



## Education and Housing Equity Project Records.

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FACILITATOR TRNG. GRP. PLNG MTG. 2-3-97 (PARTIAL NOTES)

BRUCE VANDEL HAS  
FULL NOTES

ITEMS TO ORDER

- \* ISSUE Framing Booklet, Kettering
- \* A short video showing what deliberation is.
- \* Examples/ sampler of house/ground rules (eg., INTER-RACE)

Add to list =

KRIMA BUSHNELL  
4604 Columbus Ave  
MPLS, MN 55407  
827-4424

✓ Look for "conversation starters."

\* Copy or fax list of Strick facilitator/moderators to Scott - he'll make calls.

The phenomena, the facts

The assumptions, how issues are framed  
Underlying assumption

Do choices reflect those + capture those  
choices + perspectives

Methodically lifting thru the info. presented

Techniques / Handout on Moderator Deliberation

\* Prox + Cons / Brainstorming

\* Trying to get the underlying values  
Clarifying types of questions

\* Priority setting

What is it that you can live with?

What is it we can live <sup>with</sup> + live w/o?

What are one or two basic values or priorities  
we can agree on?

Lead to a choice or crafting an alternative?

2 or 3 principles emerge from this

2 or 3 major goals

some action steps, maybe.

People are expected to be contributory,  
they own what they reap.

Public pol. action should be able to tested  
against the values, objectives + priorities  
agreed upon by groups.

Reporting back from groups

What is convincing from/of what has been/  
you said?

EXS;

GROUPS / TABLE -

Alliance for Metro Stability

MMET

MICAH

Center for Neighborhoods

SPEAC → Hal to follow up on.

Libertarian Party → Scott to follow up.

Post-It™ brand fax transmittal memo 7671		# of pages ▶ 2
To <b>Bruce Vandal</b>	From <b>Ray Taylor</b>	
Co. <b>MMEP</b>	Co.	
Dept.	Phone #	
Fax # <b>330.1510</b>	Fax #	

**JANUARY 22, 1997****PROPOSED PLAN FOR FACILITATOR TRAINING SESSION(S)****1. INTRODUCTION (25 minutes)**

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** To understand and model the introductory elements of a study circle process.

**LEARNING APPROACH:** Lecture, questions and answers, discussion.

**SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:** Description of SC philosophy, background, goals, role of participants. Introduction of each participant by each sharing something important to the participant from their background, e.g., family, community, work. Discussion, clarification and agreement on "ground rules". Sharing of a personal connection to or their personal interest in the issue or substance of the study circle discussion.

**2. ISSUE ANALYSIS (30 minutes)**

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** To understand and model the process of problem definition and organizing policy choices.

**LEARNING APPROACH:** Use of the study guide, role play, participant presentations, questions from participants only for clarification.

**SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:** Participants may briefly describe their reaction to certain key words. Small group examination of various view points from discussion guide and each other. Presentation to large group summarizing elements of each view point. Discussion among participants looking for common themes and connections underlying each view point. Outlining possible actions associated with each view point. Cluster comments from participants into potential policy options.

**3. DELIBERATION (90 minutes)**

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** To understand and model how participants express values underlying each view point.

**LEARNING APPROACH:** Exercises that weigh consequences, discussion of values, probing questions.

**SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:** Questions intended to determine early preferences of participants for a view point. Discussion among participants of the "pros and cons" of each point of view. Questions that probe and clarify the values, motives and preferences expressed. Testing of values, preferences and tensions against the interests and will of the group.

**4. PUBLIC VOICE (45 minutes)**

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** To understand and model how participants begin to extract policy options from view points and express a desire and will for priorities among policy options.

**LEARNING APPROACH:** Discussion, negotiation, reporting, sample balloting.

**SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:** Discussion of what view points are not workable as a policy option. Negotiation among remaining view points as to what is a workable policy option. Participant reporting of what makes them comfortable/uncomfortable and what they can live with regarding policy options. Optional use of balloting for each policy option.

**5. ACTION STEPS (20 minutes)**

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** To explore potential actions that emerge from policy options.

**LEARNING APPROACH:** Discussion, volunteer opportunities identified, sharing of joint interests and pursuits.

**SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:** Presentations or material from volunteer organizations. Discussion about possibility of group effort. Suggestions on continued monitoring of the issue.

**COMMUNITY CIRCLE  
COLLABORATIVE  
MEMORANDUM**

Date: January 28, 1997  
To: Facilitator Training Planning Group  
From: Bruce Vandal  
Subject: Next Meetings

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The next two meetings of the Facilitator Training Planning Group will be on Monday, February 3rd from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM and Thursday, February 13th from 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM at the Minnesota Church Center.

These meetings are important for those that wish to participate in the two trainings scheduled for February 15th and 20th. Please let me know if you will not be able to attend.

At the January 28th meeting the group decided that the sessions should be divided into five sections. The sections are as follows:

1. Introduction (25 minutes)
2. Issue Analysis (30 minutes)
3. Deliberation (90 minutes)
4. Public Voice (45 minutes)
5. Action Steps (20 minutes)

Each section will consist of a plenary component and a small group component. We foresee that we will need at least five facilitators for the small groups. Therefore, people should come prepared to articulate their availability to help with both training sessions.

A notice for the training sessions will be sent out by the end of this week. Enclosed is the notice and registration form. Let me know if you have any questions. Thanks and I'll see you on February 3rd.

BV

# Beyond Busing:

A Metrowide Dialogue on the Challenges of  
Education and Housing Segregation

## Facilitator Training

Saturday, February 15, 1997

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Marshall Room, Christenson Center, Augsburg College

OR

Thursday, February 20, 1997

6:00 - 9:30 PM

Marshall Room, Christenson Center, Augsburg College

The Beyond Busing Facilitator Training is for individuals that will be facilitating one of the many community circles that will be taking place across the metro area this March and April. Facilitators can be representatives of organizations that will be sponsoring a community circle or citizens that would like to participate in the Beyond Busing project by leading a group.

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### Facilitator Training Registration Form

Please complete the following registration and return it by February 12th to:

Bruce Vandal

Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, Inc.

2211 Riverside Ave. S.

Minneapolis, MN 55454

Phone (612) 330-1509 / Fax (612) 330-1510 / E-mail Vandal@Augsburg.edu

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring Organization (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Check which session you will attend: \_\_\_\_\_ Sat. February 15th \_\_\_\_\_ Thurs. February 20th

Please Check All Apply:

I am representing a sponsor organization and have a group that I will be facilitating.

I would like to facilitate a group, please assign me to a group that needs a facilitator.

I consider myself an experienced group facilitator.

I would be interested in attending a second training session where I can practice my facilitation skills.

**AGENDA**  
**COMMUNITY CIRCLE COLLABORATIVE**  
**FACILITATOR TRAINING PLANNING COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY JANUARY 23, 1997**  
**9:00 - 11:00 AM**  
**SIVERTSON ROOM, MORTONSEN TOWER**  
**AUGSBURG COLLEGE**

**I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

**II. FACILITATOR TRAINING DATE AND LOCATION**

**MARSHALL ROOM, CHRISTENSON CENTER, AUGSBURG COLLEGE**  
**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1997 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM**  
**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1996 6:00 PM - 9:30 PM**

**ACTION: PREPARE NOTICE AND MAIL TO ALL SPONSORS AND  
POTENTIAL FACILITATORS BY JANUARY 28TH.**

**III. FACILITATOR LISTS**

Action: Members should submit lists of potential facilitators to Bruce.

Action: Members will contact potential facilitators by phone to encourage their involvement.

**IV. DISCUSSION GUIDE STRUCTURE**

Action: Discuss and incorporate into the Training

**V. PROPOSED PLAN FOR FACILITATOR TRAINING SESSIONS**

Action: Discuss and approve the plan

Action: Divide up responsibility among participants in the plan

**VI. NEXT MEETING**

**VII. ADJOURN**

Post-It™ brand fax transmittal memo 7671 # of pages **2**

To <b>Bruce Vandam</b>	From <b>Ray Taylor</b>
Co. <b>MMEP</b>	Co.
Dept.	Phone #
Fax # <b>330.1510</b>	Fax #

**JANUARY 22, 1997**

**PROPOSED PLAN FOR FACILITATOR TRAINING SESSION(S)**

**1. INTRODUCTION (25 minutes)**

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**SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:** Presentations or material from volunteer organizations. Discussion about possibility of group effort. Suggestions on continued monitoring of the issue.

Community Circle Collaborative  
Facilitator Training Planning Meeting  
Meeting Summary  
December 19, 1996

***Facilitator Compensation***

After a lengthy discussion it was decided that compensation would not be offered to facilitators. Efforts will be made to work with the committee's contacts, people who have expressed interest in facilitating, and project sponsors to identify the necessary number of facilitators. If the project is unable to recruit the necessary number of facilitators or the pool of facilitators is not adequately diverse, other options will be pursued at that time.

***Date of Facilitator Training***

The group agreed to change the date of the training to January 25, 1997. However, upon discussion with Dick Little and Darcy Seaver, they suggested that we move the date back once again to allow adequate time for sponsors to be fully brought on board and to complete the discussion guide. The Church Center remains the top choice for location.

***Training structure/format***

Roy Taylor, Jim McDonough and Karima Bushnell all provided information that could be used in the training. From that information and a consideration of the training objectives it was agreed that the training will cover the following areas:

**Ground Rules**

This area will focus on establishing the foundation of the group by outlining guidelines, building trust in the group, dealing with venting among participants and other basic elements to facilitation.

**Issue Analysis**

This will focus on an examination of issues and the sorting through of differences of opinion.

**Deliberation**

This area will focus on the consideration of various options and the weighing of consequences. It was decided that some options be presented to the group, but that participants be encouraged to critique the options and identify other strategies that they believe are more appropriate.

**Public Voice**

Focus on developing a means of communicating the results of the community circle. This does not necessarily mean reaching consensus. There should be an effort to identify what the group members agree on and what areas are contentious.

**Public Action**

Concentrate on an appropriate action. This may not be feasible at this point and is less important than the other areas.

***Delegation of Tasks***

- Group members agreed to do the following:
- Roy agreed to further develop the above outlined areas and pull together materials that can help in the development of the training.
- Roy also agreed to contact Darcy Seaver about the discussion guide.
- Each member agreed to develop a list of potential facilitators and provide Bruce with names and addresses so that information about the project can be mailed to them.

**COMMUNITY CIRCLE  
COLLABORATIVE  
MEMORANDUM**

Date: January 16, 1997  
To: Facilitator Training Planning Meeting  
From: Bruce Vandal  
Subject: January 23, 1997 Planning Meeting,

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**NOTE NEW MEETING LOCATION**

The next meeting of the Community Circle Collaborative Facilitator Training Planning Group is scheduled for:

**Thursday January 23, 1997  
9:00 - 11:00 AM  
Sivertson Room, Mortenson Tower,  
Augsburg College  
(Map Enclosed)**

We will continue to plan the facilitator training sessions which are scheduled for Saturday February 15, 1997 from 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM and Thursday February 20, 1997 from 6:00 - 9:30 PM. Both sessions will take place in the Marshall Room of the Christenson Center at Augsburg College.

I have not received lists of potential facilitators from many of you. It is very important that I receive those lists as soon as possible so that I can send information out about the training. Please get all names to me by our meeting on the 23rd.

