



WELCOME



I love
deliberation
!

Welcome to the Webinar!
We'll get started in a few minutes!



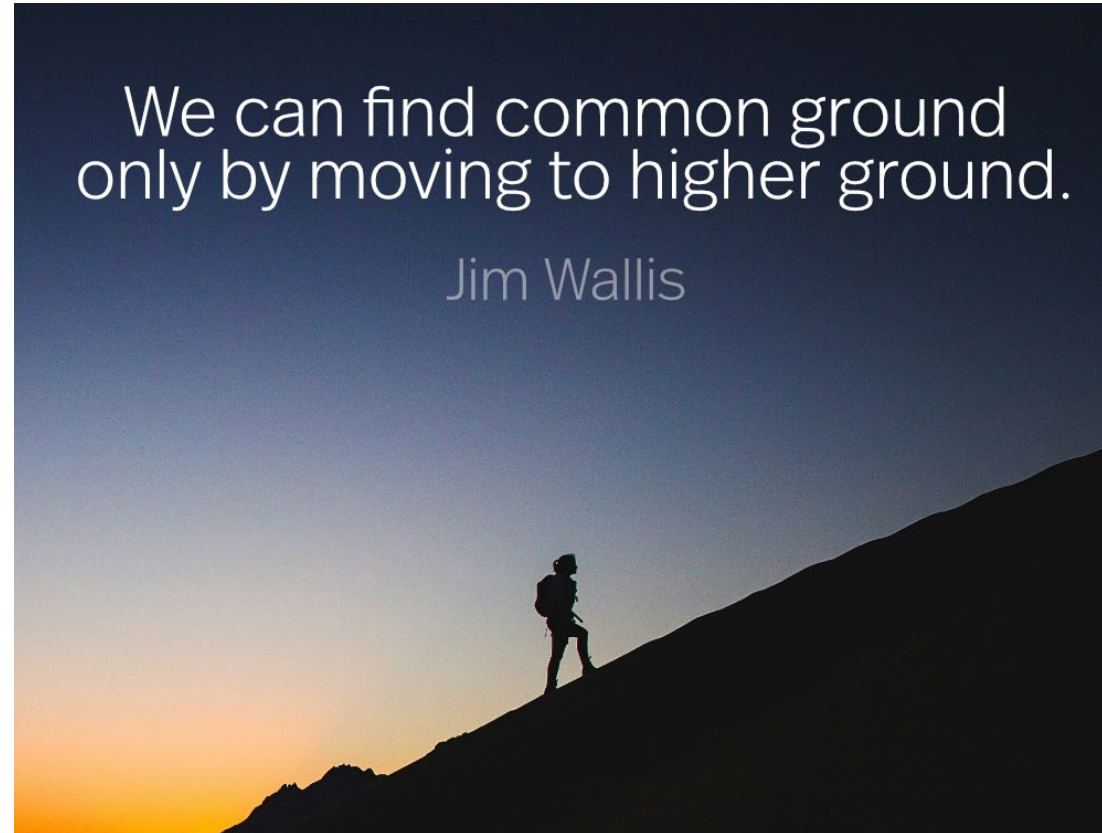
They had a tendency to talk past one another.

We'll get started soon!



Please introduce
yourself in the chat
and where you're
zooming in from!

Welcome to the Webinar!



Please introduce yourself in the chat and where you're zooming in from!

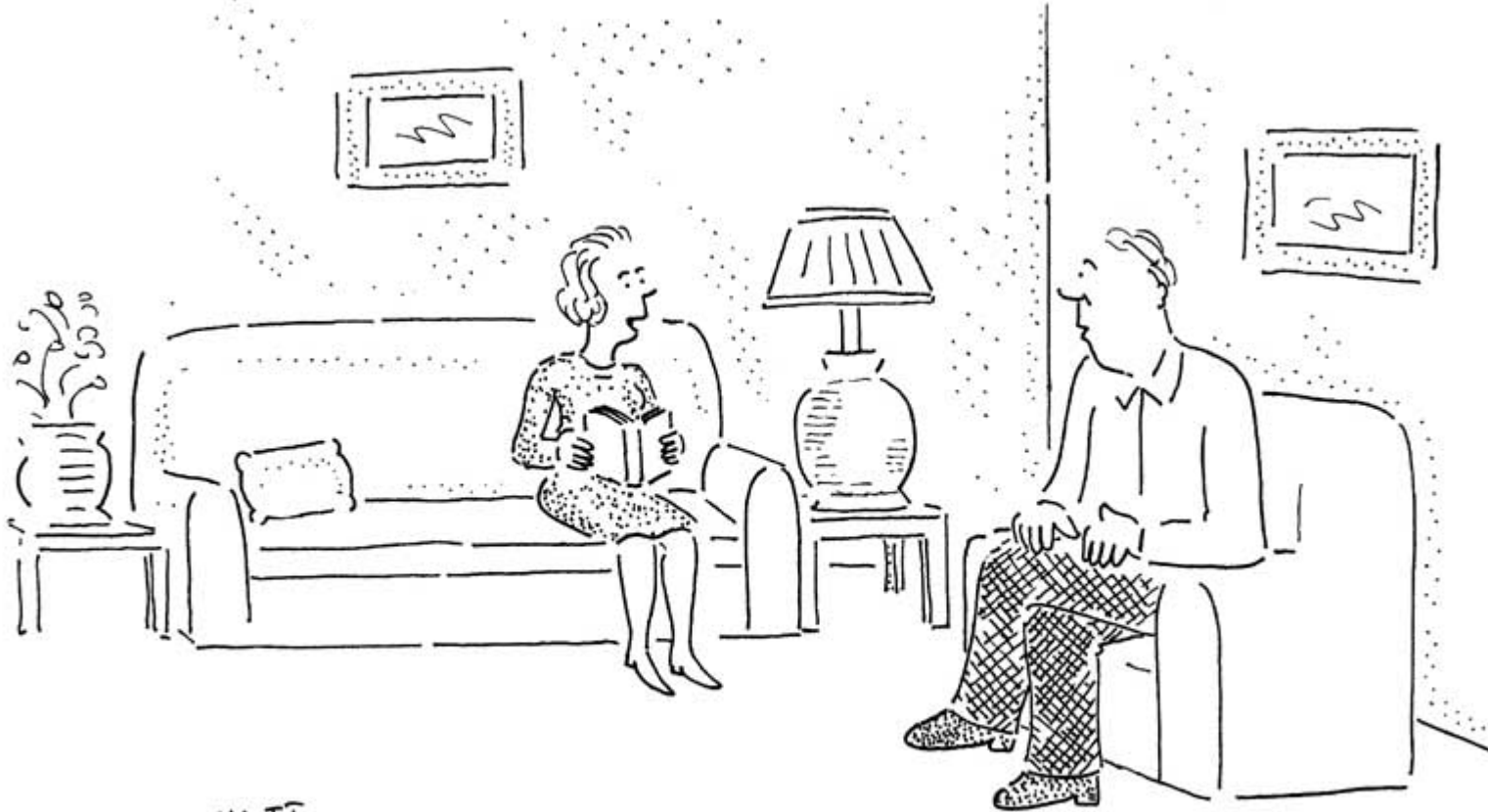
We'll Get Started Soon!

