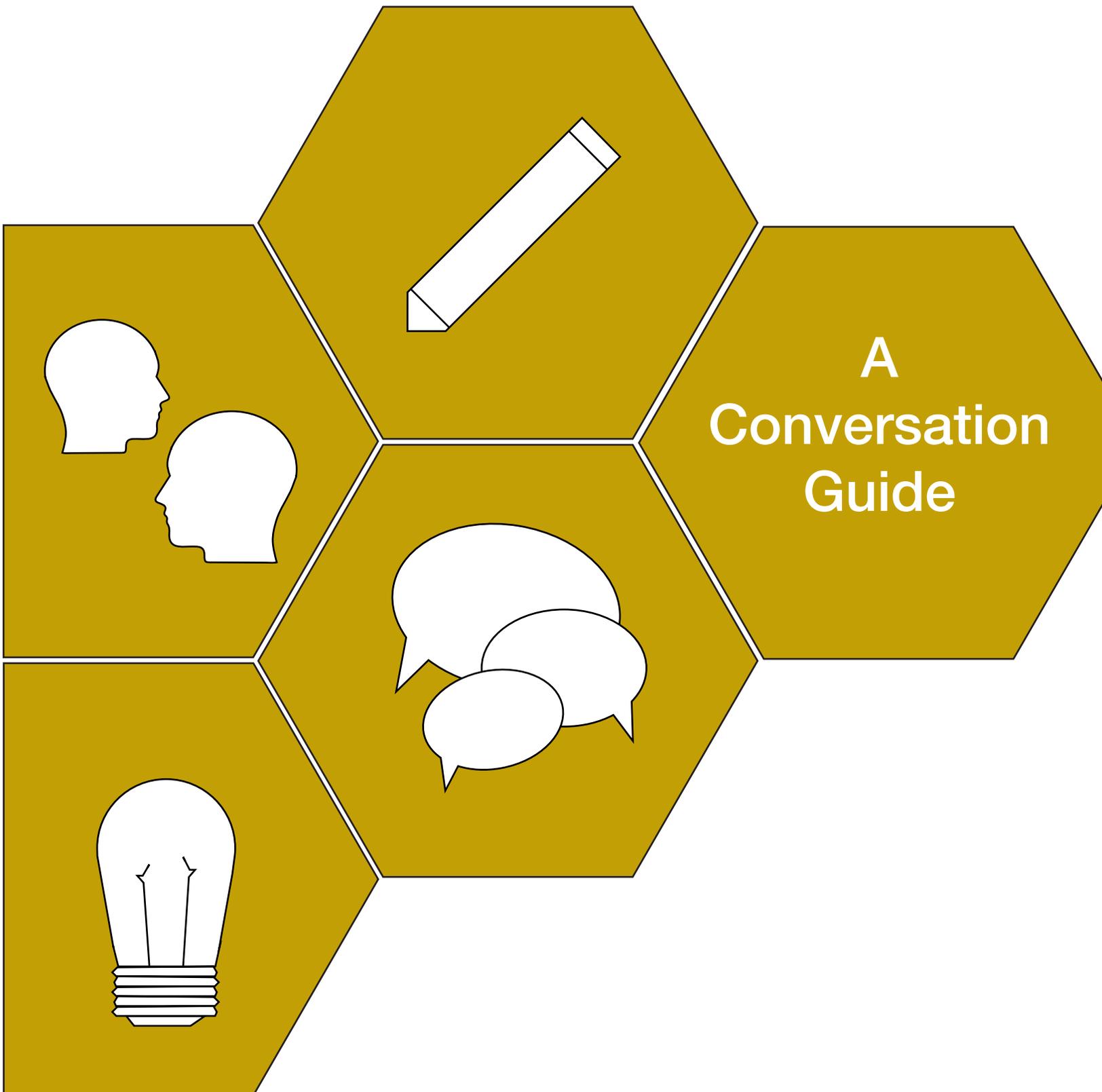


What's positive, lasting impact?



A
Conversation
Guide

Welcome!

Facilitating dialogue around complex questions is challenging. However, group reflection can direct and support individual meaning-making, group connection, and leads facilitators and participants to deeper understanding about big ideas. This guide is designed to be used by the facilitator, providing tips for facilitating these types of intentional conversation and ideas for a structured dialogue around a specific question. These conversations are meant to be between an hour and an hour and a half, with a group of people interested in the topic. The suggested structure offers tips, activities, and needed materials to be used and adapted by the facilitator to the group needs. This guide may be used on its own, or in conjunction with other guides or activities to create a facilitation plan for a variety of reflective purposes. The activities suggested in the conversation guide are described in further detail in accompanying activity guides.

