

Organizing an Engaging Nonviolence Study Group

The *Engaging Nonviolence* curriculum is best experienced by a group of 8-12 people interested in exploring the power of nonviolence for use in their own lives and in making a difference in the world. Assembling such a group often depends on well-organized planning, outreach, and follow up. The following ideas are offered as suggestions for meeting this goal. Feel free to contact the authors through the *Pace e Bene* website for consultation.

Note that there is just one book for both the facilitators and the participants. The idea is that once people go through the study program and familiarize themselves with the material, they can opt to become facilitators themselves. Until then, participants are encouraged to use it sparingly for reading, homework, and as a refresher for past sessions so that situations requiring creative input in upcoming sessions are not spoiled.

Forming an Organizing Committee

To organize an *Engaging* study group, it is strongly recommended that an organizing committee of three or more people be formed.

Once the committee is established, its members should first discuss their own hopes for this process, as well as their own commitment of time and energy to it. The committee should be clear about its goals. Is this study program being organized to introduce new ideas? Used as the basis of forming a long-term nonviolence group? Strengthening an existing group? Educating people who wish to do a nonviolent action? Getting clear on objectives and expectations will help guide the rest of the organizing.

You might find useful to refer to the seven steps of planning in from the book *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach* by Jane Vella when organizing a group:

1. *WHO?* – Profile of the participants and the number expected.
2. *HOW?* – This helps leads to the structuring of the program, the learning tasks, and the materials.

3. *WHY?* – Answering this question reveals the situation that calls for the educational event. A good way to respond to this question is to complete the sentence: “The participants need . . .”

4. *WHEN?* – Answering this question establishes the time frame of the study group. This question invites serious consideration of just how much can be taught in the available time.

5. *WHAT?* – Answering this question determines the content of the course: the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to be taught.

6. *WHERE?* – Answering this question determines the site where the course will be presented—for instance, what facilities are available?

7. *WHAT FOR?* – Answering this question identifies the achievement-based objectives*.

*Achievement-based objectives are stated in the form of the following statement: “By the end of the program, the participants will have . . .” As an example: “By the end of the program, participants will have experimented with nonviolent principles and strategies and discovered how they are relevant to their lives and the life of the world.”

The committee should then develop an organizing plan, including a checklist and a timeline. This plan should include the following tasks.

Identifying Participants

While the *Engaging* study program can be used with fewer or more participants, its exercises and process are ideally designed for groups of 10-20 people. Groups bigger than 30 can be challenging to manage unless you have more co-facilitators, and groups smaller than 8 can lack the full range of ideas and energy. To achieve the ideal number, consider pre-registering 12-15 people, because one or more individuals often decides to drop out beforehand for a variety of reasons.

To meet this goal, plan to reach out to at least three or four times that number. Consider who to reach out to as potential participants. Below are some basic approaches:

Reaching out to an already existing group

Do members of the committee belong to any existing groups? Would any of them be interested in going through the *Engaging* program? Consider exploring this at the next meeting of one or more of these groups. What are some of the other groups in the community? Make a list. Do committee members have any connections to them? Explore whether or not one or more of these groups are open to a presentation about the program. It could be that an entire group

would want to participate, or that some members of the group might be interested. If that is the case, they could be invited to join a group with people from several different settings.

Forming a new group

This group can be made up of friends, family members, people at work, community groups, civic organizations, business organizations, political groups, religious congregations, groups working against violence, and peace and justice groups.

Setting the Time

Plan the *Engaging* study program far enough in advance to successfully identify and pre-register participants. Decide the time and day of the week the program will be held. Usually a weekday evening, works best. Keep in mind that it is helpful to schedule half an hour extra for each workshop. Decide whether you will meet once a week, once every two weeks, or once a month. (Ideally, groups meet once a week or once every two weeks. This allows time for people to reflect on the material between sessions, but not so much time that group continuity is lost.) You may decide to wait until participants are identified to ask them what dates and times work best for them.

