

HOW TO HOST A CANADA'S WORLD COMMUNITY DIALOGUE
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How many of us spend our days talking about the world? If you are like me and days away from a mid-life crisis, you probably find yourself in endless conversations about vacations, schooling for your children, the exorbitant cost of real estate or how you are going to care for your aging parents. If you are like many of my colleagues who are under the age of 30, you are probably not talking about these things, but instead riffing about music, exams, the latest pod cast or paying the rent.

The fact is, unless we are part of an academic community (re) 0.2h(m) 0.2 2 (a) 0.2(a) 0.2 (r a) 0.2 ((m) 0.2

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Introductions - Round

- each person introduces themselves and identifies one thing that concerns them or gives them hope about the world

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Activity #1 – Being Canadian

- everyone is asked the following questions:
 - o What is it you like about being Canadian?
 - o What don't you like about being Canadian?
 - o How do you think others perceive us?
 - o How would you like others to perceive us?
- community members share their responses in groups of two or three
- the full group then discusses some of the main attributes of "being Canadian"

Activity #2 - A Citizen's Timeline of Canada's Role in the World

- The participants post a long sheet of paper on the wall with a serpent like line that starts with the date 1931 and ends with 2008 – noting where 1940, 1950 and so on are on the line. (The line starts with 1931 which is when Canada was freed from British authority over its international relations through the Statute of Westminster)
- Community members are asked to go up to the sheet of paper and note those events or decisions that are important to them in relation to the history of Canada in the world. (Some will note events that precede 1931 and that is fine)
- When the line is full, the full group will look at it and review why certain events were posted. The facilitator will also ask if there are any patterns that we can see in the history of Canada's role in the world.

Activity #3 -

- The group reviews their ideas and comments on the similarities and differences of the headlines.

Closing

- To close the dialogue, the CWY participants let the community members know that they are going to feed the information from the three activities into a larger national citizens' dialogue process called Canada's World. Community Members will receive a handout with more information about Canada's World and an invitation to join the online dialogue at www.canadasworld.ca.

A closing round is held where all community members are asked what they liked and didn't like about the dialogue and one thing that they learned or will take away from the experience.

After the dialogue, the participants gather the notes from the session and send them to Canada's World so that we can include them in our analysis.

Background

The Kitchen Roundtable has a long tradition in Canada. If you live on the Prairies or in the Atlantic region you may have participated in a Kitchen Roundtable. If we look back at our history we can trace most of our social policy, our cooperatives or our non-profit organizations back to conversations that started around kitchen tables.

Salons, philosopher's cafes and university cafes are new manifestations of the Kitchen Roundtable – but at the heart, they are the same. They are comprised of groups of people who come together to explore and exchange ideas.

At Canada's World, we want to revive the notion of the Kitchen Roundtable. Why – because as we begin to develop a new story about Canada's role in the world, we want to begin where all good democracies should begin – with a discussion among equals – a discussion around our nation's kitchen tables.

In this How To guide, I'll walk you through the steps of hosting a Kitchen Roundtable – from inviting guests to facilitating the discussion around the table to letting us know how it went. If you have any suggestions for how to improve this guide - please let me or any of the Canada's World team know!

Step #1 – Deciding on hosting a Kitchen Roundtable

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Step #2 – Inviting Guests

The ideal Kitchen Roundtable is small with between 5 to 8 people. When it gets bigger than eight, people don't have the opportunity to fully explore issues together. If you do decide to invite a larger group –

included some ideas for activities in the appendix. This agenda is for a two-hour evening Kitchen Roundtable but it can be adapted for any time of the day.

7pm People start arriving. As the host, your job is to ensure that everyone feels comfortable when they walk in the door. Prepare whatever food you want

How do you think others perceive us?
How do you want them to perceive us?

If there are people in your group who are not Canadian – ask them what they like about Canadians? You can post these on a paper for everyone to see or you can just pose the questions out loud. Allow people to respond in whatever order they want. Don't be alarmed if there is silence at the beginning – there generally is. If after 30 seconds no one is speaking – offer your own thoughts. Once the conversation gets going – allow it to flow. As a facilitator, you want to ensure that everyone is getting a chance to speak. It's fine to let a conversation emerge between two or three people, but if it becomes exclusive or dominating – gently intervene by asking others what they think. Avoid getting into a position of “traffic cop” – where everyone is talking to you and you are directing the conversation. Allow people to guide the conversation and talk to each other. (Jot down the key ideas that are emerging from the conversation – or have a friend do so).

Give the conversation at least 30 minutes. If it dies down sooner, move on. If it is just getting started, give it another 15 minutes before moving to the next part of your agenda. The idea is not to be too rigid or fixed in your process.

8:20pm

Introduce a new round of questions:

What do you think is core to Canada that can't be compromised in our international relations? (Think about what you value, what you think our interests are and what you think our strengths or capacities are).

Again, allow the conversation to flow. The goal is not to come to agreement, but to explore the questions in some depth. Disagreement is good, but foster greater learning in the group by probing why there is disagreement. Encourage people to ask questions to clarify people's positions.

The conversation is likely to go through different peaks and valleys as new ideas are offered or people raise issues of dispute. There may be ti0 1 Tf (50 0 0 Tm /F2.0

As in the former session, if you have a great conversation going, allow it to continue. The goal is to get people talking about Canada's role in the world and if that conversation evolves organically from the questions you've raised, great – just let it flow. If not – pose some additional questions like:

What are two things that you would like Canada to achieve in the next 10

incorporate it into your revised report and then forward it to Tasha Nijjar at Tasha@canadasworld.ca. Ideally Canada's World would like to receive your report within seven days of your event. Once we receive your report, we are going to review it and then post in on our website.[under what section]

In your follow-up email to your group members:

- thank them on