

The Den

Facilitated Dialogue on issues we face together in London, in the UK, in Europe and internationally

The idea for the DEN is simple. It's a place to contribute to the need for facilitated conversations about the issues we face together in our communities and society – in London, in the UK, in Europe, and internationally.

Without facilitation, conversations cycle, and hopelessness and fear creep in as you look at the news. And hopelessness and fear breeds escalation of conflict and polarisations.

The Den is a place to meet together on particular themes. It's a place to speak, to listen, to talk together in a deeper dialogue - knowing your personal limits and that we really each do make a difference to the shape of our future.

With facilitation, in the spirit of 'deep democracy' (Mindell), we will work with how issues are polarised and cycle, and we may catch moments of fresh insight or deepening of understanding between us and pathways forward.



Following each Den dialogue, we'd like to write up the proceedings so that they may be useful also to others.

The Spirit of the Den

We were writing about the role of facilitated dialogue in conflict zones, while in the mountains of Eastern Oregon. We'd been invited to contribute to a 'brown bag' programme at Joseph Arts and Community Centre in Joseph. We were impressed with the simplicity and strength of this 'brown bag' programme, and realized we'd like to do something similar in London. We loved the friendliness and hospitality, and want to make it a practice, adding our bit to facilitate conversations in society.

But...what to call it?

We drifted to sleep one afternoon and woke up to up to a loud thump at the window. Who was that peering at us through the window? It was a black bear on his hind legs looking in!

When we returned to the question of what to call the facilitated dialogue in London, we thought the name should reflect a spirit that is welcoming, and that supports reflection, study and contemplation, (inside of a cave.) It should a place to engage in vigorous dialogue, while relaxed and homey among friends and colleagues. And it should have the strength and courage, to deal with the magnitude of issues we face as a world, in order to protect our future.

And perhaps something to do with a bear?

Programme and Schedule

We will start the series in Autumn 2016.

You can come along once, or attend a series.

Brief presentations or panel discussions will be followed by facilitated dialogue, using methods of 'worldwork'. This approach facilitates awareness and interaction of all points of view and dimensions of our experience.

At the end of the facilitated dialogue, there will also be an opportunity to reflect on the conversations, appreciate new levels of insight, or actions generated. And we'll write up the proceedings.

Hot spots

Facilitation allows us to talk about complex and difficult issues.

'Hot spots' are points that we all recognise, where communication usually breaks down- when difficult themes sizzle, and you might feel yourself back away, or feel agitated, roll your eyes, or fall unwittingly into conflict. When carefully facilitated, these hot spots are also doorways to potential deepening of dialogue and transforming our emotions and understanding, and discovering creative ideas and contributions to deal with the issues together in society.

Some conversation themes for the Den

- Xenophobia in new clothes- old attitudes towards new waves of migrants
Youth, Idealism and radicalisation
- Disentangling Islam, Islamophobia and terror
- Diaspora Communities and their contributions
- The role of Diaspora communities in contributing needed perspective to their current home, and to their homes of origin.
 - South Africa
 - Great Lakes: Rwanda, Burundi and DRC
 - Muslim and Jewish relationships in the UK and wider Interfaith dialogue, in relation to the Israel-Palestinian conflict
- Contributions from the fields of psychotherapy and spirituality?
- Contributions from the arts to creating the world: theatre, music, opera, arts

Contact us on admin@cfor.info for more information.