Setting the Location

Possible venues include homes, community centers, or congregational settings (synagogues, mosques, churches, etc.). Consider the following when choosing a space for the sessions:

- ☒ Atmosphere: Choose a place that offers an environment suitable for this study program.
- ☒ Convenience: Choose a place near public transportation.
- ☒ Size: Choose a room location that provides enough space to move around but not so much space that it loses the intimacy of the setting.
- ☒ Noise: Choose a space that will not be disturbed by outside noise.
- ☒ Wall space: Choose a space that has enough wall space to hang sheet paper.
- ☒ Consider creating a centerpiece that you will use throughout the whole study program. This might consist of a small table on which you place symbolic or ritualistic objects, flowers, scarves or anything else that is meaningful to the particular group you are facilitating.

Deciding About Finances

The one fundamental expense of the *Engaging* study program is the *Engaging Nonviolence* book, which each participant must purchase. The facilitators may decide that the rest of the program is free, or they may decide to charge a small amount of money (\$15.00-\$20.00) for refreshments, additional materials, etc.

In some cases, a fee may be charged to provide the facilitators with a stipend to cover the time she or he spends organizing and preparing the process. (For example, \$40.00 could be charged per participant.) If an individual or organization decides to use this curriculum and program on an on-going basis (for nonprofit purposes only), please contact Pace e Bene and consider donating a percentage of the fees to Pace e Bene for the continuance of our work. In any case, financial terms should be settled and advertised before the study program begins.

Publicity

Use and adapt the following *Engaging* talking points for all printed materials and to talk with prospective participants.

Engaging Nonviolence offers participants the opportunity to:

- ☒ Learn how to respond to violence
- ☒ Find ways to live a more just and peaceful life
- ☒ Deepen their relationship with themselves and others
- ☒ Experience the power of nonviolence

How to Promote Your Study Group:

- ☒ Create a flier. Effective outreach materials are critical to attract participants. A one-page flier is ideal.
- ☒ Send online notices to friends, family, colleagues, and affiliated organizations.
- ☒ Send postcards announcing this program to friends, family, colleagues, and affiliated organizations.
- ☒ Place ads in relevant publications (newsletters, etc.).
- ☒ Attend local community events to pass out fliers.
- ☒ Send press releases announcing this event to local media and try to get on a local radio program to talk about the upcoming study program.
- ☒ Let Pace e Bene promote your event via their events page or emails to supporters in your area.

See sample fliers, ads, and more at the *Engaging Nonviolence* sales page on Paceebene.org.

Engaging Introductory Presentation

Some people may be reluctant to commit to a 15-week study program immediately. Consider organizing a one-hour *Engaging* introductory presentation (with refreshments) to provide more information about the program. This informational gathering could be held at one of the committee member's homes, or at another suitable location. The presentation could be designed for the communities noted above: friends, family-members, people at work, community groups, civic organizations, business organizations, religious congregations, etc.

Responding to Inquiries

When someone calls or requests online information, it is important to respond to them as soon as possible (preferably within one business day). This will instill confidence in the process. Follow up immediately by responding to any questions they have or needs for more information. Refer them also to the Pace e Bene website.

Advance Registration

Pre-register people ahead of the start date of the study program—the earlier the better! For example, if the announcement of the study program is made two months before it begins, consider having a “pre-registration deadline” two to four weeks before it begins. This will allow the facilitators to gauge whether the program will meet its required number of participants. After people have pre-registered, send them a confirmation by mail or email.

Logistics

Identify any logistical requirements and develop a plan to meet them (transportation, refreshments, etc.). See each session for its material requirements.

Program Planning

Choose session facilitators (preferably two). Prepare for sessions. For in-depth guidance on facilitation, see the Engaging Study Program Facilitation Guidelines.

First Meeting

At the first meeting, make sure that co-facilitators have prepared ahead of time and welcome people as they arrive. It's also important to provide refreshments so people feel welcome.

Getting Copies of the Engaging Nonviolence Book

Order copies from: Pacebene.org // 510-268-8765 // info@pacebene.org

Contact Pace e Bene

Please let Pace e Bene staff know about your study program plans! We are excited to learn about what you are organizing, and we will be happy to share your news with our growing *Engaging* network. In addition, you can contact the authors to request training or other forms of support. Nina Koevoets can be reached at: nina.koevoets@gmail.com (Veronica Pelicaric can be reached through Pace e Bene).

