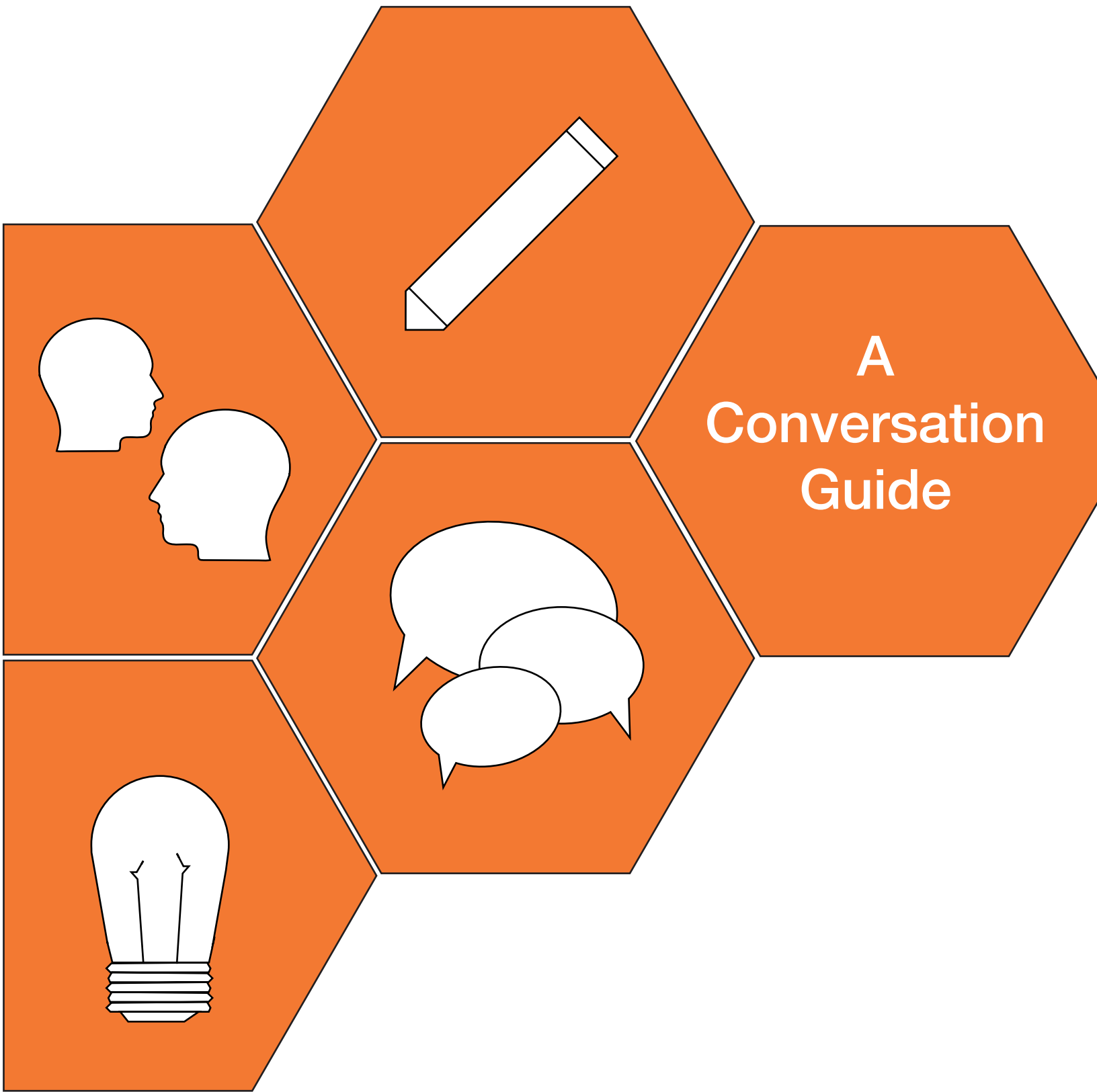


# What's the point of service?



# Welcome!

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Facilitating dialogue around complex questions is challenging. However, group reflection can direct and support individual meaning-making and group connection, as well as 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 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 the 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.



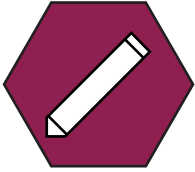
## Activity Guides

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

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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.



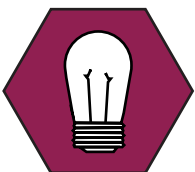
## Connect

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.



