

## **Initial Guidelines for Dialogue**

Isaacs, (1999) states that Dialogue “is about a shared inquiry, a way of thinking and reflecting together. It is not something you *do* to another person. It is something you do *with* people.”(9)

- **Suspend assumptions and certainties**
  
- **Observe the observer**
  
- **Listen to your listening**
  
- **Slow down the inquiry**
  
- **Be aware of thought**
  
- **Befriend polarisation**

## **Convening Dialogue**

“Leaders of dialogue are convenors. The word *convene* means “to assemble with others; to come together.... Listening, respect, voice and suspension are actively encouraged and practiced.” (291)

### **Entry is everything**

- ◆ Clarify your intentions
- ◆ Join each person differently

### **Create the container**

- ◆ Evoke the ideal
- ◆ Support dreaming out loud
- ◆ Deepen the listening
- ◆ Make it safe for opposers
- ◆ Dare people to suspend

### **Map the structures**

- ◆ Facilitate cross-model conversation
- ◆ Educate
- ◆ Embody reflective inquiry
- ◆ Listen for emerging themes

### **Embody service**

- ◆ Reflect on the whole process
- ◆ Seek paths to resolution
- ◆ Allow the leadership role to move
- ◆ See the whole as primary

Isaacs, W. Taking Flight: Dialogue, Collective Thinking, and Organisational Learning in Cross, R & Israelit, S., (2000) Strategic Learning in a Knowledge Economy: Individual, Collective and Organisational Learning Process. Boston, USA: Butterworth-Heinemann