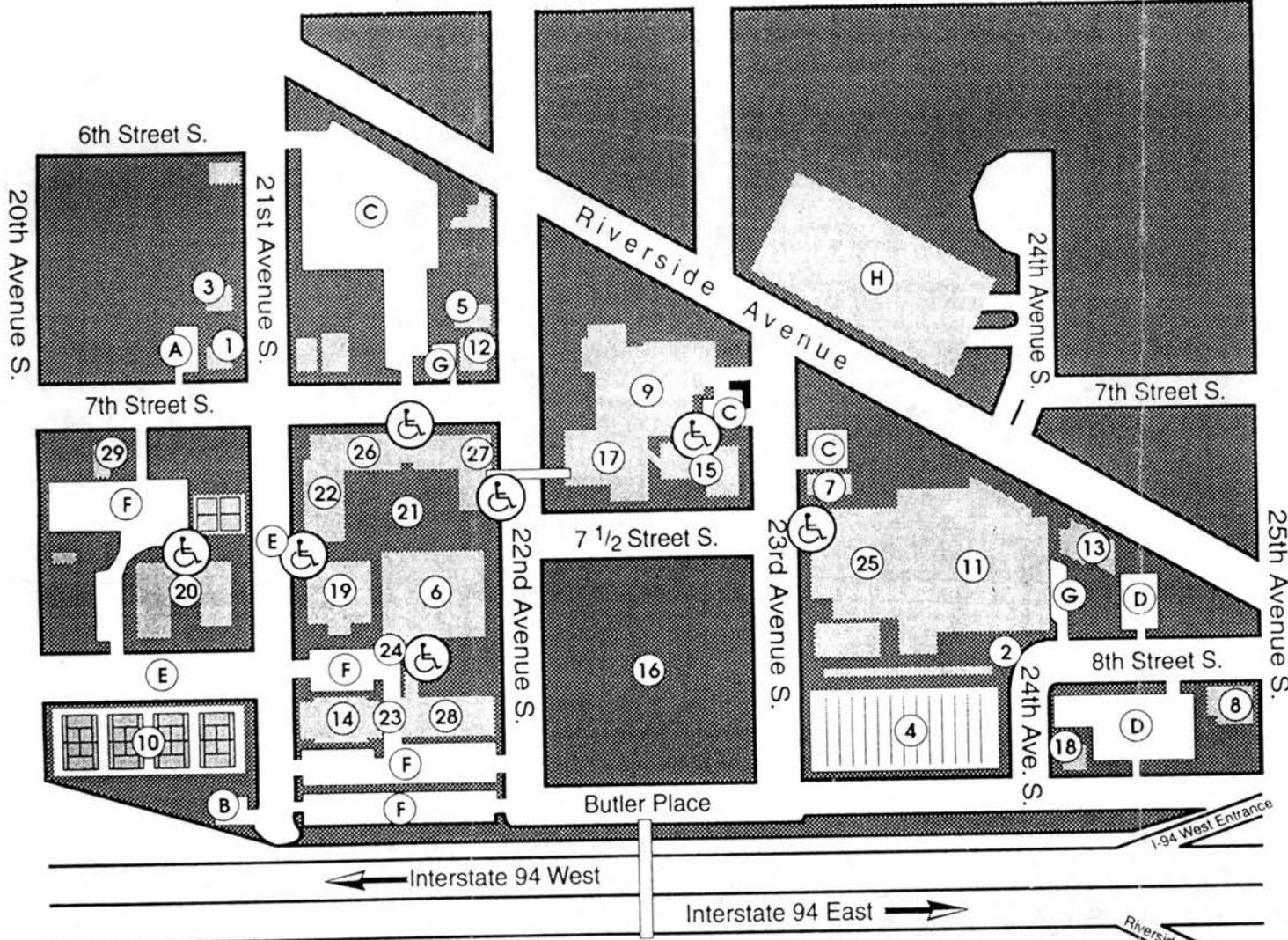
The Community Circle Collaborative Advisory Committee has agreed to a framework for the Discussion Guide and the community circles. That framework will be central to our planning of the training and will be available at the meeting.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 330-1509. I'll see you on the 23rd.

BV

# AUGSBURG

C • O • L • L • E • G • E



NORTH

## College Map Information

1. Admissions Undergraduate
2. Air Structure Entrance  
November through March
3. American Indian Support and Black Student Affairs
4. Anderson-Nelson Athletic Field and Seasonal Air Structure
5. Center for Global Education and International Programs
6. Christensen Center  
Information desk
7. College Relations
8. East Hall
9. Foss, Lobeck, Miles Center for Worship,  
Drama and Communication
10. Husby-Strommen Tennis Courts
11. Ice Arena
12. Jeroy C. Carlson Alumni Center
13. Maintenance and Grounds Shop
14. Mortensen Tower

15. Murphy Place  
Admissions Weekend College and Graduate
16. Murphy Square
17. Music Hall
18. Nordic Center
19. Old Main
20. Oscar Anderson Hall
21. Quad
22. Science Hall
23. Security Dispatch Center
24. Shipping and Receiving
25. Si Melby Hall
26. Sverdrup Library
27. Sverdrup-Ofedal Memorial Hall  
Admissions Master of Social Work
28. Urness Tower
29. Youth and Family Institute

## Parking Lots

- A. Admissions Parking  
for prospective students and their parents
  - B. Faculty/Staff/Commuter/Resident Parking
  - C. Faculty/Staff Parking
  - D. Faculty/Staff/Commuter Parking
  - E. Commuter - Street Parking
  - F. Resident Parking
  - G. Visitor Parking
  - H. Riverside Professional Building Ramp  
see Information desk in the Christensen Center  
for special arrangements
- ♿ Disability access

**Community Circle Collaborative  
Facilitator Training Planning Meeting  
Agenda  
January 6, 1997  
9:00 - 11:00**

- I. Welcome\Introductions
- II. Facilitator Training Date and Location  
**Action: Set a new date for the training.**
- III. Facilitator Recruitment  
**Action: Check on progress of members in recruiting members.**
- IV. Discussion Guide  
**Action: Review the guide and provide comments.**
- V. Training Planning  
**Action: Continue discussion and structuring of planning.**
- VI. Other Business
- VII. Next meeting  
**Action: Set future meeting dates**

MTG. #1 (1-6-96)

COMMUNITY CIRCLE  
FACILITATOR TRNG

How pose the question so that ...

How does it happen

What are the solutions

Follow Roy's Format

Teeter - Fritz Knopf

Bring SCRC, fly up to get this

---

Clear sense of outline of process.

Question that can pt. to possible solutions

---

What do we want to achieve:

- 1) Trng. for the activists/advocates / Present one side of perspective -
- \* 2) Open-ended discussion - involving all parties  
Get people working to the solution
- 3) Bldg. community relations / just get people talking about whatever issues important to them; not be worried about present one perspective or another. Open-ended.
- \* The vision / walking the farm  
Process that allows us to have that equitable discussion toward solutions

Some of how to pose the question =

Being clear on what the process is.

MTG. #2

(1-6-96)

DISCUSSION GUIDE REVIEW

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Process  $\leftrightarrow$  Format

Lay out a way of thinking about these issues

DG  $\rightarrow$  provide us w/ lens (like Bob Terry)

How lay out the Discussion guide

Here's what's going on w/

Two different policy options

Two more

Given all of these, where do we come down

---

Section I

Elim. I - IV

---

Intro - expl. the history of this project.

Our perspective - being honest about where we  
are coming from

Given that we want people to bring + put in  
their own perspectives.

Don't deal w/ lang. + <sup>edu.</sup> seg. separately.

For each policy option =

Here also are assumptions.

Do you agree w/ assumption?

What do you see as underlying value of these assumpt/altern  
underlying these options.

allow people - ability of people to express  
themselves in terms of their self interests

Need for a FACIL. DISCUSSION GUIDE.

Q. of whether discussion guide sections  
should be explicitly tied to <sup>different</sup> sections.

**Agenda**  
**Facilitator Training Planning Committee**  
**Thursday December 19, 1996**  
**9:00 - 11:00 AM**  
**Minnesota Church Center**

**I. Introductions\Welcome**

**II. Facilitator Planning Date and Location**

*Action: To finalize a date and location for the Facilitator Training and a second training session for mock facilitations.*

**III. Facilitation Model**

*Action: To finalize who we will target to be facilitators; professional paid facilitators, volunteers from the sponsors, or a co-facilitation model.*

**IV. Facilitator Training Strategies**

*Action: Begin developing strategies for each of the facilitator training objectives.*

**V. Timeline**

*Action: Decide on a meeting timeline leading up to the training.*

**VI. Other Business**

**VII. Adjournment**

BV

# Community Circle Collaborative Memorandum

Date: December 13, 1996  
To: Community Circle Collaborative Facilitator Training Planning Committee  
From: Bruce Vandal, Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, Inc.  
Subject: Next meeting and agenda

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The next meeting of the Community Circle Collaborative Facilitator Training Planning Committee (Ain't that a mouthful) is scheduled for **Thursday December 19, 1996 from 9:00 - 11:00 AM at the Minnesota Church Center, 122 W. Franklin Ave.**

At our last meeting we successfully grouped the objectives of the facilitator training into the following four areas:

### *Introduction*

- Inform facilitators on the purpose and objectives of the Community Circle Collaborative.
- Familiarize facilitators in the Community Circle approach.
- Discuss how the Community Circle Collaborative can make a difference.

### *Elements of Facilitation*

- Explore how to co-facilitate.
- Review the basic skills of facilitation.
- Examine how to frame issues.

### *Group Dynamics*

- Strategize on how to harness people's motivation and move them to action.
- Explore how to build trust among group members and to the process.
- Examine basic components of intercultural communication.

### *The Issues and the Study Guide*

- Basic overview of issues of housing and education segregation.

We will begin the process of developing strategies for the objectives in each of the four training areas.

In addition to discussing the substance of the training, we will discuss training logistics and who our facilitators will be. On the first point, there was some concern expressed at the kick-off event that January 11th is too early for a facilitator training.

On the second point, we will need to resolve once and for all whether facilitators will be trained professionals or facilitators from sponsor groups. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 330-1509. I look forward to seeing you on the 19th.

An agenda for the meeting is on the back of this memo.

# Community Circle Collaborative

Date: November 25, 1996

To: Community Circle Collaborative Facilitator Training  
Committee Members

From: Bruce Vandal, Minnesota Minority Education  
Partnership, Inc.

Subject: December 6th Facilitator Training Planning Meeting

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The next meeting of the Facilitator Training Planning committee of the Community Circle Collaborative is scheduled for Friday December 6, 1996 from 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM at the Minnesota Church Center.

We had a very productive meeting on November 21st. The items accomplished at the last meeting were as follows:

- Each community circle should be co-facilitated by an experienced facilitator and a facilitator from the sponsoring organization.
- Facilitators will be compensated a flat amount of \$100.00 plus special recognition from the Community Circle Collaborative.
- Trainers for the facilitator training will be compensated \$100.00.
- Committee members should bring with them a list of experienced facilitators.
- A summary of the Community Circle Collaborative and details on facilitation will be prepared for potential facilitators. (available at 12\6 meeting)
- The facilitator training is scheduled for Saturday January 11, 1997 from 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM at the Minnesota Church Center.
- Developed a draft of objectives for the facilitator training. (see enclosed)

The next meeting will focus primarily on finalizing the objectives of the training and developing strategies. Attendees should come prepared with a list of potential facilitators that they are committed to contacting to be included in the Community Circle Collaborative.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 330-1509. Hope to see you on the 6th.

BV

Attachments

**Community Circle  
Collaborative**

**Friday December 6, 1996  
8:30 AM to 10:30 AM  
Minnesota Church Center**

**Facilitator Training  
Planning Session**

Meeting called by: Bruce Vandal      Facilitator: Bruce Vandal

Attendees: Scott Bol, Karima Bushnell, Dick Little, Jim McDonough, Jim Addington, Roy Taylor, Darcy Seaver, Kristy Greenwalt, Joanne Walz, Mary Treacy and Bruce Vandal

Please read: Enclosed summary for potential facilitators, Training Objectives, December 10th Meeting Announcement

Please bring: Names and Addresses of potential facilitators

**Agenda**

- |                                    |                |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Introduction>Welcome            | 8:30-8:35 PM   |
| 2. Project Update                  | 8:35-8:45 PM   |
| 3. Facilitator Summary             | 8:45-9:00 PM   |
| 4. Facilitator Lists               | 9:00-9:15 PM   |
| 5. Facilitator Training Leaders    | 9:15-9:25 PM   |
| 6. Facilitator Training Strategies | 9:25-10:25 PM  |
| 7. Next Meeting                    | 10:25-10:30 PM |

**Additional Information**

The Facilitator Training Session is scheduled for Saturday January 11, 1997 at 8:30 AM at the Minnesota Church Center

# Community Circle Collaborative Facilitator Training Objectives

1. Inform facilitators on Community Circle Collaborative purpose and objectives.
2. Familiarize facilitators in the Community Circle Collaborative approach.
3. Strategize on how to harness people's motivation and move them to action.
4. Discuss how the Community Circle Collaborative can make a difference.
5. Explore how to co-facilitate.
6. Review the basic skills of facilitation.
7. Basic overview of issues of housing and education segregation.
8. Examine how to frame issues.
9. Explore how to build trust among group members and to the process.
10. Examine basic components of intercultural communication.

Post-it FAX NOTE

To	DICK LITTLE	From	DARCY SEAWER
Co./Dept	INTER-ZONE	Co.	MUN
Phone #	339-0820	Phone #	379-3602
Fax #	339-5288	Fax #	379-5952

Community Circle Collaborative  
Pilot study circle

## SESSION I: Experiences, Perceptions, Concerns

1. **Welcome & introduction to the Community Circle Collaborative**
  - ▶ The purpose of this project
  - ▶ The purpose of this pilot

2. **Introductions**

3. **The study circle process**
  - ▶ Brief overview
  - ▶ Reading: "The Role of the Participant"
  - ▶ Revisions/agreement to the ground rules

4. **Sharing of personal experiences**

*Think back. How did the community(ies) in which you grew up affect your education and other opportunities?*

*Has anyone had a personal experience that illustrates how segregated housing affects education?*

5. **Reading: "New challenges facing our metro-area communities & schools"**  
(Background, basic trends, overview of viewpoints and proposals)

6. **Discussion of personal connection to or interest in this issue**  
*Why are you concerned about this issue?*

*What is at the crux of this issue?*

*How have your experiences or concerns influenced your opinions about this issue?*

7. **Summary and common ground**  
*Did any common concerns emerge?*

*In what ways do you see the issue differently as a result of considering others' views and experiences?*

8. **Evaluation: Discussion of what participants thought of process/questions/material**

## Community Circle Collaborative *Pilot study circle*

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### New Challenges Facing Our Metro-Area Communities & Schools

The Twin Cities metropolitan area is changing in many ways. Among these changes is increasing segregation. In fact, our metro area is quickly becoming one of the most segregated regions in the United States. This is happening racially as well as economically.

