

# **OK! SO ... TELL ME MORE ... ABOUT ... BUILDING BRIDGES 2.0**



- How do I register and participate?
- Why does the group exist?
- Why participate?
- What are the methods and activities used?
- What have been the prior experiences?
- How do we choose the divisive issue?

*Pure Disgust -> Angry Disagreement -> Civil Dialogue*

## **How do I register and participate?**

The Group will meet in-person on select Mondays from 6:30 - 8:30 pm at the **Stonebridge Club** – 9/18, 10/2, 10/9, 10/23, 11/6, and 11/13. Each session requires some pre-work and builds upon prior sessions, so participation continuity is important. Zoom connection and later replays for select full group sessions are available upon request. Contact Rick Frazier at [BuildingBridgesPH@gmail.com](mailto:BuildingBridgesPH@gmail.com) for additional information.

To register, please eMail [BuildingBridgesPH@gmail.com](mailto:BuildingBridgesPH@gmail.com) with your name and eMail. Registration closes 9/15. We will eMail you confirmation and a brief request for some additional information.

## **Why does the group exist?**

Major issues that threaten our U.S. democratic republic are going unresolved with ever-widening partisan division. This division is playing out badly among family, friends, neighbors, organizations, cities, states, and country. Multiple organizations have developed methods to help remedy the situation, but these methods are sparsely known and seldom implemented. The group was formed to influence participants to become better informed “unifiers” and “depolarizers” within their influence circles.

## **Why participate?**

Building Bridges is a proven and productive way to discuss our selected divisive issue:

- To enrich both the depth & breadth of the participants personal understanding of the issue
- To identify and build common ground
- To learn ways to disagree without being disagreeable
- To develop skills to become a uniting and depolarizing presence in your daily life

## **What are the methods and activities used?**

Methods and principles are drawn from several organizations (example: Braver Angels, Better Arguments, etc)

Emphasis:

- Group Agreement on Principles, Methods, and Tools
- Diverse political representation wherever possible
- Clear definition of the selected Issue

Structures Used:

- Presentations (video, in-person, role plays)
- Full Group Discussions
- Small Groups Discussions (2 – 4 people with full political range)
- Caucuses (6 – 12 people with similar views)
- Fishbowls (observe discussions, full group viewing listen only, structured question and answer sessions)

Examples of Principles, Methods, and Tools:

- Take winning off the table, replace with a curious mindset
- Seek to understand with depth, especially views different than yours
- Embrace full spectrum conversations (Values/Beliefs, Concerns/Desired Outcomes, Solution Paths)
- Increase self-awareness
- Prioritize relationships over ideas

## **What have been the prior experiences?**

We have conducted four prior cohorts – on (1) Voting Laws, (2) Income Inequality, (3) Immigration, and (4) Disinformation. Survey testing of our Disinformation (cohort #4) participants yielded the following highlights:

- 95+% said they would recommend Building Bridges to friends, family, and neighbors (either “likely” or “very likely”)
- 95+% said they enriched both the depth and breadth of understanding (either “better” or “way better”)
- 45% said they identified and built new common ground (either “better” or “way better”)
- 88% said they learned ways to conduct more civil dialog (either “a lot” or “a great deal”)

## **How do we choose the divisive issue?**

Our Building Bridges Full Group will focus on one major issue, selected by participants during early registration (using Ranked Choice Voting) to focus on for *all* of the 6 sessions:

- US Social Safety Net (health, food, housing)
- US Energy Policy
- US Trustworthy Elections

Once selected, the group will define and bound the selected issue.