



Facilitator Manual

Deep Democracy Let's Talk

Relationship Conflict Resolution

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Deep Democracy Limited
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Welcome to the Facilitators Guide to Let's Talk

Let's Talk introduces people, young and old to the simple Deep Democracy method of conflict resolution. Through applying this easy to follow 4-step process people can be helped to face and resolve the inherent tension created by differences of opinion, difficult decisions, arguments and conflict. Together with the relief of tension through resolution they will gain a greater understanding of themselves and one another. **Let's Talk** can be used in any relationship with a life partners, family, friends and work colleagues.

Your role WILL NOT BE AS THEAPIST but will be one of facilitator/teacher to help the couple/dyad understand the basic philosophy behind the tools and to gain the skill and practice of the 4-step Let's Talk method, and to present to groups the Lets' talk methodology.

As part of your service to enable the couple or individuals attending the group presentations to practice and integrate the Let's Talk methodology, you will provide them with the Let's Talk eBook which has been developed as a teaching aid. The eBook is available on the Deep Democracy website and the Facilitator is required to register one or both of the participants at a registration a fee of GBP5 per person. On registration and payment by the Facilitator, the participant/s will receive a Username and Password via email that will allow them log on to the Deep Democracy website and download the eBook at no charge.

Licence Agreement and Support

Following the training and accreditation you will be licensed by Deep Democracy Ltd as a Facilitator in the Let's Talk methodology. You will sign a license agreement annually that will cover ongoing supervision, individual coaching, product related information, support programs and web support, including:

- ✓ Supervision sessions in small groups; each group will have four 2-hour supervision sessions per annum.
- ✓ The Facilitator will be entitled a maximum of three 15 to 20-minute individual coaching sessions per annum to assist the Facilitator with tough facilitation situations.
- ✓ Marketing and administration support via the Deep Democracy website.
- ✓ Peer support.

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The Process

You will offer the couple 1 to 6 sessions. The number of session will be dependent on the couple's ability to learn and become practiced in the steps and if possible (but not essential) to introduce them to the Golden Arrows.

Structure of the Program

- ✓ The sessions will be time structured and last for a maximum of 90 minutes.
- ✓ Prepare and clearly state the time frame.
- ✓ The sessions will begin with a Check-in and end with a Check-out.
- ✓ They will take place in a venue which honours the process ie. a quiet setting where confidentiality and privacy are assured.

Your Role as Facilitator and what to watch out for

Be careful not to fall into the role of therapist. Your role is to teach the couple the steps and facilitate the process, and NOT work on their issues.

1. The Metaskill of Neutrality

This is the most important aspect of your role. If you lose neutrality by beginning to side with one person you will not help but will hinder the situation. It will be important that you watch your own neutrality as a facilitator. If you notice yourself taking sides with one party put it on the hook and work with it after the session; you will do the neutrality dance exercise.

This 'neutrality dance' implies the moving between two clear positions. The positions can be literally demarcated physically in space or metaphorically or symbolically demarcated e.g. through changing hats.

This is an important exercise to use whenever you re-hook, either positively or negatively and as a result you begin to lose your neutrality. Use this exercise to help you gain insight into yourself and your projections.

Neutrality Exercise

- Step 1:** Be the person; talk, walk, gesture, stand like the person.
- Step 2:** Amplify these gestures.
- Step 3:** You may come to an edge; feel that it's not working, that it's too embarrassing, too difficult. Continue doing the exercise a little longer go over the edge.
- Step 4:** You will become aware of something about yourself; this insight will allow you to move into a neutral position in relation to the person who hooked you.



2. The Metaskill of Compassion

Make sure you are very present and LISTEN!!! Your neutrality which incorporates non-judgement together with compassion should create the safety that the couple will need to try the process.

3. The Metaskill of Patience

This process of addressing tension, disagreements and conflict will most likely be a very different and unfamiliar way of dealing with conflict and the couple will need time to learn and practice this new process. Ensure that you don't rush the process and allow each person enough time when setting safety rules, throwing their arrows and owning their grains of truth.

4. The Couple/Dyad drives the Process

Let the couple decide where they want to go, however encourage them to know the steps before they slide into bigger issues.

5. Sliding

The reality is that issues are like spaghetti; they are linked. However, enable the couple to realise that they can put limits on the level that they want to go to. They will feel themselves dropping to deeper levels, so explain to the couple that this will start happening and it is part of the process. However, they can choose to stop going there by agreeing that they will address these deeper issues at a later more appropriate time. As they become familiar with the tool they will be able to recognise where and when they should put on brakes. Emphasise that they are in the driver's seat and that they can control the process.

