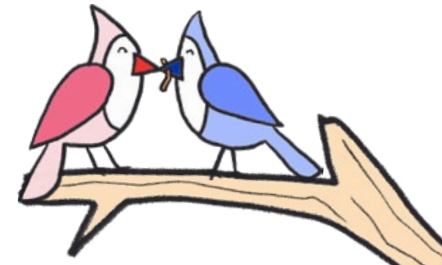


UNITE VIDEO

DIALOGUE COMPANION



Welcome!

Stories have the power to create change and foster understanding across different experiences and perspectives. By inviting us on an emotional journey, stories prompt us to question assumptions while sparking ideas of what might be possible.

We invite you to consider that...

- ...we all face challenges.
- ...change is possible.
- ...healing is attainable.
- ...recovery is a reality.

WHY ADDRESS STIGMA?

Challenging stigma can reduce barriers related to accessing housing, employment, and appropriate medical care. Reducing stigma extends dignity and compassion while undermining assumptions and judgements. Stories can foster an environment where shame doesn't have a chance to grow, where diversity is celebrated, and where change unfolds.

—Charles, Chris, LT, Nicolas & Victoria
Storytellers and Lived Experience
Strategic Advisors 

“Real dialogue depends on us being passionately committed to our own world, and simultaneously, passionately interested in other worlds. It is possible to work for the realization of our values and interests, but to do so in a way that remains continuously open to inquiry and dialogue.”

—Margaret McKee

SPIRIT OF DIALOGUE

Dialogue is a way to create trust and bridge divides among people. Through dialogue, simplistic explanations are replaced by greater awareness of complexity and increased empathy for the challenges others face. Different perspectives and values can be expressed, heard, and understood.

Dialogue is not a method but an orientation to “being-with” other people that involves openness and a willingness to push beyond discomfort.

For more resources on disrupting stigma through dialogue, visit www.bcmhsus.ca/health-professionals/mental-health-promotion-literacy/disrupting-stigma-for-better-care.

3 MOVEMENTS OF DIALOGUE

1. Come together by carefully creating the container (setting or situation) in which people can truly **listen to one another as equal participants**. Nurture understanding and trust by identifying preconceptions and committing to openness.
2. **Focus on building relationships** rather than on sharing information or problem solving. Encourage participants to get curious and to seek to learn from others' experiences. When we do this well, learning and problem solving follows.
3. **Explore questions together** with openness and curiosity rather than promoting our own position.



Applying Dialogue

Each of the UNITE videos can be used to stimulate dialogue. The prompts below offer one way to start dialogue after viewing each video. It is often a good idea to remind participants about the nature of dialogue (see previous page). Complex issues that divide our communities can be addressed when we come together in a spirit of openness and curiosity, with a willingness to listen and understand the perspectives of others.

“One must not be afraid of a little silence... It is often a devastating question to ask oneself, but it is sometimes important to ask it – ‘In saying what I have in mind will I really improve on the silence?’”

–Robert K. Greenleaf

DIALOGUE PROMPTS

VIDEO ONE

Stories of Experience



- What word, thought, phrase, or idea stands out for you after watching this video?
- How does it feel when someone doesn't trust you?
- Can you recall a time when your trust in someone shifted? How did it feel?
- What are the risks involved in trusting? Are those risks different for different people? How might we mitigate those risks?

VIDEO TWO

Standing in the Gap



- What word, thought, phrase, or idea stands out for you after watching this video?
- How does it feel when someone believes in you? Or doesn't believe in you?
- How does it feel when you find it hard to believe in someone you care about?
- How might we help each other believe in each other?

VIDEO THREE

Overcoming & Healing



- What word, thought, phrase, or idea stands out for you after watching this video?
- Reflect on a time when you changed something about yourself. How did it feel?
- Who or what supported the change? How did you experience that support?
- We all tell ourselves stories about our life and about who we are. How has changing helped you re-write your life story?

CLOSING

What feelings, thoughts, or ideas arose for you as a result of participating in this dialogue?

“The essence of a question is to open up possibilities and keep them open.”

–Hans-Georg Gadamer