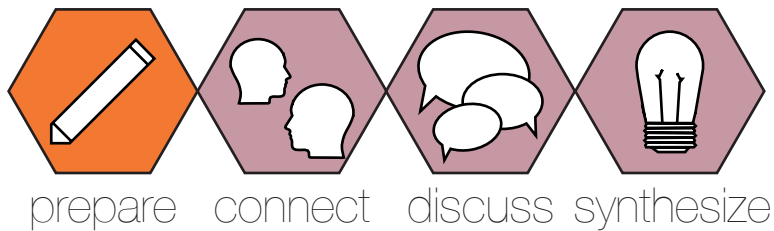
## Discuss

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

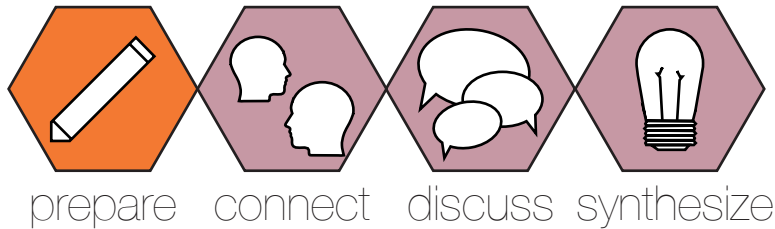
When beginning to think about your facilitated conversation, consider the mood and energy levels of your participants, based on other factors. The **time of day and activities around reflection** will impact the outcome of your group session. Fluctuating energy levels, amount of attention and focus, 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

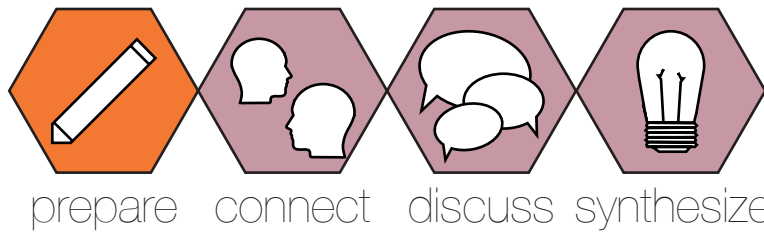
Be mindful of others in order to create a safe space. Try not to rush to speak your opinion. Understand that it takes courage to share personal information, and respect participants by not sharing this information in an identifiable way. We want to create a space where we can support one another while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

Generally, service is considered beneficial. However, the value assigned to service is often individually defined. Instead of assuming the utility of service, we should ask why service is valuable. Should service meet a direct goal? Should service leave a specific legacy? Is it enough for service to “just help”? Questioning the reason behind why we do and value service is important because it resultingly shapes how we serve and measure success of service activities.

It is important to remember that this question applies to a variety of different service activities and perspectives. Each participant may enter the conversation with a specific idea of what “service” is, or what these acts look like. It is important to challenge these perspectives on the definition of “service”, but focus on the overall goal of any type of service. Despite the details of the particular action, what is the overall mission for service activities? What function or role does service play? What guiding principles should direct service efforts?



If using this conversation guide during or after a service experience, remember to be mindful of the morale of the group. This conversation is important for individuals engaged in service immersion or recurring service, but can feel deflating or depressing if the group's contribution is not properly framed. Consider using this question at a post-trip meeting to critically reflect on service, or use it during the service experience to explore the importance of different aspects of the service experience.

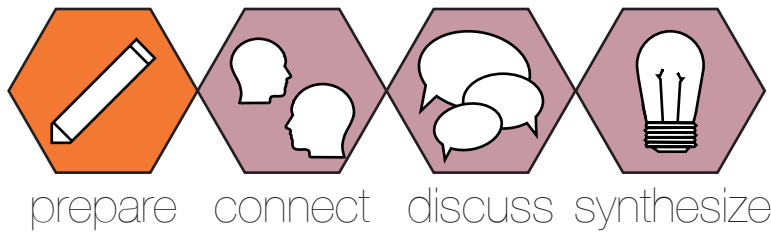


In the classroom or a setting distinct from service, it is important to share everyone's initial perspectives among the group. Ensure that the grounding activities encourage individuals to contribute their ideas of service, and begin sharing preliminary ideas of why they, or others, do service, or what the need for service may be based on their experience or knowledge.