Engaging Nonviolence Study Program Facilitation Guidelines

The *Engaging Nonviolence* study program is a small-group learning process in personal and social transformation designed for a wide range of contexts and settings. It can be led either by people with minimal facilitation experience or by those with a significant background in leading group processes.

The *Engaging* curriculum has been organized so that people with little formal facilitation training can facilitate it. Of course, experienced facilitators are encouraged to utilize their own skills for the benefit of all those participating. Each session starts with clear directions for every element and exercise. All facilitators, no matter the degree of their experience, are asked to do two important things:

First: Be diligent. This means reading the session text and readings carefully ahead of time; taking the time to grasp the intent and flow of the content; and following the instructions found at the beginning of each session. If you have questions about anything, contact Pace e Bene.

Second: Do your best to create a safe and productive environment where the program participants can explore the vision and tools of nonviolent power for use in their lives and the world. When people feel safe, they learn better and are more creative.

The following facilitation guidelines—which have emerged from the experience of hundreds of trainings, workshops, and small-group study programs led by Pace e Bene since 1997—are designed to help the facilitator accomplish these two objectives.

The Structure And Content Of The Engaging Study Program

Co-facilitation

Though not absolutely necessary, it is best to have two co-facilitators lead the *Engaging* series. Not only will this share the responsibilities between two people, it will also allow the person not presently facilitating to be a “vibes watcher”: to gauge the mood of the group and its needs and to intervene if necessary. The person not facilitating is available to:

- ☒ Add pieces that the facilitator may miss
- ☒ Provide support in challenging situations (for example, broken agreements)

- ☒ Carry out logistical tasks (for example, take notes)
- ☒ Take over if necessary

When there are two facilitators, the process is shaped by the wisdom and experiences of two people; it keeps both people fresh, and it models nonviolent collaboration for the group. Generally speaking, gender balance and cultural diversity strengthens *Engaging* co-facilitation.

Fifteen Sessions

The *Engaging* study program is comprised of 15 sessions. The value and impact of the program comes from the cumulative momentum of the entire 15 sessions that integrate the power and dynamics of personal and social change. We highly recommend scheduling and completing the entire program. The sessions can be once a week, once every two weeks, or once a month.

For some groups, however, it will not be possible to complete 15 consecutive sessions for various reasons. Under these circumstances, one possible adjustment could be to group a series of sessions and space them throughout the year. (For example, sessions 1-5 in the fall; sessions 5-10 in the spring; and sessions 10-15 in the summer.) Or consider doing half one year, and the second half the next year.

Our recommendation is to begin the series and work through it sequentially (even if a group decides that it can do no more than five or six sessions). The most important thing is to begin—as people participate, they may discover the importance of scheduling the entire study program.

The Structure of Each Session

Each session is two hours in length. In general, a session has the following structure:

- ☒ It begins with a short welcome where the facilitator welcomes everyone back to the group and gives an overview of the session.
- ☒ This is followed by an opening process that offers centering and focus. Sometimes this includes a quote, or some kind of meditative reflection.
- ☒ Each session then offers multiple styles of learning and being: large-group exercises, nonviolence story-telling, small-group reflections, times of creative expression (using various art media), role-plays, and debriefing. In all of these segments, we often encourage participants to reflect on and honor their own life experience.
- ☒ The last part of each session focuses on closure and preparation for the next session. Participants are invited to track their progress through journaling. In a few instances they are also asked to read the required material for the next gathering.

Preparing Each Session

Each session has an agenda that outlines the elements of the gathering with suggested times. Certain topics, reflections, or role-plays, however, may lead to extended valuable group discussion. Please feel free to adjust the agenda if this happens.

Facilitators are invited to slot an extra half an hour for each session in order to have extratime when exercises call for that due to participants' engagement, interest, and level of comprehension. The times allotted in the manual are not set in stone. They are guidelines. We are aware that some sessions are longer and more challenging and might require more explanation and different pacing. Each group will be different in their needs and reactions.