This guide is broken into four parts, delineating the different stages of the conversation. Each section, or stage of conversation, offers activities and guidance specific to the question for the guide. The activities are meant to be adapted and modified to fit the group's needs. There are specific adaptations mentioned for classroom, service immersion, and routine service use. At the conclusion of the guide, there is a sample conversation. This sample demonstrates one way to structure the conversation for use with groups.



Activity Guides

More information about techniques involved in facilitating conversations and implementing specific activities are found in the accompanying activity guides. These activity guides and the associated materials are found in the VT Engage office, or online when possible.

How to Use this Guide

Each section in the guide serves a distinct purpose in the conversation. The structured dialogue depends on varying depth to process as a group, and come to collective realizations, along with personal take-aways. These four sections serve specific purposes in engaging participants.



Prepare

This section focuses on preparing for the conversation as a facilitator. Beginning this process by personally reviewing the question and content is an important step in leading dialogue. As the facilitator, it is important to be aware of and prepared for the different directions the question and conversation may take. This step focuses on guiding the facilitator through personal reflection, and exploring different elements of creating and facilitating a reflective space for group dialogue.



Connect

As the first tangible step in facilitated conversation, it is critical to begin the dialogue with activities that invite participants to invest in the experience. This stage in the conversation focuses on bringing participants together, co-defining core concepts and creating a shared experience to begin a deeper dialogue about a specific concept. These activities generally offer easy opportunities to engage in the group activities, and focus primarily on building group cohesion.



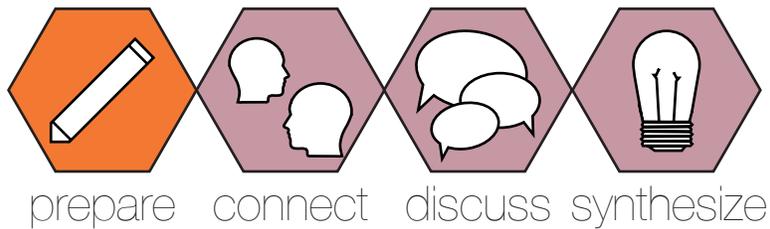
Discuss

This stage of the conversation is the deepest stage of dialogue, as participants unpack the complexities of the topic or question together. Generally, this stage of the conversation consists of a group discussion framed by an activity that challenges participants beliefs about a specific aspect of the question. This builds on the shared foundation established in the previous stage, and brings participants together to unpack complex themes.



Synthesize

After participants have engaged in deliberate conversation around complex themes, it is important to properly wrap up the experience. This stage does not necessarily provide answers, but does create the opportunity for participants to close this specific session. At times, it may feel as though there are more questions at the completion of the conversation than there were at the beginning. This creates the opportunity to recapture the thoughts shared during the discussion portion, and contribute to future conversations.



Personally Preparing for Dialogue

Adequate preparation is among the most critical elements to facilitating group dialogue. Before you begin the conversation with your group, it is important to think about the ideal atmosphere of the conversation, and personally reflect on the specified topic. The setting for your group conversation can have important implications for the success of your conversation. It is also helpful to have thought through the question, without creating hard and fast outcomes, to help guide the conversation when needed.

Set the Scene

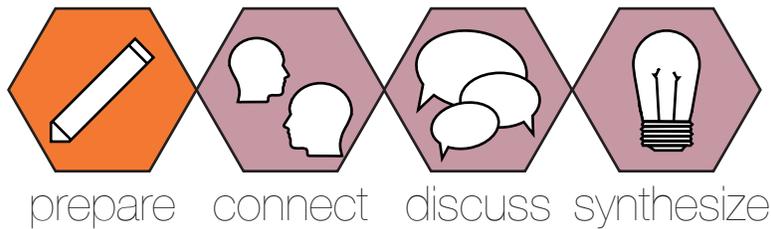
When beginning to think about your facilitated conversation, consider the mood and energy levels of your participants, based on other factors. The **time of day and activities around reflection** will impact the outcome of your group session. Fluctuating energy levels, amount of attention and focus, and routine-nature of reflection often influence the group's ability to concentrate and engage in facilitated conversations. The time and place of your reflection should depend on things such as the group's need to sit and rest, the merits of concrete floor versus sitting at a table, and available locations and times based on group activities. If the facilitated conversation is happening directly after or in the midst of other activities, such as service, participants may need help focusing. By thinking through and meeting the needs of your group participants, they will be more likely to engage in the facilitated conversation.

