

difficult d!alogues

Facilitator's Guide to the Day of Listening

october 31st 2006

welcome | establishing the listening space (5 min)

Hi everyone, thanks for taking the time to join us. The Day of Listening is one of the launch events of the Clark Difficult Dialogues project. This session should last about an hour. The Day of Listening, and this hour session, is about taking a moment to pause, to really listen to each other and to explore the relationship of effective listening to dialogue – and to have some fun. We believe that the skill of listening is essential to effective dialogue, and we hope to cultivate listening and dialogue across the Clark community through the Difficult Dialogues project.

warm-up | listening pairs (5 min)

We are going to do two listening exercises. For this first listening exercise we would like you to get into pairs - preferably with someone that you don't know, then:

- greet your partner and introduce yourselves
- take turns speaking in response to the following prompt (2 minutes each)

question: Recall and talk about a time this semester, or recently, when you listened to someone or when someone listened to you and where you could tell it made a difference.

who is here (5-7 min)

Let's all gather back together – Could everyone introduce themselves to the group?

listening exercise (15 min)

Choose a new partner - decide who will speak first and who listen – and then talk about the following:

questions: Did you feel like your partner was listening – did you feel heard – what made you feel this way?
What was it like to be listened to?
What was it like to listen?
What can you do to encourage others to listen?
What do you need to do to become a better listener?

large group discussion (15-20 min)

questions: What helps or enhances the process of listening?
What gets in the way of listening?
What are the characteristics of good listening, or good listeners?
What do you wish others would do to create the space for good listening?
What issues or topics should be included in the focus of Difficult Dialogues?