So what does this mean? On the most basic level, it means that our communities – and schools – are becoming very different from each other. While some communities remain nearly all white and comfortably affluent, others are home to people of color and poor people almost exclusively. None of us in the metro area live more than a few miles from such segregation. Indeed, most likely everyone in this study circle lives in a segregated community. Think about your neighborhood: how many people of a different race or income live on your block?

Our schools are reflecting these changes. Students of color make up over 63% of enrolled students in Minneapolis and over 56% in St. Paul. In addition, over half of the students in those districts need free or reduced lunches. In contrast, nearly all children in our outer-ring suburban schools are white and from middle- or -upper income families.

As we'll be seeing later in this study circle, opinions differ greatly as to the causes and implications of the segregation in the metro area. Some believe it is borne out of choice: people of color could be living in largely white communities, even the affluent suburbs, but are choosing to live among other people of color in the central cities. Others contend that segregation is the result of housing policies that have encouraged middle income families and European American families to move to the suburbs, but left a high concentration of poverty and people of color behind. Still others believe that not enough fair and affordable housing exist in the suburbs.

A similar variety of viewpoints exists over schools. Some maintain that school desegregation is unnecessary, arguing that the racial makeup of a school doesn't affect the educational achievement of its children. Others contend that although an ideal school system would be integrated, we shouldn't force schools to become so. Proponents of that view often seek to have school districts work together voluntarily to create greater balance. Others simply find the cost of busing too high, particularly in the loss of "neighborhood schools," or worry that the focus has become too focused on racial balance and not on student achievement. Still others, however, believe that we can't afford not to bus students to achieve racial balance, that as long as our communities are segregated, we need to make our schools integrated. If we don't, they believe, our society will remain racist and our children's education unequal.

These are just a sampling of the many views that emerge in discussing these complicated issues. Many of our current and proposed policies reflect this wide range, from the effort to encourage suburban school districts to work with their city counterparts to proposals that would merge all of our metro school districts into one. The debate is going on in the courts, too.

We need now to explore these issues in greater depth, and with greater understanding. As a metro community, we have not had a chance to study these important changes and options before us. Even more importantly, we have not had an opportunity to understand each other and how these changes are affecting us in different ways. We hope this study circle will help us all do that.

**Community Circle  
Collaborative**

**November 21, 1996  
8:30 PM to 10:30 PM  
Minnesota Church Center**

**Facilitator Training  
Planning Session**

**Agenda**

- |                                       |               |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Introduction\Welcome               | 8:30-8:35 PM  |
| 2. Project Overview                   | 8:35-8:45 PM  |
| 3. Facilitator Compensation           | 8:45-9:05 PM  |
| 4. Objectives of Facilitator Training | 9:05-9:45 PM  |
| 5. Timeline\Meeting schedule          | 9:45-9:55 PM  |
| 6. Pilot Study Circle Discussion      | 9:55-10:30 PM |

**Additional Information**

# COMMUNITY CIRCLE COLLABORATIVE

Date: November 7, 1996

To: Jim Addington, Scott Bol, Jim McDonough, Roy Taylor, Fred Tenfingers, Mary Treacy, Joanne Walz, Darcy Seaver, Dick Little

From: Bruce Vandal

Subject: November 21 Facilitator Training Planning Meeting

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The Community Circle Collaborative is building momentum and needs your help. A critical component of the community circle project will be the training of representatives from the sponsor organizations as facilitators for the community circles.

A planning meeting for the facilitator training will take place on Thursday November 21, 1996 from 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM at the Minnesota Church Center. The Church Center is on the Northeast corner of Franklin and Pillsbury.

Our goal is to provide a valuable, skill building training that will prepare the facilitators for the community circle project.

The current timeline has community circles convening in January and February with facilitator trainings taking place in early January.

The Community Circle Collaborative is fortunate to have received a \$10,000 grant from the Bush Foundation. This grant will allow us to compensate trainers and facilitators. If you are interested in participating in the training, please let me know. Please contact me at 330-1509 or e-mail me at [vandal@augsborg.edu](mailto:vandal@augsborg.edu) if you should have any questions.

Hope to see you on November 21st.

BV

# Beyond Busing:

A Metrowide Dialogue on the Challenges of  
Education and Housing Segregation

## Facilitator Training

Saturday, February 15, 1997

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Marshall Room, Christenson Center, Augsburg College

OR

Thursday, February 20, 1997

6:00 - 9:30 PM

Marshall Room, Christenson Center, Augsburg College

The Beyond Busing Facilitator Training is for individuals that will be facilitating one of the many community circles that will be taking place across the metro area this March and April. Facilitators can be representatives of organizations that will be sponsoring a community circle or citizens that would like to participate in the Beyond Busing project by leading a group.

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### Facilitator Training Registration Form

Please complete the following registration and return it by February 12th to:

Bruce Vandal

Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, Inc.

2211 Riverside Ave. S.

Minneapolis, MN 55454

Phone (612) 330-1509 / Fax (612) 330-1510 / E-mail Vandal@Augsburg.edu

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring Organization (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Check which session you will attend: \_\_\_\_\_ Sat. February 15th \_\_\_\_\_ Thurs. February 20th

Please Check All Apply:

I am representing a sponsor organization and have a group that I will be facilitating.

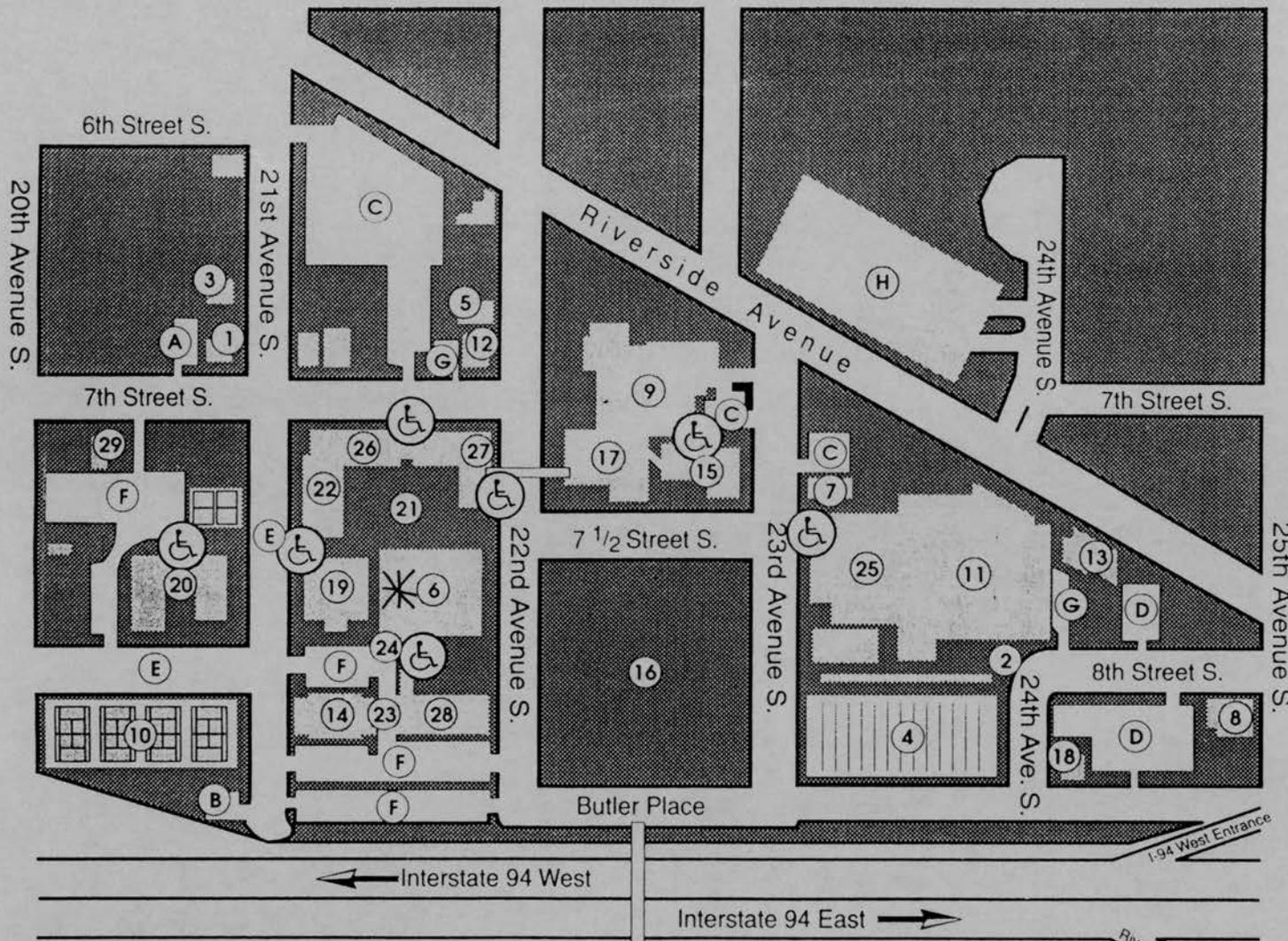
I would like to facilitate a group, please assign me to a group that needs a facilitator.

I consider myself an experienced group facilitator.

I would be interested in attending a second training session where I can practice my facilitation skills.

# AUGSBURG

## C • O • L • L • E • G • E



### College Map Information

1. Admissions Undergraduate
2. Air Structure Entrance  
November through March
3. American Indian Support and Black Student Affairs
4. Anderson-Nelson Athletic Field and Seasonal Air Structure
5. Center for Global Education and International Programs
- \* 6. Christensen Center  
Information desk
7. College Relations
8. East Hall
9. Foss, Lobeck, Miles Center for Worship,  
Drama and Communication
10. Husby-Strommen Tennis Courts
11. Ice Arena
12. Jeroy C. Carlson Alumni Center
13. Maintenance and Grounds Shop
14. Mortensen Tower

15. Murphy Place  
Admissions Weekend College and Graduate
16. Murphy Square
17. Music Hall
18. Nordic Center
19. Old Main
20. Oscar Anderson Hall
21. Quad
22. Science Hall
23. Security Dispatch Center
24. Shipping and Receiving
25. Si Melby Hall
26. Sverdrup Library
27. Sverdrup-Ofstedal Memorial Hall  
Admissions Master of Social Work
28. Urness Tower
29. Youth and Family Institute

### Parking Lots

- A. Admissions Parking  
for prospective students and their parents
  - B. Faculty/Staff/Commuter/Resident Parking
  - C. Faculty/Staff Parking
  - D. Faculty/Staff/Commuter Parking
  - E. Commuter - Street Parking
  - F. Resident Parking
  - G. Visitor Parking
  - H. Riverside Professional Building Ramp  
see information desk in the Christensen Center  
for special arrangements
- ♿ Disability access

Agenda  
Facilitator Training Group  
Community Circle Collaborative  
Thursday, March 27, 1997  
9:00 - 11:00 AM  
Minnesota Church Center

- I. Welcome\Introductions
- II. Project Update
  - A. Discussion Guide
  - B. May events
- III. Debriefing on Training Sessions
- IV. Facilitator Outreach
- V. Twin Cities Freenet
- VI. Other Business

COMMUNITY CIRCLE  
COLLABORATIVE  
MEMORANDUM

Date: March 6, 1997  
To: Community Circle Collaborative Facilitator Working Group  
From: Bruce Vandal  
Subject: March 20, 1997 Meeting

---

So you thought that your work was done! I want to thank all of you for your dedication to pulling together the Facilitator Training sessions. In my own humble opinion both sessions were an unmitigated success.

Despite this success there is still more work to be done. To continue our work with the facilitators I have scheduled a meeting for Thursday March 20, 1997 from 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM in Assembly Room #2 of the Minnesota Church Center. Please let me know if you will not be able to attend.

Items to be discussed include:

- Debriefing on our training sessions.
- Use of the training video filmed at the first training session.
- Using the Twin Cities Freenet.
- Other opportunities for facilitators to receive feedback.
- Developing facilitator packets.
- Matching facilitators with sponsors.

As you can see there still is a lot to do. Thanks again for your commitment and I will see you all on the 20th.

BV

**COMMUNITY CIRCLE  
COLLABORATIVE  
MEMORANDUM**

Date: March 21, 1997  
To: Community Circle Collaborative Partners  
From: Bruce Vandal and Dick Little  
Subject: Important Project Update

---

The Community Circle Collaborative Project, *Beyond Busing: A Metrowide Dialogue on the Challenges of Housing and Education Segregation* is moving full steam ahead. Groups are beginning to convene all across the metropolitan area, while others are poised to begin.

