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 peoples in Canada 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 peoples in Canada.

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 Canada where all peoples achieve their full potential and shared prosperity.

Our Purpose: We are an Indigenous-led organization that catalyzes meaningful relationships through values-based dialogue, leadership and action

Born from the vision of Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, Gwawaenuk Elder, Reconciliation Canada is leading the way in engaging Canadians in dialogue and transformative experiences that revitalize the relationships among Indigenous peoples and all Canadians. Our model for reconciliation engages people in open and honest conversation to understand our diverse histories and experiences. We actively
engage multi-faith and multi-cultural communities to explore the meaning of reconciliation.

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.

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. 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.

Materials

a.) A copy of the Kitchen Table Dialogue Agenda for each participant (Appendix 1.1)
b.) A copy of the Facilitation Guidelines (Appendix 1.2)
c.) A copy of Reconciliation Begins with Me for each participant (Appendix 1.7)
d.) Print out 2-4 copies of Dialogue Guidelines for the table (under the ‘For all Participants’ section)
e.) Pens and blank paper for those who want to take notes
f.) Flip charts and pens (Facilitator’s preference)
g.) Refreshments [Tea and/or coffee and water] and Kleenex – make your fellow participants comfortable.

Why you are here?

You are here because you are interested in finding your role in reconciliation! 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. We believe that this is a starting point to finding a New Way Forward for your community.
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) and share the additional resources provided:

- First Peoples: A Guide for Newcomers (Appendix 1.3)
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 94 Calls to Action (Appendix 1.5)
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Appendix 1.6)

Review Facilitation Guidelines (Appendix 1.2) before the Kitchen Table Dialogue.

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# APPENDIX 1

## 1.1 Kitchen Table Dialogue Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Agenda Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Welcome and Introduction to Reconciliation Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>Introductions&lt;br&gt;Name (including traditional name), where you are from, cultural identity/background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Language of Reconciliation&lt;br&gt;- Language of Reconciliation Video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 min</td>
<td>What is reconciliation?&lt;br&gt;What does reconciliation mean to me?&lt;br&gt;Why is reconciliation meaningful to me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 min</td>
<td>Creating Sacred Space&lt;br&gt;What is my story and/or experience to share?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 min</td>
<td>Planning for a Future of Reconciliation&lt;br&gt;What action towards reconciliation can I make as an individual leader in my community?&lt;br&gt;What action towards reconciliation can we make together as influencers in our community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>What will I take away from the dialogue today?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Videos found here:  
  www.reconciliationcanada.ca/category/video  
  www.reconciliationcanada.ca/elders-statement
1.2 Facilitation Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 min</th>
<th>Acknowledgement of Local Traditional Territories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Following the Acknowledgement of Territories.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please find the introduction to Reconciliation Canada in the Reconciliation Canada Dialogue Guide (Appendix 1.4)

Finally, please review the Dialogue Guidelines. Ask the group if they would like to add anything.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 min</th>
<th>Introductions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You may know one another well, but please follow this introduction exercise. It is very impactful!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Going around the circle, please take 30 - 60 seconds and introduce yourself in the following way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 min</th>
<th>Language of Reconciliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We always look to our Elders to guide our way forward:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To start this dialogue in a good way, we will turn to a group of Elders representing Indigenous and other ancient histories who speak to the language of reconciliation.

Elders Share on the Language of Reconciliation - Video

http://reconciliationcanada.ca/elders-statement/
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>25 min</th>
<th>What is reconciliation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Reiterate that the ‘Norms for Sharing Circles’ are very important in this section to allow for personal and group safety. Emphasize that when one is not speaking, their job is to listen wholeheartedly. | • What does reconciliation mean to me?  
• Why is reconciliation meaningful to me? |

| Starting with the first question, ask one attendee to start, and continue on around the circle in order. | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>25 min</th>
<th>Creating Sacred Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having set the expectations just previously, maintain this environment:</td>
<td>What is my story or experience to share?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| This is an opportunity for you to share, without questions or comments from others. Answer this question from your heart – ask yourself, how have I experienced reconciliation, and how do I understand reconciliation as it applies to my own story or experience? | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>30 min</th>
<th>Planning for a Future of Reconciliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Encourage attendees to share the space and time equally, answering the following questions. | • What action towards reconciliation can I make as an individual leader in my community?  
• What action towards reconciliation can we make together as influencers in our community? |

| Facilitator should take notes in this section. | |
**10 min**
Close the circle in a good way, however you define that. Allow each attendee a minute or so to answer the question.

Thank all participants and suggest the next step of private personal work with the *Reconciliation Begins with Me* activity (Appendix 1.7). Make copies available for take away.

**Closing**
- What will I take away from the dialogue today?
  
  Suggested Take-away: Reconciliation Begins with Me

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**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 First Peoples: A Guide for Newcomers

This guide provides information about the rich culture, diverse history, and experiences of Canada’s First Peoples designed to build greater understanding between non-Indigenous and Indigenous communities.

To download, visit the following link:
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 Kitchen Table Dialogue Toolkit.

To download, visit the following link: www.reconciliationcanada.ca/dialogue-workshop-guide
1.5 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 94 Calls to Action

In order to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission made 94 Calls to Action.

To download, visit the following link: http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf
1.6 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN-DRIP) is an international instrument adopted by the United Nations on September 13, 2007, to enshrine (according to Article 43) the rights that “constitute the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world.”

To download, visit the following link:
1.7 Reconciliation Begins With Me - Activity

Used by many Indigenous peoples across North America, the medicine wheel is a holistic way of exploring one’s own well-being.

If we see ourselves as the entire wheel, we notice there are several small pieces that make up the whole. We need to nurture each piece to its fullest potential in order for the wheel to be in balance. If one piece is not tended to, the others suffer from overcompensating for the lack of strength in the un-nurtured piece, causing the nurtured pieces to then become stressed and disproportionate to the whole.

At this time, through the lens of reconciliation, you are invited to search within your own life, your own medicine wheel, to see what parts of your being are nurtured and what parts need nurturing.