

## CTE Crucial Conversations in the Classroom

### **Fostering a Culture of Listening**

Here are some practices for you to experiment with in your teaching.

- **Checking In**

- Self Check-In Before Class

- “Stop Talking” Exercise, Ilarion (Larry) Mercurieff and Libby Roderick, *Stop Talking: Indigenous Ways of Teaching and Learning and Difficult Dialogues in Higher Education* (Anchorage: University of Alaska Anchorage, 2013), 14.



- Student Check Ins from *Facing History and Ourselves*

- Mood Meter Activity (<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/mood-meter>)
- Learn to Listen/Listen to Learn Activity – (prompts should be neutral questions) (<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/learn-listen-listen-learn>)

- **Listening as Pedagogy**

- Slowing Down

- “I am thinking about what you just said”

- Rephrasing is Powerful! Have a student rephrase a peer’s comment/question.

- “Gut Checking” – Use Slido or Mentimeter to ask anonymous questions that help gauge student viewpoints—lean into complexity here.
- Silence and Reflection
  - Make time for silence – be explicit about this at the beginning of class.
    - Ilarion (Larry) Mercurieff and Libby Roderick, *Stop Talking: Indigenous Ways of Teaching and Learning and Difficult Dialogues in Higher Education* (Anchorage: University of Alaska Anchorage, 2013), 23.



### Silence and Reflection

A technique that encourages reflection and allows discussion participants to plan their responses. Educational research on the related strategies of “wait time” and “think time” demonstrates dramatic achievement gains when students are given time to think before they speak.

Experiment with slowing down your classroom delivery, giving students more time to process information. Slow your rate of speech; build pauses and silences into your lectures and discussions.

Introduce a minute of silence now and then during lectures or discussions to allow everyone to mull things over and plan their next response. Allow silence to exist without panicking or filling it yourself.

Create listening pairs, in which each student gets a few minutes of uninterrupted time to reflect aloud with respectful attention from another student.

Have students write down their reflections before engaging in a discussion. Give them extra days to respond to particularly tough questions.

#### Don't

- answer your own questions too quickly.
- mistake silence for “dead air” or disengagement. Discussions are not performances, and the most talkative are not the only ones with ideas.
- assume that those who speak more are learning more.

Adapted from Landis (*Start Talking*) and Brookfield and Preskill (*Discussion as a Way of Teaching*).

- **Closing Well**
  - “Appreciate, Apology, Aha” Exercise (<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/appreciation-apology-aha>) – “Sit in a circle and give students a minute to reflect on the day’s lesson. Ask students to prepare to share an *appreciation*, an *apology*, or an *aha* moment with the group.”
  - “Unfinished Business” Exercise
    - Ask students to identify one piece of “unfinished business” from the class discussion on paper (can be anonymous).
      - What is a point you wanted to make but didn’t get to?
      - What is a response you wanted to give but didn’t get to?

Email with questions or for more resources:

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