Creating a welcoming space is crucial for reflection both in the physical and abstract sense. Make sure the space is physically accessible to everyone. Also, consider if participants feel welcomed, or a sense of belonging. By making sure you, as the facilitator, know everyone's names and that everyone is able to participate, the participants will feel more open and engaged in the conversation.

Supply the Scene

You may need certain materials to effectively lead your reflection. Think about this beforehand, and **collect the materials you need**. Some common materials may be paper, pens, index cards, Visual Explorer cards, flip charts, markers, etc.

Thinking about the needs of your group members, what will promote the reflective nature of the conversation? Depending on the setting or regularity of reflection, it may be helpful to **bring snacks or coffee to help engage your group participants**. By sharing baked goods and coffee or tea, the group will be able to engage with one another on multiple levels.



Create the Space

One of the main roles a facilitator adopts is setting the space for the conversation. To start the conversation off on the right foot, it is essential to consider critical elements and convey core values of reflection to your group before the reflection begins. Make sure you are upholding and demonstrating the values listed below, as well as sharing with your group, to create a safe and inviting space. Develop an understanding of your participants' beliefs and thoughts on the service project, and how much past experience they have had with service and reflection. Ask yourself what you believe your participants hope to get out of this service experience.

As the facilitator, it is important to set the guidelines for participating in the dialogue, to ensure that each participant feels welcomed, respected, and able to contribute. Consider these common agreements as you are designing your conversation, and ensure that you share these with your participants at the beginning of the conversation. Sharing these with the participants generally occurs during the first reflection meeting, agreeing to uphold these standards to respect one another and meaningful engage in the activities.

Be Respectful

Respect others' opinions and be open minded to new ideas and perspectives. You do not need to agree with every opinion, and if there is some confusion make sure to ask for clarification before judging or jumping to conclusions.

Be Mindful

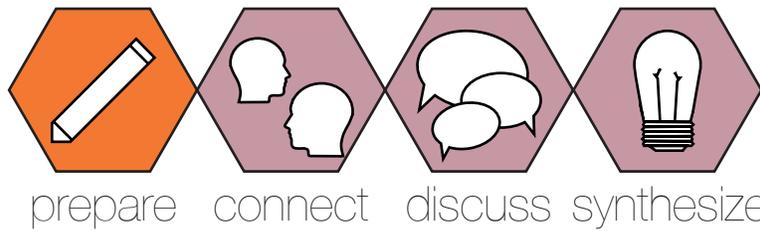
Be mindful of others in order to create a safe space. Try not to rush to speak your opinion. Understand that it takes courage to share personal information, and respect participants by not sharing this information in an identifiable way. We want to create a space where we can support one another while difficult questions and perspectives can be processed.

Be Aware

Be aware of your verbal and nonverbal communication. This communication includes not only words, but posture, gestures, tone, and facial expressions. Judgement can be communicated both verbally and nonverbally. Be mindful of your actions and the language and tone that you use.

Be Engaged

Be active listeners. Engage and tune in to others when they are sharing their opinion, story, beliefs, or questions. Do not interrupt, but respect their time and contribution to the conversation.



Unpacking: What's positive, lasting impact?

Service often happens without significant reflection to understand the impact or legacy of the activity. While these actions occur with good intentions, service may suffer from a lack of intentional review and assessment to improve future programming. Despite the type of service, what does it look like when service is going well? What is the ideal impact of service? This question is delivered with two objectives. Firstly, it is important to engage participants in thinking about what *positive* impacts from service look like. Recognizing that service, at times, has the potential to be harmful, are we ethically obligated to understand what makes service positive and beneficial? What elements make service a positive contribution to the community? Secondly, it is critical to understand what aspects of service leave a *lasting* impact. Does the type of service influence the overall sustainability of the impact? What makes the impact of service long-lasting or short-lived? Whether the impact is positive or negative, what influences the lasting impact of service?