## Keep In Mind

This question and the following conversation may challenge the perspectives of your participants--especially the participants that have a set definition of service. It also may create some contention around the impact of service. Allow space for your participants to express their opinions within reason, but try and be prepared for these different opinions and perspectives. For example, some participants may hold strong beliefs that service is only meaningful when working towards promoting social justice, and using resources for a larger, overall goal. Others may feel that service is purposeful in and of itself, and not see a need to connect service to a larger framework. Despite initial beliefs, it is important to respectfully challenge participants to understand one another, and create dialogue about different points of view.



# 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:

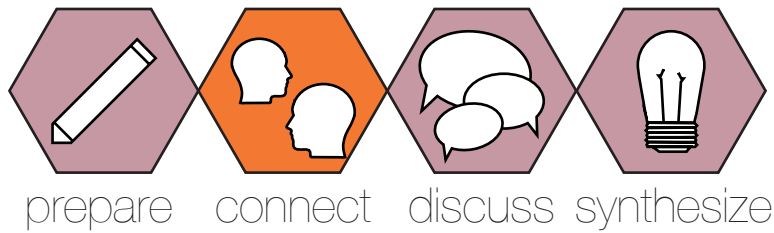
**The following questions are meant to consider as the facilitator before starting the discussion. These are designed to encourage you to think about the different directions the conversation may go.**

**Why do you serve? What purpose do you hope your service meets?**

**What experiences have contributed to your view of the purpose for service?**

**What other reasons have you heard people use as reason for serving?**





# 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.

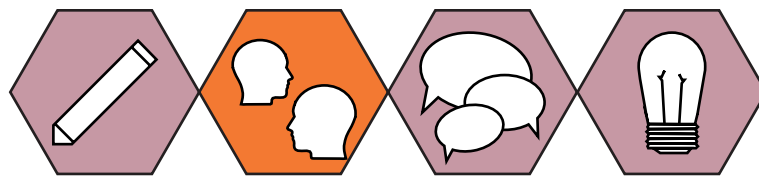


## Start On the Right Foot

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 the point of service?", 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 Highs/Lows, 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 what they observed, and identify what elements they connected with throughout the experience.

### Highs/Lows



10-15 minutes



Large group

Gather the group in a circle. Ask participants to think back on their day. Instruct participants to share the one highlight of the day and the one low point of their day. Encourage participants to share why these events were a high and low point for them.



## Classroom or Distinct from Service

If reflection is occurring distinct from a group activity, there may be a need to create a shared experience to support the safe space and deepen group dynamics. A great grounding activity includes both icebreaker and reflective elements, helping the group get to know one another and adopt a thinking mindset. Having intentional dialogue to encourage your group participants to engage in the topic will start conversation and elicit group contributions to start the dialogue. Using Visual Explorer Cards will get the group thinking creatively around abstract concepts. These activities encourage group participation, and guide the participants through experience working with one another.

### 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<sup>1</sup>

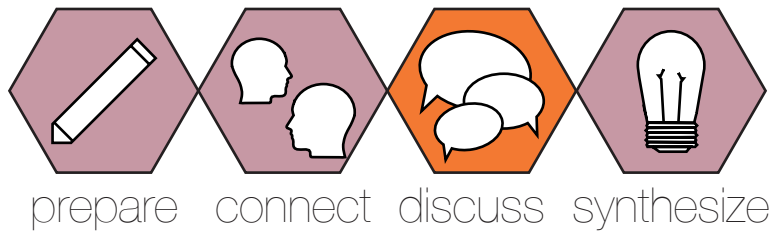


20-25 minutes



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: Lou Ambers Tips His Hat<sup>2</sup>

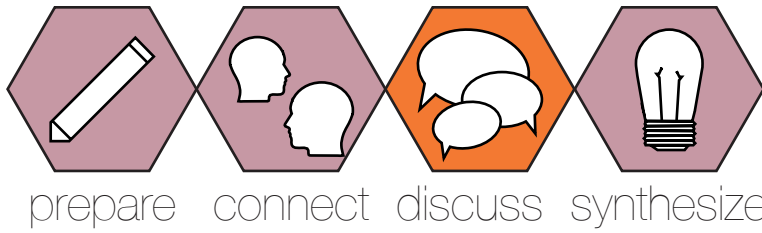
This picture can be used to create conversation around the goal or purpose of service activities. This image challenges participants to identify what emotions or beliefs the participant holds around service, and can provide a starting point to talking about what we expect or want from service. By unpacking what service should look like, we are better able to construct dialogue around what purpose service is used for. As the discussion continues, encourage participants to think past if they think the act of service depicted in the image is good or bad, and dig into why they feel the image is meaningful service or not. What goal do they have in mind when they study the image?