***Discussion Guide***

The *Beyond Busing* Discussion Guide is still in production. Syl Jones has been asked to further develop this piece to ensure that it will be a well balanced and effective tool for your community circles. The current timeline is to have a new draft complete by Monday, March 24, 1997. The goal is to have a final draft ready by the week of March 31, 1997.

Given the delay with the study guide, we want to assure you that your group should not feel obligated to finish in time for the May 8, 1997 Forum to be held at Macalester College. We will be refocusing that event to accommodate those groups that are still meeting.

We apologize for the delay in the production of this piece, but we are certain that the final product will be a tremendously useful tool for your discussion groups. If you have any questions please contact Dick Little at 871-8980.

***Site\Partner Updates***

To better serve the needs of each community circle we are asking that each community circle provide us with an update on the status of their groups. Please complete the enclosed Site\Partner Update Form and fax it to Dick Little at 871-8984 or Bruce Vandal 330-1510.

Completing the form will enable us to better serve your needs as participants and sponsors of the Community Circle Collaborative.

If you have any questions, please contact Dick Little at 871-8980 or Bruce Vandal at 330-1509. Thank you for your cooperation.

BV

# COMMUNITY CIRCLE COLLABORATIVE SPONSOR/PARTNER UPDATE

This form will enable us to better serve the needs of the Community Circle Project's sponsor organizations. Please complete this form and return as soon as possible to:

Dick Little  
Education and Housing Equity Project  
122 W. Franklin Ave.  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
(fax) 871-8784

Bruce Vandal  
Minnesota Minority Education Partnership, Inc.  
2211 Riverside Ave. S.  
Minneapolis, MN 55454  
(fax) 330-1510

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor Organization (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

phone \_\_\_\_\_ fax \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**1. I am (check all that apply):**

- A representative of a sponsor organization.  
 A facilitator that has a community circle to facilitate.  
 A facilitator that needs to be assigned to a community circle.

*If you are a sponsor or are facilitating a group answer the following:*

2. When will your group be meeting? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are you in need of a facilitator?  Yes  No 4. How many groups are you convening? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many people total are participating in community circles? \_\_\_\_\_
6. To create greater diversity would you like to be paired with another sponsor organization?  Yes  No
7. Do you have any special needs that we should know about that would assist you in your work? Please explain.

*Facilitators please answer the following:*

8. If you have not been assigned to a group, are you still interested in doing so:  Yes  No
9. Which geographic area would you be willing to facilitate in? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Have you received information about your Twin Cities Freenet Account:  Yes  No
11. Do you need additional information about how to use the Twin Cities Freenet?  Yes  No
12. Would you participate in another training on facilitation and use of the Freenet  Yes  No

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12. Would you participate in another training on facilitation and use of the Freenet  Yes  No

COMMUNITY CIRCLE  
COLLABORATIVE  
MEMORANDUM

Date: March 21, 1997  
To: Community Circle Collaborative Partners  
From: Bruce Vandal and Dick Little *RCL*  
Subject: Important Project Update

---

The Community Circle Collaborative Project, *Beyond Busing: A Metrowide Dialogue on the Challenges of Housing and Education Segregation* is moving full steam ahead. Groups are beginning to convene all across the metropolitan area, while others are poised to begin.

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We apologize for the delay in the production of this piece, but we are certain that the final product will be a tremendously useful tool for your discussion groups. If you have any questions please contact Dick Little at 871-8980.

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Completing the form will enable us to better serve your needs as participants and sponsors of the Community Circle Collaborative.

If you have any questions, please contact Dick Little at 871-8980 or Bruce Vandal at 330-1509. Thank you for your cooperation.

BV

COMMUNITY CIRCLE  
COLLABORATIVE  
MEMORANDUM

Date: April 8, 1997  
To: Facilitator Support Working Group  
From: Bruce Vandal  
Subject: Phone Calling of Facilitators

---

As promised, I am sending a memo out that will help prepare your phone calling of facilitators. Unfortunately, I have not been able to pull together the resources that we discussed that would support your work. Instead, I would like to gather information from the facilitators on what they need to effectively facilitate. Based on what we learn from the facilitators, we can prepare a mass mailing that addresses their questions.

The goal of the phone calls is to personally connect with facilitators and assure them that their involvement is valued and important to the effort. Based on the above goals, it would be helpful to cover the following information:

- Have they received a discussion guide? If not, check their address. If yes, do they have any questions? Let them know that the sponsor organizations will receive multiple copies for group members.
- Are you facilitating a group? If yes, who is the group's sponsor organization? and Has the group met yet? On your mailing list the far column is for indicating whether they are facilitating.
- What challenges are you facing in your facilitation that you would like more information on? Document these and tell them we will be sending out a mailing that addresses common problems. If they have specific concerns that require a follow up conversation, let me know.
- If they are not facilitating a group, are they still interested in doing so? Would they be interested in co-facilitating with someone?
- Have they received information about their Twin Cities Freenet account? If not, have they sent in the required registration form that they received at the facilitator training? If yes, have them call Nolan at 871-7307.
- Have they tried to enter the Beyond Busing conference on the Twin Cities Freenet? If they have tried and been unsuccessful, have them call the Twin Cities Freenet Voice Mail system at 305-0847.
- Let them know that the project forum originally scheduled for May 8, 1997 has been rescheduled for May 29, 1997. The location is still the Macalester College Chapel.

Thank you for agreeing to help with this outreach. If you have any questions, please let me know by calling 330-1509.

BV

**COMMUNITY CIRCLE  
COLLABORATIVE  
MEMORANDUM**

Date: March 21, 1997  
To: Community Circle Collaborative Partners  
From: Bruce Vandal and Dick Little  
Subject: Important Project Update

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BV

COMMUNITY CIRCLE  
COLLABORATIVE  
MEMORANDUM

Date: February 5, 1997  
To: Facilitator Training Planning Meeting  
From: Bruce Vandal  
Subject: February 13, 1997 Planning Meeting

---

The next meeting of the facilitator training planning group is scheduled for Thursday February 13, 1997 from 9:00 - 11:00 AM at the Minnesota Church Center.

The meeting will focus on final arrangements for the Facilitator trainings scheduled for Saturday February 15, 1997 from 8:30 - 12:30 p.m. and Thursday February 20, 1997 from 6:00 - 9:30 PM. Both sessions will take place in the Marshall Room of the Christenson Center on the campus of Augsburg College.

The following things were accomplished at the last meeting:

- A tentative program for the event was developed (see enclosed).
- We met with a representative from the Twin Cities Freenet to discuss the establishment of an electronic conference for all facilitators to use during the community circles to report results and get feedback on challenges they are facing in the group.
- We decided to send out a packet of information about the training in advance to those that RSVP before the event.
- People articulated their commitment to attending the events.

Those that will be at the meeting on the 15th are as follows:

Roy Taylor  
Charmaine Sprengelmeyer  
Dick Little  
Bruce Vandal  
Hal Clapp  
Jim McDonough  
Scott Bol  
Karima Bushnell

Those at the meeting on the 20th will be:

Charmaine Sprengelmeyer  
Dick Little  
Bruce Vandal  
Hal Clapp  
Jim McDonough  
Scott Bol  
Karima Bushnell

- That some form of compensation for those facilitating the transition should occur. Bruce and Dick will discuss this further.
- Dick agreed to pull together a packet of information for the training packet from existing materials available from the Study Circle Resource Center and the Kettering Model.
- Roy agreed to develop summary forms for the Issue Analysis, Deliberation and Public Voice portions of the training.

I will contact committee members to help with other components of the training planning in the next week.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 330-1509. I will see you on the 13th.

# TENTATIVE SCHEDULE BEYOND BUSING FACILITATOR TRAINING

## I. Introduction 45 minutes

- A. Introduction to project - 15 minutes
  - 1. What is the charge of each community circle - Dick Little - 5 minutes
  - 2. Responsibilities of being a facilitator - Dick Little - 5 minutes
    - a. Convening the group.
    - b. Facilitate the group.
    - c. Explaining the charge to the group.
    - d. Identify a recorder for the group.
    - e. Participate in TC - Freenet Conference
    - f. Report back to the Community Circle Collaborative
    - g. Identify members to participate in the May Conference.
    - h. Participate in the May Conference.
  - 3. Twin Cities Freenet Facilitator Conference - Nolan - 5 minutes.
- B. Deliberation, Discussion and Debate - Bruce Vandal - 30 minutes
  - 1. Overview of Deliberation, Discussion, and Debate - 10 minutes
  - 2. Developing Ground Rules Small Group Activity - 10 minutes
  - 3. Report Back to the group. - 10 minutes.

## II. Issue Analysis - 40 minutes

- A. Housing and Education Segregation - Darcy Seaver - 15 minutes
  - 1. Overview of the Discussion Guide - 10 minutes
  - 2. Some statistics on Housing and Education Segregation - 5 minutes
- B. Issue Analysis Process - Roy Taylor - 20 minutes
  - 1. Examine Assumptions
  - 2. Do the policy options capture these perspectives.
- C. Worksheet critiquing policy options.

## III. Deliberation - 80 minutes

- A. Deliberation Techniques - Roy Taylor - 15 minutes
- B. Cross Cultural Communication - Karima Bushnell - 10 minutes
- C. Role Play - Roy Taylor - 35 minutes
  - Give people roles to play, rotating roles every 7 minutes.
- D. Debrief with the large group - Roy Taylor 10 minutes

## IV. Public Voice - Roy Taylor -45 minutes

- A. Developing Public Voice - 10 minutes
- B. Model Group Demonstration - 20 minutes
- C. Questions/Discussion - 10 minutes

## V. Action Steps

**Agenda**  
**Facilitator Training Group**  
**Community Circle Collaborative**  
**Thursday, February 13, 1997**  
**9:00 - 11:00 AM**  
**Minnesota Church Center**

- I. Welcome\Introductions
- II. Twin Cities Freenet
- III. Review of Training Program
- IV. Training Materials
- V. Division of Duties
- VI. Other Business

Name	Address	Phone
Nolan Venkatathnam	TCFN - 110 E 15th St #112	871-7307
Howard Kroll	3252 Pleasant mpls 55408	824-4803
Karina Bushnell	4604 Columbus Ave S. MPLS 55407	827-4424
DICK LITTLE	EHEP, 122 W. FRANKLIN AVE., #320 MPLS, MN 55404	871-8980 (871-8989, Fx)
Roy Taylor	4912 · 17th Ave So Mpls. MN 55417	728 · 3996
David Woolley	2316 Humboldt Ave S. Mpls MN 55405	374-2664 voice (call - 374-2731)
Jim McDonough	2840 Cavell Ave. So. St. Louis Park, MN. 55426	935-5762
Scott Bul	2309 28th Ave S Mpls Mn 55406	W 7216320 H 430 9111
Bruce VANDAL	2211 Riverside Ave Mpls, MN 55454	330-1509
HAL CLAPP	SOUTHSIDE NHS 3137 CHICAGO AVES. 55407	W) 823-5214 H) 698-6409

## BEYOND BUSING

A METROWIDE DIALOGUE ON THE ISSUES OF HOUSING AND EDUCATION SEGREGATION

Date: March 4, 1997  
To: Beyond Busing Facilitators  
From: Bruce Vandal, Community Circle Facilitation  
Coordinator  
Subject: Facilitator Update

---

Here's an update for facilitators on the Beyond Busing project.

### *Twin Cities Freenet Training*

The Twin Cities Freenet and the Community Circle Collaborative are sponsoring a training for facilitators who want to learn more about how to use the Twin Cities Freenet as a resource. Trainings are scheduled on Monday March 10th and Thursday March 13, 1997 from 7:00 - 9:00 PM at the Minneapolis Telecommunications Network Offices on 125 SE Main Street, St. Anthony Main (See map on reverse side.)

This is a unique opportunity to learn about the Internet and how it can be a resource for you after the Community Circle Project. Please RSVP for one of the training sessions by giving me a call at 330-1509.

The Twin Cities Freenet Beyond Busing Conference has been set up, however it will not have significant information available until next week.

### *Matching of Facilitators to Discussion Groups*

For those facilitators that are in need of a group to facilitate, we will begin the process of matching you with a group in the next week. If you have not heard from us within the next two weeks, please give me a call.

### *Discussion Guide*

The Discussion Guide is going through another round of editing in the next couple of weeks. The goal is to have the final product ready by the week of March 17, 1997. We apologize for the delay, however we want to be sure that the final product is a useful resource that has a balanced presentation of the issues. For those groups that will be meeting before March 17, 1997 we are encouraging those groups to have their first meeting and to spend the first meeting examining and documenting personal perceptions and opinions of the issues of housing and education segregation. If you are in need of specific materials for your first meeting please let us know.

