



Education as the Practice of Freedom

Dialogue Education™ practitioners would recognize the title of this month's **Tips & Tools** as the purpose Paulo Freire felt education should serve: Learning in service of helping humans recognize their right and responsibility to help create the world they live in, and want to live in, by naming and acting upon it (the world) consciously. This is no small undertaking, and that said, from Freire's point of view, this is what distinguishes humans from other animals.

Here are three of the practices Dialogue Education™ uses to support and design learning events to promote the practice of freedom:

Problem posing

This approach invites instructors to set out new information to be acted upon, in contrast to being memorized, or accepted without question that it is a fact, or is useful as described, or even that it is "correct". What does this mean? It means that content is to be debated, contrasted, examined for its historical and current value to a range of different groups of people in the community, country, world, etc.

Here is another description of problem posing, along with examples, that contrasts problem posing and banking education:

http://serendip.brynmawr.edu/sci_edu/cook-sather.html#modern

Upcoming Events

Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach

An Introduction to Dialogue Education™

August 10-13, 2010 ~ Boston, MA
with Marian Darlington Hope
Early Bird deadline: June 15
(marian@globalearning.com)

[register now](#)

September 14-17, 2010 ~ San Diego, CA
with Karen Ridout
Early Bird deadline: July 20
(karen@globalearning.com)

[register now](#)

October 19-22, 2010 ~ Montpelier, VT
with Peter Perkins
Early Bird deadline: August 24
(peterp@globalearning.com)

[register now](#)

November 2-5, 2010 ~ Toronto, ON
with Jeanette Romkema
Early Bird deadline: September 7
(jeanette@globalearning.com)

[register now](#)

**November 30-December 3, 2010 ~
Raleigh, NC**
with Karen Ridout
Early Bird deadline: October 5
(karen@globalearning.com)

[register now](#)

Advanced Learning Design

November 8-10, 2010 ~ Montpelier, VT
with Peter Perkins
(peterp@globalearning.com)
Early Bird deadline: September 13

[register now](#)



Open Questions

While many educators are familiar with open questions, those most familiar know that an authentic (respectful) use of open questions is challenging. It takes personal awareness, humility, and a keen sense of inquiry to create great open questions. The gift is that open questions, carefully crafted invite critical thinking that brings new insights into the learner's and others' awareness.

Here is a list of open questions that can be reworked for your purposes:  [More Open Questions](#)

Decision-making

Problem posing and open questions invite and honor learners' decision-making capacities and the meaning he or she creates in the work of learning and living. There is nothing passive about making conscious decisions. We cannot easily blame another for our choice, nor fully abdicate our responsibility when our choices are made conscious. It is not unusual to hear, "This made me realize what I thought!"

Here are several questions for your analysis of decision-making in your learning designs:  [How Am I Ensuring Meaningful Decision-making in my Learning Events?](#)

Learning Evaluation by Design

December 7-8, 2010 ~ Washington, DC

with Valerie Uccellani

(valerie@globalearning.com)

Early Bird deadline: October 12

[register now](#)

View the complete

[2010 Public Course Calendar](#)



More Open Questions

1. *Why it is important to you?*
2. *What difference it might make to your work?*
3. *How soon can I use this?"*
4. *What questions and insights arise as you consider these factors in light of your current situation?*
5. *What is it that tells you or shows you that (for example: a learning environment is safe enough for your learners to be reasonably comfortable to learn)?*
6. *In what ways will this be most useful?*
7. *How can a lecture be effective and contribute to learning for everyone?*
8. *What do you need to put this into practice tomorrow?*
9. *How will you use this to make decisions?*
10. *As you study this list, how might you group these items to be most useful for your situation?*
11. *When you are invited to apply new ideas immediately to your life or work, what usually happens? Why do you think this is so?*
12. *What actions or strategies do you use that help learners to develop their skills and confidence?*
13. *How do you see these concepts connecting?*
14. *What is one more thing you can do to provide learners even more decision-making opportunities in your teaching situation?*
15. *What would be the implications for your teaching if you used more open questions next week?*



How Am I Ensuring Meaningful Decision-making in my Learning Events?

1. *In what ways are your learners treated as decision-makers? How are they being invited to:
 - a. *Make decisions?*
 - b. *Critically analyze the content being taught?*
 - c. *Invited to apply the new ideas immediately to their own life or work?**
2. *What actions or strategies do you use that help learners to develop their skills and confidence? How do you see these connecting to being a decision-maker?*
3. *What is one more thing you can do to provide learners even more decision-making opportunities in your teaching situation?*

Remember Consultative and Deliberative Voices

There is an important difference between a “deliberative” and a “consultative” voice. When we have the deliberative voice, it is our role to make decisions. When we have the consultative voice, it is our role to make suggestions and accept that others will make a final decision. Often, frustration occurs (be it in a learning, work, or family situation) because people are unclear what voice they have! As teachers, we should always be clear (with ourselves and our learners) about who is making which decisions and who is making suggestions. Of course this will vary from moment to moment, and from issue to issue. Pause occasionally and ask: What decisions am I expected to make here? What decisions are others making? Am I communicating this clearly?



The tools and resources in this issue of *DE Tips & Tools* were developed/compiled by [Darlene Goetzman](#), Certified Dialogue Education Teacher and GLP Partner. [Contact her](#) about coaching and consulting services, or to bring Dialogue Education™ directly to your company or organization.