Review the agenda beforehand and read through the entire session. Prepare any necessary logistics as suggested in the "Preparation" before people arrive.

For all sessions, you will need an easel with sheet paper, non-toxic felt markers, and relevant PowerPoints which can be found on the Pace e Bene website at paceebene.org. If an easel is not available, tape large pieces of paper on the wall.

Consider using appropriate music while waiting for participants to arrive and settle.

Throughout this study program there are activities encouraging participants to creatively express their feelings or thoughts. Art supplies (crayons, colored pencils, clay, pastels, wire, drawing paper, etc.) are helpful to this process. They can be bought with fees collected for the course or from a special collection during the first session.

In addition to this study program, it is highly beneficial for participants to also watch videos dealing with nonviolence. A number of them are available on YouTube, or you can visit our website for a current listing of videos we find helpful such as *A Force More Powerful* and *Bringing Down a Dictator*. You might also want to do some research on this subject at your local library.

Personal Preparation For Each Session

In addition to session preparation, being an *Engaging* facilitator requires personal preparation. It is important to be centered and grounded when facilitating *Engaging*. If a facilitator typically practices a particular spiritual discipline or regimen (for example, meditation, artwork, singing, writing, or mindful walking) they are encouraged to ground themselves in this practice prior to facilitating the program and do the relevant inner work throughout the process.

If a facilitator is dealing with personal issues that prevent them from being fully present to the group, please share this with your co-facilitator and consider seeking professional advice.

Specific Elements Of Facilitating Engaging

Creating a Centered Environment

Create a tone and atmosphere in the room where the group will meet by using relevant material such as artworks, colorful cloth, symbols, and so forth. Set a “nonviolence table” with meaningful objects. Invite participants to bring objects that embody justice, peace, or nonviolence (pictures, items from nature, etc.) that can be put on the table throughout the study program. Invite participants to add to the nonviolence table at any point during the series. These are just suggestions to be applied in accordance with your particular style and cultural framework.

Putting Instructions and Comments into Your Own Words

The **instructions** for the facilitator are unindented italicized text. **Dialogue** intended for the facilitator to *share* with the participants is shown in indented unitalicized (plain) text with the invitation “Share the following in your own words” or similar phrasing.

The more you can present the comments or instructions to the participants naturally and in your own way, the better the flow will be. It is a very good idea to read over these instructions, presentations, or comments several times in advance.

Opening and Closing Each Exercise

The facilitator should open every exercise with a one-sentence description of the exercise and its purpose. This provides the participants with a framework for what they should get out of the exercise. At the end of the exercise, conclude by briefly summing up what happened. This reinforces what the participants just learned.

Creating Flow by Building Bridges Between the Segments

One way to prepare one’s facilitation is to notice the flow from one agenda item to the next and to build bridges between them. Flow helps participants to move smoothly on the journey and not to feel disjointed or jarred when a new agenda item is introduced. One way to do this is to reiterate previous material and connect it to the new exercise or issue. This provides an anchor for participants to build on as new material is added.

Debriefing the Content

Debriefing in the large group is the process of reflecting on the experience of an exercise or segment. It gives participants the opportunity to articulate and integrate their learnings from an exercise.

Generally speaking, debriefs should be allotted as much time as the original exercise or segment. We suggest a three-part process for debriefs. When possible, write on a large sheet of paper the following headings: *Feelings/Noticings*, *Learnings*, *Applications*. Debrief the exercise according to these three categories:

- ☒ **First:** *Feelings/Noticings*. These are observations without judgment. They are the sensory experiences of the exercise: what participants felt, saw, and heard.
- ☒ **Second:** *Learnings*. Where did participants grow? What were their new discoveries and insights? These might be incorporated in participants' journaling at the end of the session.
- ☒ **Third:** *Applications*. How can participants apply what they learned to their life and work? This gives time for them to reflect on how to make the material more immediately relevant.