Please introduce yourself in the chat and where you're zooming in from. 😊

“One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say.”

We'll Get Started in a Few Minutes

©Cartoonbar



Please introduce yourself in the chat and where you're zooming in from!

“I’m sorry, dear. I wasn’t listening. Could you repeat what you’ve said since we’ve been married?”

“

Most people do not listen
with the intent to
understand; they listen with
the intent to reply.


STEPHEN R. COVEY

GRACIOUSQUOTES.COM

Welcome to the Webinar!

Please introduce yourself in
the chat and where you're
zooming in from!

WELCOME



I'm always
deliberating in
my head!

When Values Collide

WELCOME!

ee360+ eeWEBINAR

When Values Collide

DELIBERATING
ENVIRONMENTAL
ISSUES WITH
YOUTH AND ADULTS

APRIL 23, 3:00–4:00 ET

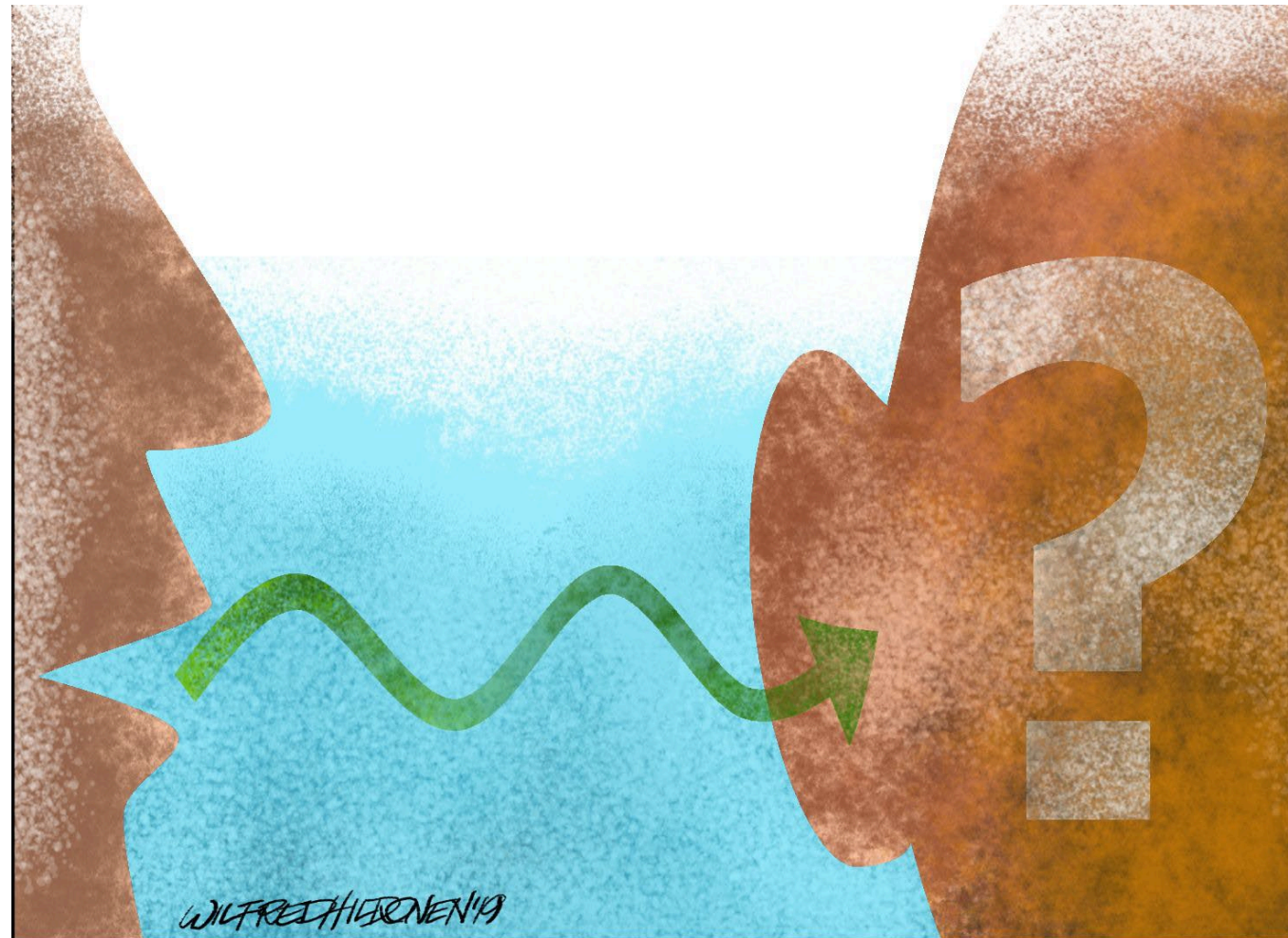
bit.ly/WhenValuesCollide

How can deliberation engage both young people and adults in **meaningful public dialogue**?



