

- To invite the working groups to share their vision and proposed action plan;
- To discuss each vision and each proposed action plan in terms of next steps;
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the dialogue by having participants complete a post-workshop questionnaire.

Activities

The intercultural facilitators will need to consult with the leaders of the working groups in advance of dialogue four to design an appropriate format.

The activities in this dialogue will build on the outcomes of the small working groups and will result in a clear set of visions, directions and specific initiatives for the community – all of which will be integrated in the final Intercultural Action Plan.

Step Six: A community forum to showcase the Intercultural Action Plan

The project leaders should consider organizing a celebratory community forum to report on the project outcomes and the visions of the future that were developed through the dialogue series.

Creating a celebratory forum with food and festivities will make it more appealing to a wider range of community members.

With regard to the Intercultural Action Plan, it should include:

- summaries for all four dialogues;
- the working groups' visions, strategic directions and specific initiatives;
- the organizations who have taken responsibility for following up on the specific initiatives.

A celebratory community forum can also help ensure continued community support of the Intercultural Action Plan, and answer questions and provide information to community members who did not attend the dialogues about the plan. They also provide an opportunity for key stakeholders and other agencies to showcase any steps that have been accomplished to improve Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations in the community.

Step Seven: Complete evaluation and write up final evaluation report

The final phase of your dialogue series involves conducting the evaluation and writing the final report. How you evaluate your dialogue series depends on the intended outcomes that the group of coordinators articulated in the early stages of planning the project.

The Evaluation Report

Your evaluation report will present an overview of the dialogue series and provide analysis of participant response to each post-dialogue questionnaire, which should include questions that are related to anticipated outcomes of the dialogue in question.

In addition to providing post-dialogue evaluation questionnaires, you may want to conduct follow up interviews with a diverse range of stakeholders six months after the project.

The follow up interview questions should be developed by the group of coordinators and should ask for input about the impact of the project in relation to some of the intended outcomes.

Although the evaluation report will include some of the same information that appears in the Intercultural Action Plan, it is a separate piece of work because it is narrowly focused on an assessment of the implementation and outcomes of the dialogue series.

Appendices

Appendix One: Checklist for your Intercultural Dialogue Series

There can be many steps to planning, delivering and evaluating a local dialogue series between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. This workbook covers the major steps in the process and was designed to be used in a sequential manner. As such, you and your group should move through the workbook one phase at a time, drawing upon the *Building Bridges Together Resource Guide* wherever applicable.

