Engagement Streams

A Matrix of Proven Practices.

Primary Purpose	Name of Engagement Stream	Key Features	Important When...	
To encourage people and groups to learn more about themselves, their community, or an issue, and possibly discover innovative solutions	**Exploration**	Suspending assumptions, creating a space that encourages a different kind of conversation, using ritual and symbolism to encourage openness, emphasis on listening	A group or community seems stuck or muddled and needs to reflect on their circumstance in depth and gain collective insight.	
To resolve conflicts, to foster personal healing and growth, and to improve relations among groups	**Conflict Transformation**	Creating a safe space, hearing from everyone, building trust, sharing personal stories and views	Relationships among participants are poor or not yet established yet need to be. Issue can only be resolved when people change their behavior or attitude, expand their perspective, or take time to reflect and heal.	
To influence public decisions and public policy and improve public knowledge	**Decision Making**	Naming and framing the issue fairly, weighing all options, considering different positions (i.e. deliberation), revealing public values, brainstorming solutions	The issue is within government's (or any single entity's) sphere of influence.	
To empower people and groups to solve complicated problems and take responsibility for the solution	**Collaborative Action**	Using dialogue and deliberation to generate ideas for community action, developing and implementing action plans collaboratively	The issue/dispute requires intervention across multiple public and private entities, and anytime community action is important.	

Examples of Issues	Organizer's Strategy	Appropriate D&D Processes	Key Design Questions for Organizers
Strengthening democracy, understanding a community of practice	To encourage new insights and connections to emerge by creating a space for people to share their thoughts, feelings and perspectives.	Conversation Café, Intergroup Dialogue in the classroom, Wisdom Council, Wisdom Circles, Socrates Café, World Café, Open Space, Appreciative Inquiry, Bohm Dialogue	How can we ensure that people feel safe expressing what inspires and touches them? What kind of techniques or rituals will stimulate listening and sharing, without making people uncomfortable?
Political polarization, Jewish-Muslim relations, race relations, value-based conflicts, healing after crises or trauma	To create a safe space for people with different views to talk about their personal experiences and feel heard. Often, to set the groundwork for deliberation and action.	Sustained Dialogue, Intergroup Dialogue in communities, Victim-Offender Mediation, PCP dialogue, Compassionate Listening	How can the issue be framed so that all sides are brought to -- and feel welcomed at -- the table? What are people's needs relating to this issue, and how can divergent needs (healing, action, respect) be met effectively? If a conflict exists, how overt and volatile is it? How, if at all, will you transition people to "what's next"?
Budgeting, land use, health care, social security	To involve a representative group of citizens in thorough discussions about complicated policy issues. Ideally, the process is linked to policy making.	National Issues Forums, Citizens Jury, Deliberative Polling, 21st Century Town Meeting, Charrettes, Citizen Choicework, Consensus Conference	How can we best represent the public (random selection, stakeholder representation, recruiting a critical mass)? Should/can public officials participate in the process side-by-side with citizens? What kinds of materials need to be developed or obtained? How can we ensure that this process influences policy?
Regional sprawl, institutional racism, youth violence, responding to crises	To encourage integrated efforts among diverse stakeholders, sectors, organizations, etc. involved in the issue.	Study Circles, Future Search, Appreciative Inquiry	Who needs to be at the table? What kind of power dynamics exist already? What group/leader/ institution is most resistant to change? What group tends not to be at the table, although they're affected?