

# A Brief Overview of *The Art of Facilitating Self-Determination:*



*The Art of Facilitating Self-Determination* is a five-day personal and professional development workshop that deepens our understanding of human motivation, strengthens our capacity to make connections, and focuses the mindfulness required to facilitate the freely self-directed growth and development of others.

Whether one is working with groups, working with individuals, or striving to better support self-determination within one's own family, *The Art of Facilitating Self-Determination* will clarify the principles behind facilitating change, help grow personal self-awareness and deepen intentionality, while providing practical experience in the role of the facilitator. Two-day *Overviews* are also available.

*The Art of Facilitating Self-Determination* is based on decades of observation of a wide range of formal and informal human efforts to influence change in others, through which we have learned about what helps, what doesn't help and what hurts. Our observations validate Self-Determination Theory, verify the strong influence of a facilitator's mindset and worldview, and confirm the importance of intentionality in all we say and do in our role as facilitators. We have learned that:

- ☞ **Our human potential is to flourish.**
- ☞ We are all capable of flourishing because **we all possess deep-rooted and keenly evolved tendencies toward growth and development.**
- ☞ **Our potential to flourish can be nourished, or it can be undermined.**
- ☞ **Our potential is most fully realized when growth and development are freely chosen and when self-determination is intentionally fostered** through supportive social, cultural and environmental conditions.

*The Art of Facilitating Self-Determination* grew out of the understanding that every engagement with another person presents us with the opportunity to be a nurturing influence rather than a managing director. Where we nurture, natural healthy growth occurs—in its own way and at its own pace. Where we attempt to steer or manage growth, natural resistance distorts it and harms the human soul.

*The Art of Facilitating Self-Determination* harnesses our natural human motivation and potential to flourish—we all have a natural tendency to seek out challenges, the unfamiliar, and opportunities to learn—and we seek to integrate what we learn from the world around us into a meaningful whole throughout our lives. *The Art of*

*Facilitating Self-Determination* is the “art” of working *with* our basic human needs for connectedness, autonomy, and competence without getting in the way of an individual’s choices in creating the life he or she wants.

### **Who Should Attend *The Art of Facilitating Self-Determination*?**

- **Friends:** Anyone who seeks to create and sustain relationships with others based on Mutuality, Unconditional Valuing and Acceptance.
- **Peers:** Anyone who is in the role of a “supporter” and whose support depends on the notion of being a “peer.”
- **Family Members:** Anyone whose love for a family member to empower that loved one and support their self-determination.
- **Professionals and Para-professionals:** Anyone whose work involves supporting people to achieve their stated goals in life through increasing self-reliance.
  - ☆ Case Managers: People responsible for facilitating Person-Centered Planning.
  - ☆ Clinicians: People who provide treatment designed to support wellbeing.
  - ☆ Direct Service Providers: Anyone who provides recovery-oriented direct services.

**Everyone is welcome.** *The Art of Facilitating Self-Determination* inspires and equips people to bring a spirit of intentionality, mutuality and companionship to any role or relationship. Together, “We” explore the possibilities for moving past “Us” versus “Them.”

### **The Five-Day Seminar:**

To facilitate self-determination is to enter into relationships with others in ways that stimulate critical thinking *without* fixing, saving, advising or setting the other straight, so it cannot be “taught” like History or Geography. This is an interactive seminar where the learning is mutual and new knowledge emerges from the group during open yet focused discussions. *The Art of Facilitating Self-Determination* is about growing self-awareness through reflection, learning to sit with discomfort, and becoming intentional in all we say and do. Therefore the workshop *facilitates* the growth of each participant’s personal experiential understanding of self-determination and the art of facilitation.

The following is a condensed overview of the workshop’s fourteen modules:

**In Module One, *What’s This All About?*** we explore:

- The *concepts* of “Facilitation” and “self-determination.”

- The *role* of the facilitator in easing this process of self-determination.
- How the process of *becoming* a facilitator is never-ending and involves allowing people to grow in their own way, at their own pace.

**In Module Two, *Feeling Safe and Valued*, we explore:**

- How the practical foundation of facilitating self-determination is a learning environment that fosters feelings of safety and being valued, which the facilitator is responsible for creating and maintaining.
- The importance of anticipating that people bear some woundedness from Life, but their woundedness is not an expression of weakness; carrying on, bearing their many wounds, demonstrates their profound strength.
- The importance of having everything we say and do demonstrate the value we place on others and their contributions.

**In Module Three, *"This I Believe,"* we explore:**

- The importance of knowing what we stand for and the necessity of leaving room for the beliefs of others when we express what we think we "know."
- The limits that some of our "truths" can impose on our willingness/ability to facilitate the self-determination of others, and how some beliefs give us "hot buttons" others can push to knock us out of our role as facilitator.
- The importance of recognizing that our beliefs are the usually the source of significant personal limits and/or troublesome "hot buttons" that interfere with our ability to support self-determination.

**In Module Four, *Principles That Govern Relationships*, we explore:**

- The concept of *principles* that govern human relations, and how *values* that can reliably guide our facilitation are deeply rooted in these governing principles.
- How our *worldview* shapes our choices and can even mislead them, but governing principles determine their consequences.
- How a clear understanding of "true north" principles can help us avoid the negative consequences of violating principles and enjoy the benefits of adhering to them.