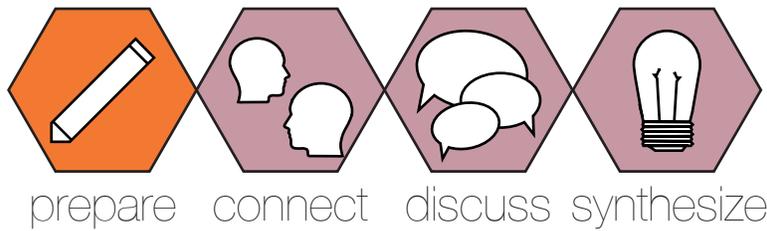
Using this conversation guide during or directly after service helps participants understand the elements of their actions that have the potential to influence the importance of service. While it is important to remember to respect the current service trip, it is important to challenge participants to identify the small aspects of the way they serve, and the influence those elements have on the success of the goal.



If used in a classroom setting or distinct from service, this may be a challenging discussion about how we see our ethical obligations through service. One possible adaptation to this guide could be to examine how we see a positive, lasting impact from service, compared to other for-profit efforts. It is important to orient your conversation about the different impacts of service under consideration of your group's experience with service.

Keep In Mind

You would want to use this reflection when participants are trying to understand their efforts and how their work can leave lasting impact on communities. Participants will start thinking about different ways where lasting impact can be seen and felt. It also addresses positive and negative impact looking at it from a community perspective. This question will challenge participants to critically analyze the impact of service, and may be the first venture into understanding positive and negative elements of service for some participants. Depending on available time, this conversation can be adapted to only address part of the question (i.e. what is the impact of service--is it positive or negative?). It may be helpful to think about what the main point you would like your participants to consider before planning the dialogue activities.



Facilitator Reflections

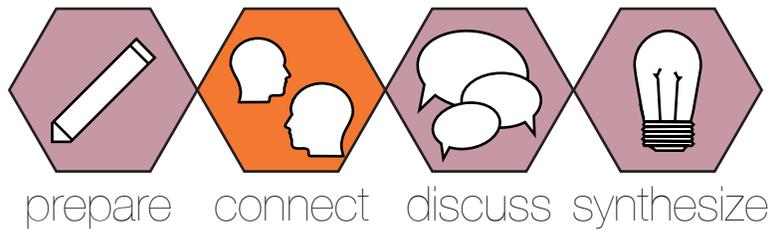
Before you lead reflection, take a moment to personally reflect on the question. Think about what experiences the participants may bring into the conversation, and why this is an appropriate question to engage your group with. Answer the following questions to begin exploring the direction this question may take:

The following questions are meant to consider as the facilitator before starting the discussion. These are designed to encourage you to think about the different directions the conversation may go.

How do you define lasting impact? What does this look like, feel like, sound like, etc?

Do you think impact can be negative? Are lasting impacts always positive?

How do we make sure that we are having a positive and lasting impact?



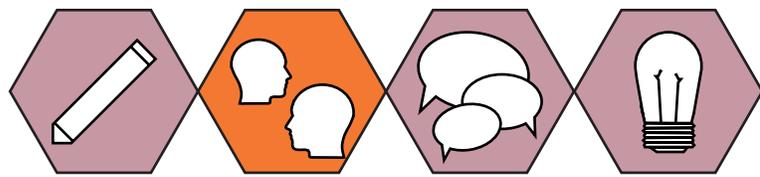
Getting Into the Conversation

The beginning of the conversation often sets the tone for the rest of the session. Whether working with a service group or engaging in dialogue in the classroom, it is important to lay the groundwork for the conversation. In this stage of group dialogue, it is important to consider what needs to be done to help your group feel connected, and build trust to move into deeper and more vulnerable topics. As you begin a reflection session with a group, it is important to introduce one another and share the common agreements listed in the preparation section. Setting this foundation will help establish the safe space for reflecting on deeper issues later in the session. Introducing one another invites everyone to the conversation, and allows people to feel ownership within the dialogue. Specifically sharing the common agreements helps establish the collaborative nature of the conversation, create mutual responsibility, and empower participants. This is also a great time to share important logistical information, like how long participants can expect the conversation to be and how to take care of personal needs that may arise during the session. As participants are able to form basic assumptions of what is expected of them, others, and the direction of the conversation, they will feel safer about contributing within the conversation.

Start On the Right Foot

If your group is unfamiliar with one another, **facilitate introductions** through a name game or a simple time to share names and an interesting fact. By beginning to facilitate group dynamics, the participants are more likely to engage and trust later in the conversation. If your group already knows one another, take this time to draw everyone's attention and focus to the task at hand. This can be done by setting the expectations for reflection early on in the trip or activity.