"This might be the common ground we've been looking for."

How do we **build civic skills** and help groups **weigh tradeoffs**, surface **underlying values**, and build **shared understanding** around complex environmental and community challenges.



Three Wonderful Presenters



Cristin F. Brawner

Executive Director
National Issues Forum Institute



Dawn Harfmann

Program Coordinator
National Issues Forums
Institute



Elizabeth W. Corrie

Professor in the Practice of Youth
Education and Peacebuilding
Candler School of Theology
Emory University

**Thanks for sending in your questions!
We'll get to as many as we can!**



**NAAEE's Webinar
Series: Bringing New
Ideas and Insights to
Our Field and Beyond!**



Thanks to our Affiliate Co-hosts!



Thanks to EPA & ee360+

ee360+





- **Type questions in the chat throughout**
- **For closed captions and translated captions, click Closed Captions**
- **This webinar will be recorded and shared**



Use chat to join conversation & ask questions



For captioning and translations click "Closed Captions"



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Show Captions

Reactions

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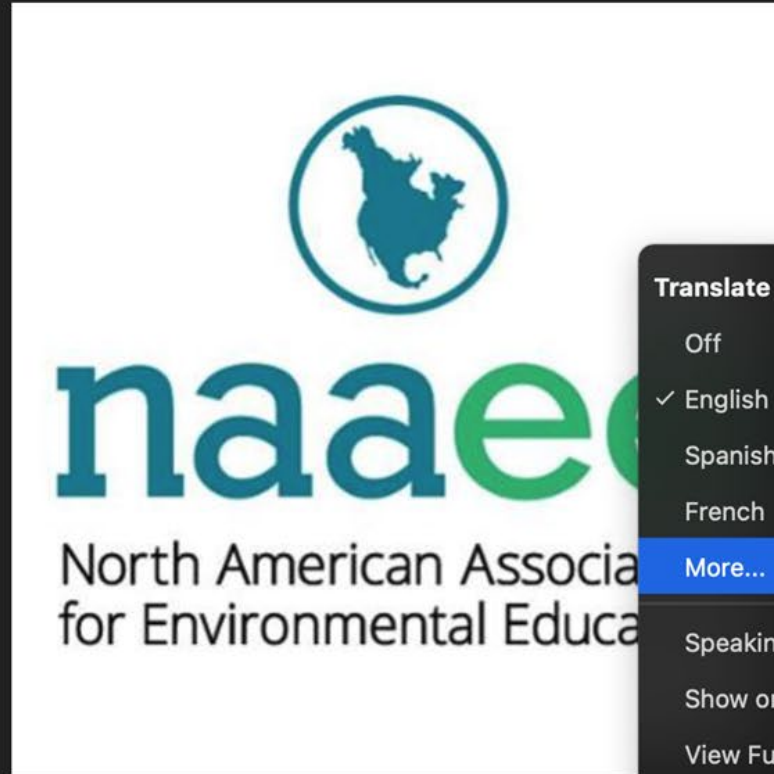
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Breakout Rooms

Reactions +

More



Thanks, Anne!



Anne Umali

Director of Leadership, Conservation, and
International Programs

Introducing Our Speakers



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Cristin F. Brawner

Executive Director
National Issues Forums Institute

- Executive Director of National Issues Forums Institute
- Nonprofit, nonpartisan organization
- Dedicated to equipping, empowering, and mobilizing people to use deliberation to take action for the public good
- All about building partnerships and designing programs
- Former Executive Director of the David Mathews Center for Civic Life in Alabama
- Founder of the Southern Deliberative Democracy Network
- Form Associate with the Kettering Foundation

Deliberating Environmental Issues with Youth and Adults

April 23, 2026

A webinar presented by the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE)

Featuring the National Issues Forums Institute (NIFI) and Elizabeth Corrie, Ph.D.



**Deliberation for the Public
Good**

National Issues Forums

Institute

*Solving Public Problems Requires Public
Participation*



Equip



Empower



Mobilize

What Are National Issues Forums?

- Convened by a **national network** of individuals and organizations
- Using **deliberative practices** that promote nonpartisan, multi-perspective discussions
- On **issues** of national scope that impact communities across the country



Defining Deliberation

Deliberation is a democratic practice for addressing complex issues and solving public problems. It involves:

- considering diverse perspectives
- weighing options and tradeoffs
- identifying common ground for acting...

...for the public good.