Hand out the image or pass the image around the group. Have everyone take a moment to study the image. **A set of these images is available from the VT Engage office, with the accompanying activity guide ("Lou Ambers Tips His Hat").**

Begin by asking the group what they see and notice from the seen.

- >> What are their feelings about the action?
- >> What outcomes does this lead to?
- >> What are your feelings about the service, good or bad?
- >> Do you think it addresses the purpose of service?

Design additional questions that integrate the participants' experience. Link the images and perspectives with the shared experience, challenging participants to draw connections.



## Lou Ambers Tips His Hat

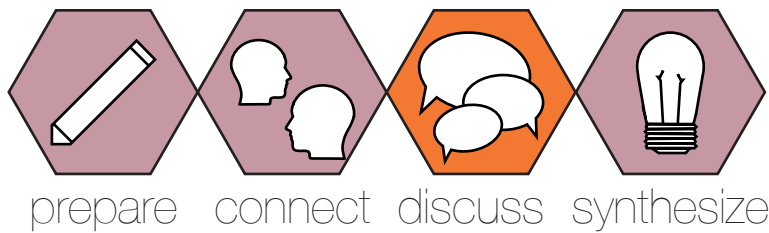


35 minutes



Small groups

Have each participant study the photograph. Ask for initial reactions. Follow up with the questions listed above, or prompt to think about questions that ask participants what different types of service look like, and how approaching service in different ways is connected to larger overall messages or expectations.



## Activity Two: A Bed for the Night<sup>3</sup>

This poem creates the opportunity to not only assess an act of service, but critically think about why service is important, and what is important for service to achieve to be meaningful. The questions below, created by the Center for Civic Reflection, encourage participants to think and talk about different elements of the poem separately, and then think about how we value service based on what we expect from service. Can or should service change the world? How do we use service to meet needs, and is it meaningful service? Encourage participants to explore varying perspectives, and find different experiences or thoughts to support their ideas.

Hand out the poem to the participants to read silently. **A set of these poems and accompanying activity guide are available in the VT Engage office.** After everyone has finished reading and taken a few moments to think, ask the questions below or create your own. Questions following up this poem should focus on challenging the participants to interpret the poem, and talk about the juxtaposition the author suggests as he describes the effect of the action in the poem.

### Example Questions<sup>3</sup>

- >> Who is this man? What is he doing? Why is he doing it?
- >> Why does the narrator say, “Don’t put down the book on reading this, man”? Who is he talking to? What does he mean?
- >> Why does the narrator repeat the lines, “It won’t change the world. It won’t improve relations among men. It will not shorten the age of exploitation”? Is this a reminder? A warning? Something else?
- >> Why does the narrator remind us at the end of the poem “but it won’t change the world”? Do you feel like service is changing the world? Why or why not?
- >> Is what the man’s doing worthwhile?
- >> Where do you see yourself in this poem? What resonates for you and your own service?

### A Bed for the Night

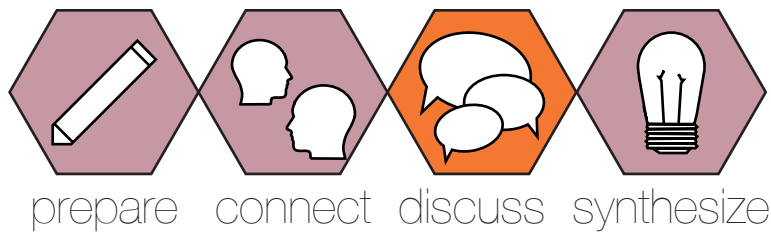


30-35 minutes



Large group

Have participants read the poem silently. Give everyone a couple minutes to jot down some thoughts. Come together as a group to discuss the poem, using the following questions or asking other prompts that encourage the group to think about what we hope to result from service, if anything.



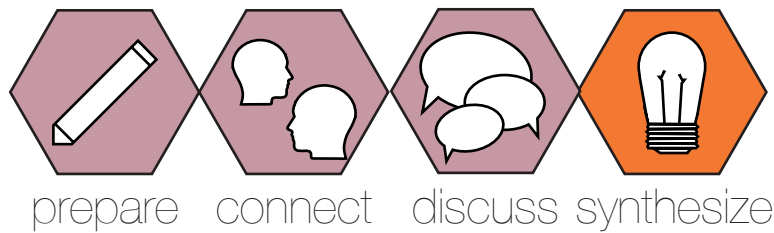
## A Bed For the Night by Bertolt Brecht

I hear that in New York  
At the corner of 26th street and Broadway  
A man stands every evening during the winter months  
And gets beds for the homeless there  
By appealing to passers-by.