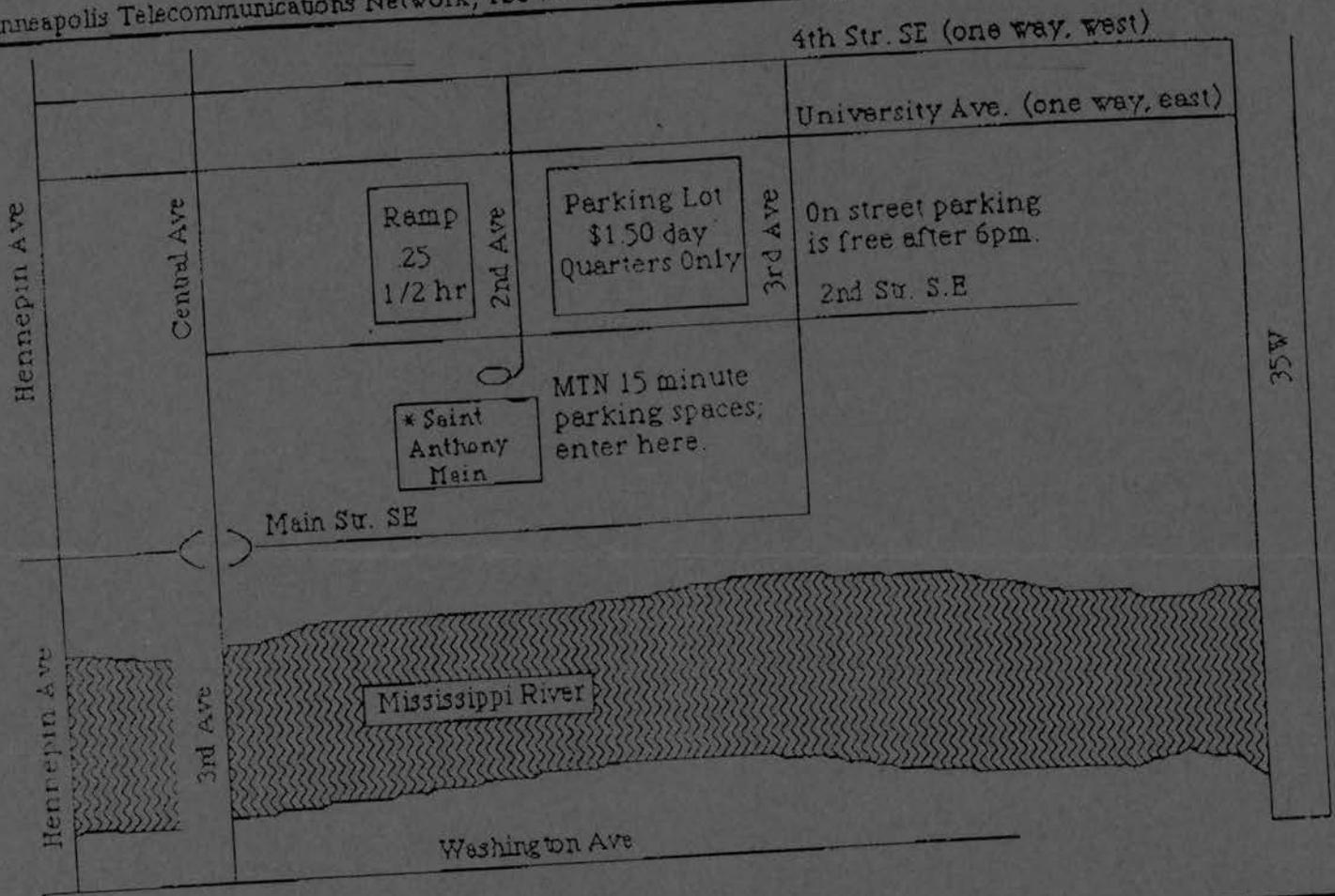
In addition to the discussion guide we will be sending a packet of other resources and materials. Enclosed will be a registration sheet and a report form that should be sent back to the Community Circle Collaborative.

### *Diversity In Community Circles*

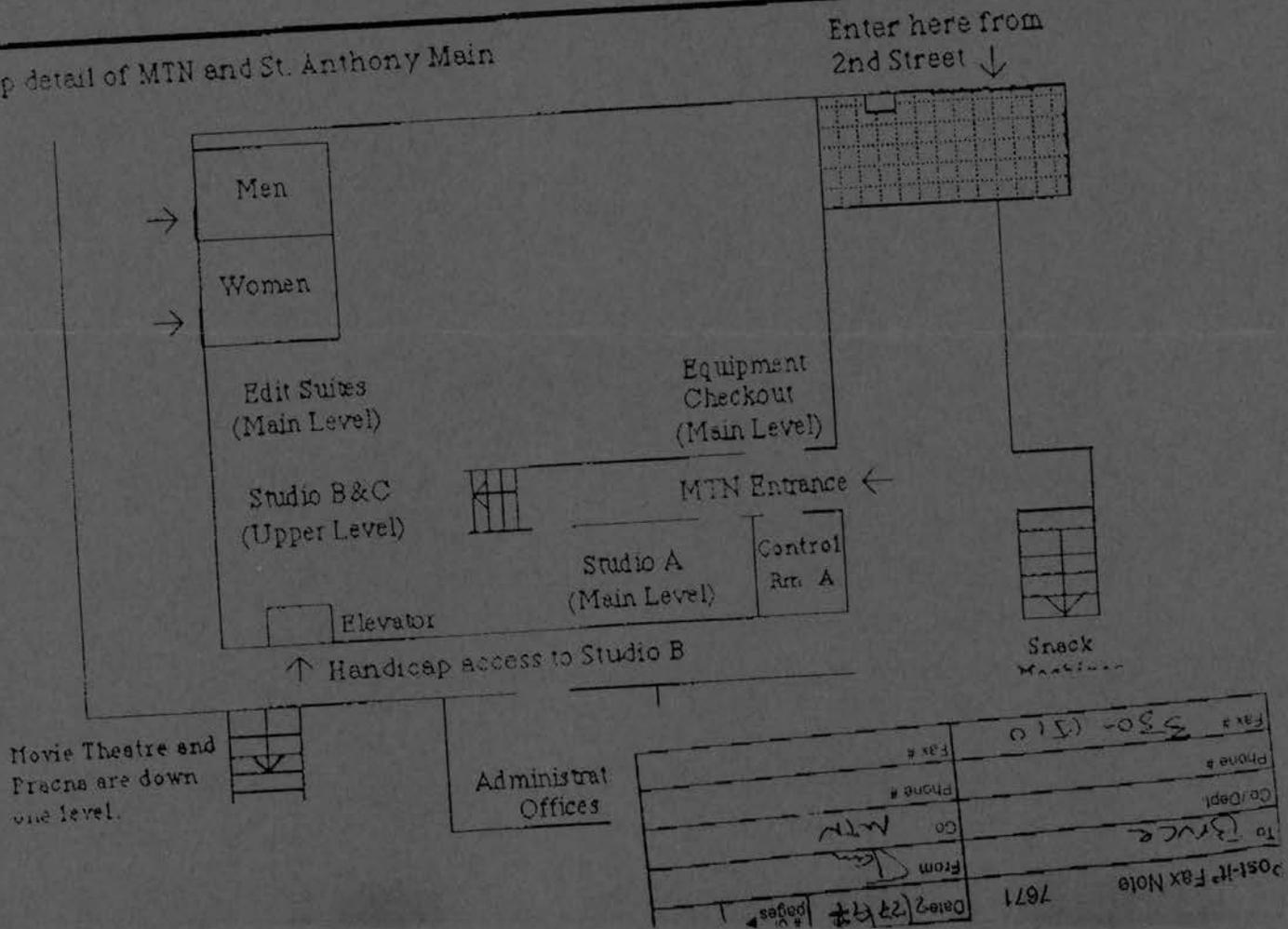
It is important for community circles to be as diverse as possible. An ideal group would have diversity in the following areas: geography, political perspective, culture, gender, and economic status. Sponsor organizations and facilitators should work together to create as much diversity as possible. If you would like to create diversity by pairing up with another group, please contact Dick Little at 871-8980. He will make an effort to match you up with another group.

In addition, we are looking for examples of groups that are diverse. If you believe you have a diverse community circle, please let me know. We want to make these groups available to the press and Minnesota Public Radio as examples of an ideal community circle.

Thank you for your patience with all of these issues and be sure to contact me if there are any questions.



\*Closeup detail of MTN and St. Anthony Main

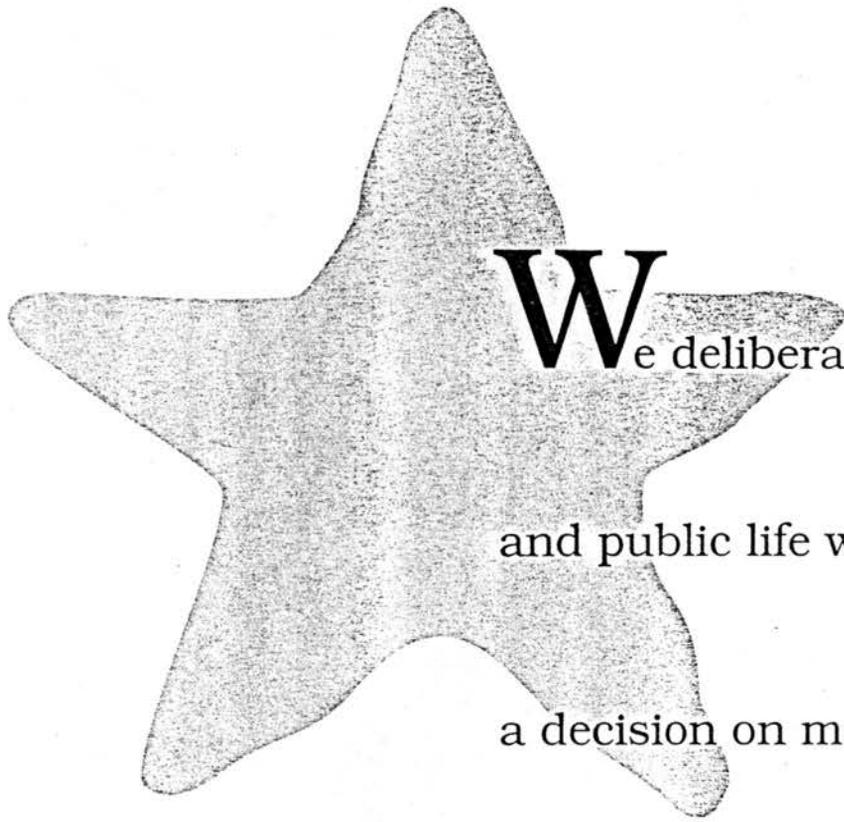




For  
**Convenors and  
Moderators**

Organizing for Public Deliberation and  
Moderating a Forum/Study Circle

NATIONAL  
ISSUES  
FORUMS



**W**e deliberate in our personal and public life when we have to make a decision on matters that are very

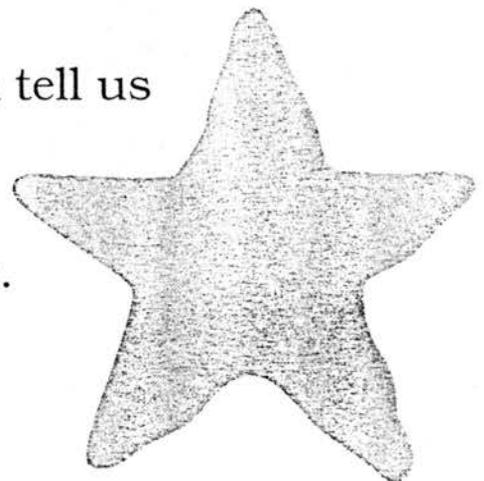
important to us and when there are competing approaches to solving a

problem and when there is not any



authority that can tell us

exactly what to do.



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# NATIONAL ISSUES FORUMS NETWORK

There are more than 5,000 civic and educational organizations using the National Issues Forums' process. Those organizations include a large number of schools and colleges that use the NIF materials as a part of a course or educational program. Another group of national organizations uses it in local chapters to carry out institutional missions, which range from developing leadership skills to increasing community problem-solving capabilities. Still others are independent, local forums/study circles begun by energetic citizens who are concerned about a number of public issues that face their communities. Examples of NIF partners who organize and conduct forums/study circles are churches/synagogues, cooperative extension services, libraries, leadership groups, senior centers, corrections education, continuing education facilities, adult basic education, and community groups.

There are certain organizing principles that have facilitated the growth of those organizations using NIF to more than 5,000 participating institutions in 15 years. They are:

## **1** Each Organization Participates for Its Own Reasons and Operates Independently

If public deliberation is seen as a means for accomplishing important institutional missions, it has a valid claim on time. If those organizing and conducting the local NIF program do not see how NIF is valuable to the organization, institution, community and members, then NIF is soon gone.

Few people want to "do" or conduct someone else's program. Those organizing NIF and those attending are far too busy to engage in forums or study circles over time unless they see a reason or value in the experience. Experienced convenors say, "Be ready to explain and help others understand why NIF is important to them and the community."