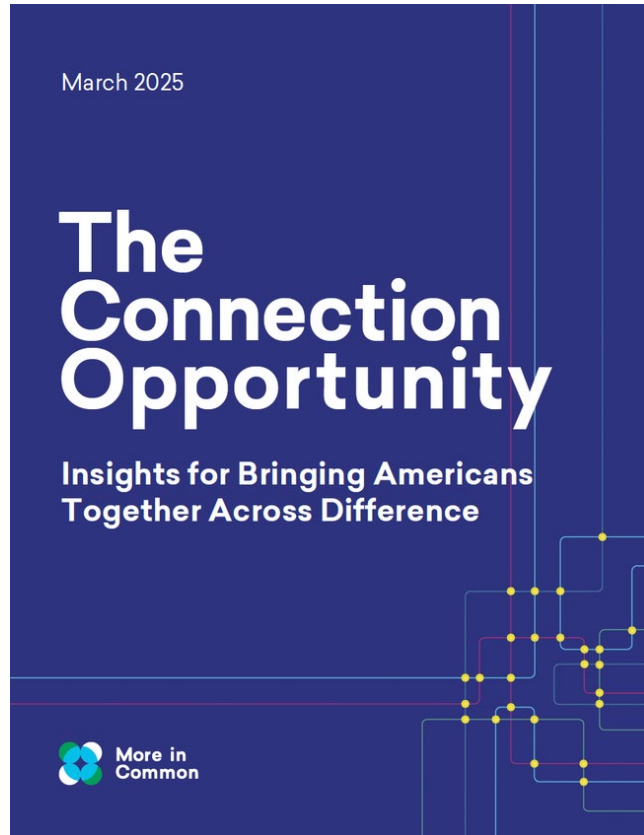
PUBLIC DELIBERATION

- Brings the public together to work through and take ownership of a problem.
- Encourages participants to talk through rather than just about an issue.
- Asks citizens to work through tensions, weigh tradeoffs, and make choices.
- Helps community members identify areas of common ground for taking action.
- Views citizens as actors rather than passive recipients of democracy.

Defining Deliberation

Format	Primary Purpose	Orientation	Typical Outcome
Debate	Advocate & test arguments	Adversarial but structured	Clarified positions
Dialogue	Seek mutual understanding	Relational & exploratory	Empathy & trust
Discussion	Exchange ideas	Informal & open	Information & perspective-sharing
Deliberation	Weigh tradeoffs & decide	Collaborative & choice-focused	Shared judgment & direction

Acting Together: a Secret Ingredient



National research indicates that while a strong majority of Americans feel a responsibility to engage across difference (70%) and prefer **collaborative, goal-oriented efforts** to dialogue alone (74%), structural opportunities to act together remain limited.

Link: <https://moreincommonus.com/publication/the-connection-opportunity/>

When is Deliberation Useful?

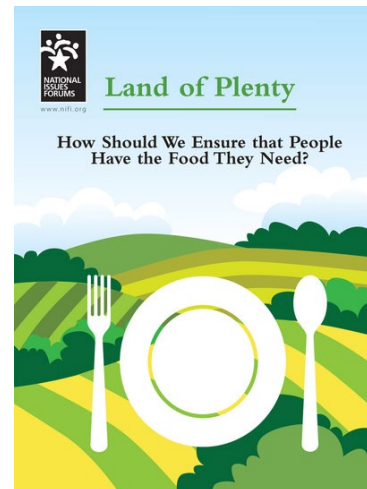
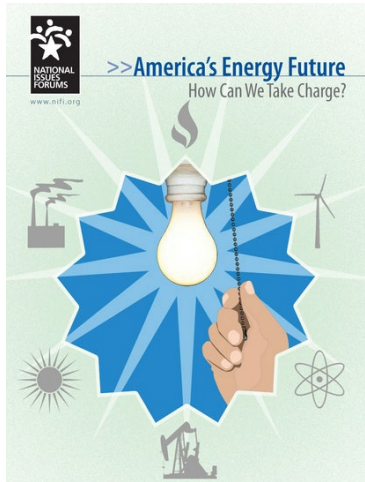
- When the **problem is complex** and affects many people
- When people disagree but must live with **shared decisions**
- When decision makers need public legitimacy or insight
- When communities are ready to move from talk to action
- When **trust and civic capacity** need rebuilding



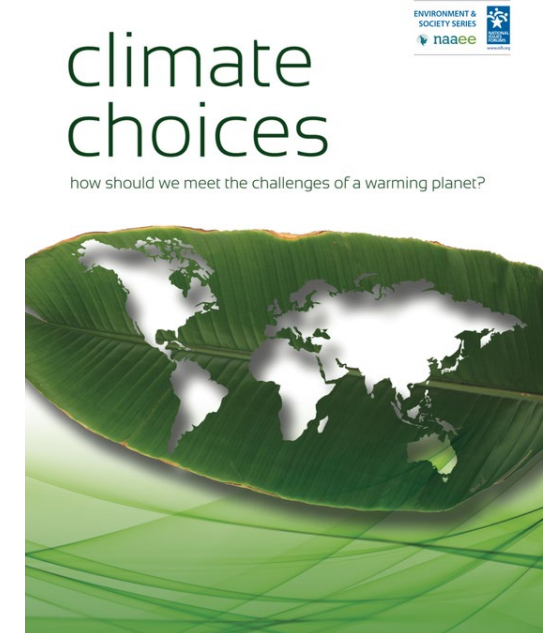
What **issues
would you most
like to see **your**
community
deliberate about?**

