



# KITCHEN TABLE DIALOGUE GUIDE

## FOR INDIVIDUALS, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

### KITCHEN TABLE GUIDE FOR RECONCILIATION DIALOGUE

A Kitchen Table Dialogue creates space for constructive conversations on reconciliation. This do-it-yourself framework allows Indigenous peoples and all Canadians the opportunity to gather their friends, family, neighbours and/or colleagues to join the dialogue on reconciliation and contribute to the movement, helping us to create a new way forward for all people in Canada.

## BACKGROUND

### Who is Reconciliation Canada?

#### Our vision

A vibrant Canada where all peoples achieve their full potential and shared prosperity

#### Our purpose

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

#### Reconciliation Canada's Approach to Reconciliation

Our goal and approach to reconciliation is to shed light on our shared Canadian history, including the history of the Indian Residential School system and the intergenerational impacts of colonization. We believe that it is important to acknowledge historical injustices that have occurred across Canada in order to highlight the diversity and resiliency of all Canadians. Our goal is not to compare one injustice to another, but to learn from each affected community and their path towards reconciliation.

## FOR THE HOST

### Place and time

Make this work for you! These dialogues are meant to take place in a casual, comfortable and culturally inclusive environment such as a home or community space. If working with colleagues, we encourage you to host this dialogue outside of the office environment in order to create a sense of ease and comfort for the participants. Try to choose a space that will comfortably fit 8-12 people around a table, or in a circle format. This space should be free of distractions or interruptions for approximately 3 hours.

### Your Role

We would like to express our deepest gratitude for your interest in, and commitment to creating a new way forward. We are counting on you to start the conversation within your community, to encourage openness and renew relationships, and create a safe space to explore and embed reconciliation in your daily lives.

### Participants

Invite those who have expressed interest in reconciliation, an openness to communicate and a willingness to hear and consider diverse or opposing views.

If appropriate, we encourage you to invite a diverse group, keeping safety for all as a top priority: different age groups, cultural backgrounds and/ or professional backgrounds. The safety of Indian Residential School (IRS) survivors and intergenerational survivors is of utmost importance, please make sure every safety precaution is taken to ensure their wellbeing.

### Facilitation

Will you facilitate the dialogue, or will you ask a friend or colleague who is keen and has facilitation experience? Decide this well in advance of the dialogue so that the facilitator has ample time to review the dialogue format and discussion questions.

Facilitator reminders: participants are to be mindful of shared space and time, all participants must have equal opportunity to contribute and, prompt those who are hesitant, and politely remind those who over-speak to be mindful of their group members.

*Dialogue Facilitator should review Facilitation Guidelines (Appendix 1.2) before the Kitchen Table Dialogue.*

## FOR THE HOST (CONTINUED)

### Health and Safety

It is very important that as the host, you understand the importance of creating a safe, welcoming, and accepting space is critical to the success of your dialogue. We recognize that wellness is an integral part of a reconciliation journey. Invite participants to help you design and maintain this space, and encourage participants to practice self-care and use any resources available to them to help them along the journey.

Understand that some participants may need to excuse themselves temporarily or permanently from the dialogue due to the highly sensitive and for some, deeply personal nature of the history of Indian Residential School system and intergenerational trauma.

### Materials

- a. A copy of the *Kitchen Table Dialogue Agenda* for each participant (Appendix 1.1)
- b. A copy of the *Facilitation Guidelines* (Appendix 1.2)
- c. Circulate an electronic version of the *Reconciliation Dialogue Workshop Guide* one week in advance of your dialogue (Appendix 1.3)
- d. A copy of *Back Pocket Reconciliation Action Plan* for each participant (Appendix 1.4)
- e. Print out 2-4 copies of *Dialogue Guidelines* for the table (under the 'For all Participants' section)
- f. Refreshments (tea/coffee and water) and light snacks
- g. Kleenex

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## FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS

### Dialogue Guidelines

#### Norms for Sharing Circles

- Speak on behalf of yourself only
- If you are not speaking, your job is to listen wholeheartedly
- Every participant is invited to take care of their own needs (bathroom break, personal time away from the circle)
- Being in a circle allows us to co-create safety for ourselves and one another
- While recognizing personal traumas, the focus for the circle is to increase greater understanding of the need for reconciliation

#### Dialogue Preparation

Please read, and encourage your fellow participants to read the Reconciliation Dialogue Workshop Guide (Appendix 1.3) in addition to the resources below:

- [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 94 Calls to Action](#)
- [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [First Peoples: A Guide for Newcomers](#)
- [National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#)

#### Ideas for Impactful Dialogue

- Listen openly to ideas; be curious and listen to understand
- Assume best intentions: clumsy words are a sign of learning
- Speak honestly and leave time for silence, emotion and vulnerability
- Remember that everyone has a responsibility to make space for all voices to be heard

## APPENDIX 1

### 1.1 Kitchen Table Dialogue Agenda

5 min	<b>Acknowledgement of local traditional territories</b> <b>Welcome and Introduction to Reconciliation Canada</b>
10 min	<b>Introductions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name (including traditional name) and answer: where are your ancestors from, and what is your cultural identity/background?</li> </ul>
5 min	<b>Language of Reconciliation</b> Language of Reconciliation Video*
25 min	<b>Our Shared History</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is our history here?</li> <li>• How is it connected to the history and experience of Indigenous people?</li> <li>• Where does our knowledge about Indigenous people come from?</li> </ul>
25 min	<b>What is reconciliation?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does reconciliation mean to me?</li> <li>• Why is reconciliation meaningful to me?</li> </ul>
25 min	<b>Creating Sacred Space</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is my experience to share?</li> </ul>
30 min	<b>Planning for a Future of Reconciliation?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideally, what does reconciliation look and feel like in our community?</li> </ul>
30 min	<b>My Role in Reconciliation and Back Pocket Action Plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What actions toward reconciliation can we make together as leaders in our community?</li> </ul> Back Pocket Action Plans
10 min	<b>Closing Circle</b> What will I take away from the dialogue today?