## **2** Local Ownership and Capacity

Each of the forums controls and finances its own program. There is not one National Issues Forum, but many diverse forums. Everything that is done is to reinforce the local forums' sense of their own capacity and importance. NIF is not an organization itself, but a network of civic and educational organizations that have their own programs of public deliberation, which they control and finance to meet their objectives. The NIF network is Internetlike rather than hierarchical.

## **3** Partners for Tasks Beyond the Capacity of Local Forums

Certain tasks require help from nonforum partners with specialized capacities. For example, when issue books were needed, Public Agenda and the Kettering Foundation joined the venture to produce them. Today, institutions around the country are conducting Public Policy Institutes. These partners, like those conducting forums, participate for their own reasons; and their independence is understood and respected.

## **4** Division of Labor

When there are common programs of all the partners, each participant in this enterprise decides on his or her involvement in NIF. No central authority oversees local programs and no one tries to direct the way a nonforum partner makes a contribution.

## **5** Everyone Participates

The selection of three or four issues each year is done by having each local forum steering committee express its preferences — not by a "committee" that tries to represent everyone in making the decision. Everyone represents himself or herself.

## **G** Diverse Local Forums/Study Circles United by Common Purposes

Those characteristics that are held in common are:

- Issues are framed in public terms.
  - The work of the forums/study circles is to struggle with the hard choices that every issue entails.
  - The choices are made through public deliberation.
  - Work toward a shared sense of direction and what trade-offs they are willing or unwilling to accept.
- 

*"If American democracy is to fulfill its promise, citizens must take responsibility and act together. They can act directly or through their representatives but they must act."*

## **WHY NATIONAL ISSUES FORUMS?**

If American democracy is to fulfill its promise, citizens must take responsibility and act together. They can act directly or through their representatives but they must act. The first order of business then is to come together to make choices about what actions they can agree to take. Sound choices come from our most reflective and shared judgments, not the first reactions so often documented by pollsters. What is required is public deliberation, a process through which people talk with one another about public issues that concern them, weigh the advantages and consequences of alternative courses of action and seek a shared sense of direction for creating public policy. This process is carried out in deliberative forums across the country.

Today, thousands of civic and educational institutions in the U.S. are loosely linked in a network known as National Issues Forums (NIF). These deliberations are locally sponsored, controlled, and financed. Over the years, NIF has linked up with all kinds of groups in America — from neighborhood associations and literacy programs to churches and synagogues, from colleges, universities, and schools, to leadership programs and libraries. The NIF network, now close to 15 years old, continues to grow.

# TIPS FROM NIF CONVENORS ON HOW TO GET STARTED

"New groups should remind themselves daily that there is no right way to format their programs. This was very hard for us to realize. We spent several months researching other groups, asking how they did it, looking for THE answer. It finally hit us that there was no answer. We reached agreements among ourselves about how we wanted to do it, keeping our community situation and resources in mind, and went for it. Once you do it, you can always improve upon your methods next year."

"Establishing a solid network and base to build on is important. One thing most helpful is to begin with an established group; NIF fit beautifully into it."

"That would be my advice for any new NIF convenor. Start small, identify the people whose interests you share. Don't be afraid to be the only one pushing NIF. Once it gets out into the community, it does catch on. We remind ourselves we are not just holding an event, but building an institution."

"First, we ask ourselves, Who would most likely care about issues facing our nation? Who would want to engage in public talk? Next, we contacted existing groups that we felt would be interested."

"Ours are not communitywide forums. We go to organizations in the community. The forums are more likely to have a good response if they are held in conjunction with an already existing group. Build on already established efforts or practices that have the potential for fostering deliberation."

"Be sure your first forum is a manageable size and includes a diverse audience. A diverse audience helps make deliberation easier. I would start with a group of 20 to 30 people. Leadership and participants are inclusive."

"It is so important that everyone remember that he or she must get out of the role of the teacher and get into the moderator role. A person new to NIF should

take moderator training. If training is not possible, moderate your first forum with an experienced moderator."

## Recommendations to new convenors as to how to proceed are:

- "Get organized into an advisory committee and assign specific responsibilities."
- "Tailor the format to the community or to the audience you are trying to reach."
- "Promote the study circles through the constituency of the people there. Use them to expand. Get them interested in deliberating the issues and not worry about numbers. The alternative to a large forum would be to pick an organization and get them to adopt one or more of the issues as part of their fall or winter program and make it part of the regular programming. The key is the ability to adapt NIF to whatever group or organization you are working with. Then just go ahead and do it!"
- "Start with an existing group in the community. Think about audiences that would see it as being to their self-interest to engage in choice work and deliberation about specific issues."
- "Just get started. You will keep developing your moderator skills."

"NIF is an ongoing part of our basic and adult education programs in correction education. Successful NIF efforts relate to the self-interest of various organizations."

"I was an active volunteer with the Literacy Council and had participated in NIF study circles in my church. There seemed to be a natural fit between the two. Eventually, NIF became a part of the work of the Literacy Council. I keep looking for connections."

# ORGANIZING A FORUM/STUDY CIRCLE

What is the difference between a forum and a **study circle**? Very little. Study circles and forums are characterized by choice work, deliberation, and working toward common ground for action or a shared sense of purpose.

What may be different is in the size of the group and the number of times the group meets. Essentially, they are the same. Individuals tend to call a large group that meets only for one session a **FORUM**. They typically refer to a small group, 5 to 20 people, who meet one or more times on the same issue a **STUDY CIRCLE**.

In a typical study circle a group of 5 to 15 people meet several times to discuss one of the critical issues facing our society. Each deliberation dialogue session commonly lasts about two hours and is led by a moderator whose role it is to focus the discussion and help the members engage in deliberation. Issue books and other reading materials are given to the participants prior to the discussion. The tasks and purposes of forums and study circles are the same.

## Study Circles in Action

Think about a dozen people seated around a living room or meeting room in a church, library, civic/senior center, or school. The participants are all active. Everyone assumes responsibility for the group. All participants weigh carefully the views of others and understand the impact various choices would have on what they and others consider valuable. They are engaged in "working through" the conflicting emotions that arise when various options pull and tug on what others hold most valuable in their everyday lives.

## Organizing a Forum/Study Circle

Often two individuals, the **Convenor** and the **MODERATOR** are central to the creation and success of a study circle (one person can do both tasks).

The **Convenor** recruits the participants, arranges logistics of the meeting, and orders issue books. The **MODERATOR** guides the discussion, explains the guidelines, and helps the group engage in deliberation rather than "just talk."

### 1 Start by Starting

A frequent question for experienced convenors/moderators is, "How does one start or organize his or her first forum/study circle?" The most common response is "You start by starting. Start small, something manageable and get under way. As deliberative dialogue and choice work becomes valuable to others in the community a network will develop. Think of existing groups."

### 2 Develop Around a Set of Ideas

NIF is not a "program" to do and is not a discussion to promote better understanding. NIF forums/study circles become a way to make decisions that allow citizens to act together. In forums/study circles, people are challenged to face the costs and consequences of their options and to "work through" the often volatile emotions that are a part of making public decisions.

### 3 Networks Grow as People Begin to Experience the Benefits

Some of the benefits often mentioned by convenors are:

- helps people get a handle on complex public problems;
- helps one understand different points of view before he or she acts;
- others say they feel less isolated, more a part of the community;
- over a period of time it changes the way their community approaches decision making and problem solving;
- gives people confidence they can eventually change their political life; and
- most always changes the way people view others.

#### **4 Leadership and Participants Are Inclusive**

If you are organizing beyond a very small group with established leadership you will want to organize a steering committee. A steering committee is really just a way to spread ownership and encourage multiple leaders. If one person assumes all the responsibility, NIF will probably be gone in a short time.

A steering committee is a group of people who believe that the deliberative process should be a part of politics and that deliberation should be one way people in the community do the public's business.

#### **5 Keep Making Connections**

Public politics is a politics of connections or relationships, not only of those with similar self-interests but those with very different self-interests. A public is a diverse body of citizens, not a homogeneous group. So good organizing follows the principle of ever-expanding associations. One of the most important questions organizers can ask is: Who is not in this room who needs to be here if we are to have an array of forums? That question should be followed by: Why aren't they here? How can we bring them to the table? What room are they in? Can we get where they are?

The principle of association shouldn't be interpreted to mean there has to be just one table, one central organization that sponsors all forums. One of the best deliberative programs is in a community where between 30 and 40 different civic and educational organizations all hold their own forums.

#### **6 Take Advantage of the Potential for Creating Public Space in Everyday Life**

Forums don't have to be special events that take people away from their normal routine. In fact, some of the strongest forums are embedded in the established programs of community institutions. They are part of a course in the community college, part of the educational program of a church or synagogue, part of the decision making in a neighborhood association. The principle is to take the forums where the people are. It is based on the conviction that "politics" isn't a special arena but a dimension of everyday life.

#### **7 Build on What Grows**

Surely, the most difficult task in organizing forums is the first step. Somebody or a small group has to decide who to talk to first. The more successful organizers appear to have followed the principle of building on an already established effort or practice that has the potential for fostering deliberation. This principle is based on the assumption that some community organizations may have already sensed the need for citizens to come together and make choices together. It takes a good deal of investigation to find these likely allies, but the time is well spent. Allies will usually say, "We have been looking for something like a different kind of forum" or "We have begun thinking about something like this."

#### **8 Relate to Self-Interests**

While organizers may have had the larger interests of the community as a whole in mind, they usually recognize that institutions in the community wouldn't really commit their resources unless they see forums as a way of carrying out their missions. So organizing is based on relating to the self-interests of institutions. These self-interests vary widely because they grow out of the different missions of libraries, prisons, churches, and schools. Because institutions may not readily see how using forums can be a different way of relating to a community of constituency, organizers have to allow time for institutions to clarify their self-interests.

#### **9 Learn from Similar Institutions in Other Communities**

Local institutions sometimes turn to similar institutions that have held forums in other communities to see if promoting public deliberation does, in fact, serve institutions' goals or help reinterpret those goals. Leadership organizations tend to check out new ideas with other leadership organizations; literacy programs call other literacy programs, leagues talk to leagues, and so on.

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*"...start with people who feel outside the community and are looking for a way in."*

*“...perhaps the most important corollary of public organizing is to be patient.”*

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Certain corollaries seem to grow out of these principles. Maybe one is to start small; don't begin by calling a large meeting. Another is to start with people who feel outside the community and are looking for a way in. This may be a clue to finding people who are “looking for something just like this.” Established leaders and established organizations may have turf problems that keep them from cooperating in a forum initiative.

You have probably noticed that all of these principles take time to follow. There seems to be a certain gestation period for establishing ownership. So perhaps the most important corollary of public organizing is to be patient. Public space is space that people make. It is a series of do-it-yourself projects rather than third-party interventions. And the making takes time.

## Suggestions:

### **Experienced convenors suggest nine things to be sure to do:**

- **Clarify the unifying purpose. This is essential for a single group or a network.**
- **Maintain independence and autonomy. Few individuals and groups are looking for somebody else to report to and tell them what to do.**
- **Create volunteer links. People learn from each other and seek ways to connect. This connecting is best done in a natural fashion and not forced.**
- **Recognize the power of multiple leaders.**
- **Stay connected at all levels and keep making connections.**
- **Create public space that is used by persons in their everyday lives.**
- **Build on what grows.**
- **Relate to self-interest.**
- **Learn from others.**

# SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR A DELIBERATIVE PUBLIC DISCUSSION GROUP

## Welcome!

Let participants know **who is sponsoring** the forum/study circle. Stress cosponsorship if several organizations are involved.

## Ballot (Pre-Forum)

Remind people that the Pre-Forum Ballot is a way to get everyone **focused on the issue** and a way for each participant to **identify initial feelings** on the issue. Tell them there'll be another ballot for them after these deliberations end.

## Ground Rules

- **Make clear that the discussion will not be a debate.** Stress that there is work to do, and that the work is to move toward making a shared choice on a public policy issue. The work will be done through deliberation.

- **Charge the forum/study circle to do choice work.** "Charge" the forum, in the beginning, with the responsibility of helping the country and communities make sound decisions on critical issues. Not doing this imperils the effectiveness of forums and study circles. It is almost impossible for a moderator to get a group to do choice work unless it is explained initially and the group commits itself to this task. Forums wander, responses are random and unconnected when there is no sense of working to meet a common goal.

Emphasize that your forum is not just any forum. It will be distinguished by its deliberative character, its emphasis on the need to do the hard work of recognizing that a choice has to be made, that consequences have to be weighed and trade-offs balanced. Democratic politics requires that we hold ourselves, and not just officials, accountable.

*"Connect the issue to people's lives and concerns."*

## Starter Video

Explain that the video **reviews the problems** underlying the issue, then briefly **examines three or four public policy alternatives** that are reviewed in-depth in the issue books. The starter video sets the stage for deliberation.

