

KITCHEN TABLE DIALOGUE GUIDE

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Kitchen Table Dialogues

A Kitchen Table Dialogue creates the space for constructive conversation on an issue of concern in the comfort of a friend or colleague's home. This do-it-yourself framework allows all Canadians the opportunity to gather their friends, family, neighbours and/or colleagues and join the dialogue on reconciliation and the movement towards a new way forward for all Canadians.

Background Information: We have included a summary of historic and present-day injustices that have occurred, or are currently occurring, in Canada. Including but not limited to: Indian Residential School system and the intergenerational trauma, Chinese Head Tax, and Japanese-Canadian internment (see Appendix 1.4).

BACKGROUND

Who is Reconciliation Canada?

Our Vision: A vibrant, inclusive Canada where all peoples achieve their full potential and shared prosperity.

Our Purpose: Reconciliation Canada is an Aboriginal-led organization building meaningful relationships through transformative experiences.

Reconciliation Canada is building new relationships between Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians – relationships built on a foundation of openness, dignity, understanding and hope. Our focus extends beyond the Indian Residential School experience to those communities who have received official apologies from the government of Canada, including the Jewish, Sikh, Chinese and Japanese peoples.

Our initiatives engage people from every part of Canadian society in open and honest conversation about our diverse histories and experiences in order to build resilient and sustainable communities.

Born from the vision of Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, Gwawaenuk Elder, Reconciliation Canada is a charitable nonpartisan, community based initiative which was formed as collaboration between Tides Canada Initiatives Society and the Indian Residential School Survivors Society.

FOR THE HOST

Place and time

Make this work for you! As the name suggests, these dialogues are meant to take place in a casual environment such as a home, café or staffroom. Try to choose a space that will comfortably fit 6-8 people around a table, or in a circle format. This space should be free of distractions or interruptions for roughly two-hours.

People

Invite those who have expressed interest in reconciliation, and an openness to communicate.

Materials

- a. A copy of the agenda for each participant and facilitator (see Appendix 1.1)
- b. Pens and blank paper for those who want to take notes
- c. Tea and/or coffee and water – make your fellow-participants comfortable!
- d. Print out 2-4 Dialogue Guidelines (see next section) for the table

Why you are here?

You are here because the Reconciliation Canada team is only so big! We are counting on you to start the conversation within your circles, to encourage openness and renewed relationships in your community, and most importantly, invite your community to take part in this movement. After all, we are all one and it will take a collective effort to move forward together.

Invite individuals who you are comfortable sharing your home/space, emotions and opinions with. If appropriate, we encourage you to invite a diverse group, keeping safety for all as a top priority: different age groups, cultural backgrounds and/or professional backgrounds.

Will you facilitate the dialogue, or will you ask a friend of yours who is keen and has facilitation experience? Decide this well in advance of the dialogue so that the facilitator has ample time to review the dialogue format and discussion questions.

FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

Dialogue Guidelines

Norms for Sharing Circles

- Speak on behalf of yourself only
- If you are not speaking, your job is to listen wholeheartedly
- While recognizing personal traumas, the focus for the circle is on moving reconciliation forward

Ideas for Impactful Dialogue

- Listen openly to ideas
- Assume best intentions; clumsy words can be a sign of learning
- Speak briefly and leave time for others
- Don't be afraid to ask for clarity

Dialogue Preparation

Please read, and encourage your fellow participants to read the Reconciliation Canada Dialogue Guide (see Appendix 1.4) before the Kitchen Table Dialogue.

Review facilitation guidelines in Appendix 1.2.

Please note that this document is for informational purposes. By using the information in this document, you agree to use this document at your own risk, responsibly and with discretion. None of the parties involved in creating, producing, or delivering this document shall be held responsible or liable for any damage that may arise, directly or indirectly, through the access to, use of, or viewing of this document.

APPENDIX 1

1.1 Kitchen Table Dialogue Agenda

5 min	Welcome and Introduction to Reconciliation Canada
10 min	Introductions <i>Name (including traditional name), where you are from, cultural identity/background</i>
15 min	History and Impacts of Indian Residential School and Inter-generational Trauma* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Robert Joseph’s Residential School Story Video • Language of Reconciliation Video
25 min	Creating Sacred Space <i>What is my story and/or experience to share?</i> <i>What are the greatest things that I have had to overcome?</i>
25 min	What is reconciliation? <i>What does reconciliation mean to me?</i> <i>Why is reconciliation meaningful to me?</i>
30 min	Planning for a future of reconciliation <i>What does reconciliation look like as a process?</i> <i>What action towards reconciliation can I make as a leader in my community?</i> <i>What action towards reconciliation can we make together as influencers in our community?</i>
10 min	What will I take away from the dialogue today?

* Videos found here:

www.reconciliationcanada.ca/explore/video-stories

www.reconciliationcanada.ca/explore/elders-statement

1.2 Facilitation Guidelines

Environment

- Create an environment that is safe, welcoming, accepting and forgiving; ask participants to help you design and maintain this space.
- Remind participants to be mindful of shared space and time; all participants must have equal opportunity to contribute.
- Prompt those who are hesitant, and politely remind those who over-speak to be mindful of their group members.

Facilitator Tools

- Allow small groups to self-facilitate; allow natural roles to emerge.
- Large group: Listen, encourage and help focus the conversation;
- Try to avoid adding content or conveying any judgment on the content provided by participants.
- Avoid misinterpretation by asking for clarification and using the speakers' own words and phrases as much as possible when paraphrasing or summarizing (when you use your own language to confirm, you risk misinterpreting what has been said).
- Ensure safe space is maintained and participants feel supported.

1.3 Quick Facts about Indian Residential Schools

- Aboriginal children were forcibly taken from their homes by RCMP.¹
- 150,000 Aboriginal children were taken from their families.³
- 90 to 100% suffered severe physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.¹
- There was a 40 – 60% mortality rate in Indian residential schools.¹
- Residential schools date back to the 1870s.³
- Over 130 residential schools were located across Canada, and the last school closed as recently as 1996.³
- Two-thirds of Canadians believe (and four in ten strongly believe) that Canadians with no experience in Indian Residential Schools have a role to play in reconciliation between Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians.²

1. Dr. Bryce Report 1907, Medical Inspector, Department of Indian Affairs

2. 2008 National Benchmark Survey, Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada

3. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

1.4 Reconciliation Canada Dialogue Guide

The Reconciliation Canada Dialogue Guide is typically used for official Reconciliation Dialogue Workshops and is intended only to be a reference source for this Community Action Toolkit.

To download, visit the following link:

www.reconciliationcanada.ca/dialogue-workshop-guide