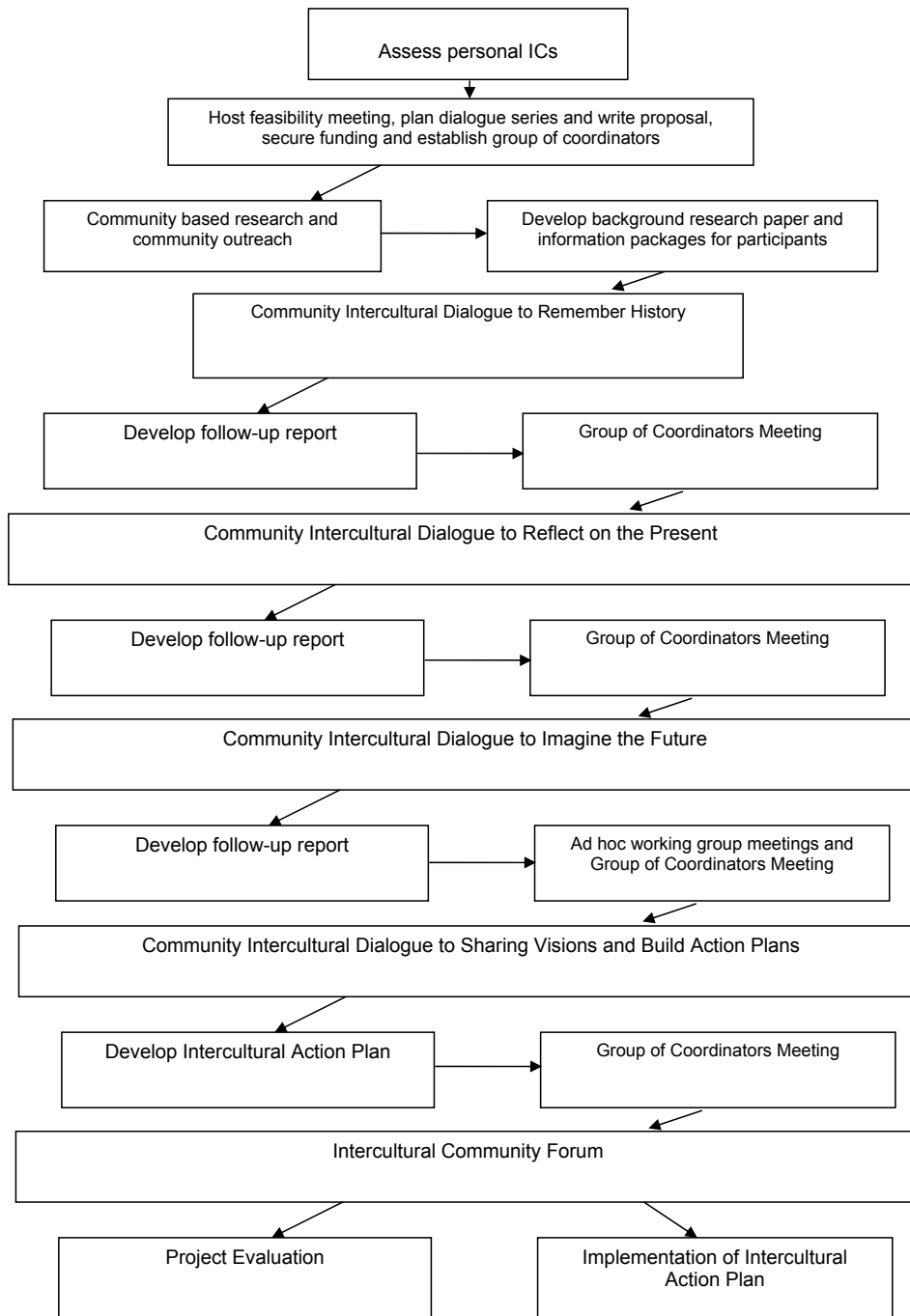
In the table below, we outline all of the major steps in creating a successful local dialogue series. Think of this checklist as a way to get a broad view of your work and as a tool that you can use to make sure that you are covering all of the steps in the process. The whole process involves three parts of work, each of which include several sub-steps.

Checklist for your intercultural dialogue series

Part of Process	Steps	Completed
Part 1: Complete self assessment	Step One: Assess your intercultural work competencies	
Part 2: Bring together stakeholders and plan your intercultural dialogue series	Step One: Develop draft dialogue series idea and hold a feasibility meeting	
	Step Two: Establish a group of coordinators	
	Step Three: Choose the most appropriate type of dialogue process for your community	
	Step Four: Select host organization and write proposal	
	Step Five: Conduct community-based research	
	Step Six: Develop an outreach plan	
	Step Seven: Plan for evaluation	
	Step Eight: Recruit intercultural facilitators and/or an implementation manager	
Part 3: Deliver and evaluate your dialogue series	Step One: Host a dialogue to remember history	
	Step Two: Host a dialogue to reflect on the present	
	Step Three: Host a dialogue to imagine and plan for the future	
	Step Four: Meetings of working groups	
	Step Five: Host a dialogue to share visions and solidify action-plans	
	Step Six: Community forum	
	Step Seven: Complete evaluation and write up final evaluation report	



Appendix Two: Workflow diagram



Appendix Three: Characteristics of an Intercultural Action Plan

The intercultural dialogue series that we propose in this workbook should result in some type of document that summarizes the voices of participants and outlines strategic directions and local action steps for improving local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations.

Since you will be determining the content and function of your local dialogue series, you and others in your community have the freedom to shape and name the document product as you see fit. For the purpose of this workbook, we use the generic term Intercultural Action Plan to refer to the written product that captures the insights gleaned from the intercultural dialogue series.

Given the many areas of work where Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples interact, the dialogue series and resultant Intercultural Action Plan can be narrowly focused on improving Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations in one particular area of community life (i.e. early childhood development or social service delivery) or can be more comprehensive by combining multiple aspects of community life (i.e. economic, environment and social areas). The scope of your Intercultural Action Plan will depend on your local interests and needs.