## Personal Stake

**Connect the issue to people's lives and concerns.** In the first few minutes get participants to talk about their personal experiences with the issue and to tell their stories. This makes the issue real and genuine, human rather than abstract. Some questions you might ask include:

"Has anyone had a personal experience that illustrates the problems associated with this issue?" "Within your family, or circle of friends, is this an important issue?" "What aspects of the issue are most important to you?" "How does the issue affect people?"

## The Deliberation

This is the actual forum/study circle experience. It is absolutely critical that the moderator remain neutral. Your task is to guide the deliberation. There are four basic questions that the moderators ask:

## Questions:

- 1** What is valuable to us in this issue?
- 2** What are the costs or consequences associated with the various options?
- 3** Where are the conflicts in this issue that we have to work through?
- 4** Can we detect any shared sense of direction or common ground for action?

## Ending Your Forum/Study Circle

Before ending a forum, take a few minutes to reflect both individually and as a group on what has been accomplished. These types of questions have been useful:

- How has your thinking about the issue changed?
- How has your thinking about other people's views changed?
- What didn't we work through?
- What do we still need to talk about?
- How can we use what we learned in this forum?
- What, if anything, do we want to do next?
- What do we have to say that is different from the usual debate on this issue?

## Ballot (Post-Forum)

The Post-Forum Ballot is a way to face the conflict found within ourselves. Often, we discover aspects of each choice that we hold valuable. Yet, the things we care deeply about are often in conflict. The ballots, along with other information, will be important in gaining a full sense of a PUBLIC VOICE after the forums are over.

Send both Pre- and Post- Ballots to:

**National Issues Forums Research  
100 Commons Road  
Dayton, OH 45459-2777**

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*"Deliberation is weighing the costs and consequences of a variety of possible actions...."*

## Suggestions:

### Suggested Time Line

#### 15% for Welcome

Ballots  
Ground Rules  
Starter Video  
  
Personal Stake

#### 65% for Deliberation

20% for Discovering the  
Shared Sense of  
Purpose and Ending  
the Forum/Study Circle

### Stages of a Forum/Study Circle

**Welcome** — The convenor or moderator introduces the NIF program.

**Ballots** — Participants complete Pre-Forum Ballots before discussion begins.

**Ground Rules** — Participants review desired outcomes of forum.

**Starter Video** — The starter video sets the tone for the discussion.

**Personal Stake** — Connect the issue to people's lives and concerns.

**The Deliberation** — Participants examine all the choices.

**Ending the Forum** — Reflect on what has been accomplished.

**Ballots** — Participants complete Post-Forum Ballots.

# MODERATING FOR DELIBERATION

Many people who attend deliberative forums may not know what to expect. If they've attended a public meeting before, it's probably taken the form of a hearing about proposed governmental action, a political debate involving candidates, or a general discussion about some problem that has surfaced in their community.

When these people enter a deliberative forum, they find something altogether different. The purpose of this kind of forum is for citizens to make, or at least work toward, a decision about how they will act on a problem or what policy they think is best for their community or the country. Deliberation is weighing the costs and consequences of a variety of possible actions or discovering (1) that the various things that are valuable to them pull them in different directions as they consider their options, and (2) that these conflicts have to be worked through. Deliberation doesn't result in absolute agreement, but it can reveal the general direction in which people want to move, the range of approaches to a problem that would be acceptable, and what people are or are not willing to do to solve a problem.

**Consistent with what deliberation is, moderators ask four basic questions in a forum:**

**1 What is valuable to us?** This question gets at why making public choices is so difficult: the options turn on things that people care about very deeply. This question can take many forms:

- How has this issue affected you personally? (Usually asked at the beginning.)
- What things are most valuable to people who support this option?
- What is appealing about this option?

- What makes this option a good idea — or a bad one?

To uncover their deeper concerns, moderators will often ask participants how they came to hold the views they have and to ground what they say in their experiences, and not just in facts or rational arguments. They might ask these questions:

- How do you see this option?
- What experiences have led you to this perspective?
- Could you tell a story illustrating that view?
- How might others see this option?
- Does someone have a different experience, another perspective?

**Notice that throughout, in every series of questions, the moderator will try to draw out different perspectives in an effort to ensure a complete and balanced discussion. That is the only way that a forum can do its job — to examine fully and weigh carefully all the possibilities.**

**2 What are the costs or consequences associated with the various options?** This question can take any number of forms as long as it prompts people to think about the likely effects of various options on what is valuable to them. Examples include:

- What would result from doing what this option proposes?
- What could be the consequences of doing what you are suggesting?
- Can you give an example of what you think would happen?
- Does anyone have a different estimate of costs or consequences?

**Deliberation requires weighing the "pros" and "cons" of different options so it is important to be sure that both are fully aired. A "pro" is simply a positive consequence, a "con" a negative one. Questions to ensure a fair and balanced examination of all potential effects include:**

- What would be the argument against the option you like best?
- What would someone say is good about the option that you oppose?
- Can anyone think of something constructive that might come from this policy?
- Is there a downside to this course of action?

**3 What are the tensions or conflicts in this issue that we have to work through?** As a forum progresses, moderators will ask questions that draw out conflicts or tensions that people have to work through. They might ask:

- What do you see as the tension between the options?
- Where are the conflicts that grow out of what we've said about this issue?
- Why is this issue so difficult to decide?
- What are the "gray areas"?
- What remains unresolved for this group?

Throughout the forum, a moderator will intervene with questions that move the deliberations toward a choice but always stop short of pressing for a consensus or agreement on a particular solution. The objective of a deliberative forum is to chart a direction or articulate shared purposes that can be the basis for specific programs or detailed policies.

**4 Can we detect any shared sense of purpose or how our interdependence is grounds for action?** In the very first few minutes of a forum, the moderator should remind people that the objective is to work toward a decision. Then, as the tensions or conflicts become evident, as people see how what they consider valuable pulls them in different directions, the moderator will test to see where the group is going with questions like:

- What direction seems best, or where do we want to go with this policy?
- The moderator can follow up to find out what people are or are not willing to do or sacrifice to solve a problem with such questions as:

- What trade-offs are we willing to accept?
- What trade-offs are we unwilling to accept?
- What are we willing to do as individuals or a community to solve this problem?

**At the heart of deliberation is the question of whether we are willing to accept the consequences of our choices. That might lead to a question like this:**

- If what we seem to favor had some of the consequences several of our colleagues worry about, would we still favor this policy or course of action?

### Ending a Forum

Before ending a forum it is usually a good idea to take a few minutes to reflect both individually and as a group on what has been accomplished. Questions like the following have been useful:

- How has your thinking about the issue changed?
- How has your thinking about other people's views changed?
- Tell the rest of us how your perspective changed as a result of what you heard in this forum.
- What didn't we work through?
- What do we still need to talk about?
- How can we use what we learned about ourselves in this forum?

**These questions prompted enough testimonials to demonstrate one of the most powerful effects of deliberation: It changes people's opinions of others' opinions. Those changes in perception create new possibilities for acting together, generating the political will to move ahead.**

*"At the heart of deliberation is the question of whether we are willing to accept the consequences of our choices."*

# EXPERIENCED CONVENORS REPORT THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO:

- Move the conversation beyond sharing the stories to looking at costs and consequences of the options.
- Make sure the best case/positive side of all options are considered and understood. To diminish an option is to stop deliberation.
- Stay with deliberation until participants see that the issue is framed on what is valuable to people and until they have identified the conflicts among the approaches.
- Recognize that forums seldom end in total agreement or total disagreement. Forums frequently end in a discovery of a shared sense of purpose or recognition of how interests are interconnected.

Forums do change people's opinions of others' opinions. Those changes in perception create new possibilities for acting together, generating the political will to move ahead.

*"Recognize that forums seldom end in total agreement or total disagreement. Forums frequently end in a discovery of a shared sense of purpose or recognition of how interests are interconnected."*

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## Tips on Moderating

Deliberation is more likely to take place if some ground rules are laid out at the beginning; they can help prevent difficulties later on in the forum.

- Everyone is encouraged to participate, but no one should dominate. (By giving that warning ahead of time, moderators find it easier to cut off someone later, if they are taking over the discussion.)
- Listening is as important as talking.
- Participants are encouraged to speak to each other, rather than just to the moderator. (If the group is too large, participants may have to raise their hands to be recognized, but otherwise the deliberations go more smoothly if they simply respond to each other's comments.)
- Participants must fairly consider every option and fully examine all the trade-offs involved in a choice. (If no one in the group seems to favor a particular option, the moderator or someone might raise a question like, "What would someone who favors this approach say?")

**The moderator is not constantly intervening. To the contrary; the essence of good moderating is to encourage people to engage one another. The responsibility for doing the work of deliberation is the group's responsibility and the moderator should make that clear from the beginning. Above all, the moderator also must remain impartial so that the group can do its job.**

*Do citizens see the issue in any way different from experts or politicians? Do they have a shared definition of the problem? Do they agree on the causes? Do they see connections to other issues?*

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### **Officeholders and NIF Forums**

Experienced convenors report the following "dos" and "don'ts" when inviting officeholders to a forum:

- Do invite the officeholder to attend a forum to listen to the deliberation.
- Do provide some suggestions about what the officeholder might listen for. (Examples being (1) what matters most to people; (2) how did they deal with the conflicts and trade-offs; (3) was there any sense of possibility?
- Do "protect" the officeholder. If you invite the officeholder to the conversation, make it clear to the participants they are not to demand answers or create situations that change the ground rules. Forums should be a "safe place" for officeholders to meet with the public.
- Do invite them to share how they are struggling or wrestling with the conflict and trade-offs in the issue.
- Don't invite officeholders to have a "debate" with other officeholders.
- Don't expect or allow officeholders to become the experts to tell participants what should be done.
- Don't demand they justify their position.

### **Tips on Local Reporting of Your Public Voice**

What you have valuable to report to others are the effects of deliberation on the issue. Remember you organized and participated in a deliberative discussion not a fact-finding session, goal setting, or a search for the perfect solution. The following questions will help you focus on the effects of your deliberation.

1. Do citizens see the issue in any way different from experts or politicians? Do they have a shared definition of the problem? Do they agree on the causes? Do they see connections to other issues?
2. Did deliberation change anything?
3. How did people come out on the conflicts, contradictions, and trade-offs? What were they willing or not willing to do to solve the problem?
4. Did any general sense of policy direction emerge? Was there a range of actions, which were consistent with one another, that had public support?
5. What unique information came out of forums that officeholders need to know? What implications do the results have for community action?

*What matters most to people? How did they deal with the conflicts and trade-offs? Was there any sense of possibility?*

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# NIF FORUMS AND STUDY CIRCLES

1

*Why?...*

**Why are we here?** What are we going to do? We are here to move toward a public decision or CHOICE on a difficult issue through CHOICE WORK.

2

*How?...*

**How do we do it?** Through a deliberative dialogue in which we:

- Understand the PROS and CONS of every option, its COSTS AND CONSEQUENCES.
- Know the STRATEGIC FACTS and how they affect the way the group thinks about each option.
- Get beyond the initial positions people hold to their deeper motivations — the things different people consider to be most valuable in their everyday lives.
- Weigh carefully the views of others; appreciate the impact various options would have on what others consider valuable.
- WORK THROUGH the conflicting emotions that arise when various options pull and tug on what people consider valuable.

3

*How?...*

**How can we know if we are making progress?**

By constantly testing your group:

- Can your group make the best case for the option least favored?
- Can it identify the negative effects of the option most favored?

4

*What?...*

**Movement from first reactions and mass opinions toward a more shared and stable PUBLIC JUDGMENT.**

- The emergence of a PUBLIC VOICE, one different from the voice of personal preference or special interest pleadings.

Increased COMMON GROUND FOR ACTION found in a greater ability to:

- Identify how people worked through the conflicts, contradictions, and trade-offs, and what they were willing, and not willing to do to solve the problem.
- Identify any shared sense of purpose or policy direction and a range of actions that were consistent with one another.
- Understand the implications of how citizens sensed their interdependence on the issue and its implications for community action.

# GUIDELINES FOR OUR STUDY CIRCLE/FORUMS

24" x 36" Posters Available from NIF Research

- The moderator will guide the deliberation yet remain impartial. Citizens engage one another not the moderator.
- Everyone is encouraged to participate. No one or two individuals dominate.
- Everyone understands that this is not a debate. The talk is deliberative rather than argumentative.
- The deliberation will focus on the options.
- The major choices or options are considered and the trade-offs are examined.
- Listening is as important as talking.
- Everyone works toward making a decision about how he or she will act on a problem or what policy they think best for the community or country.

## BE CERTAIN THAT ...

After Our Forum/Study Circle, Everyone Is Able to:

- identify the range of realistic alternatives and move toward a choice;
- make a good case for those positions one dislikes as well as the position one likes, and consider options one has not considered before;
- realize that one's own knowledge is not complete until one understands why others feel the way they do about the choices;
- consider what is important or valuable to different individuals about each choice;
- reconsider one's own judgment and reconsider the views of others; and
- understand how the deliberation has changed people's opinions of others' opinions and how those changes in perception create new possibilities for acting together, generating the political will to move ahead.

