

## ADVOCACY GUIDE: RESOURCE 4

# Getting Advocacy Started: For Educators and Facilitators

**Facilitators have the power to turn moments of angry conflict into moments where people can actually learn from one another.**

Even when people do not agree, the role of any facilitator is to promote thoughtful dialogue where diverse viewpoints can actually be heard and explored. Use this guide as a set of reminders for how you can improve conditions for self-advocacy and advocacy for others, creating spaces where diversity is valued. Note: These suggestions are intended as personal checkpoints rather than used as a formula. Feel free to add steps or skip suggestions that do not work for you or the situation you are in—make it your own!

### Create Community Agreements

- 1) Pose different scenarios involving conflict and the need for advocacy. Discuss what needs to happen for different voices to be heard.
- 2) Co-create community agreements, including audience norms, speaker norms, and group norms. Discuss do's and don'ts for further detail.
- 3) Regularly reinforce agreements.

### Value Diversity, Address Power

- 1) Discuss power: where it comes from, how we can tell who has it, and influences on who has a voice.
- 2) Pose questions about whose point of view is represented and which voices are missing.
- 3) Encourage and validate different perspectives. At times, agree to disagree and value diverse ideas.

### Model Reactions

- 1) Explicitly teach how to respond productively when people want to disagree or agree with an idea. Post sentence starters.
- 2) The facilitator has power, so keep your opinions open and probe for different views. Validate every idea by responding or connecting it to something else before moving on.

### Facilitate Thoughtfully

- 1) Facilitators have a responsibility to help people listen. Keep discussions structured and focused on ideas, not people.
- 2) Encourage deeper understanding. Ask questions that haven't been asked and make connections between ideas. Be extra sensitive to individual needs and emotions.

### Refine Remarks

- 1) Help speakers focus on a specific problem and make sure they can back up their ideas. Provide feedback on structure and help keep their remarks concise and within time limitations.
- 2) Help speakers anticipate where the audience is coming from and adjust to provide greater clarity.

### Reinforce Care and Connection

- 1) Reserve time and space to facilitate common ground through debriefs. Observe areas of conflict and identify areas in common.
- 2) Move discussions of ideas to plans of action. Stop people from getting too abstract: focus on human beings, research, concrete examples, and care for each other.