After initial introductions are complete, a grounding activity can be used to **bring the group together around the facilitation topic**. This activity is meant to bring everyone to the table and starting the conversation with an idea about where each participant is coming from. At the conclusion of the grounding activity, the group should be prepared to discuss the topic at hand. There are important considerations when you choose grounding activities based on the experiences of your group. These grounding activities are interchangeable, but are recommended with the specific question, "What's positive, lasting impact?" in mind. **Pick one activity from the opposite page to engage your group in beginning to think about the purpose for service.** These activities are chosen for their ability to draw the group together, and set the foundation for a group conversation.



prepare connect discuss synthesize

▼ During or After Service

If your group has already participated in a shared experience, the grounding activity should build off the experience. These activities allow participants to share what they have noticed or observed throughout the day, building off their personal reflections. Activities such as “Draw a Picture of...”, or sharing thoughts on a specific idea encourage participants to connect their experience with the group dialogue. Good initial questions encourage participants to critically process service they have observed or been a part of, and possible impacts of those actions.

Draw a Picture of...



15 minutes



Individual

Pass out paper and writing utensils to each participant. Prompt the group to individually think about a service event or commitment they have been or are a part of. Ask participants to draw a picture of (or write notes, jot ideas, etc.) about the possible impacts of the service. Time permitting, share with the group.

🪑 Classroom or Distinct from Service

If reflection is occurring distinct from a group activity, there may be a need to unpack the question before diving into conversation. A great grounding activity may include both icebreaker and reflective elements. For this reflection, it could be useful to have participants answer the facilitator’s questions either individually, in a small group, or in the large group. Here are the questions:

- >> How do you define lasting impact? What does this look like, feel like, sound like, etc?
- >> Do you think impact can be negative? How?
- >> How do we make sure that we are having a positive and lasting impact?

Intentional Questions



10-15 minutes



Large group

Take the first ten minutes of the group dialogue to share personal perspectives on the topic, using the questions for personal reflection in the preparation section. If the group is larger than about seven people, break participants up into pairs or small groups.

Visual Explorer Cards

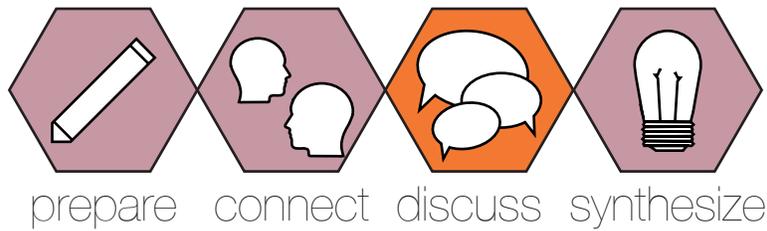


20-25 minutes



Large group

Lay the cards out on a flat surface. Instruct participants to pick a card that relates to a specific prompt. They will be given time to think about the prompt, choose a card, and come back to the group circle. Have each participant share why they choose their specific card. Dialogue as a group at the end.



Having the Conversation

This is meant to be the deepest stage of the conversation. When reaching the heart of the dialogue, participants are ready to dig into unpacking the question together. Activities during this stage of the conversation are meant to promote critical thinking and encourage deeper thought, using materials that challenge participants to see ideas in a new way and engage in presenting their perspectives.

Pick one of the following activity options to facilitate with the group. These activities should take the most time, and be shaped by participant contributions. As the facilitator, this is a time to frame the question and present different perspectives. **These questions should be adapted to fit the group's needs--including designing questions around shared experiences and context of group members.** However, it is critical to respect the reflective space, and support participants in exploring a variety of different opinions. These activities should be open-ended to support inquiry in different directions.

Activity One: Visual Explorer Cards¹

Lay the cards out on a flat surface. Instruct participants to pick a card picturing a time when a lasting impact has been made, seen, or felt. The impact can be positive or negative. Encourage your participants to think broadly and creatively. For the first question below, have your participants share their card by first explaining their card's details. For example, have them explain what the picture is, what is happening in the picture, what stands out to them, etc.

Here are some example questions to help facilitate conversation:

Explain the image that you chose and why you see it as positive or negative impact.

If the impact is negative, what could have been done to change the impact to a positive one?

In service, what would lasting, positive impact look like? Who would be involved?

For more in depth conversations, these questions can be used, but they do require a little more unpacking than the previous questions.

How can we make sure that we have a lasting, positive impact on the community? What needs to be done before, during, and after the project?