## REFLECTIONS

On Your Forum: (What did you accomplish?)

### I. Individual Reflections

- How has your thinking about the issue changed?
- How has your thinking about other people's views changed?

### II. Group Reflections

- What did you hear the group saying about a shared sense of the problem and the tension in the issue?
- Can we detect any shared sense of direction? How did the issue create a recognition of interdependency?
- What trade-offs are we, or are we not, willing to make to move in a shared direction?

### III. Next-Step Reflections

- What do we still need to talk about?
- How can we use what we know?
- What implications do the results have for community action?

*"Deliberation doesn't have to produce agreement; it only gives us a shared sense of direction, which is common ground for action."*

# NIF ISSUES AND MATERIALS

## How the Issues Are Selected

The NIF issues are selected by the network members. Each NIF community has a voice in determining the issues for the NIF series.

Convenors are asked to suggest the issues for the following year. The NIF network's collective judgment has proven to be absolutely vital in selecting timely, engaging issues that are at the top of the nation's agenda.

The community steering committees/other cooperating groups then talk over the suggested choices, add others as appropriate, and select their top three choices. The communities also comment on how they feel the issues should be addressed and make known what is really on people's mind.

## The Issue Books

What citizens typically lack in consideration of public issues is the one indispensable element in a representative democracy: an informed basis for making choices by first addressing implications of the issues for their individual lives. People need a way of relating their choices to what is important and valuable to them and to their own life's experience. Accordingly, a goal of the NIF is to provide a nonthreatening setting where public deliberation about national issues as public choices is encouraged. That means helping the participant understand the personal implications of issues and choices.

Issue books are generally divided into five or six sections. The introduction provides an overview of

the issue. Then, three or four sections illustrate the basic policy options, choices, or points of view that might be adopted in making decisions. A conclusion summarizes the choices arrayed in the previous sections, suggesting the various trade-offs associated with each.

NIF issue books are available from:

Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company  
4050 Westmark Drive  
PO Box 1840  
Dubuque, IA 52004-1840  
1-800-228-0810  
1-800-772-9165 FAX

*"People need a way of relating their choices to what is important and valuable to them and to their own life's experience. Accordingly, a goal of the NIF is to provide a nonthreatening setting where public deliberation about national issues as public choices is encouraged. That means helping the participant understand the personal implications of issues and choices."*

To request copies of this publication and our publications catalog, you may use our toll free number, 1-800-600-4060, send a fax to 1-513-7367, or write:

NIF Research Order Department  
P.O. Box 41626  
Dayton, OH 45441-9801

# NIF MATERIALS

## Moderator Guides

Specially prepared moderator guides are available for each NIF issue booklet. This guide offers background, insights, and suggestions about moderating the NIF forums/study circles.

Single copies are available at no charge. Contact:

NIF Research  
100 Commons Road  
Dayton, OH 45459-2777  
1-800-433-7834

## Starter Videotapes

The NIF starter videotape helps NIF moderators lay the groundwork for open, fair-minded deliberation. These videotapes present NIF issues, setting out in a clear and straightforward manner the pros and cons of the choices involved with each issue. Convenors and moderators report that over time they have found the starter tapes "a must" for opening the forum. Often citizens attend the forum/study circle without having read the issue booklet. The starter tape provides a solid base and common experience for all participants. The videotapes, starting in 1996, are available on one NIF issue per video. The cost for a single tape is \$12.00. This is done so that the starter videos will be available as they are produced. When the last starter video is produced, then all issues will be on a single tape for a cost of \$35.00. Prior to 1996, all three issues for a year were on one video at a cost of \$35.00. Tapes may be ordered from:

Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company  
4050 Westmark Drive, PO Box 1840  
Dubuque, IA 52004-1840.  
To order direct, call 1-800-228-0810.

## NIF Ballots and Your Community Voice

Starting in 1996, NIF will publish a report and hold a briefing for the national news media on the outcomes of the prior year's series of forums/study circles. It is scheduled at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. The pattern is for a breakfast briefing for the news

media and national leaders in each of the NIF topic areas, and a luncheon discussion of the larger role deliberation plays in democracy.

The NIF network is making a major effort to report forum outcomes to the national news media and to make the best possible case for deliberation. **In order to have a comprehensive report on the issues, the ballots from your community are important and valuable.**

Have forum participants complete the Pre- and Post-Ballots and send them in. The media will be briefed on the outcomes and you will be sent a copy of the report.

If you need additional ballots, you have permission to reproduce the Pre- and Post-Ballots found in the NIF issue book. Return the ballots to:

NIF Research  
100 Commons Road  
Dayton, OH 45459-2777

## A Public Voice

"A Public Voice" is a series of public affairs television programs that reveal striking differences between the way citizens, the media, and political leaders think and talk about pressing issues on the nation's agenda.

The Public Voice series contrasts the voices of ordinary American people, in serious deliberation around the nation (at the National Issues Forums), with sound bites and headlines from talk shows, newspapers, and the floor of the U.S. Congress. On the issues deliberated in NIF forums and study circles the difference is striking. In informal but sometimes intense conversation, a distinguished panel of nationally known political leaders, commentators and columnists, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., reflect on what this "public voice" means for those who care about America in the future.

A Public Voice Series is produced by Milton B. Hoffman Productions.

Copies of the "A Public Voice" are available from:

NIF Research  
100 Commons Road  
Dayton, OH 45459-2777

# PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTES

Public Policy Institutes (PPIs) located throughout the country bring together those who are experienced in organizing forums and study circles and those who are new to NIF. Attending a PPI affords an opportunity to gain background in the concepts needed to convene and moderate a deliberative meeting. New and experienced convenors together look at aspects of the practice of NIF: sponsoring and organizing an NIF forum or study circle; getting it off the ground; letting people know about it; getting them to attend.

These Public Policy Institutes, held at more than 19 sites around the country, will do more, however, than show you how to organize and run public forums. They will show you how you can work effectively through NIF with your fellow citizens, to make sound choices about the issues of policy that accompany any serious public problem. The institutes' curriculum is designed to give prospective forum and study circle convenors and moderators a basic grounding in the ideas, principles, and practical experience needed to lead their fellow citizens in deliberating on issues of public policy. Through a variety of exercises conducted in full group ("plenary") and smaller ("homeroom") sessions, **the institutes explore the following concepts about the public and how the public might act together.**

## What Is a Public?

Think of a public not as a crowd but as a diverse array of citizens who share certain problems or concerns and are connected in ways that allow them to act together as they face those problems. Being connected is key to being a public. Publics exist through the ongoing relationships citizens have with one another.

## How Publics Form

Public relationships form in particular ways. They grow out of people seeing connections between what is happening to them, on the one hand, and what is valuable to them, on the other. They form around a sense of a common fate, interdependence, and overlapping purposes.

## Naming and Framing Public Problems

Who gets to name a problem and the kind of name chosen, even the type of language used, is critically important. If experts name the problem in technical language, a public isn't likely to form. Citizens often have a different "take" on issues than experts or institutions. They respond to issues described in public terms, in terms of everyday experience, and what they consider valuable.

## Making Choices through Deliberation

Naming problems in public terms and framing issues for public action sets the stage for another critical step in creating public relationships — making choices about how to act.

Making difficult choices requires deliberative dialogue. Deliberation differs from popular expression (sounding off), information gathering, and debate. To deliberate, people have to talk citizen-to-citizen and face-to-face rather than just listening to expert presentations. They have to be able to explore, test ideas, weigh the pros and cons of all of their options, and consider the costs and consequences of possible actions. That is what deliberation is — weighing carefully options against what is truly valuable.

## Public Actions

In the final analysis, publics are created or public relationships are formed when we act — through common work or public action. By "public action" we mean a particular kind of action different from what an institution does. Institutional action is uniform, linear, and usually coordinated by some administrative agency. Public action, on the other hand, isn't linear, beginning at one point and ending at another. It is a more organic, ever-repeating series of efforts — richly diverse with many people involved. Public action is neither carefully planned action such as strategic planning nor is it spontaneous or magical. It grows out of deliberation that, if it goes well, results in a sense of direction for action. Deliberation sets the stage for identifying where interests overlap and purposes can be joined.

# FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NIF PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTES (PPIs), CONTACT:

- **Auburn University Extension**  
Sondra Hennessee  
100 Mel Hall  
Auburn University, AL 36849-5608  
334-844-5100
- **College of DuPage**  
Marilyn Gebhardt  
Glen Ellyn, IL  
708-942-2800 ext. 51049
- **Gulf Coast Community College**  
Gayle Oberst  
5230 West U.S. Highway 98  
Panama City, FL 32401  
904-747-3216
- **Hofstra University**  
Leon Hellerman  
115 Heger Hall  
Hempstead, NY 11550  
516-463-5604
- **Kent State University**  
Marilyn Bokrass  
PO Box 5190  
Kent, OH 44242  
216-672-7947
- **National Council for the Social Studies**  
Susan Griffin  
3501 Newark Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20016  
202-966-7840 ext. 103
- **Pacific Northwest at Reed College**  
Neal Naigus  
PO Box 19000  
Portland, OR 97280  
503-977-4122
- **Purdue University**  
Michael Menefee  
1420 Knoy Hall of Technology  
Lafayette, IN 47907-1420  
317-494-5599
- **Topeka Association of Neighborhoods**  
Rowena Horr  
PO Box 8112  
Topeka, KS 66608  
913-354-1087
- **University of California**  
Elinore Moloney  
1333 Research Park Drive  
Davis, CA 95616-8727  
926-757-8817
- **University of Delaware**  
Micaela Corradin  
John M. Clayton Hall  
Newark, DE 19716  
302-831-8838
- **University of Kentucky**  
Michael Score  
400 Agricultural Engineering Building  
Lexington, KY 40506-0276  
606-257-7272 ext. 246
- **University of Oklahoma**  
Krista Pettersen  
1700 Asp Avenue, Room 209  
Norman, OK 73037-0001  
405-325-2891
- **University of Pennsylvania**  
Harris Sokoloff  
3700 Walnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6216  
215-898-7371
- **University of Tennessee**  
Ginny Reese  
119 Race Hall, 615 McCallie Avenue  
Chattanooga, TN 37403-2598  
423-755-4344
- **Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**  
Anne Wolford  
255 Wallace Hall  
Blacksburg, VA 240061-0426  
540-231-9404
- **Wayne State College**  
Jan Dinsmore  
1111 N. Main Street  
Wayne, NE 68787  
402-375-7217
- **West Virginia Humanities Council and University of Charleston**  
Betty Knighton  
203 Sabol Lane  
Charleston, WV 25312  
800-296-5038

# SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS FROM STUDIES OF PUBLIC DELIBERATION

Over the past ten years, there have been more than a dozen studies, conducted with a variety of research methods, including an increasing amount of attention in the past two years to the effects of citizen deliberations.

In a nutshell, the studies indicate that public deliberation makes a difference. Not only does it change the way individuals understand an issue, it changes the way people talk with each other; and it improves a community's (society's) ability to deal with its issues, concerns, and problems.

Here are some of the other highlights:

- Every kind of person seeks out and takes part in citizen deliberations.
- Virtually everyone is capable of deliberating important public issues.
- People reconsider their own opinions and judgments.
- People reconsider the views of others and develop a greater understanding of those viewpoints.
- People approach issues more realistically and are willing to consider costs, consequences, and trade-offs.
- People come away with a greater sense of efficacy, self-worth, and confidence (including increasing their image of themselves as political actors who are capable of participation and action).
- People become more interested in political and social issues.
- People define their self-interests more broadly.
- People increase their activity around issues.
- Deliberation in a community establishes and enhances communication between groups.

*"In a nutshell, the studies indicate that public deliberation makes a difference."*

“...makes a difference.”

# NATIONAL ISSUES FORUMS INSTITUTE BOARD

The National Issues Forum Institute (NIFI) Board is a group of citizens, drawn largely from local National Issues Forums (NIF) boards or steering committees, who have agreed to form a national board to promote public deliberation in America. The NIFI Board recognizes that it is not the same as the NIF network and makes no claim to represent or try to direct the network, which consists of hundreds of independent forum programs, locally controlled and financed.

Chartered as a 501(c)(3) organization in 1987, NIFI has served primarily as a base for joint projects of participants in the network. For example, the MacArthur Foundation made a grant to NIFI to introduce NIF into literary programs in 20 states. More recently, the Kellogg Foundation has supported a consortium of Public Policy Institutes in increasing the diversity of institute audiences.

*“...a national board to promote public deliberation in America.”*

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## Board Members:

**NIFI Board  
Members and  
Officers**

William Winter, Chairman	Mary McFarland
David Mathews, President	Mark Miller
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**The National Issues Forums Institute  
P.O. Box 75306  
Washington, D.C. 20013-5306**



*A Different Kind of Talk,  
Another Way to Act*

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