

## How to Be a Successful HMV Facilitator

Paul Davidson, PhD 2015 FJMC International Convention

- Anyone with an interest in encouraging group discussion can be a facilitator
- Almost anyone has the potential to be a great facilitator if he can relate to the topic on a highly personal
- You do not have to be a mental health professional or religious leader to do well
- Create a welcoming environment from the beginning, introducing yourself to all members
- Spell out the ground rules of HMV:

Talk about your own thoughts and feelings

What is said in HMV stays in HMV

- Have everyone go around the circle and introduce themselves
  - Each should say his name, either why they came or hope to get out of it

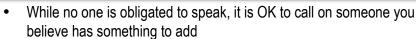
This breaks the ice to get everyone speaking

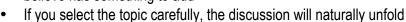
- Always start by introducing the topic
- It often best to lead with a personal story to share
- The facilitator sets the tone

The more personal the sharing, the more personal the group sharing

- Generally, the less the facilitator speaks, the better
- Enthusiasm goes a long way to engaging people in the session

- Questions should ideally be open ended, not "yes or no"
- Use the interrogative pronouns: who, what, when, where, why and how Questions that frame the issue in time
- How something has changed over your lifetime
- The difference in something from one generation to another
- Pinpoint times in your life that the topic held specific meaning Questions that frame the issue in impact
- How you have been affected by the topic
- Ways the topic has affected family, community, etc. Questions which address feelings
- What the topic has meant to you
- How you have come to feel the way you do about the topic Questions which clarify how the issue ties you to others
- What you feel in common with others around regarding the topic
- Where you differ from others regarding the topic Questions which relate to other parts of your life
- When and how the issue may affect your work, spiritual life, etc.
- How the issue affects your well-being
- It is OK for the discussion to move off topic as long as it amplifies involvement, but you should try to find an opportune moment to redirect to the issue at hand







## **Handling Problems**

- Potential problems, though rare, can disrupt the HMV experience, so be prepared
- You ask a question and no one responds

Rephrase the question more simply

Start the discussion by being the first to respond to the question

Call on someone who is likely to respond

Ask participants to think about the question for a moment, and then go around the circle for feedback

Remind members that this is not a lecture and we are here to listen to one another

Someone is dominating the discussion

You can sensitively shift the focus of attention away from that participant

Acknowledge what was said but you want to give everyone a chance to contribute

Summarize what the person said and move on

Ask others how they feel about what the individual has said

Directly call on someone else in the group

Transition to another question

Someone becomes very emotional about a topic

Let it flow and validate the feelings

Tell them that it is healthy to express emotions

Remind the group that this is a safe place for expression

You can state that their emotions are understandable given their experiences

Ask if anyone else can relate to those feelings

Thank him for his honesty

If discussion wanes, either pose another question or tell another personal story