How can we avoid having a negative impact? Are there situations where this may be impossible?

Visual Explorer Cards



20-25 minutes



Large group

Lay the cards out on a flat surface. Instruct participants to pick a card that relates to a specific prompt. They will be given time to think about the prompt, choose a card, and come back to the group circle. Have each participant share why they choose their specific card. Dialogue as a group at the end.



Activity Two: Find It Scenario

Instruct participants to get in small groups. Give participants a copy of the following scenario. Ask participants to read through the scenario and answer the following questions:

What are the different acts of service presented in the scenario?

What are the different impacts of these acts?

You may want to provide participants with writing utensils and material to write on. Here is the scenario:

A group of students were volunteering at a local homeless shelter. The shelter needed help around their building with certain projects. A few students planted flowers, mulched the flower beds, and weeded. While they were working, a family that currently lived in the shelter wanted to help too. While the mother worked alongside the students in the flower beds, Mary held the baby and played with the three year old daughter in the yard. A couple of other students worked to repaint the doors around the shelter and clean windows. While the students were painting, a church group came to the shelter to drop off a meal they had prepared. Lori put down her paintbrush to help the church volunteers carry in the trays of hot food. Another set of students worked with a volunteer contractor to build a ramp to one of the shelter's entrances to make the building accessible to everyone. As the students worked together they began to get to know each other really well. They told stories and eventually ended up sharing the reasons why they were so motivated to serve. Conversation created a deep connection with most everyone working on the project. One of the students, Jason, took an eight year old boy who resided at the shelter under his care during this time. He showed him how to measure the wood for the ramp and how to secure the wood pieces with the hammer and nails. While all this work was happening, Janet noticed an elderly woman sitting on the porch quietly observing everyone's actions. She decided to go and talk to this woman as she took a break. The older woman enjoyed the company and ended up talking with Janet for over an hour. By the end of the day, the students had finished planting flowers in all the flower beds, painting the doors, cleaning the windows, and building the ramp. Before leaving, the group had committed to cooking dinner and eating with the residents of the shelter next Saturday evening.

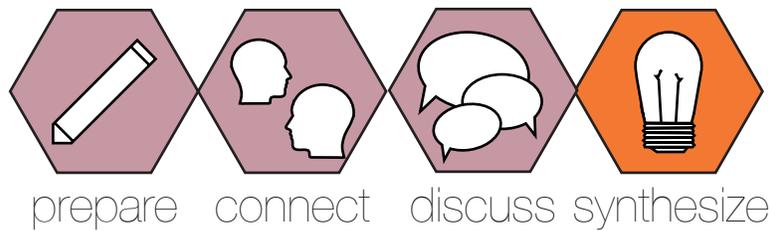
Bring the group back together after they have brainstormed in small groups for a few minutes. Here are some example questions to help facilitate group discussion:

>> Identify the ways in which students are providing a service.

>> What short and long term impact did their service have?

>> A year after the students visit, the ramp they built needs repairs to be functional again. Do the students no longer have a lasting impact at the shelter? Why or why not?

>> What are some ways to make sure that their efforts or any volunteer efforts are maintained in the future?



Leaving the Conversation

The end of the conversation should provide closure for the participants. This does not mean there needs to be concrete answers or a group consensus on a resolution, but group members should feel that they were able to express things that they wanted to say and there should be an opportunity to identify a takeaway. If this opportunity was a one-time reflection, group participants may benefit from creating a deliverable, such as something creative or written to synthesize their thoughts from the reflection. While this always has the potential to be beneficial, participants in recurring reflection may choose to identify takeaways in less work-intensive ways, and create something more substantial at the end of the experience.

Often, the needed closure can come from reading something simple, acknowledging the group's contributions to the conversation, or allowing a few moments for participants to jot down thoughts from the conversation. Different groups have different needs post-reflection, and may vary due to experience and investment.

If the conversation turns out to be more intense or “heavy” or you feel is coming to an end on a negative note, it may be valuable to try and change the tone of the conversation to a more positive one. Do not discount the point of the reflection, but try and leave participants with a positive outlook and hope. You can achieve this by reading an uplifting quote, poem, or short story before the group disperses. You may also ask your participants a question to help them sum up the reflection through a some sort of personal outlet.