Regardless of the scope and content of your Intercultural Action Plan, your plan will likely include the following:

- an overview of the dialogue series, including the guiding principles for the dialogue work and the names of participants and organizations;
- descriptions of the strategic directions to which dialogue participants agreed;
- descriptions of specific initiatives for moving the community in the stated directions, including how the work will happen, who will do it and when.

For an example of an Intercultural Action Plan that was developed for a municipality with input from the community, see the City of Richmond's *Intercultural Strategic Plan and Work Program*: http://www.richmond.ca/__shared/assets/2004_-_2010_Richmond_Intercultural_Strategic_Plan_and_Work_Program9791.pdf

Appendix Four: Key activities of facilitating intercultural dialogues

In a sense, everyone who participates in an intercultural dialogue is a facilitator — some of the people involved just spend more time at the front of the room. The role of an intercultural facilitator is to present relevant information, structure peer-to-peer dialogues/exercises, summarize information, and encourage learners to build new understandings of their shared social world in partnership with others.

The facilitator and dialogue participants should carry on an active dialogue through the entire learning experience about how such information relates to local circumstances. To be a successful facilitator requires a commitment to working with a wide range of learning styles, so that learning across cultures can be accommodated and a multitude of world views can be expressed.

Facilitators of intercultural dialogues between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples should aim to use the four RCAP principles for intercultural work between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. By using these principles as guides for presentations, dialogue and action, an intercultural facilitation team can model the type of behavior that is conducive to improving relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

Ideally, an intercultural dialogue should be facilitated by an intercultural team. A co-facilitating arrangement models intercultural work and has several advantages:

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- The workload of preparation, facilitation and writing is shared;
 - There is a stronger chance that multiple perspectives are considered and acknowledged in the dialogue series;
 - There are more opportunities for role-playing;
 - Various parts of the presentations may resonate differently for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. For example, common coping strategies used by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are experienced differently by these two groups. Therefore it can be more effective for an Aboriginal facilitator to work with Aboriginal people and a non-Aboriginal facilitator to work with the non-Aboriginal participants separately on these issues and then reconvene to debrief as a whole group.

Although this brief section will not address all aspects of intercultural facilitation, we have endeavoured to outline some key considerations for a team of intercultural facilitators. In general, intercultural facilitators aim to create a safe environment that is supportive of all participants. Facilitators should be attentive to the room set up, time and pace of the dialogue and seek to ensure that such aspects of the dialogue are culturally appropriate to everyone in attendance.

When people feel comfortable in the meeting space and are respected for their attendance, they are more likely to want to contribute to the dialogue process. In order to set a comfortable and welcoming environment, consider greeting participants as they arrive and thanking them for coming.

In addition to making people feel welcome, you will also want to:

- Review the objectives of the dialogue at the beginning of the session (assuming these are pre-determined);
- Invite participants to express their expectations for the dialogue;
- Assist the group in the creation of the ground rules for their dialogue.

In addition to assisting the group to establish or re-commit to the ground

rules for a dialogue, you will also need to, wherever appropriate, remind the group to adhere to the basic guidelines that it has set for itself.

It is important to remember that as a facilitator, you occupy a position of power because you are, at least in part, responsible for assisting a group to have a productive and focused discussion. As such, you must exercise your power in a respectful way that aims to benefit the group with which you are working. To be a facilitator is to lead a group through a process by serving their diverse needs in culturally appropriate ways.

Most local dialogue sessions will involve participants who have also facilitated dialogues and workshops and also possess expertise about subject matter relevant to the dialogue at hand. Facilitators of intercultural dialogue need to be respectful of the knowledge of others and recognize that knowledge means different things and takes different shapes in different cultures.

Making space for the process of sharing knowledge and insights across cultural difference means creating new possibilities for how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples understand one another and relate to each other. If you are directed to help the group move toward particular objectives, then part of your job will involve keeping the group focused and on task. In other cases, you may be expected to help a group establish their objectives, or what they want to accomplish as a group, and then facilitate a process that helps the group achieve the stated objectives.

Since all formal dialogues take place in a limited time frame, your role as a facilitator also involves managing the time by setting up appropriate systems for interaction between participants. Related to your time-monitoring responsibilities, you will also be expected to monitor the group dynamics and assess how well the exercises are working for each group. Again, since time is limited, you may need to intervene in those groups that are not working well and propose an alternative type of exercise.