Deliberative Discussion Guides

Deliberative Discussion Guides



Climate Choices Discussion guide



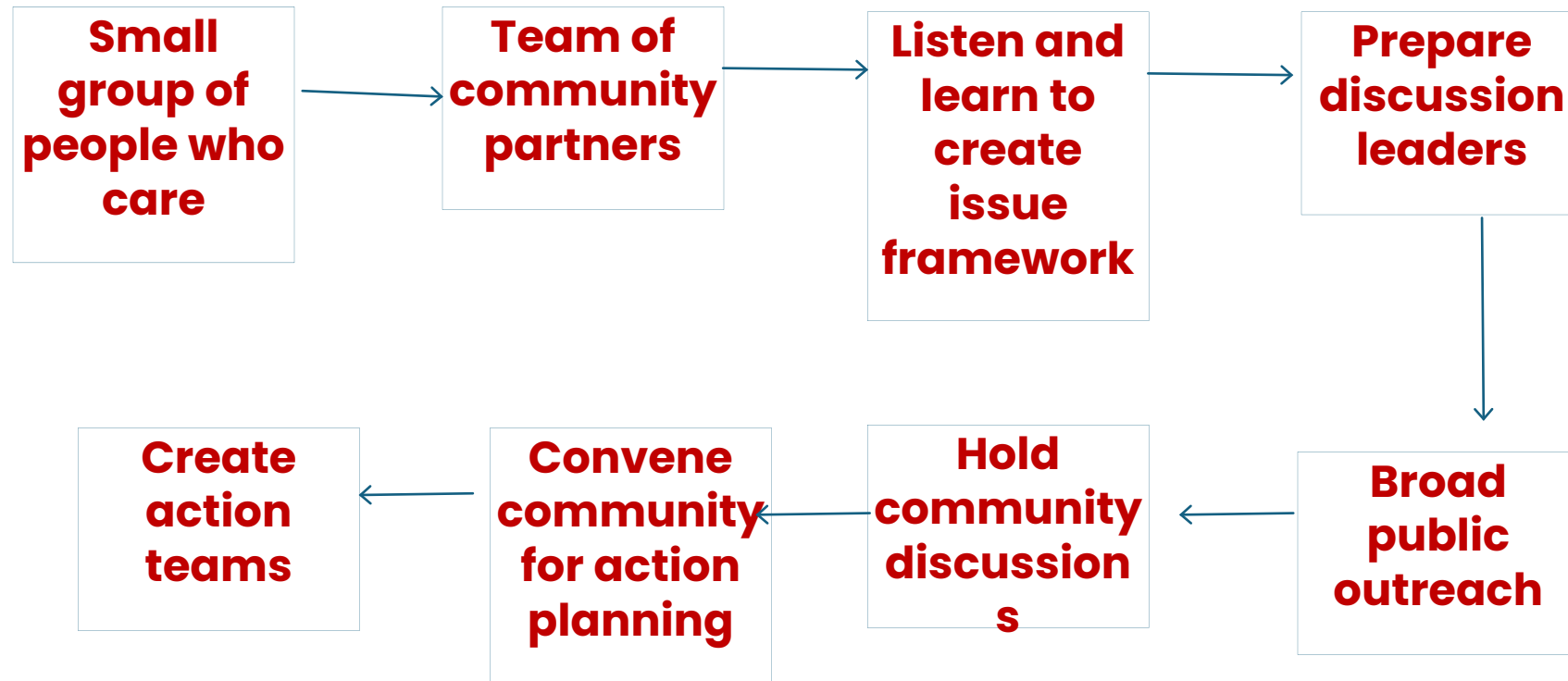
Other deliberative models

- Frame-it-yourself
 - Build a team
 - Select a frame-able issue
 - Gather information and insights
 - Group concerns and identify trade-offs
 - Test the framework



Other deliberative models

- Community-defined Talk-to-Action initiatives



Other deliberative models

- Community-defined Talk-to-Action initiatives

- Ex: What's Next, America

Three series of deliberative questions

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to go?
- How do we get there?
- "Action summit"



NIFI-provided tools, resources and support

- Deliberative Discussion Guides
- Community, Campus, & K-12 Toolkits
- Coaching & Support
- Evaluation & Story Gathering
- Emerging Funding Opportunities



Why Deliberate on Environmental Issues



- Politicized environmental issues (e.g. climate change)
- Environmental issues as points of common ground
- Multiple approaches
- Often grounded in values



Youth-Centered Deliberative Dialogue: Motivating Intergenerational, Faith- Based Action to Address Climate Change

Elizabeth Corrie, Ph.D.
Candler School of Theology
Emory University
Atlanta, GA USA



**Louisville
Institute**



Georgia Interfaith
Power and Light

What if congregations engaged in an innovative practice that centers young peoples' perspectives and ideas, invites collective reflection on values and purpose, and equips the whole church for meaningful work in the world?



Could this practice help congregations move forward on climate change initiatives in ways that take seriously youth perspectives?

Project Overview

- Work with four different church organizations
 - Partnership with youth ministry staff
 - Communication with senior pastoral staff
- **Part One:** Youth group develops Issue Guide through deliberative pedagogy
- **Part Two:** Issue Guide becomes basis for deliberative dialogue aimed at deciding community action
- Research grant provides \$1000 mini-grant to each church to put towards action they choose to do

Curriculum Overview

- **Session One:**
 - Introduction to Deliberation
 - Discussion of personal stakes (e.g. “how does climate change impact you personally?” or “Do you want your church/youth group to act to address climate change? If so, why?”)
 - Time to name concerns and hopes (anonymously)
- **Sessions Two, Three, Four:**
 - Introduction to the Approach and its theory of change
 - Connection to theological or Biblical sources for this approach
 - Learning about specific kinds of action related to that approach
 - Naming and discussing challenges and benefits to pursuing that approach
 - Exploring more in depth one or more actions; discussing challenges and benefits of that action
 - Sharing feedback that will go into final Issue Guide
- **Session Five:**
 - Review of the three approaches
 - World Café: teams engage each approach and add their thoughts on challenges and benefits
 - Dotocracy: individuals vote on which actions they support, challenges they are most concerned about, benefits they are most excited about
- **Forum:**
 - Deliberative forum featuring Issue Guide created out of the feedback from these sessions