Take Away Cards



5-20 minutes



Large group

Hand out individual index cards and markers to participants. Prompt participants to think about the conversation. What stuck out to them? Ask them to write down one thing they thought about in a new way, learned, or struggled with. These cards can be collected for the facilitator or shared among participants in pairs.

Action Plan



10-15 minutes



Pairs

Ask participants to pick a partner and sit with them somewhere in the room. Ask the pair to reflect the day's conversation. What stuck out? Given the day's conversation, what are the three things your organization or project should do differently? What are three goals you would set for future service projects?

Credits

1. **Visual Explorer Cards**

Visual Explorer Cards are a set of images created by the Center for Creative Leadership. These cards can be rented from the VT Engage office.



Analise Adams

Analise Adams is an alumna of Virginia Tech and VT Engage, and often utilizes reflection as a tool to unpack service and promote citizenship in communities. She is passionate about community empowerment, increasing awareness of social justice issues, and working with students and community members to promote citizenship. She enjoys facilitating reflection with copious amounts of baked goods and coffee, and recommends this question specifically to groups that participate in varied service.



Emily Neer

Emily Neer is a student at Virginia Tech, and an alternative breaks leader with VT Engage. She loves using reflection in a service-immersion context, deepening learning outcomes from service by reflecting individually and in groups. Her favorite ways to reflect include conversation with others and journaling. She is passionate about challenging perspectives, motivating others to see their potential, and serving others wholeheartedly. She sees reflection as critical to making meaning and learning from experiences.

Conversation Planner

This Conversation Planner is a sample guide of what a conversation may look like. One activity is chosen for each section, and basic information is provided. Feel free to use these suggestions, modify the existing activities, or replace choices based on group needs.



Prepare

- Who will attend this conversation?
- What is the purpose of the session?
- When will the conversation happen?
- Where will the conversation happen?

How do you define lasting impact? What does this look like, feel like, sound like, etc?

Do you think impact can be negative?

How do we make sure that we are having a positive and lasting impact?



Connect

If your group has already participated in a shared experience, such as service, an appropriate grounding activity may be more topical. For a group that has just worked together on service, use a game like **Flash** to help center the group around the core idea. This group may need assistance in transitioning from an active service mindset to a reflection mindset, slowly bring the group to a more serious place for deeper reflection. For this question, having participants respond to words like making a difference, impact, success, and community may help in centering participants around the core idea.

Flash



10-15 minutes



Gather the group in a circle. Instruct participants to respond to the keyword with the first word that comes to their mind. The group will be given a word, and respond quickly. After each participant has responded, give a new word. Repeat four times.



Discuss

Visual Explorer Cards

Gather participants in a circle, and frame the idea of the impact of service. If the impact is negative, what could have been done to change the impact to a positive one? In service, what would lasting, positive impact look like? For more in-depth conversations, these questions can be used, but they do require a little more unpacking than the previous questions. How can we make sure that we have a lasting, positive impact on the community? What needs to be done before, during, and after the project? How can we avoid having a negative impact? Are there situations where this may be impossible? After about 2-5 minutes, bring the group together to share the cards they chose. Instruct each participant to briefly describe their image, and explain why they chose the particular card. At the end, discuss perceptions and ideas.

Visual Explorer Cards



20-25 minutes



Large group

Lay the cards out on a flat surface. Instruct participants to pick a card that relates to a specific prompt. They will be given time to think about the prompt, choose a card, and come back to the group circle. Have each participant share why they choose their specific card. Dialogue as a group at the end.



Synthesize

Take Away Cards

Pass out index cards. Instruct participants to write down one motivation or reason for service. What makes service worth it? What characteristic separates meaningful from insignificant service? Have participants hold on to these cards, pair up and share with a partner, or discuss with a small group.

Take Away Cards



5-20 minutes



Large group

Hand out individual index cards and markers to participants. Prompt participants to think about the conversation. What stuck out to them? Ask them to write down one thing they thought about in a new way, learned, or struggled with. These cards can be collected for the facilitator or shared among participants in pairs.

After you have personally reflected, there are three distinct stages of dialogue present in conversation. The structured dialogue depends on varying depth to process as a group, and come to collective realizations, along with personal take-aways. These three sections serve specific purposes in engaging participants.

Connect

The beginning of the conversation often sets the tone for the rest of the session. In this stage in the dialogue, it important to consider what needs to be done to help your group feel connected, and build trust to move into deeper and more vulnerable conversations. The activities in this section should focus on making the participants feel welcome and valued, and introduce concepts for the deeper dialogue.