Take at least five minutes for each section of the debrief. Sometimes a participant will make a response that belongs in a different section. Check with the participant if they think it belongs in the other section, and then ask the group to continue to give input on the section you are working on.

When a participant shares something that is unclear during the debrief, don't respond by making an interpretation of what the participant said. Use a question to gather more information. For example, ask the participant, "Can you say more about that?"

Balancing Experiential Learning with Presentations

Much of the *Engaging* process, including the debrief detailed above, focuses on reflecting on the experience of its participants. This method is called experiential learning. Popular education, developed by Paulo Freire in Brazil, is an example of the experiential learning method.

At the same time, the book and the facilitator provide input to the participants. This input is important because there is a rich history of nonviolence contained in the stories and principles that participants can learn from and apply to their lives. Some examples of these are:

- ☒ Bringing out key principles of nonviolence related to an exercise
- ☒ Telling a nonviolence story to illustrate a nonviolence principle
- ☒ Teaching a way to practice a nonviolence skill

Sharing Personal Stories

It is helpful for the facilitator to share personal stories that illustrate principles of nonviolence whenever possible. This models the importance of connecting the *Engaging* material to one's life and encourages the participants to do the same.

Stories don't need to be very elaborate or intense examples of nonviolent power. In fact, basic, simple stories from ordinary, everyday life are powerful because they show how creative nonviolence is ordinary and can be a part of everything we do.

Using Humor

Humor is important for several reasons. Since discussions of violence and nonviolence are serious and heavy issues, humor helps to lighten things up and keep people from getting overwhelmed. Ways of incorporating humor include using funny stories, jokes, short and simple games, or nurturing an atmosphere where participants can be humorous. It is important to be careful not to use humor violently (for example, using humor to put someone down).

Using the Diversity of Learning Channels

There are four primary learning channels: visual, auditory, kinesthetic (or learning through body movement), and emotional (or heart learning). Learning happens through all of these channels, but each person tends to process primarily through one or two of the channels. Vary the channels as much as possible in order to make the process more inclusive. Also, try to attend to multiple channels at one time. For example, write notes on easel paper during debriefs to attend to the visual along with auditory channels.

A Word about Role-plays

A role-play is an improvised dramatic enactment of a situation in order to find new and creative ways to respond. They are used to understand the emotional response and physical reactions to a situation and try out different actions and their results in a safe setting.

Through role-plays, participants can identify and anticipate possible problems and reveal fears and anxieties people have about an event and action. Role-playing conflicts can also be useful to develop insights into thoughts and feelings of an "opponent".

Role-plays help to understand and examine real problems because one can develop grounded theory, i.e. theoretical conclusions derived from practical experiences.

The steps in a role-play are as follows:

Select a situation – Explain the situation – Cast roles – Prepare the role-players – Prepare the observers – Set the scene – Run the role-play – Conclude the role-play (when it has met the goals) – Debrief

It is normal for participants to experience resistance to acting out role-plays. Some people tend to feel nervous and fearful when asked to be so visible or say that they “are not good at acting.” Facilitators can encourage them by pointing out that this is not about acting but about the capacity to walk in other people’s shoes and grasp issues in a very experiential way. In the book there will be several group role-plays where everyone is engaged, as well as role-plays with an audience. Make sure that people volunteer and have the opportunity to say no. (See the zones of learning in Session 1—participating can be in the alarm zone.)

Creating A Productive And Safe Environment

The *Engaging* study program explores the power of nonviolence through stories, readings, group discussion, exercises, and journaling. These activities encourage participants to come to a deeper understanding of violence and nonviolence by reflecting on their own experience, learning from the other participants, and taking action at whatever level they feel comfortable. Each session is structured to create a space conducive to attentive learning and contemplative reflection.

The facilitator creates this environment through the structure and rhythm of each of the fifteen sessions and the sensitivity and respect they display and cultivate.

Facilitating, Not Dictating

In this study program we want to honor everyone’s contribution. Discussions should not turn into debates. If differences of opinion arise in the group, the facilitator should encourage everyone to listen to each of the opinions and to take a long view, waiting to see how it might all unfold over the course of the fifteen sessions.