## 1.2 Facilitation Guidelines

### Facilitation Tools

- If respectful and appropriate, begin with and close with a blessing, prayer, or ceremony for cleansing, grounding and concluding the session
- Allow small groups to self-facilitate; allow natural roles to emerge
- Large group: Listen, encourage and help focus the conversation
- Try to avoid adding content or conveying any judgment on the content provided by participants
- Avoid misinterpretation by asking for clarification and using the speakers' own words and phrases as much as possible when paraphrasing or summarizing (when you use your own language to confirm, you risk misinterpreting what has been said).
- Ensure safe space is maintained and participants feel supported

<p><b>5 min</b></p> <p>Following the Acknowledgement of Traditional Territories on which you live and work.</p> <p>Please find the introduction to Reconciliation Canada in the Reconciliation Canada Dialogue Guide (Appendix 1.3).</p> <p>Review the Dialogue Guidelines. Ask the group if they would like to add anything.</p>	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>Acknowledgement of Traditional Territories Introduction to Reconciliation Canada</p>
<p><b>15 min</b></p> <p>You may know one another well, but please follow this introduction exercise. It is very impactful!</p> <p>Going around the circle, please take 60 seconds and introduce yourself in the following way:</p>	<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p>Name (including traditional name) and answer: where are your ancestors from, and what is your cultural identity/background?</p>

## 1.2 Facilitation Guidelines (Continued)

<p><b>5 min</b></p> <p>We always look to our Elders to guide our way forward:</p> <p>To start this dialogue in a good way, we will turn to a group of Elders representing Indigenous and other ancient histories who speak to the language of reconciliation.</p>	<p><b>Language of Reconciliation</b></p> <p>Elders Share on the Language of Reconciliation - Video</p> <p><a href="http://reconciliationcanada.ca/elders-statement/">http://reconciliationcanada.ca/elders-statement/</a></p>
<p><b>25 min</b></p> <p>This is often a humbling exercise to highlight how much, or how little we know about our neighbours.</p> <p>You may host these questions in the dialogue circle, casually. Or, may we suggest that you encourage participants, using sticky-notes create an interactive time line of their understanding of history on the wall.</p>	<p><b>Our Shared History</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is our history here?</li> <li>• How is it connected to the history and experience of Indigenous people?</li> <li>• Where does our knowledge about Indigenous people come from?</li> </ul>
<p><b>25 min</b></p> <p>Reiterate that the 'Norms for Sharing Circles' are very important in this section to allow for personal and group safety. Emphasize that when one is not speaking, their job is to listen wholeheartedly – not to comment or anticipate their response.</p> <p>Starting with the first question, ask one attendee to start, and continue on around the circle in order.</p>	<p><b>What is reconciliation?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does reconciliation mean to me?</li> <li>• Why is reconciliation meaningful to me?</li> </ul>

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<p><b>25 min</b></p> <p>Respecting the same approach to the sharing circle as above, encourage participants to share the space and time equally, answering the following question.</p> <p>Encourage participants to think about their story or experience of reconciliation, in the context of, between Indigenous peoples and all Canadians.</p>	<p><b>Creating Sacred Space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>What is my experience to share?</i></li></ul>
<p><b>30 min</b></p> <p>Encourage attendees to share the space and time equally, answering the following questions. However, feel free to break from the sharing circle format, and encourage 'popcorn' participation.</p> <p>a. Ask participants to entertain a 'blue-sky' or 'ideal' perspective when visioning for reconciliation. This allows them to vision on a large-scale before moving towards more tangible action.</p> <p>b. Encourage participants to take stock of what already exists to enable cross-cultural relationships and reconciliation. Facilitator should take notes in this section.</p>	<p><b>Planning for a Future of Reconciliation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Ideally, what does reconciliation look like in our community?</li><li>b. What actions can we take as individuals to move reconciliation forward in our community?</li></ol>

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<b>30 min</b>	<b>Back Pocket Reconciliation Action Plans</b> <i>Share one action that you can commit to and reflect on daily.</i>
<b>10 min</b>  Close the circle in a good way, however you define that. Allow each attendee a minute or so to answer the question. Let participants know that you will share the notes that you captured.  Thank all participants and suggest the next step of personal work with the Reconciliation Begins with Me activity (Appendix 1.5). Make copies available for take away.	<b>Closing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>What will I take away from the dialogue today?</i></li><li>• Suggested takeaway: Back pocket action plans</li></ul>

## 1.3 Reconciliation Dialogue Guide

The Reconciliation Dialogue Workshop Guide is typically used for official Reconciliation Dialogue Workshops and is intended only to be a reference source for this Kitchen Table Dialogue Guide.

To download, visit the following link:

[www.reconciliationcanada.ca/dialogue-workshop-guide](http://www.reconciliationcanada.ca/dialogue-workshop-guide)

## 1.4 Back Pocket Reconciliation Action Plan



*"Reconciliation begins with you. Create and grow a way of life for yourself and others, starting today."*

Chief Dr. Robert Joseph



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