

DEBRIEFING THE DEBRIEF:

A moment's insight is sometimes worth a life's experience
~Oliver Wendell Holmes



Goal: to integrate the experience obtained from our peace games to skills and concepts that can be applied to real-life issues, and help create a lens of peace to add to students' world.

The debrief is a learning **process** that seeks to progressively synergize, strengthen and transfer the learning of skills found in our peace games to their application in the daily life of every student we serve so that, with time, each student creates his or her own lens of peace to view the world. It provides an excellent opportunity for students and volunteers to learn more about themselves (individual behaviors, class dynamics, society's expectations, personal beliefs and assumptions) and begin to **create goals and action plans to become peacemakers** and make their communities more peaceful. Debriefs involve a **variety of techniques** from large group discussions to smaller group talks to individual reflection through art, in ways that **connect** the activities of the day with themes of the week and the skills practiced. The volunteer's challenge is to engage the student in an **ongoing dialogue** with him or herself, as well as with others, moving the student from the mastery of skills and concepts to their application in a journey of **self-empowerment**.

There are many different ways to visualize a debrief. The following diagram represents the debrief in the arrows that connect each level of learning. At first, only the yellow arrow may be reached as students learn about the skills used in the activities. With time, practice, and reflection, students will be able to progress to the next arrow and become more effective peacemakers in their community.



APPROACHING THE DEBRIEF:

There are many different approaches to debriefing, from a traditional large-group discussion to using storybooks and artwork, but all of them focus on how learning stems from an **active learning process**. Debriefing is the key to transforming a game into a meaningful learning experience. One approach is through this five-step process:

1. **Experience:** doing the game or activity
2. **Share:** What? Sharing results, observations and reactions
Sample Questions: What happened during the game? What stood out to you? What did you see or hear? Who noticed...? Did you find anything challenging? How did you feel when... happened?
3. **Process:** What's important? Relating what was observed to the learning objectives for the day (i.e. theme of the day)
Sample Questions: What do you think...meant? How does what we did in the game connect to [theme]? Did any predictions come true?
4. **Generalize:** So what? Connecting the skills and experiences from the game to real-world examples
Sample Questions: Did _____ remind you of something you might have seen or experienced before? How did you act in the game? How did you act in real-life? How do you think [real-life example] affects how you acted in the game?
5. **Apply:** Now what? Using the skills and lessons learned in daily life
Sample Questions: Where and how could we use [skill]? How do you think this game might change how you would approach...? If we played again, would you do something differently?

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To be an excellent facilitator during a debrief, you must be comfortable with the material that you are working with and have a clear goal in mind for where you would like your learners to be at the end of the session.

Remember: Communication is 7% the words we speak, 38% our tone, volume, inflection and intonation, and 55% nonverbal...**monitor your body language!**

A few tips:

1. Be **prepared** with clear objectives and goals that connect to the theme of the week
2. Create a **safe space** by making rules and expectations clear
3. Enforce **positive and respectful** interaction
4. Allow students to **learn from one another**
5. Expect participants to be **engaged**
6. Ask **open-ended questions** and model **active listening**
7. Be aware of **pacing**; keep an eye on the clock; keep it moving
8. Clarify with **examples**
9. Include a **variety** of activities
10. Offer **encouragement**, praise, and recognition
11. Get to know your **group dynamics** so you can adapt the material in a way that keeps students engaged
12. Understand that people like **to learn in different ways**
13. Have a sense of **closure** to your conversation
14. You may need to **park or table topics** that will derail the focus but may come back to them later
15. Don't be afraid to some times **call out** on students to answer a question
16. Keep participation **balanced**
17. Pay attention to **reactions, moods, and attentiveness.**
18. **Listen, listen, listen**

