Appendix C:
Sharing a Frustration
Dialogue Guide

Frustrations, concerns, challenges, and other difficulties are inevitable in organizations. This Dialogue Guide helps teammates create a safe space to discuss difficult topics in a way that's free of negativity and focused on productive solutions. The prompts listed below will first direct the sender to share an Appreciation (as an initial connecting activity), and then direct the sender to describe the frustration or challenge they're experiencing, followed by their proposed solution, wish, or request.

Note: It's essential to practice Zero Negativity and share your frustration in an objective way. It's highly recommended that you view Appendix E: Dialogue Best Practices before you begin this Dialogue.

Instructions: Follow the prompts exactly as they are listed below.

The person initiating the conversation and sharing the frustration will follow all the **orange bubble** prompts aligned to the left labeled **Sender**.

The person listening, Mirroring, Summarizing, Validating, and Empathizing will follow all the **blue bubble** prompts aligned to the right labeled **Receiver.**

1 - MAKE AN APPOINTMENT

Sender: *Is now a good time to talk about a Frustration/Challenge I am experiencing, and what I propose as a solution?*

Receiver: *Yes, it is.*

Connect Non-Verbally: Make eye contact and take a breath before beginning the dialogue.

2 - SHARE & MIRROR

Begin with Appreciation

First, I'd like to share an Appreciation with you.
I appreciate that you ___.

Sender

Mirrors and Checks for Accuracy

If I got that, you appreciate that I ___.
Did I get it?

Receiver

Verifies Accuracy

Yes, you got it.
- or -
The part you got was ___ and I also said ___.

Sender

Receiver continues to Mirror Sender until the Sender confirms the Receiver "got it."

Shows Curiosity

Is there more?

Receiver

Shares Feelings/Impact

Yes, the more is that when you ___ ,
It makes me feel ___.

Sender

Mirrors and Checks for Accuracy

So, when I ___, it makes you feel ___.
Did I get it?

Receiver

Verifies Accuracy

Yes, you got it.

Sender

Thank you for sharing your Appreciation.

Receiver

Thanks for receiving it.

Sender

Shares Frustration

Now I'd like to have a conversation about a frustration/ challenge I'm experiencing. That frustration/challenge is ___.

Sender

Mirrors and Checks for Accuracy

If I got that, the frustration/challenge you're experiencing is ___. Did I get it?

Receiver

Verifies Accuracy

Yes, you got it.
- or -
The part you got was ___ and I also said ___.

Sender

Receiver continues to Mirror Sender until the Sender confirms the Receiver *"got it."*

Shows Curiosity

Is there more about that frustration/challenge?

Receiver

Shares Feelings/Impact

Yes, the more is when I experience this frustration/challenge, I feel ___.

Sender

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Mirrors and Checks for Accuracy

If I got it, when you experience this frustration/challenge, you feel ___. Did I get it?

Receiver

Verifies Accuracy

Yes, you got it.

- or -

The part you got was ___ and I also said ___.

Sender

Shows Curiosity

Is there more?

Receiver

Connects Current Frustration to Past Experience

Yes, when I feel ___, it reminds me of a past experience in my work life that is ___.

Sender

Mirrors and Checks for Accuracy

If I got it, it reminds you of ___. Did I get it?

Receiver

Verifies Accuracy

Yes, you got it.

- or -

The part you got was ___ and I also said ___.

Sender

Shows Curiosity

Is there more?

Receiver

Proposes Solution

I'd like to share what I'd propose to address this frustration/challenge, which is ___.

Sender

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Mirrors and Checks for Accuracy

If I got it, what you'd propose to address this frustration/ challenge is ___. Did I get it?

Receiver

Verifies Accuracy

Yes, you got it.

- or -

The part you got was ___ and I also said ___.

Sender

Shows Curiosity

Is there more?

Receiver

Receiver Mirrors until Sender has no more.

3 - SUMMARIZE

Summarizes

Let me see if I got it all.
The frustration/challenge you are experiencing is ___.
And it makes you feel ___.
And it reminds you of a past experience that is ___.
You have a proposal for addressing this frustration/challenge, which is ___.

Receiver

Checks for Accuracy

Is that a good summary, did I get it all?

Receiver

Verifies Accuracy

Yes. You got it all.

- or -

I also said ___.

Sender

Receiver continues to Mirror if a part was missed.

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4 - VALIDATE

Validates

Well, that makes sense! It makes sense that the frustration/challenge you're experiencing makes you feel ___ because it reminds you of ___.

Receiver

Checks for Accuracy

I want to Validate you, is that a good Validation?

Receiver

Verifies Accuracy

Yes, that's a good Validation.

Sender

5 - EMPATHIZE

Empathizes

And if you/we address this frustration/challenge by doing ___, I imagine you would feel ___(Relieved, Happy, Less Anxious, etc).

Receiver

Checks for Accuracy

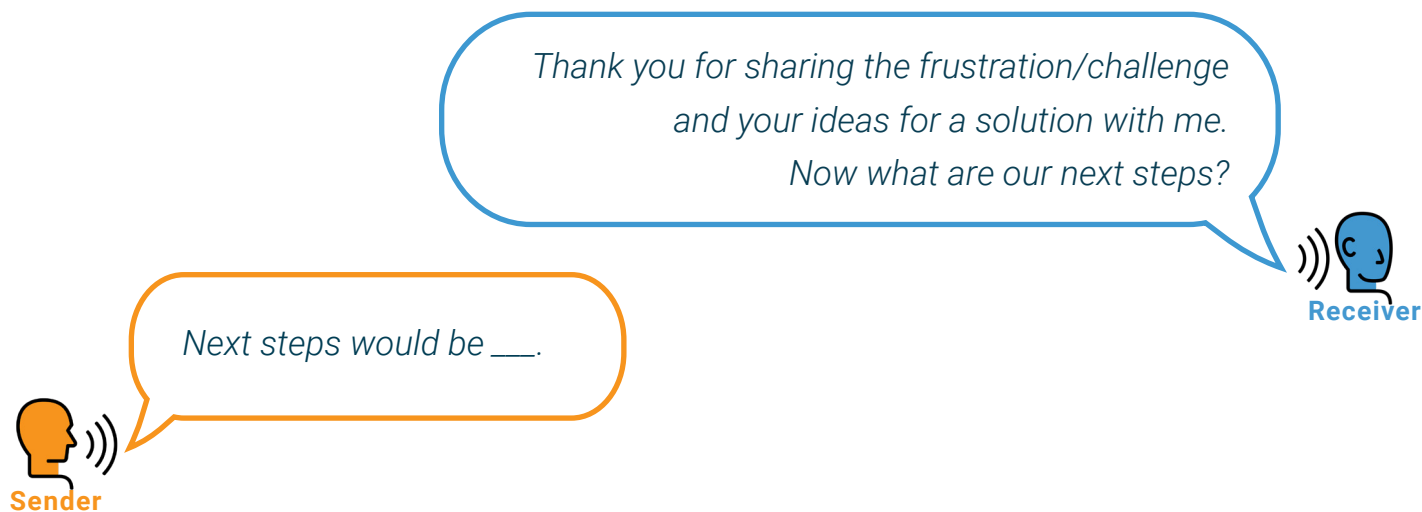*Am I getting it?*
Is there more about how you'd feel?

Receiver

Verifies Accuracy

Yes.
- or -
I'd also feel.

Sender

Receiver Mirrors additional feelings.

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6 - CLOSE AND DISCUSS NEXT STEPS

Thank you for sharing the frustration/challenge and your ideas for a solution with me. Now what are our next steps?

Receiver

Next steps would be ___.

Sender

Give each other a handshake or high five.

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