Issue Guide Approaches:

	Theory of change	Examples of actions
Educational approach	We change the world by changing individuals through consciousness-raising and skills-building through education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">*Invite guest speaker from GIPL*Engage in a service-learning project*Field trip to CHARM; Kendeda Building*Engage in disaster relief training*Teach younger children
Practices/ Policies approach	We change the world by changing our community's culture , modeling a different way of living and providing communal support to participants who want to live differently	<ul style="list-style-type: none">*Plant trees or build garden on church grounds*Compost at church dinners*Collect hard-to-recycle-items*Energy audit/upgrade physical plant*Zero waste policies for church events
Advocacy approach	We change the world by advocating in the halls of power to change policies , which will change how institutions operate and in turn change how people live	<ul style="list-style-type: none">*Attend Lobby Day at GA Capitol*Write letters to state reps*Write a group letter to local newspaper*Propose resolutions at church council/denominational gathering

Role of Youth

- Creation of Issue guide
 - Gathering ideas from peers through a survey that helped determine the 3 basic approaches
 - Brainstorming and deliberating ideas for action each week in Sunday School/Youth Group Meeting
 - Voted on which actions and theological arguments should be included in Issue Guide
- Deliberative Forum
 - Intergenerational Forum: Youth spread out across tables so that their voices were part of every table conversation
 - “Movable Forum”: Youth divided up into multi-grade level teams to deliberate and add notes on proposed approaches and action ideas
- Project evaluation
 - Interviewees gave valuable feedback on how to improve survey questions, curriculum, and forums for future congregations

How can our church act to address climate change? A Deliberative Dialogue for Decatur First UMC November 9, 2025

“The great lesson that our blessed Lord inculcates here... is that God is in all things, and that we are to see the Creation in the glass of every creature; that we should use and look upon nothing as separate from God, who pervades and actuates the whole created frame, and is, in a true sense, the soul of the universe.”

— John Wesley, quoted in the preface to “Community of Creation” in the United Methodist Social Principles, revised and affirmed by General Conference 2024.



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No debating
Our views of reality may differ, but speaking one's convictions does not mean
debating what others say. Seek instead — through listening deeply and asking honest, open questions —
each participant find their own clarity and resourcefulness.

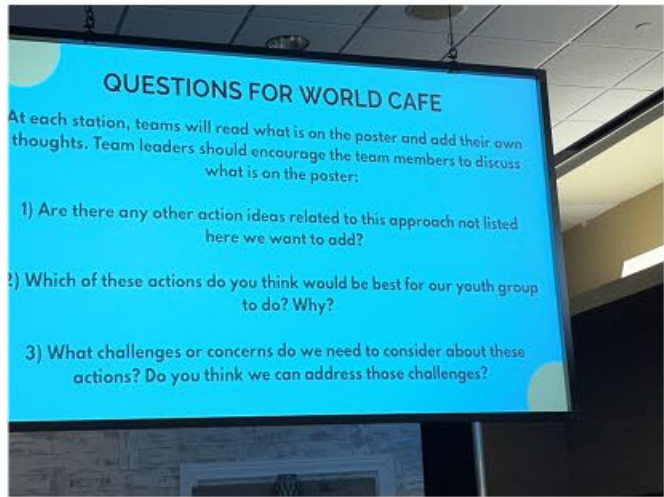
Embrace differences
Speak from your experiences and viewpoints with “I statements,” not mountain-top declarations or
overgeneralizations. Listen with an open mind to others' experiences.

When the going gets rough, turn to wonder
Turn from reaction and judgment to wonder and compassionate inquiry: “I wonder why he or she feels/thinks
this way?” “I wonder what pushed my buttons in what he or she just said?”

Learn to ask honest, open questions
Instead of judging or debating what people say or asking leading questions, ask questions that are free of
... questions that come from a simple desire to help the speaker explore more deeply what
... life that helps explain why you feel or believe what you do?” is an

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for Courage & Power



The Sustainable Practices approach believes that we should focus on changing our church by changing our habits and changing our building

Examples of actions:
 ① Plant a tree
 This would be good for us to do because:
 ✓ Trees are good for the planet!
 ✓ Name a tree on campus

Challenges/concerns:
 - Just one tree?
 - Also not clear where it would go.

② Compost at youth gatherings (Sunday morning / Smith hub)
 This would be good for us to do because:
 - Easy to get compost bins
 - Help those unable to get to our building
 - Keep around house

Challenges/concerns:
 - Who will be responsible for managing it, sorting it?
 - How to keep it covered

③ Do a drive to collect hard-to-recycle items for CHARM
 This would be good for us to do because:
 - Could be congregation wide
 - Could be competitive → "who can fill the most bins?"

Challenges/concerns:
 - People forget to bring
 - Has to be transported

The Educational Approach believes that we should first act to educate ourselves and others and this will lead to taking other actions.

Examples of Actions:
 ① Invite GIPL to do a workshop with the youth group (ex. "faithful Responses to Reducing Waste" workshop)
 This action would be good for our group because...
 already have relationship
 poster to educate youth vs. adults

Challenges or concerns about this action:
 only affects our youth group

② Do a service project, like a river clean up and learn about water conservation.

This would be good for our group to do because...
 - It is active / hands-on as opposed to telling them
 - More fun!
 Church area?