**In Module Five, *Intentionality*, we explore:**

- How effective facilitators are fully intentional (i.e., purposeful) about everything we say and do, which means we are fully present and mindful with others, and give our full attention to our task and to the total environment we work in.
- How intentionality isn't an ordinary state of mind and can easily be undermined by "default settings," assumptions or an unreliable worldview/mindset.
- How "conveying what we intend" depends on understanding *how* we communicate and on making our *non-verbal* communication as intentional as our choice of words and tone.

**In Module Six, *Sitting With Discomfort*, we explore:**

- How our role is to *ease* a process that can make others feel *uneasy*, and how this requires the facilitator to sit with considerable discomfort, surrounded by multiple sources of un-ease.
- What our own experience teaches us about sources of *personal* discomfort and about which tools can best help us sit with discomfort as we pursue our goals, and the worth of going through discomfort to get the benefits on the other side.
- How the essence of *sitting with discomfort* involves connecting with goals that motivate us, and embracing discomfort as an acceptable cost of achieving them.

**In Module Seven, *Resisting Temptation to Fix, Save or Advise*, we explore:**

- How the desire to alleviate the suffering of others through attempts to direct their growth is natural and feels noble, yet fixing, saving and advising have been demonstrated to undermine self-determination.
- How through practice it is possible to learn to sit with discomfort, resist the impulse to fix, save and advise others, and instead validate the feelings of those who ask for fixing, saving or advising but leave choice to the individual.
- How the essence of *sitting with discomfort* involves connecting with goals that motivate us, and embracing discomfort as an acceptable cost of achieving them.

**In Module Eight, *Growing Self-Awareness*, we explore:**

- How, in order to facilitate self-determination for others, we are first obliged to grow our own self-awareness around *how we know what we know* and all the layers of culture, assumption, prejudice, and irrational belief we may hold.

- How companions who share our journey and regard us as mutual supporters can challenge us to reflect and to grow our self-awareness through honest (non-leading) questions, and thereby stimulate/support the creation of better futures.
- How, no matter how self-aware we become, there are things like poverty, violence and oppression that can hold anyone back, so ultimately growing our self-awareness extends to exploring how we are working for social justice.

**In Module Nine, *Re-Storying Our Introductions*, we explore:**

- How, in introducing ourselves, we also introduce the information we represent, the *difference* this material has made in our lives, and how the concept of self-determination is tied to the choices we make.
- How people will judge the as yet unknown information we are about to present by what they first see in us, and how they will also judge the *possibility* of self-determination by what they see of it in us.
- How effective introductions offer a glimpse of past struggle, a clear picture of a better present, and a strong sense of the brighter future that the information is helping us create for ourselves—and how a great introduction then welcomes people into a shared journey toward brighter futures.

**In Module Ten, *Presentation Skills and Practices*, we explore:**

- How the information we present is first a resource worthy of consideration and a sufficient reason for bringing people together, and then it provides an opportunity to learn from our own experience and from each other.
- How presenting information as *potentially* useful stimulates the hearer's critical faculties, encouraging them to carefully weigh what they hear and decide for themselves whether this new information is indeed personally useful.
- How we don't need to *sell* anything, because the value of what we are presenting is well expressed through our careful and knowledgeable organization of the material, through our sincerity, and through our obvious enthusiasm for it.

**In Module Eleven, *Facilitation As Unconditional Valuing*, we explore:**

- The importance of centering our facilitation on *unconditional valuing* and the need to understand a variety of practical means to put it into practice.
- The importance of being mindfully present, seeking always to understand the other, and clearly expressing what we understand and learn from the other.

- How we can give people time to express their views and then validate them by showing that we see their value, and how this depends on filtering out any judgment that comes from our own prejudices.

**In Module Twelve, *Facilitating The Emergence of New Knowledge*, we explore:**

- How passion for our own information and our concern that people understand it can result in “teaching” our piece of the truth as Truth, which invariably gets in the way of easing access to all the *options*.
- How we create opportunities for listening to multiple perspectives when we: very briefly *preview* our topic; concisely *present* key points and *illustrations* that show how the information matters to us; *facilitate* a discussion that invites the expression of alternative perspectives by others and allows new knowledge to emerge; and, close with a concise *summary* that includes the input of others.
- How we can focus our intentionality on optimizing the balance between our brief presentation of information and our facilitation of a rich discussion in order to draw out the perspectives of others and generate new knowledge for all.

**In Module Thirteen, *Attending And Responding*, we explore:**

- How seeing people on the raw edge of emotional distress can *knock* anyone off their emotional center, and how it can knock *us* out of the role of facilitator.
- How important it is to have a realistic picture of certain scenarios facilitators are likely to face and a sense of how others and we might personally respond to distress in similar situations.
- How important it is to know one’s own strengths as revealed through practice.

**In Module Fourteen, *Essential Elements*, we summarize the essential elements of a week’s learning about facilitating self-determination with individuals and groups.**

### **Summary:**

In the end, becoming a Facilitator of Self-Determination is a matter of whom we choose to be, rather than a matter of special skill sets or techniques we acquire. Whether seeking personal transformation or societal transformation, it comes down to values, relationships and our capacity to be authentic and fully intentional with people. We offer simple tools and ideas anyone can use while their inner facilitator emerges.

*The Art of Facilitating Self-Determination* seminar inspires and equips people to make an informed transformative choice. If you are interested in facilitating self-

determination, the experienced facilitators at *Well Beyond Recovery* are eager to explore that process with you.

For more information please contact us at [info@wellbeyondrecovery.com](mailto:info@wellbeyondrecovery.com) and put *The Art of Facilitating Self-Determination* in the subject line. You can also reach us directly:

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