The task of analyzing, synthesizing and summarizing information that

is communicated by the group is perhaps one of the most important functions of the facilitator. In some cases, you will simply need to reiterate the comments of the group members at key junctures of the dialogue. In other cases, you will need to document the comments of the group, either on flip charts or you may also need to recruit a note taker. The level of documentation that is required depends on the objectives of the dialogue that you are facilitating.

One of the more challenging roles of a facilitator is the task of listening for what is not being said by participants. Although silence in ordinary dialogues can be an indicator of a potentially problematic area, in the case of intercultural dialogue between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, silence can be a very important aspect of the interaction that needs only to be respected — not rushed through out of a sense of discomfort.

When you encounter moments of silence that are clearly a result of the group being stuck on an issue, and assuming that all participants want to move beyond the awkward and unhelpful silence, you may want to consider asking probing questions. By inquiring into confusing and vague areas of the dialogue, you provide the means to clarify an issue and deepen the discussion.

Also, invite participants to expand on their feedback by asking probing questions. In so doing, you express interest in their views and value what they are saying. Consider asking questions like: I am very interested in what you are saying and I think that it can benefit the group and our process. Can you expand on your comments?

In sum, there are five basic roles a facilitator of intercultural dialogue:

1. Welcome participants and have them introduce themselves (include an ice breaker exercise if applicable);
2. Set the dialogue's purpose;
3. Work with the group to establish group rules for the dialogue;

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4. Promote and model respectful conversations through questions, visual media, or other materials; and
 5. Summarize and record the dialogue content and evaluate its effectiveness.

Appendix Five: Common challenges of facilitating intercultural dialogues

Regardless of the group that you are working with you can count on facing your fair share of challenges. The challenge may relate to the content that is being discussed, the method of content delivery or the dynamics at play in discussing the content, and/or the behavior of the participants.

No hard and fast rules exist for how to deal with particular challenges since each challenge is unique and requires a ‘tailor-made’ response that is appropriate in tone and content. Nevertheless, the following discussion about some possible challenging dynamics can help you keep your intercultural dialogue safe and on track in the face of difficult moments.

One of the first responses to a challenge that you will likely notice is your own anxiety. Vitally important to your success as a facilitator is your ability to remain aware of your self and the inner workings of what and why you are feeling the way you are in the midst of a challenging moment. Although it is important to be honest with the group about how you feel at certain times, in other moments, especially challenging moments, you will need to remain calm and work to maintain a safe space for everyone — sometimes at the expense of your own feelings. Moreover, there may be situations when the participants are emotionally fine and it is only you who are feeling stress and tension due to the group’s work and discussions. Whatever the situation, the facilitator needs to remain centred and respectful.

Although some challenges may relate to the content of the dialogue process, it is the responses or lack thereof from participants that are often

the most challenging aspects of facilitation work. If treated with respect, any engagement with a participant can be a valuable learning experience for you and the participant. As such, challenges with regard to participant behavior are simply learning opportunities. Paula Beltgens and Lynda Taylor, in their *Facilitator's Resource Guide* outline a few useful examples of types of participant challenges that you may encounter:

1. The chronic nay-sayer: Sometimes the nay-sayers are right. However, if the group has expressed an interest in developing solutions to local problems, then consider the following type of response to the person who stands in opposition to solutions that are proposed by the group: "I recognize the problem that you are noting and I can see how it could be prohibiting factor. I'd like to consider possibilities for how the proposed idea could work. Does any one have any ideas?"
2. Non-participating participant: Some people are introverted and are not comfortable speaking in a group setting and prefer to participate by actively listening. As always respect the person's working and learning style by inviting them to participate but to not place pressure on them if they indicate that they are not interested in participating. During a break, ask them how they are doing and what they think of the dialogue activities. Are there particular activities that they would like to see happen?
3. Resistant participant: Resistance can be an integral feature of useful social developments, especially those developments that aim to transform problematic current day relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. As such, approach resistance with respect and an inquiring mind. Ask questions that work toward understanding the resistance, its source and the various parts of the form of resistance at hand. Ask for suggestions on what needs to be different in order for them to become a participant in the process.

