

## **Navigating Difficult Conversations: Creating an Environment for Social Issue Discussions Part 1**

Link to the recording: <https://youtu.be/2X5Nh5Lclal>

Visit the webinar page to view the slides and continue the conversation:  
<https://naaee.org/eepro/learning/webinars/webinar-navigating-difficult>

### **Highlights of the chat transcript:**

**What is your comfort level with social issue discussions in the classroom?  
Respond in the chat box with the letter and a BRIEF explanation.**

- Sarah Johnson: D it can be a long focused committed fully engaged activity
- Patrick Lathrop: D
- Grace Edinger: D, done collectively in partnership with young people
- Patrick Lathrop: D. Sometimes a tough slog, but need to do it together.
- Leigh Ann Reynolds: D hard work to get to the good stuff at the top
- Emily Sprowls: D collective, group work
- Elizabeth Bonnell: A. The situation may be precarious. I don't feel like I am falling, but that may be in a risky place.
- Emily Johnson: C because I often feel alone and unsupported
- Katelyn Nettler: D (We're all in this together and it's more about the journey in getting to an understanding than arriving at the same point)
- Anne Perrote: D, collective listening and expressing, exchange of ideas
- Malia Pownall: D — challenging but can lead to a better view
- Dani Lin Hunter: C. It sounds exciting like dangling from a cliff, but also dangerous like I might fail/fall at any minute.
- Catherine Salm: C
- Griffin Bray: C. Trying to learn what others think and why they think that (metaphorical climbing to peak)
- Maggie McCoy: D, that it is difficult to get up hill, but steady effort works well
- Polly Burns: C, it feels impossible to fill the vast voids among various perspectives
- Sarah Doxon: D, hard going, but feel accomplished when you get to the top!
- Judy Kingsbury: A, not sure of support from others
- Julia Fregonara: D- only successful when working with others, will never be glamerous but necessary
- Jenna Hoover: A, feels hard to start

- Lisa Ward: B - well read & prepared to answer questions & discuss challenging issues with adult newcomer participants

### **Other comments & resources**

- Interactive polling tools: PollEv.com, Mentimeter.com
- Sarah Johnson: Project Zero visible thinking activities are AMAZING. I've been using them and seeing awesome results during educator PD. In virtual learning environments the tools are great for online discussion forums. All these tools allow for really neat audience analysis.... and giving students voice to their values. Here are some really great tools on teaching people to use deliberation (not debate) with learners - <https://naaee.org/our-work/programs/environmental-issues-forums>
- Coralie Dorville: How many people could you recommend to have in an online workshop?
- Jane Hurley: Such good content! I'll definitely be listening to this again and checking out the resources before Mary Ellen comes back for Part II.
- Katelyn Nettler: I am so onboard with what you are saying Mary Ellen, but what advice can you offer for those of us that don't spend a lot of time with our students or the opportunity to develop long-term relationships with students or adults? In my work I often get 1.5 hours tops.
- Sarah Johnson: I'm going to incorporate #MaslowBeforeBloom in my teaching and learning class in two hours from now... thank you for this! :-)
- Jane Hurley: YES! Would love a QFT focus
- Judy Braus: Here's the link to the Tools of Engagement. See page 135. You can download the PDF.<https://naaee.org/eeopro/resources/tools-engagement-toolkit-engaging-people>
- Stefan Jackson: To establish "norms" for duration workshops/discussions - generally for me <1-1/2hours, if I am familiar with similar sets of participants, I will seed 5 or more norms that I have had other groups establish then ask participants to add or edit in their own language

### **When I think about engaging student voice in societal issue discussions, I used to think....but now I think...**

- Jane Hurley: "retreat" ... "Motivated!"
- Sarah Johnson: so necessary
- Elizabeth Bonnell: "caution!"... "I have more tools to do this right!"
- Katelyn Nettler: I used to think overwhelmed but now I think I'm committed to making a difference and cultivating a safe and productive environment

- Sarah Johnson: It would be awesome to hear Mary Ellen talk about how she best thinks on her feet and quickly pivot/respond to learners in the moment based on the responses they give to all these great teaching routines
- Jane Hurley: What a content-rich session! Once again, NAAEE invites the BEST speakers!
- Brandon Caley: I can see myself using some of these tools in wilderness education especially when it comes to wilderness values and issues and discussion with kids and adults.
- Sarah Johnson: @Brandon - yes me too!
- Lisa Ward: Excellent & useful resources! Thanks everyone. Looking forward to part 2
- Grace Edinger: Thank you!
- Patrick Lathrop: Thank you so much. Excellent discussion and looking forward to many great tools to explore / add to the toolbox!
- Gail Woon: Thank you!
- Jane Hurley: And follow NAAEE on Facebook!
- Elizabeth Bonnell: Thank you!