



Contract and Informed Consent:
Coaching, Facilitating, and Consulting on *Real Dialogue*
Polly Young-Eisendrath, Ph.D.

This document contains important information about my professional services in *Real Dialogue*. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us that you have been informed of my overall aims, process, and methods for coaching, facilitating and consulting on *Real Dialogue*.

Real Dialogue for Opposing Sides: Skill, Method, and Practice

Real Dialogue is a skill and method for working with "difficult conversations" in any setting. *Real Dialogue* is not psychotherapy or a therapeutic intervention. It is a psycho-educational process that is designed to renew trust, open stuck channels of communication, discover spontaneous agreements, and improve speakers' abilities to maintain a mindful emotional space during conflict, perceived offense, stress, and emotional threat -- real or imagined. *Real Dialogue* counteracts our natural tendencies to dehumanize others or create "enemies" when we feel unheard, unseen or unknown. It draws on mindfulness, relational theory, psychodrama, and psychoanalysis for its theories and practices.

In *Real Dialogue*, individuals learn to speak for themselves (recognizing the inherent limits of our subjectivity in memory and perception), to listen mindfully to another (paraphrasing and stepping into another's worldview, checking it out, without endorsement, agreement or compromise), and to remain curious (keeping emotional threat levels low and acknowledging the limitations and subjectivity of one's own memory and perception).

Real Dialogue, as individual skill or co-facilitated conversation, allows us to have conflict with respect, use conflict creatively, and speak and listen to others without having to agree or compromise so that a process of inquiry can take place without dehumanizing or devaluing another's point of view or perspective.

Benefits and Risks

Real Dialogue is not psychotherapy. I have given you a verbal description of what we will be doing and helped you understand the nature of the skill and the set-up of the method (if this is a co-facilitated conversation). Your actual process with me will vary, depending on what you want to accomplish, many aspects of our personalities, and the particular problems you want to address. In order for *Real Dialogue* to be most effective, you will have to work on what I teach or coach within and outside of our sessions. The skill and the method require practice. In order to benefit, you will also be expected to purchase three small booklets, called *Real Dialogue: The Skill 1, 2, and 3*, that are available for download on my website here, <https://young-eisendrath.com/real-dialogue>. They are \$4.95 per booklet to download. Please make them into stapled booklets that you can refer to when you are practicing. While I bring expertise to the process of our engagement, you must bring dedication and your own engagement in order to benefit from what I coach, facilitate or teach.

There are deep benefits to be gained by being able to address all conflicts – whether small or great – by lowering threat levels, being able to speak subjectively for yourself, being able to listen mindfully, and being able to stay engaged with curiosity throughout the span or nature of the conversation. *Real Dialogue* is not conflict resolution, compromise, non-violent communication or reconciliation. Instead, it is a means of using mindfulness (concentration and equanimity/relaxation) during emotionally distressing conflicts so that each person can accurately hear, see and feel each other – self and other.

Real Dialogue brings emotional relief to encounters in which there is or has been polarization and repetitive conflict. As a skill, it can be applied in personal and professional, and impersonal (not familiar), relationships. It can be applied when people disagree about values, facts, feelings, goals or any other problems. It keeps the conversation *subjective* and humanized or respectful.

On the other hand, during our experience together, there may be emotional stresses and unpleasant feelings and/or memories. You may experience agitation, irritation, anger, sadness, anxiety or even loneliness or helplessness. These will typically be temporary and we can discuss anything like this that comes up in our sessions, but *Real Dialogue* is not personal psychotherapy. It focuses instead on mindfulness skills in relationship and conflict. If you have any concerns or questions during our sessions, feel free to ask me. If you want me to refer you to a mental health professional as a result of this training or facilitation, I will be happy to offer such referrals.

Professional Fee

My hourly (60 minute) fee for *Real Dialogue* Coaching, Facilitating or Consulting is \$250. If you miss a scheduled session (for a non-emergency) without giving me a 48 hours notification, payment of \$125 per hour will be collected for missed time.

Confidentiality

While this is not psychotherapy, it is a confidential process. I will not reveal the nature or findings of our work to anyone outside our sessions without your signing a consent form.

Contacting Me

It is best to email me at pollye@comcast.net or call me at my office at 802-223-6223 (this is not a cell phone and you cannot text to it).

Your signature below indicates that you have the information in this document and agree to abide by its terms during our professional relationship.

Name of Trainee:

Signature of Trainee:

Date: