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Taking Inventory of Collaborative Discussion Skills

[Activity 1.7 Taking Inventory of Collaborative Discussion Skills](#)

Use these symbols to indicate skill level: F=Fulfillment, C=Comfort, D=Developing, L=Lacking

Collaborative Discussion Skill	Evaluation
1. Practicing Self Reflection. Do you spend time before, during, and after a discussion thinking about what you said and/or why you said it? Do you understand your own motivations during a discussion?	
2. Building Self Awareness. Do you know who and what you bring to a discussion? Do you know how you show up? Are you aware of how you are perceived by others in a discussion?	
3. Nurturing Curiosity. Are you curious about others? Do you contribute more questions than statements? Do you ask exploratory or clarifying questions? Are you sincerely interested in the beliefs, experiences, or values of others and how they inform perspectives?	
4. Embracing Contradiction. Can you overlook contradictions in a discussion and not be stumped by them? Do you notice internal contradictions in an argument but use them to see the complexity or value that these contradictions indicate?	
5. Harnessing Creativity. Do you offer new and interesting perspectives in a discussion? Do you see the discussion from perspectives that others do not?	
6. Seeking Innovation. Do you seek out new ideas and solutions during a discussion? Do you push the discussion in new directions?	
7. Taking Risks. Do you take risks in a discussion? Do you say things that make you feel a little uncomfortable or speak up when no one else does?	
8. Practicing Playfulness. Do you exhibit and encourage playfulness in a discussion? Do you imagine what could be or what might be? Do you play with ideas and not feel confined by what others consider to be realistic?	

9. Building on the Ideas of Others. Are you good at saying “yes, and...”? Do you take someone else’s idea and build on it? Elevate it?	
10. Cultivating Expansive Thinking. Do you try to engage a topic from multiple dimensions? Do you think about multiple scenarios or possibilities?	
11. Employing Imagination. Do you practice imaginative play during discussions? Do you ask, “What if...” or “I wonder why or how...”?	
12. Expressing Critical Thinking. Do you consider sources of information and question basic assumptions in discussions? Do you ask hard questions that may open up new avenues of exploration?	
13. Sharing Critical Feeling. Do you consider sources of experiences and stay tuned in to the emotional balance of a discussion? Do you focus on the feelings of those around and not just on their statements?	
14. Developing Awareness of Bias and Assumptions. During a discussion, do you acknowledge your own biases and assumptions?	
15. Acknowledging Comfort with Ambiguity. Do you acknowledge “on the one hand” one idea is good, but “on the other hand” another idea is also valid or winning? Do you acknowledge messiness in a discussion?	
16. Seeking Divergent Thinking. Do you wonder, who is missing from this discussion? Do you try to actively engage in the discussion by including multiple possibilities or perspectives?	
17. Anticipating Unintended Consequences. Can you think through sets of possible implications during a discussion? Can you express these outcomes in a way that opens up the discussion?	
18. Practicing Generosity of Interpretation. Can you find the nuggets of truth in someone’s comment? Can you hear a position and pull out the most interesting part and build on it?	
19. Recognizing Complexity. Do you often say, “I don’t know, that’s complicated” in a discussion? Can you map out the complexity of a topic during a discussion?	
20. Practicing Cultural Humility. Can you acknowledge your own inadequacies, insecurities, and socially constructed realities within a discussion? Do you acknowledge relational realities and try not to impose your assumptions on others?	

21. Listening to Understand. Do you ask clarifying questions in a discussion? Do you ask follow up questions? Do you try to mirror or repeat back complicated positions to check if you are understanding the other person?	
22. Taking the Perspective of Others. Can you imagine walking in the shoes of someone else? Do you try to see the issue from the position of another person in the discussion?	
23. Recognizing Power Imbalances. Do you intentionally practice talking less in a discussion so that you might help to create more opportunities for others to speak? Do you notice who speaks the most and who is regularly silenced or not heard in discussions?	
24. Expressing Beliefs with Confidence. Are you able to express your thoughts in a discussion clearly and with confidence? Even if you feel nervous, are you able to be understood in a discussion?	
25. Expressing Beliefs with Humility. Are you able to confidently express your ideas with uncertainty in a discussion? That is, are you confident enough to demonstrate humility and acknowledge that you might be wrong?	
26. Knowing Your Civic Passion(s). Do you know which public or social issues are most interesting to you? Do you have a civic passion?	
27. Fostering Awareness of Stakeholders. Are you aware of all the people, groups, or institutions affected by the discussion topic? Are you actively seeking out folks touched by the topic?	
28. Showing Awareness of Communities. Are you aware of the communities in which you operate? Are you aware of the communities of others?	
29. Understanding Community Knowledge. Do you recognize knowledge in the many places that it might be exercised? Beyond formal education, do you think about and respect different forms of knowledge? And do you demonstrate this respect in discussions?	