Challenges/concerns to consider...
 - Requires signing up / taking initiative
 - Turnout not as large as Full church/etc.
 ↳ Doing / time
 ↳ materials / transportation costs

④ Go on a field trip to learn from a successful example / model (e.g. CHARM, the Keneda Green Bldg)
 This would be good for our group to do because...
 - Hands on / educational

Challenges/concerns to consider...
 - Requires signing up
 - Scheduling conflicts?
 - More expensive

⑤ Other educational ideas (and why they would be good to do, and challenges to consider):
 - Church wide volunteer activity / clean up after church

Educate about tree garden
 teach a VBS class about the commitment for the kids to PLANT things they could plant / plant things in garden pots

The Advocacy Approach believes we can make change by getting institutions like the church or the government to change their policies so that the impact extends beyond the youth group.

Examples of actions:
 ① Participate in an environmental lobbying day at Georgia State Capitol
 This would be good for us to do because:
 It allows direct action on environmental legislation. Very visible as an opportunity to be heard.
 New + unique
 Carpooling

Challenges/concerns to consider:
 - hard to plan
 - potential parental restrictions

② Write letters to our state representatives to ask them to support green policies. This would be good for us to do because:
 persuasive techniques get kids involved
 write

Challenges/concerns to consider:
 - Not as effective as all, letters can be easily ignored
 - requires further action
 need lots of people to get noticed
 - not effective

③ Write a group letter and send to a newspaper (like AJC) stating our support for climate justice policies. This would be good for us to do because:
 e-newsletter so more people will read

Challenges/concerns to consider:
 - Just the letter being sent makes it hard to be heard / might be missed
 how does this spend \$1000?
 who would write this? reach?

Results from the "Movable Deliberative Forum"



A few pedagogical insights

- Effective way to introduce a wider range of actions (i.e. beyond recycling) available to young people and communities
- Deliberation has a way of moderating “wild” or “ambitious” ideas without adults having to quash dreams
- A way to link approaches to values and purpose of the organization
- Kinesthetic learning enhances verbal, auditory, and text-based learning (“Movable Forum”; research teams)

Q & A

Helpful Strategies: Organizing Deliberative Forums

Where to deliberate?

- In communities
- In schools/on campuses
- Within organizations
- In person/Online



Helpful Strategies for Deliberative Forums



Helpful Strategies: Organizing Deliberative Forums

Organizing may involve:

- Form a leadership team; distribute tasks
- Conduct broad outreach using varied strategies
- Consider the range of people and groups you who should be involved, and identify who can help you reach them
- Prepare team members or other residents to facilitate forums. (Check out NIFI's free trainings!)
- Logistical considerations



Helpful Strategies: Some Insights from Mandy Bailey

- Reduce barriers to entry
- Invite people that have often had little say in matters related to “environmental concern”
- Lean on trusted local leaders



Link: <https://nifi.org/lessons-from-the-field-following-communities-leads-and-needs-in-environmental-deliberations/>

The Power of Words

- **Listen first** – how are people already “naming” the issue?
- **Steer clear of buzzwords** and trigger phrases
- **Avoid jargon** – use the words that participants use

HOW TO TALK BRIDGEY 2.0



Lessons and Takeaways from PACE's 2025-2026
Civic Language Perceptions Project

A REPORT BY:



LEAD AUTHORS:

LEAD AUTHOR ON VERSION 1.0: AMY MCISAAC, MANAGING DIRECTOR
VERSION 2.0 CREATED BY SIRI ERICKSON, SENIOR DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGY AND LEARNING

Link: <https://www.pacefunders.org/language/>

Helpful Strategies: Facilitating Deliberative Forums

Key components of a deliberative forum

- Examine differing approaches
- Work through tensions among ways to address the issue
- Consider the trade-offs of potential actions
- Reflect together, capturing commonalities and differences
- Identify common ground for decision-making and action



Stages of Deliberative Forums

Introduction

- Welcome participants.
- Introduce the issue.
- Review suggested guidelines.

Personal stake

- Connect to the broad issue.
- Ask people to describe how the issue affects them, their families, or others.
 - Solicit concerns or interests that brought participants to the discussion.

Deliberate about approaches

- Consider each approach fairly.
- What is attractive?
 - What are drawbacks?
 - What trade-offs are involved?

Reflect and Next Steps

- Review the discussion.
- What areas of common ground were apparent?
 - What tensions and trade-offs were most difficult?
 - Who else do we need to hear from?
 - What are our next steps?



Multiple Facilitator Roles

- Set a welcoming tone.
- Be an active listener.
- Behave neutrally.
- Ask probing questions.
- Encourage reflections and direction-setting.
- Manage time.



What does it mean to *behave neutrally*?

- Avoid agreement or disagreement with participants.
- Avoid using your personal experiences to make a point.
- Encourage discussion of differing points of view.
- Ask for viewpoints held by others outside the group.



Four Basic “Facilitator Moves”

- Ask a **follow-up question** for clarification or to dig deeper
- Ask a **reaction question** to the last speaker’s comment.
- Ask a **transition question** to move the conversation forward.
- Synthesize **key points** when necessary.

Questions to Promote Deliberation

- Connect the issue to concerns of participants.

How would this action affect your life or the lives of others?

- Examine potential consequences.

Is there a downside to this course of action?

- Weigh trade-offs.

Would you give up ___ in order to achieve ___?

- Promote interactions among participants.

Could someone give an example to illustrate what ___ just said?