This program is most successful when the facilitator *facilitates*, literally “helps to make things go easily.” As facilitator, you should not dominate the conversation nor jump into a discussion to debate the right answer. Instead, help all the participants to engage and keep the rhythm of the process moving. The facilitator should avoid lecturing or spending excessive time explaining something. The assumption is not that you have all the answers, but that you are a co-learner and explorer who supports the growth of the group. Facilitators should not pressure themselves to be perfect and infallible.

Creating an Inviting and Welcoming Space

A key dimension of the *Engaging* process is the sharing of stories, feelings, and other personal information that often requires trust and safety. The *Engaging* facilitator therefore needs to create an environment where all the members of the group feel comfortable and safe to share in this way. There are several components in creating this environment. The first is a set of group agreements.

Making Agreements

One important way to establish this safety is through the “Shared Agreements” presented in Session 1 and reproduced here:

1. I agree to share and participate at whatever level feels safe and comfortable.
 - I will share what I want to share. If I choose not to share, that’s fine. If I want to share a little, that’s fine. If I want to share more, that’s fine. Together we will create an environment where our feelings and thoughts are respected. I might want to voluntarily take opportunities to feel uncomfortable when that might aid my growth.
 - I understand that facilitators are not acting in the capacity of professional psychotherapists or counselors. They are ordinary people helping us explore alternatives to the violence in our lives and the larger world. If something comes up for me during our time together I might want to seek assistance from an appropriate health professional.
2. I agree to maintain confidentiality about personal stories or experiences shared in my small group or in the large group, unless I have been given permission to share them with others.
 - I will not share a story or experience that someone else has shared in either small or large groups unless s/he has given their permission.
3. I agree to listen with my full and complete attention, and to wait until a person has completed their thoughts before I speak.
4. I will strive to appreciate and honor our differences.
 - Diversity is an opportunity for me to grow and learn in a new way. I will try to be open and celebrate persons, approaches, and ways of being that are different from mine. Within this context, I recognize that there are power dynamics in every group, including this one. I will do my best to be sensitive to the use of power based on race, gender, ability, sexual orientation, money, or class. If someone, for example, discounts another person’s experience, I will try to respond to this situation in a clear and loving way.

If there is any objection, discuss the issue and adjust as needed. Participants are invited to add more guidelines if they wish to do so. Explain that the document is a living document; if people notice that there is a need for new agreements or a change they can propose them. Encourage them to speak up if any of the agreements are broken and address the issue.

These agreements serve as a container for the group process similar to the way a bowl contains water and prevents it from spilling—it creates boundaries and safety beyond which one’s sharing will not be “spilled.”

The agreements are made at the beginning of the study program. They can be presented as a PowerPoint, but it would be preferable to write them on easel paper and post them on the wall throughout the sessions. When exercises require more personal sharing, it can be helpful to turn to the agreements and restate them.

Reestablishing Safety When an Agreement is Broken

A broken agreement provides the facilitator and the participants with an opportunity to practice nonviolence in a real-life scenario. When an agreement is broken, raise the issue with the group and share what you are feeling. (If a participant notices the broken agreement, ask that person to share their feelings.) In either case, get some feedback from the rest of the group by asking what they are feeling or noticing. After receiving feedback, if you have an idea what to do next, suggest it to the group for feedback. If you are not sure what to do, ask the group for ideas.

Here is an example: When someone shares an experience and another participant says, “No, it’s not like that. It’s this way . . .” the second person is denying the experience of the first person. The facilitator’s response could be something like, “I am feeling uncomfortable with what just happened. Alicia shared her story and Martin’s comment denied her experience.” Then follow the process outlined above. Try to refashion the agreement in light of the current situation while paying attention to *the comfort zone*, *the discomfort zone*, and *the alarm zone* (explained in Session 1).

It is important to support participants in the growing process while ensuring that they don’t feel overwhelmed and end up shutting down. Encourage sharing within the group at whatever level feels comfortable. At the same time, encourage them to voluntarily and freely open themselves to potentially experiencing discomfort when the opportunity for stretching and growth may arise. If it appears that a participant is going into their alarm zone, check in with that person as soon as possible. If it happens in the middle of a session, check in with the person on the spot by giving the person the opportunity to share or not share what’s happening. Alternatively, you can stop the process by taking a break and do a one-on-one follow up with that person immediately.

Facilitation Challenges

Facilitating *Engaging* can be both rewarding and challenging. The following is a list of challenges that facilitators often have to negotiate.

Keeping on Schedule

One of the most difficult facilitator challenges is managing the times scheduled on the session agenda. The facilitator must balance adhering to the schedule with allowing time for a variety of learning styles and for the deep reflection and sharing that the *Engaging* material often inspires.

The times allotted for exercises are the best estimates based on our experience. Try to remain within the time frame suggested. If an exercise is going over time, decide whether or not to continue with the exercise. If an exercise is continued, a later exercise may need to be reduced or eliminated altogether. Either decision is acceptable. In general, it is better to complete fewer exercises well than to rush through the session in order to cover every exercise. Depth is preferable to superficial understanding. However, if the group continually feels like it is getting bogged down and not getting to all of the material, it may have a negative impact on morale. By staying relatively close to the times allotted, facilitators should be able to navigate this dilemma.

Gauge the energy and amount of sharing in the group. If participants maintain a great deal of energy in an exercise, or they continue deep sharing, consider continuing an exercise that is exceeding its time limit. While it is good to maximize participation, this doesn't mean calling on every raised hand during an exercise. Acknowledge the participants waiting to speak and ask if it's okay to move on since time is running over.

Encourage participants to continue to reflect on the material in their journals between sessions. As time for an exercise is running down, it can be helpful to announce, "I'll take one or two more comments." This lets people know time is limited and will help prepare the participants for the transition to the next exercise. If you're really stuck (people want to continue to share and you'd like to move to the next exercise), address the group by saying something like, "This is really important sharing *and* we are going over time. If we continue with this sharing, some parts of the agenda will be cut out. What would you like to do?" This empowers the group to make the decision. If you're near the end of the workshop, you can simply ask the group about extending the time of the meeting.

Balancing time requirements with growth opportunities is a skill that is learned with experience.

Balancing Individual Growth and the Growth of the Group

A facilitator must consider whether one individual's processing of an experience or insight is helping or hindering the rest of the group's process. If a discussion seems to be benefiting only

one person and frustrating the others, try to move the process along. One way to deal with this challenge is to acknowledge and appreciate that one person's contribution, adding: "It's time to move on," and offer to check in with that person after the session.

Being Transparent

Facilitators should not be considered experts on the subject, but co-learners along with the participants. A good facilitator does not need to be the expert on every problem or issue that arises. A good rule of thumb is: when in doubt, ask the group for assistance and decide together what to do next.

Situations sometimes arise where it is unclear how to handle a situation. A good strategy is to consult with one's co-facilitator in front of the whole group so that everyone can hear the exchange. This models nonviolent teamwork by embodying openness and transparency in co-facilitation. It also dispels the myth that the facilitator is supposed to have the solution to every situation.

Varying Interaction Modes

Although *Engaging* is a group process, it also incorporates individual reflection time in order to pursue deeper introspection. This is especially important for more introverted individuals who may be more comfortable processing the material in this way.

In *Engaging* there is a movement between individual, small group, and large group activities. If there are too many consecutive large group activities, the group may need to do a small group or individual activity. For example, if during a large group debrief no one is responding to a question and the energy is very low, consider asking each participant to turn to the person sitting next to them and respond to the question. Usually, the energy will increase dramatically. Likewise, too many individual and/or small group activities may diffuse the energy of the group and require a large group activity.

Getting Support

Thanks for your willingness to facilitate the *Engaging* process. The authors and associates are available to consult with you about the material before a session and to assist if you have any problems.

Feel free to give the authors and Pace e Bene staff any feedback based on your experience of facilitating the *Engaging* study program.

Please don't hesitate to contact us.

Pace e Bene!