6. Amplification

Amplification is the gas or petrol pedal; it speeds up the process. Amplify **only** if you have been trained to amplify, and then PLEASE USE IT VERY SPARINGLY. The couple need to be able to control their process and go at their own pace. Your amplifying may speed up the process.

7. Climate Report

If you or the couple become stuck, give a climate report and make sure you are following the steps and the rules of the steps.

The climate report will help raise everyone's awareness and enable the couple to regain direction.

Use it when the room feels stuck or when there is confusion.

It's like showing the couple a mirror of where they are at and what is going on in the room by listing all the emotions and dynamics in the room. This way everyone becomes aware of the issues and dynamics present.

Make conscious and state all the content / opinions / views / dynamics / emotions in the room – be careful at this point not to individualise but to talk of roles. For example, "There are two people arguing with one each other in the corner" and NOT "there is John and Peter arguing with one another".

By listing all the roles in the room it brings them into the consciousness of the couple's relationship. This heightened awareness may help them to become unstuck and reduce the cycling.

Give the Climate Report in a neutral tone, as if you were giving a weather / climate report on TV. Do not interpret or ascribe the roles to any one of the two people. After the Climate Report wait and somebody will pick up the process.

The First Session

Do a Check-in whereby they will introduce themselves and state what their aims are for the session.

Let the couple/dyad know at this point that they do not need to take notes but that you will register them on the DD website that will allow them to download the Let's Talk eBook.

Model for them by introducing yourself, what your training and skill is and emphasise that your role is one of **facilitator** to teach them the process to resolve their own conflict (tension, disagreements).

Do not encourage the couple to go into the difficulties that have prompted them to seek your help; steer away from these, as this will tend to lead into a therapeutic process.

Begin by explaining what you will be doing and go into the Introduction Patter.

The Introduction Patter

All relationships like life are dynamic; they have their ups and downs. We all know how great it is when relationships are on the upside and all is going well. We also all experience the tension and discomfort when relationships go through a downside.

The downside is usually caused by the differences in how each of us perceives the situation. In fact tension and conflict starts when we become set or rigid in our views tending to perceive our view as the correct one and the other person's view as the wrong one.

Most of us dislike the tension and are conflict averse. We tend to shy away from tension and most of us don't really know how to face the tension let alone resolve it. We have never really been taught how to resolve the tension, arguments and conflicts that are caused by these disagreements.

When we do try to resolve tension, disagreements or conflict and get into an argument, what normally happens is that one person tends to "win"/have their way/dominate, whilst the other person tends to 'lose'/give in. Depending on the situation this can feel at best like a compromise and at the other end of the scale like being victimised. Whatever the feeling, one person is not really satisfied and the tension is often not truly resolved. We tend to ignore the tension "hide it under the carpet" but it does not go away, in fact it tends to get bigger over time and may result in us moving away from the person and losing the relationship.

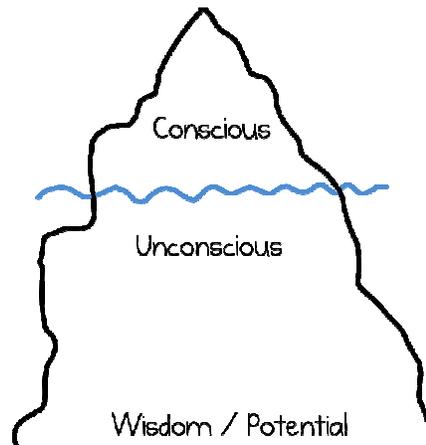
Let's Talk is a method to help you resolve tension, disagreements and conflict by agreeing to go into an argument DD-style; to help you relieve the strain of the difficult low ebbs of relationships.

This in itself will make life a lot easier.

Another major benefit of using **Let's Talk** as a method of resolving issues is that you will grow in yourself and your relationships will become stronger, closer and more fulfilling. I know this may sound strange given that tension and conflict feel so bad but in fact these times are an opportunity for growth!

Let me explain:

We can liken the individual personality to an iceberg.



(Draw the iceberg and explain)

Explain the following:

Conscious/Unconscious

The iceberg analogy describes how our personality is made up of a conscious and unconscious.

The iceberg analogy shows that only a small part of our personality is above the waterline meaning that we are only conscious or aware of a small part of who we are, whilst we are unconscious/unaware of the greater part of ourselves.

A lot of our behaviour is prompted by reflexive type patterns which we are not aware of. For example when you brush your teeth in the morning you are often doing it whilst thinking of something else. Or driving a car you do it almost automatically you don't consciously think of changing gears or putting your foot on the break you do it reflexively. Similarly a lot of our responses to more significant behaviours and relationships in our lives are prompted by reflexive patterns. We are not always aware of exactly why we feel or do certain things but we react in a patterned response.

Each of us is unique; we have our unique DNA, a unique thumbprint. However, we are also part of humanity and share common experiences and feelings.

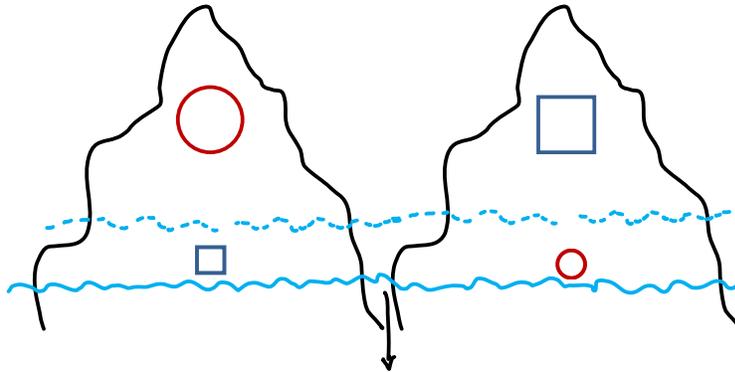
We could look at the fact that at a conscious level a person identifies him or herself as being separate. But at an unconscious level we are interconnected by those common experiences and feelings.

Through lowering the waterline and enabling more of the unconscious to become conscious, we personally grow, and gain more of our potential. We will feel less separated from others as we become aware of our common experiences and feelings.

The **Let's Talk** method helps you lower the waterline.

Let me explain by way of an example.

David and Emily are trying to decide what colour to paint their new home. David tends to be more arty and modern and wants to paint the house in modern gray tints. Emily is more conservative and wants to paint the house cream.



At a conscious level they seem very separate. However, at an unconscious level, under the waterline, there are times when David would want to use cream. And although conservative, at times, Emily would enjoy some grey accents in the house.

Tension occurs when people become rigid in their views and tend to perceive their view as right. When David strongly expresses his view as being the correct one, he implies that Emily's view is wrong. Emily in turn will feel that her view is right and both will become rigid. At this stage, they are unable to tap into what's under the water line and are limiting their awareness or views.

Through using the **Let's Talk** method Emily will be helped to discover the part of her that can agree with David and vice versa and growth takes place. Tension is lessened, it will be easier to make a decision together, and the people will experience not only personal relief, but also a sense of ease and greater awareness, which is associated with fluidity in thinking.

Before describing the method I need to tell you about three values, or premises, behind the method:

The Three Values/Premises

- 1. No one has the monopoly on the truth or reality; rather all perceptions are equally valid**

Each person sees the world separately. We all are unique and each one of us sees the world through our own unique perceptual lens.





For example if we look at this handbag and we ask a group of people to describe what they see using the first adjective that comes to mind. Some may see it as modern, some may see it as canvas, some may see it as large etc. All perceptions are right; no one's perception is more correct or rigid than the other. The handbag is all those things. No one has the monopoly on the truth.

This is the first value - No one has the monopoly on the truth. Each one of us has a valid perception.

2. Staying in Relationship

As a result of the above statement resolving tension is not about winning, but rather about staying in relationship. Recognising the first value and recognizing that the relationship is more important to us than being "right" or "winning", we agree to go into resolving the tension, disagreement or conflict.

"Staying in relationship" is an important value as the paradox is true that if we don't resolve disagreement or conflict will escalate and eventually lead to separation.

3. That it is a growth opportunity

As a result of using this method **Let's Talk** we will grow and learn more about ourselves. We will lower the waterline. This may be a little uncomfortable and we may feel sensitive when we discover things about ourselves, but we need to be aware that this is an important aspect of the process and consciously acknowledge it.

The Four Steps

Now let me take you through the 4 Steps.

