



## Thinking about relationships

**SPECIFIC ISSUE/S:** Any kind of issue

**PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES:** To provide structure to enable people to use their own knowledge about relationships to apply to other working relationships

**LENGTH:** 10 – 20 minutes

**GROUP SIZE:** Any

**GROUP CHARACTERISTICS:** Any

**FACILITATOR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NEEDED:** Low level of facilitator knowledge; high level of facilitation skills are required as tricky situations may arise

**RESOURCES NEEDED:** None

### INSTRUCTIONS:

#### Relationships in general:

This activity can be undertaken individually or in groups. Discuss the questions below and record answers.

- 1) What are common kinds of relationships? (e.g., family, workplace)
- 2) Why do we have relationships? What do we want from relationships?
- 3) What contributes to having good relationships? Think about some good relationships that you have or have had: what has made them better than other relationships?
- 4) What undermines relationships? Think about some poor relationships that you have or have had: what has made them worse than other relationships?

List answers on a whiteboard or on large sheets of paper.

#### Relationships in social justice work

Think of a social justice context that you are involved in, for example, a specific group or campaign. Decide which relationships within your chosen social justice context you want to think about — you may want to consider relationships within your group or between your group and other parties.

Consider the questions below and record your responses. The questions can be answered by participants working on their own or in sub-groups depending on the size and focus of the group:

- a) What contributes to having good relationships in this context? (e.g., trust, good communication, fairness)
- b) What undermines these relationships? (list anything that isn't just the opposite of what is already listed in 'a', for example, there is no point adding 'lack of trust', poor communication)
- c) To what extent is power imbalance a factor in these relationships?

d) Which of the factors listed in response to 'b' do you feel you can influence?

e) What strategies could you use to improve relationships in this context?

The facilitator needs to determine the approach for feeding back and recording according to group size and focus.

**FACILITATION TIPS:** Thinking about relationships can sometimes raise difficult issues for people—they should think about what they are comfortable sharing with others. Participants should talk to the facilitator if they have any concerns.

**VARIATIONS:** This activity can be done in conjunction with the Power Pole activity

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