It won't change the world  
It won't improve relations among men  
It will not shorten the age of exploitation  
But a few men have a bed for the night  
For a night the wind is kept from them  
The snow meant for them falls on the roadway.

Don't put down the book on reading this, man.

A few people have a bed for the night  
For a night the wind is kept from them  
The snow meant for them falls on the roadway  
But it won't change the world  
It won't improve relations among men  
It will not shorten the age of exploitation.



## 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.

### 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.

## 2. **Lou Ambers Tips His Hat**

This image was provided by the Center for Civic Engagement, an organization that supports reflective discussion as a tool to build community and deepen citizenship. For more information and resources, please see their website: <http://civicreflection.org/about/mission/> The image and questions are available from the VT Engage office.

## 3. **A Bed For the Night**

This poem and associated questions were provided by the Center for Civic Engagement, an organization that supports reflective discussion as a tool to build community and deepen citizenship. For more information and resources, please see their website: <http://civicreflection.org/about/mission/> The poem and questions are available in the VT Engage office.



VT Engage Branding

For more information about the reflection guides, please contact Analise Adams at [analiseadams@gmail.com](mailto:analiseadams@gmail.com)



## 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.

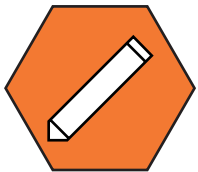


## Emily Neer

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?

What experiences have contributed to your view of the purpose for service?

Why do you serve, and what purpose do you hope your service meets?

What other reasons have you heard people use as reason for serving?



## Connect

### Intentional Questions

Gather participants in a circle, and frame the idea of the underlying reason for service. Is it to promote social justice? Is it to help other people because of a moral duty? Is it part of the duties of community members? Design 3-5 questions to get participants thinking about the shared experience, or creating group context for larger terms such as “service” or “community.” These questions should help participants feel comfortable sharing as a group and encourage dialogue among participants about why they value service, or questions service creates.

### 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.



# Discuss

## “Lou Ambers Tips His Hat”

Hand out the image or pass the image around the group. Have everyone take a moment to study the image.

Begin by asking the group what they see and notice from the seen.

- >> What are their feelings about the action?
- >> What impact does this create?
- >> What are your feelings about the service, good or bad?
- >> Do you think it addresses the purpose of service?

### Lou Ambers Tips His Hat



35 minutes



Small groups

Have each participant study the photograph. Ask for initial reactions. Follow up with the questions listed above, or prompt to think about questions that ask participants what different types of service look like, and how approaching service in different ways is connected to larger overall messages or expectations.



# 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.



## Lou Ambers Tips His Hat

 35 minutes  Small groups

Have each participant study the photograph. Ask for initial reactions. Follow up with the questions listed above, or prompt to think about questions that ask participants what different types of service look like, and how approaching service in different ways is connected to larger overall messages or expectations.

### Example Questions

- >> What are their feelings about the action?
- >> What impact does this create?
- >> What are your feelings about the service, good or bad?
- >> Do you think it addresses the purpose of service?

## Highs/Lows

 10-15 minutes  Large group

Gather the group in a circle. Ask participants to think back on their day. Instruct participants to share the one highlight of the day and the one low point of their day. Encourage participants to share why these events were a high and low point for them.

## 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.

## 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  Small groups

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?

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'S THE POINT OF SERVICE?



## What's the point of service?

Instead of assuming the utility of service, we should ask why service is valuable. Should service meet a direct goal? Should service leave a specific legacy? Is it enough for service to “just help”? Questioning the reason behind why we do and value service is important because it resultingly shapes how we serve and measure success of service activities. It is important to remember that this question applies to a variety of different service activities and perspectives. Each participant may enter the conversation with a specific idea of what “service” is, or what these acts look like. It is important to challenge these perspectives on the inclusivity of “service”, but focus on the overall goal of any type of service. What function or role does service play? What guiding principles should direct service efforts?

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

Why do you serve? What purpose do you hope your service meets?  
What experiences have contributed to your view of the purpose for service?  
What other reasons have you heard people use as reason for serving?

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.