Go through the 4 Steps. You may choose to go through the steps like an elevator pitch and then take them through it with a real issue which does not have a lot of importance. Once they have gone through the experience ensure that they understand the Steps by going through them again.

1. Step 1: Agree to go into an Argument

THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT STEP as it makes it safe for the couple.

Explain to the couple that each time they want to go into resolving a difficult decision/argument or conflict they BOTH need to agree to go through the process. Both need to be ready.

There may be a situation when one person is ready and the other is not. Or both agree but in reality one person does not really want to do it. There is no true commitment to go through the process.

The other person needs a little more time to be angry or to work through their own feelings and views. This is fine. It's not time. Suggest to the couple that they wait until the time is truly right for both parties.

They need to set safety rules. These rules may differ depending on the nature of the process. The more difficult the confrontation, the more the need for safety rules. But even with a lighter decision there may be a need for safety rules.



Safety Rules

Both need to agree to the safety rules; if one doesn't agree let the person who is disagreeing state what they need to come along.

The safety rules are about making it safe. For example, no hitting or hurting one another with words, time box, no violence, time out, no swearwords.

Ensure that you don't rush the process; allow each person enough time to say what they need to go into the argument.

2. Step 2: Throw all the Arrows - Own your own side strongly

- ✓ Example: When going through the good times in a relationship, we tend not to want the good times to end so we tend not to address the issues which irritate us. We rather decide to forget about them. However when the time comes that we do argue all the things that we decided to forget about we suddenly remember. In fact these issues are like arrows in a quiver waiting for the fight. When fighting we are also strategic; we tend to only throw that arrow which has a sharper point than the other person's arrow in order to win. Remember this is not about winning but about staying in relationship, so it's important to throw all the arrows, holding none back.
- ✓ Throw all the arrows at once. This is not about winning by keeping some bigger arrows back. This is about saying EVERYTHING that needs to be said.
- ✓ One person will go first throwing all his/her arrows, the other side will listen. Then switch. No tennis or ping pong.
- ✓ They are not to respond or defend, but throw their own arrows.
- ✓ This is about attack, not defense. Don't say: The reason why I am late is because you were unclear about the time! Rather say: You were unclear about the time!
- ✓ Try to make the arrows pointy and clear. Don't speak in generalities, in the third person or on behalf of others, speak from your own perspective.
- ✓ Throwing of the arrows will end when each side has said everything they have to say. They may begin to repeat themselves; recognize at this stage that the arrow throwing is over. Check with both sides if there's one last arrow that hasn't been thrown.
- ✓ There tends to be a lessening of tension at the end of this stage. This indicates that there are no more arrows to throw.

Ensure that you don't rush the process and allow each person enough time to throw all their arrows.

Step 3: Owning the Grains of Truth

- ✓ It's now time to own the grains of truth.
- ✓ This is about finding the arrow/s that hit you.
- ✓ Each person needs to own at least one arrow. You may own more but unless both sides own at least one, the tension will not be resolved and you will need to go back to the arrow throwing step.
- ✓ Many arrows have been thrown; you need to own those arrows that you felt hit you. You will have had a gut reaction or have recognized that this arrow really got to you.
- ✓ These are the arrows to own. The arrow will be leading to a part of you that was below the waterline; a part of yourself that you may not be that comfortable with. Be gentle with yourself as you look at the arrow.
- ✓ Own the grain of truth which the arrow contains. It might not be the exact thing that was said to you, but rather something that has the same texture or feeling. Or maybe a little part of the attack. For example: You partner may accuse you of being selfish. Your grain might then be that on one or two occasions you did consider your needs first.
- ✓ Make sure that you own the arrow completely. This means that you will speak from the 'I', in other words, it will say something about yourself. Also, beware of buts or ands. If you own the arrow completely, there will be no buts or ands. For example. If I own the arrow of being selfish, my grain might be: Yes, I have considered my own needs before yours on several occasions. Beware of things like: Yes I considered my own needs before yours sometimes but it's because you didn't tell me what you needed. This is not owning a grain, in fact, it's an attack. Owning the grain would be: I have considered my own needs before yours at times. And leave it at that.
- ✓ If you find yourselves attacking each other again in this step, it means that all arrows have not been thrown yet, and you need to go back to Step 2 of throwing arrows.
- ✓ At this stage the tension will have really disappeared and there should be a feeling of closeness.
- ✓ The grains of truth could be very insightful, and people may need a bit of time to fully understand.
- ✓ Know that the grains will be relevant not only for the person that owned them, but for both people in the argument. In a way you get two for the price of one.