4. Conversation dominator: Typically conversation dominators have firm opinions on particular issues and have a lot of experience to support their positions; however, this is not always the case. Regardless of the credentials and experience of conversation dominators, they can act as silencers of other voices and thereby bend the discussion in directions that do not serve the collective interests of the group. As such, always treat conversation dominators with respect and ask others for their thoughts by saying things like: "I'd like to hear from some of the people who haven't spoken yet. What do others think about ABC?"

For complete details on these different types of participant challenges, see: Lynda Beltgens and Lynda Taylor, **Facilitators' Resource Guide**, prepared for the Regional Vancouver Urban Observatory at Simon Fraser University, 2005.

This review of some key concepts of facilitation work only scratches the surface. Here are a couple of resources that you may also want to consult:

The International Association of Facilitators

<www.iaf-world.org>

The International Association of Facilitators (IAF) is dedicated to growing facilitators and encouraging the use of group process methodologies world-wide. The IAF is the recognized source for credible and valuable professional development for practicing facilitators. Its members contribute to organizational and social change using applied group process methodologies with corporations, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, schools, educational institutions and communities in over 30 countries.

The Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue at Simon Fraser University

<www.sfu.ca/dialog/undergrad/about.htm>

The Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue at Simon Fraser University addresses the principal challenge for contemporary education: to inspire students with a sense of civic responsibility, encourage their passion to improve Canadian society, and develop innovative intellectual tools for effective problem solving. Each semester offers an original and intensive learning experience that uses dialogue to focus student education on public issues. The Undergraduate Semester is associated with the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue at SFU's Harbour Centre campus in downtown Vancouver.

Appendix Six: Resources for intercultural work

There are many resources available on the web for you to explore that are related to the topic of intercultural work between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. The resources offered here are by no means complete, but rather a useful starting point for ongoing learning.

Canadian Race Relations Foundation

<www.crr.ca>

The Canadian Race Relations Foundation is committed to building a national framework for the fight against racism in Canadian society. We will shed light on the causes and manifestations of racism; provide independent, outspoken national leadership; and act as a resource and facilitator in the pursuit of equity, fairness, and social justice. The Canadian Race Relations Foundation aims to help bring about a more harmonious Canada that acknowledges its racist past, recognizes the pervasiveness of racism today, and is committed to creating a future in which all Canadians are treated equitably and fairly.

Intercultural Communication Institute

<www.intercultural.org>

The Intercultural Communication Institute (ICI) is a private non-profit foundation designed to foster an awareness and appreciation of cultural

difference in the international and domestic arenas. ICI is based on the beliefs that: (a) education and training in the area of intercultural communication can improve competence in dealing with cultural difference and thereby minimize destructive conflict among national, ethnic and cultural groups; and (b) we therefore share an ethical commitment to further education in this area.

International Academy for Intercultural Research

<www.interculturalacademy.org>

The International Academy for Intercultural Research (IAIR) was founded in 1997 as a result of deliberations by the Organizing Forum for an Intercultural Academy. These deliberations were co-sponsored by the Intercultural Communications Institute and the International Journal of Intercultural Relations. The aim of the Academy is to provide a forum where senior intercultural researchers, academics, and trainers can exchange ideas, theories, research and successful training approaches. In this way, the Academy fosters high level research and scholarship on intercultural issues. All disciplines are welcome in the Academy.

Project Implicit and the Implicit Association Test

<implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/demo>

Project Implicit blends basic research and educational outreach in a virtual laboratory at which visitors can examine their own hidden biases. Project Implicit is a Virtual Laboratory for the social and behavioral sciences designed to facilitate the research of implicit social cognition: cognitions, feelings, and evaluations that are not necessarily available to conscious awareness, conscious control, conscious intention, or self-reflection. Project Implicit comprises a network of laboratories, technicians, and research scientists at Harvard University, the University of Washington, and the University of Virginia. Take the Implicit Association Test (IAT) to learn about some of the biases that you have, and the role of stereotypes in shaping your views of people and things. Sessions require 10-15 minutes to complete. Each time you begin a session you will be randomly assigned to a topic. This site is free. We recommend the test on race and or Native American IAT Test.

Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research

<www.sietar-europa.org>

SIETAR, the Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research is the world's largest interdisciplinary network for professionals working in the intercultural field. The network was originally established in 1974 and now includes over 3,000 interculturalists and 15 national and regional groups world-wide. Various SIETAR groups hold NGO status at the United Nations or are recognized by the Council of Europe. Membership is drawn from individuals active in arts, business, consulting and training, migration and development aid, education and research, government, health services, language services, NGOs, minority advocates, public service, research, and social work. The resources section includes a wide range of materials related to the field of intercultural work.

Without Prejudice: Resources for Change

<www.accesstomedia.org/change>

Resources for Change is a clearing-house for anti-discrimination education resources and is designed for educators and individuals committed to making positive change. We recommend the following workshop resource entitled: *A Closer Look: Understanding the systemic racism of Canadian history and current policies*. The objective of the workshop is to learn more about the parts of Canada's history that are withheld from our mainstream society, so that we can begin to understand the experiences of people of colour within our communities.

Utopia: University of Texas

<utopia.utexas.edu/explore/pred/adults/ster.html>

This site has a good overview of the definitions of and implications of prejudice. The easy to follow e-learning modules are free. There are two streams of learning about prejudice: one for children and one for adults. Both streams are informative and to the point. There are four learning objectives for both e-learning modules: 1) What stereotypes and prejudice are; 2) Why stereotypes and prejudice are especially harmful to children; 3) How stereotyping undermines performance; 4) How stereotyping interferes with information processing.



Appendix Seven: Community-based research ethics

Regardless of the type of research that is selected for an intercultural work project, it is important to establish and follow strict ethical guidelines. For those that are unfamiliar with research ethics and need a resource to consult, we recommend reading *Protocols & Principles for Conducting Research in an Indigenous Context*, which was produced at the University of Victoria for the Faculty of Human and Social Development. See their web site for more information. <web.uvic.ca/igov/programs/masters/igov_598/protocol.pdf>

The Mi'kmaq College Institute have also created some excellent examples of research ethics. See the following site for details:
<mrc.uccb.ns.ca/prinpro.html>.

Finally, the BC ACADRE, which is situated in the Institute for Aboriginal Health, with the assistance of the Boston Bar First Nation have created an easy to use research ethics statement. It can be found at: <www.healthdisciplines.ubc.ca/iah/acadre/site_files/resources/TemplateRESEARCHCODEOFETHICS.pdf>

For more on community based research see: the Centre for Community Based Research. www.communitybasedresearch.ca

Appendix Eight: Comment sheet

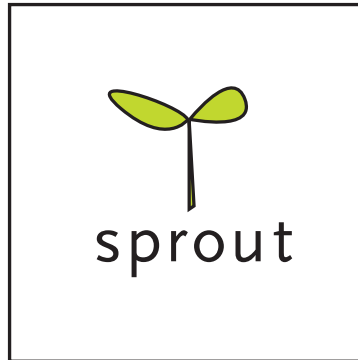
The Building Bridges Together Workbook is one of SPARC BC's first attempts to develop a step-by-step approach to engaging in local intercultural dialogue between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

We are very interested in hearing about your opinion of the Building Bridges Together Workbook. Help us improve this resource by providing us with your responses to the following questions.

1. What did you like most about the Building Bridges Together Workbook?
2. What did you like the least about the Building Bridges Together Workbook?
3. Is there anything missing that should be included in future editions of the Building Bridges Together Workbook?
4. Do you have any intercultural success stories that you would like to share?
5. Other comments?

Please send your responses by email to cde@sparc.bc.ca, fax to 604.736.8697, or mail to 201-221 E. 10th Ave., Vancouver, BC V5T 4V3.





resources for social change

As SPARC BC's ongoing knowledge transfer initiative, Sprout resources are designed to facilitate learning about and the practice of community-based research methods and community development strategies.

Sprout is a symbol of growth and innovation and can be found on all SPARC BC resource guides and workbooks that have been developed for you to use with groups of committed people who care about community well being. By nature, Sprout resources are fusions of theory and practice — mixtures of big ideas and small steps for cultivating positive change in your community. Each year, we will add new publications to Sprout based on your input. Let us know what you would like to see in Sprout!

Email us: cde@sparc.bc.ca
Find us Online: www.sparc.bc.ca