Questions to go Deeper

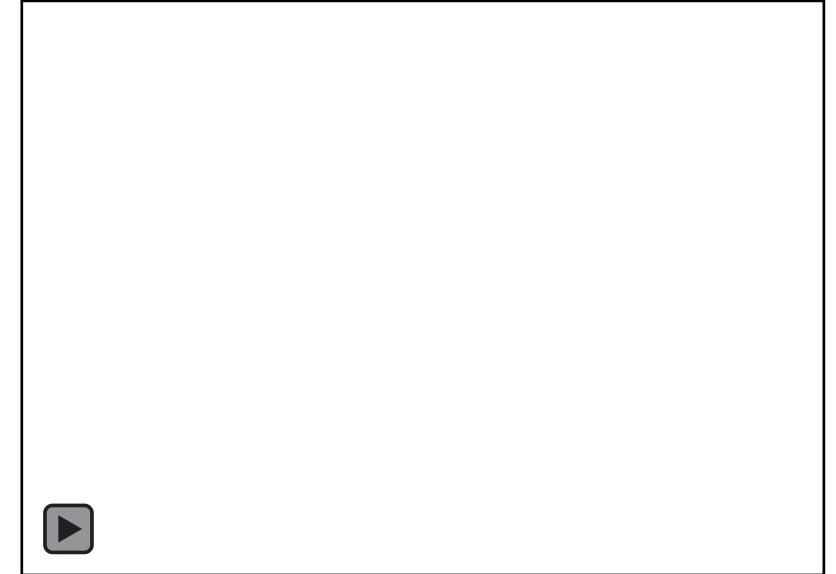
- What strengths do we have to build on?
- How might that idea affect other people?
- Why would someone disagree?
- What viewpoints are missing in our discussion?
- How will we prioritize among many good ideas?
- Given what you care about, what are you most eager to see happen?



**When you think
about facilitating,
what **excites** you &
what makes you
nervous?**

Anticipating Challenges in Facilitating

- Facilitating particularly “heated,” controversial issues
- Effectively soliciting participation from all
- Dealing with misinformation
- Addressing extra-talkative participants
- Managing time effectively
- Being flexible while staying on track



Potential Impacts of Deliberation

**Expanding
awareness**

**Bridging
divides**

**Developing
networks**

**Informing
public
policy**

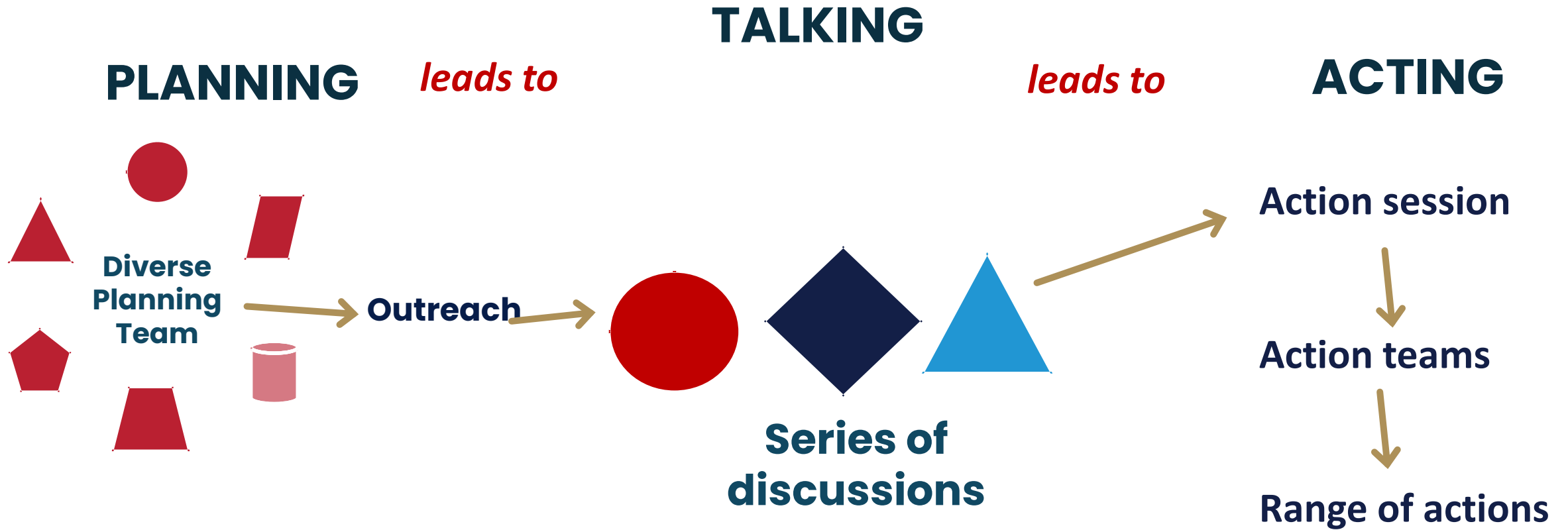
**Improving
organizational
outcomes**

**Building
civic
infrastructure**

**Taking
individual
actions**

**Working
together
to take
action**

Deliberation Leading to Action



Action Summits in Talk-to-Action Deliberations

Community-wide "Action Summit"

- As you look at what has emerged from our forums, is there anything missing that you think is essential? Do you have concerns that haven't been identified?
- What actions are doable now—in terms of time, energy, and resources—that address these needs?
- What actions require additional long-term conversation and planning?
- What action group(s) would you like to join? Who will convene the first gathering of each group?
- How will the groups communicate their progress and challenges?

**Thank you &
We're Here to Help!**

**cbrowner@nifi.org
dhartmann@nifi.org**



Thanks, Cristin,
Dawn, and
Elizabeth & to all
of you for joining!





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 - an invitation to the award ceremony in Taiwan



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conference.naturalstart.org

An aerial photograph of Portland, Oregon, showing a dense urban skyline with various skyscrapers and buildings. In the foreground, a large steel truss bridge spans across a wide river. The sky is filled with dramatic, grey clouds, suggesting an overcast day. The overall scene captures the city's industrial and urban landscape.

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conference.naaee.org

PORTLAND 2026

What will guide our next step?

Let us know what topics you want to learn about in our upcoming eeWEBINARs!



Thank you for joining us!