Discuss

This is meant to be the deepest stage of the conversation. When reaching the heart of the conversation, participants are ready to dig into unpacking the question together. These thinking points are meant to challenge perspectives and create the depth in conversation that we use reflection for.

Synthesize

The end of the conversation should provide closure for the participants. This does not mean there needs to be concrete answers or a group consensus on a resolution, but group members should feel that they were able to express things that they wanted to say and there should be an opportunity to identify a takeaway.



discuss

Visual Explorer Cards

 20-25 minutes  Large group

Lay the cards out on a flat surface. Instruct participants to pick a card that relates to a specific prompt. They will be given time to think about the prompt, choose a card, and come back to the group circle. Have each participant share why they choose their specific card. Dialogue as a group at the end.

Example Questions

- >> Explain the image you chose and why you see it as positive or negative impact.
 - >> If the impact is negative, what could have been done to change the impact to a positive one?
 - >> In service, what would lasting, positive impact look like? Who would be involved?
- For more in depth conversations, these questions can be used, but require more unpacking :
- >> How can we make sure that we have a lasting, positive impact on the community? What needs to be done before, during, and after the project?
 - >> How can we avoid having a negative impact? Are there situations where this may be impossible?



connect

Draw a Picture of...

 10-15 minutes  Individual

Pass out paper and writing utensils to each participant. Prompt the group to individually think about a service event or commitment they have been or are a part of. Ask participants to draw a picture of (or write notes, jot ideas, etc.) about the possible impacts of the service. Time permitting, share with the group.

Intentional Questions

 10-15 minutes  Large group

Take the first ten minutes of the group dialogue to share personal perspectives on the topic, using the questions for personal reflection in the preparation section of the conversation guide. If the group is larger than about seven people, break participants up into pairs or small groups.



synthesize

Take Away Cards

 5-20 minutes  Large group

Hand out individual index cards and markers to participants. Prompt participants to think about the conversation. What stuck out to them? Ask them to write down one thing they thought about in a new way, learned, or struggled with. These cards can be collected for the facilitator or shared among participants in pairs.

Wrap Up/Pair Share

 20-25 minutes  Large group

Ask participants to pick a partner and sit with them somewhere in the room. Ask the pairs to share something they learned or thought about as a result of the conversation, or one question they have. This can also be a great place to prompt participants with more detailed follow up questions.

Facilitating dialogue around complex questions is challenging. However, group reflection can direct and support individual meaning-making, group connection, and leads facilitators and participants to deeper understanding about big ideas. This guide is designed to be used by the facilitator, providing tips for facilitating these types of intentional conversation and ideas for a structured dialogue around a specific question.

WHAT IS POSITIVE, LASTING IMPACT?



What is positive, lasting impact?

Service often happens without significant reflection to understand the impact or legacy of the activity. While these actions occur with good intentions, service may suffer from a lack of intentional review. Firstly, it is important to engage participants in thinking about what *positive* impacts from service look like. Recognizing that service, at times, has the potential to be harmful, are we obligated to understand what makes service positive and beneficial? What elements make service a positive contribution to the community? Secondly, it is critical to understand what aspects of service leave a *lasting* impact. What makes the impact of service long-lasting or short-lived? Whether the impact is positive or negative, what influences the lasting impact of service?

Who will attend this conversation?
What is the purpose of the session?
When will the conversation happen?
Where will the conversation happen?

How do you define lasting impact? What does this look like, feel like, sound like, etc?
Do you think impact can be negative? Are lasting impacts always positive?
How do we make sure that we are having a positive and lasting impact?

Share these common agreements with your group:

Be Respectful

Respect others' opinions and be open minded to new ideas and perspectives. You do not need to agree with every opinion, and if there is some confusion make sure to ask for clarification before judging or jumping to conclusions.

Be Mindful

Be mindful of others in order to create a safe space. Try not to rush to speak your opinion. If personal information is shared within the reflection respect the courage that that took to share and do not share this information in an identifiable way. We want to create a space where we can support one another while difficult questions and perspectives can be processed.

Be Aware

Be aware of your verbal and nonverbal communication. This communication includes not only words, but posture, gestures, tone, and facial expressions. Judgement can be communicated both verbally and nonverbally. Be mindful of your actions and the language and tone that you use.

Be Engaged

Be active listeners. Engage and tune in to others when they are sharing their opinion, story, beliefs, or questions. Do not interrupt, but respect their time and contribution to the conversation.