

The Art of Dialogue

This page is dedicated to the principles of dialogue that are essential for fostering relationships and achieving understanding among diverse individuals and organisations. When we learn to communicate through our minds, hearts, and souls with the intention to connect to the spirit within one another, and act for the greater good of all, we will be on the path to high performance, understanding, peace, harmony, and spiritual progress. It is hoped that the principles presented here will help to elevate our awareness of the essential skills of dialogue.

Introduction

Dialogue is not some simplistic assertion of one's own position, nor is it necessarily about persuading others to one's point of view. Dialogue is about demonstrating respect for another's life and being determined to learn when confronted with differences in personality and perspective. [Daisaku Ikeda](#)

Krishnaji compared a dialogue to a game of tennis, where the question is like the ball tossed from one court to another, with each player returning it with their comment or observation. This continues until both players vanish and the ball is left suspended in mid-air! That means the observers (participants), with their particular knowledge, viewpoints, opinions, etc., disappear, leaving only the observation of the issue taking place. If the observers (or their personalities) are to disappear, it does not matter how many or who they were. [Prof. P. Krishna](#)

Ground Rules, Rights, Responsibilities and Skills of Dialogue

A mind in dialogue questions every opinion and doubts every conclusion because it is not interested in a verbal answer. It seeks to go beyond words and gain a deep insight into reality. It aims for a comprehensive understanding of the facts and the issue, rather than merely a method for solving a problem.

True dialogue requires a protective environment of mutually accepted rights and responsibilities, rooted in two fundamental values: respect for the human person and trust in the dialogue process. Dialogue works best when the participants are willing to develop certain skills that facilitate it.

This workshop is divided into five sections for participants to practise in pairs or small groups. To reinforce the principles, these practices should be repeated periodically over time, for instance, on a weekly or monthly basis. Firstly, select a chapter from the "All the World's a Stage" eBook, then engage in a dialogue by responding to the question about the role model's life, using the following principles. You can think of it as an experiment.

Rights

1. Each person has the right to define him/herself without being labelled by others

Subject creates a profile using value system and then are described by classmate(s)

2. Each person has the right to express his or her beliefs, ideas and feelings

Subject describes something they are

Responsibilities

1. Each person must be willing to seriously question his/her assumptions about "the other"

Get somebody to question the subject's assumption on an object e.g. photo / object etc

2. Each person must allow others the same right of self-expression that s/he expects for him/herself.

Skills

1. Each person should be able to evaluate and articulate his/her own attitudes, values and positions on issues within the context of his/her tradition.

2. Each person should learn how to temporarily set aside his/her own views and feelings in order to be more sensitive to what the other is saying.

passionate about in the role models life

Establishing the right to hold a view The art of agreeing to disagree. How can I allow someone else to hold a view which I factually know to be wrong?

3.	Each person has the right to ask questions that help him/her understand what someone else has said. Typical question: Could you please clarify?	3.	Each person should ask questions that respect the other's right of self-definition, even in times of conflict or disagreement.	3.	Each person should learn how to respond to questions in ways that help others understand.
4.	Each person has the right not to change or be coerced to change.	4.	Each person must accept the others as equal partners in the dialogue, and acknowledge the dignity of the traditions represented	4.	Each person should learn to deal with different points of view while maintaining his/her own integrity.
5.	Each person has the right to expect that what is said will be held in confidence.	5.	Each person must agree to hold what others say in confidence.	5.	Each person should learn to deal with others from a position of mutual trust, based on agreement that others come to the dialogue in a spirit of honesty and sincerity.

