

# Learning Track 2: Constructive Dialogue Skills

## Peer-to-Peer 1: How We Share Our Story



### Before You Begin

**Find a Spot** – Find a quiet place to talk where you're not worried about distractions or eavesdroppers. If possible, the group should sit so everyone can see each other.

**Introductions** – Start by introducing yourselves to each other. Take turns sharing your name, where you're from, and your major

or a class you're excited about taking.

## Introduction

### Welcome to your first Peer-to-Peer conversation!

Please designate one person to read the following instructions out loud so the group is on the same page about what peer-to-peers are all about.

### What are Peer-to-Peers?

Peer-to-peers are guided conversations you will have with two or more peers as you go through the *Perspectives: Constructive Dialogue Skills* online lessons. Think of it like training – peer-to-peers isolate the specific skills you are learning about in *Perspectives: Constructive Dialogue Skills*. This offers you a chance to practice them before testing them out in open discussions in class, residence halls, or other campus spaces.

Each conversation is designed to take 30-40 minutes to complete. You will meet with the same group for both peer-to-peer conversations.

## Peer-to-Peer Logistics



**Keeping Time** – Please establish a timekeeper. The clock icon will indicate when they need to keep time to ensure the group stays on task.



**Go-Rounds** – The group takes turns responding to a prompt for the exact same amount of time. When it's your turn to share, you are the only one allowed to speak – everyone else just listens.



**Read-Alouds** – This icon indicates when the designated person should read text out loud to the group.

## Connect Before Content



Each person can **choose from one** of the prompts listed below, and has 30 seconds to think about their answer. Then begin an untimed go-round to share.



- What is something that is distracting you from your school work this week, or from this conversation?
- Share with the group a small victory from this week.
- What is a group you're a part of that is important to you?

## Group Norms



Now it's time to set group norms. For these types of personal conversations, it's important to create a space where everyone can share openly and honestly. **To do that, the group should agree on two simple norms:**

1. We will respect others' perspectives and beliefs, even if we don't agree with them.
2. We will commit to confidentiality – what is shared in peer-to-peer stays in peer-to-peer.

If a group member feels they *can't* agree to one or all of the norms, they should feel free to bring up their concerns and suggestions for norms that would work better for them.

Once the group has agreed to the revised norms, they can give a thumbs up or say out loud "I agree."

## Warm Up: Talking About Talking



Think about your response to the following prompt, and respond in a go-round.



Keep your responses to just a few sentences.



What do you worry about most when you're sharing your views with someone who might disagree with you?

Don't forget: it's perfectly okay to disagree with each other. If that happens, try responding as follows:



- Acknowledge what the other person shared (e.g., "Thank you for sharing. I hear what you're saying.")
- Share your opinion (e.g., "Here's what I think...")
- Ask an open-ended question (e.g., "Can you tell me more about what leads you to feel this way? Was there a specific experience you had where someone behaved the way you described?")

## Main Activity: Telling Your Story

### Preparing to Tell Your Story



At the end of Lesson 2, you were asked to start to tell your own story. You learned that stories for constructive dialogue should be a **HIT**: Honest, Important, and To the Point. In this P2P, you can choose to tell the same story, or choose a new one. Take 2 minutes to

silently jot down notes about the story you'd like to tell, using the questions below.

### 1. What is an issue you care about?

*Need inspiration? Consider the following issues to get your thinking going. Which one do you feel most strongly about?*

- Wealth inequality
- Racism
- Climate change
- Immigration
- 2nd amendment rights
- Cancel culture
- LGBTQ issues

### 2. Note down the main points of your story. You can use the sentence stems below to guide your thinking.

My story:

- *"I feel especially strongly about this because [describe life experience.]"*
- *"I came to care about this issue because..."*
- *"The thing that's most at stake for me about this issue is..."*
- *"The person who's shaped my views on this issue most is..."*

## Sharing and Responding



This next section is for sharing your stories in a go-round.

Each person has 2 minutes to tell their story. After each story is done, the listeners have 1 minute in total to respond.

During the responding section, stick to:

- What stood out to you about what you heard?
- What did you connect with?
- What is something that you noticed, or that surprised you?



The responding section is *not* for question-asking, agreeing, or sharing your stance on the issue that person talked about. Do your best to stick to the prompts above.

For each story you hear, you can use the note-catcher below to capture your reactions so you are prepared to respond and ask questions.



2 minutes for each story, with 1 minute after each story for reflections from group members.

What stood out to me?	What would I like to know more about?
<p><i>Think: details, values, or emotions you heard that resonate with you, or that you connect with.</i></p>	<p><i>Think: what didn't you understand? What would you like to learn more about?</i></p>

## Asking Follow-Up Questions

Now it's time to step into your best explorer mindset and try to learn as much as you can about one another's stories and experiences.



Refer to the right-hand column of your note-catcher to remind yourself about what left you feeling curious or wanting to learn more. You can also see the examples of constructive questions below to guide you, if you need.

Questions can be asked of each other in no particular order – take this time to learn as much as you can about each other's stories and perspectives.

Here is a list of constructive questions to help guide your inquiry.

### Constructive Questions

- Why is this issue important to you?
- Can you tell me more?
- Can you share more about what you mean when you say \_\_\_\_\_?
- Why do you think that is?
- Can you share something about your experience that may have led you to believe \_\_\_\_\_?
- Is there anything about \_\_\_\_\_ where you feel conflicted?
- What is at stake for you or someone you know about this issue?
- Why do you think you care so deeply about this issue?
- Have you always felt that way?



Take 10 minutes for follow-up questions.

## Wrap-Up



To conclude this peer-to-peer conversation, each of you should share a response to the following prompts. Please keep your responses to a few sentences each.



How did it feel to tell your story to this group? What was it like to listen to others do the same? Did anything surprise you? Did you learn anything new?

Great work! That concludes your first peer-to-peer conversation. See you next time for your final peer-to-peer conversation.