Deliberative Facilitator Cheat Sheet

Purpose: Seek common ground and foster a different kind of talk
- This is not a debate; we’re not here to “win.”
- This is a conversation guided by an exploration and sharing of what we value most.
- This process requires us to step outside of our comfort zones and reconsider our own perspectives as we wrestle through the options together.
- We will carefully weigh the trade-offs of each option by coming to terms with what we must give up in order to get what we want.
- This process is like working out. Going to the gym one time will not get you in shape, but a commitment to the practice and consistent effort will lead to change. This is hard work, but if we keep at it, we will get the results we are looking for.

My Role: Serve as an impartial facilitator
- I’m here to push the group to be as deliberative as possible and guide you through the process.
  - Introduce empty chair – represents voices of those not in the room
  - This is your conversation, so please direct your comments to one another.

Structure: Personal Stake, Option 1, Option 2, Option 3, Reflection
- We’ll start talking about how we relate to this issue personally and then move into a discussion about each option, giving equal time to each, before wrapping up with a brief reflection.

Ground Rules
- Assume best intentions.
  - If we start from a place where we assume everyone is here because they care about this issue, it is much easier to disagree without being disrespectful.
- We’re all experts in our own experience.
  - We need everyone to share their perspective in order to find common ground. Please speak from your experience and listen to others’ perspectives (especially when they are different from your own).
  - Given the limited amount of time we have, shorter responses allow for more responses.
- Step out of your comfort zone.
  - If you are usually an overactive participant, push yourself to listen more. If you usually struggle to participate, try to speak up.
- Listen harder if you disagree.
  - If you find yourself disagreeing with what someone is saying, listen harder. Try to better understand what she/he is saying and what values she/he is speaking to.
- Consider each option fairly; creativity is encouraged.
  - The issue guide will be the starting point for our conversation and we will spend equal time considering each option, but don’t feel limited by the options or actions listed. If you have other ideas of things we could do collectively to address this problem, please share them.
- Are there additional ground rules we would like add?
- Do we all agree to follow these ground rules and hold one another accountable to them?
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________ minutes

- On the top of your issue guide, please write a number 1-10 ranking how important this issue is to you (1 = low concern and 10 = top concern). We will come back to these rankings later, but I just want to give you a moment to reflect on where your starting point on this issue is right now.
- What makes this issue real to you?
- Does ________________________ have any effect on you or people you know?
- Is this a real problem in your life?
- Do you hear people talking about ___________________________ in your community?

________ minutes

- Brief recap of the key points in option one
- If we followed option one’s course of action, what would be the effect on your life?
  - What about the lives of others?
- What seems to be most important to those who are attracted to this approach?
- What aspects of this approach speak to your most serious concerns about _________?

________ minutes

- Brief recap of the key points in option two
- If we followed option two’s proposed course of action, what would be the effect on your life?
  - What about the lives of others?
- What seems to be most important to those who are attracted to this approach?
- What aspects of this approach speak to your most serious concerns about _________?

________ minutes

- Brief recap of the key points in option three
- If we followed option three’s proposed course of action, what would be the effect on your life?
  - What about the lives of others?
- What seems to be most important to those who are attracted to this approach?
- What aspects of this approach speak to your most serious concerns about _________?

________ minutes

- On the top of your issue guide, please re-rank how important this issue is to you now that you have had the opportunity to deliberate with one another.
  - Did the number change? Why or why not?
- Are you thinking about this issue differently than before we began?
- Did we discover any common ground?
  - Do the actions that we found common ground on address our most serious concerns about _________?
- What were the trade-offs our group was or was not willing to make?
- Were there moments where someone said something that gave you pause?
- Were there moments where you began to reconsider your perspective?