Ensure that you don't rush the process and allow each person enough time to own their grains of truth.



3. Step 4: Taking the Grains back to the Issue

- ✓ As a result of the grains, new behaviours, decisions or agreements on how to be with one another will be found.
- ✓ Each person should be encouraged to suggest what to practically do to move forward from here on.
- ✓ If you went into this process with the intention to make a specific difficult decision, you will now find it much easier to decide together.

Set up the first Let's Talk Argument

Set up the first argument, helping the couple go through the steps. Advise them to pick a minor issue to argue about. It may quickly morph to their bigger issues but try and keep it to a minor issue so they can learn the steps.

Emphasise the importance of roles and doing the argument in roles, ie. that they can swop sides.

Help the couple go through the steps.

Step 1 – Agree to go into an Argument and making of Safety Rules

Once the couple have agreed to go into an argument, ensure that you don't rush the process; allow each person enough time to say what they need to go into the argument.

Step 2 - Throw all the arrows - Own your own side strongly

Ensure that they don't play tennis and that each lets the other person throw their arrows without interruption. Help them state their sides strongly and to throw all the arrows.

Ensure that you don't rush the process and allow each person enough time to throw all their arrows.

Step 3 – Owning the Grains of Truth

Explain what the grain of truth is about and help them to verbalise their grains.

Ensure that you don't rush the process and allow each person enough time to own their grains of truth.

Step 4 – Taking the Grains back to the Issue

Take the grains back to the issue, or put the grains into action/operation ie. what do they have to do in future as a result of the grains?

Suggest that they write down the grains and keep them in a place where they can see them. For example, if a couple, on the bedroom mirror.

Get them to recognise the improved/better feeling that they now have - the change of energy - the magic! Through the fluidity of roles a quantum change happens.

Link this information back to the beginning lecture.

Set them homework of having to have several arguments. Suggest that they initially concentrate on small issues and give them the notes and directions that they can follow.

It is important that you stress the importance of homework; without doing their homework the whole exercise becomes a waste of time. The whole purpose of this method is that they begin to use the tools. This allows them to practice and gets them in the habit of addressing issues and not avoiding them.



Organise a follow up session in a week or ten days.

Remind the couple/dyad that they do not need to take notes but that you will register them on the DD website that will allow them to download the Let's Talk eBook.

Remind the couple/dyad that they do not need to take notes but that you will register them on the DD website. They will receive an automated email with a link that will allow them to download the Let's Talk eBook.

Do a Check-out



The second Session

Do a Check-In

Ask them to check in on how they have been and how the homework went.

Suggest they take their time and give as much detail as possible. Gain a sense of how they have done in their arguments and what the grains have been ie. what the learning has been about themselves and one another.

Do it Check-in style and ensure that each person has a turn, that they don't interrupt one another and that one person does not speak for the other.

Now get them to tackle a deeper issue and let them try to do this on their own. Check that they are following all the steps and correct them when they are getting them wrong.

If need be use a little amplification to help them face the bigger issues and to say all that needs to be said.

At the end of the session point out again the shift in energy and the need for them to remember and act on the grains of truth.

Give them homework again.

Do a Check-out

Do as many sessions as needed until the couple has grasped the process and are continuing to use the step process regularly in resolving small and large scale issues on their own.

Closing Session

Your final session should be one of closure.

Let each person report on their learnings and change in the relationship describing at least one important growth on a personal level that has taken place.

You as a facilitator also express your learnings and share the role. Through your sharing the roles between two people and facilitator will be shared and they will be empowered by the energetic shift in roles.

Golden Arrows

The Golden Arrows is a way of acknowledging and appreciating all the positive in the other person. Just like it is difficult to say the things that need to be said when there is tension or conflict, it is often also difficult to say all the things we appreciate about one another. As hard as it is to hear the negative about ourselves it too is often hard to hear and acknowledge the positive about ourselves. This too helps us grow and become aware of the positive that we don't recognise in ourselves.

The process for the Golden Arrows is the same as for the Argument and the same Three Values/Premises and Four Steps will apply.

Explain how to the three Values/Premises and the Four Steps apply in the context of the Golden Arrows.

Let them go off alone and do the Golden Arrows. Don't be there when they do it!!

If they wish to, they may share their grains of truth with you and you may assist them by taking the grains back to their relationship, ie. operationalise their grains.