

**Making Peace and
Decisions in the
Salmon Fishery**

Module 1:

Opening the Lenses

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INTRODUCTION: The Course and Our Approach

Purpose and Scope

The intent of this Program, and the companion Guidebook, is to deepen our understanding of how we can work more effectively together in making decisions that affect salmon, and in doing so building a better future for salmon and each other.

This program is designed to explore together some of the most challenging decisions faced by all parties in the fishery - challenges which arise out of conflicts which arise out of intensely felt values, and which reveal, test, and shape the internal tensions and responsibilities of individuals and organizations.

The program is shaped and delivered to speak to a broad range of situations - from interpersonal conflicts on the riverbank to difficult managerial challenges in the fishery at head office. The program will explore how the concepts, guiding principles, and steps to dealing with them are essentially the same, adapted as appropriate to the situation.

In that sense, although the metaphor is imperfect, it might be said that this program begins with Music 101, understanding the scales as a foundation for music played in many different ways and places and with different instruments for different audiences, but all with a common underpinning. And through the Program we will go on to explore different players, places, and venues within the fishery context, and how what happens "here" can quickly rebound "elsewhere". However, our experience suggests that the lessons that can be drawn can be adapted for many different uses, from simple conflicts between two friends to complex emotionally intense multi party conflicts, and from developing plans for a family vacation to developing plans for managing complicated issues like fisheries.

Exploring the nature and dynamics of interactions between individuals, and among multiple players with different goals and concerns across sectors, among governments and among diverse communities will be done by building up from, not downloading upon, situations that are not real, but could be...

A primary goal will be to develop perspectives, tools and strategies that leaders and managers of communities, First Nations, interest groups, unions, corporations governments can put to use on the ground and in the boardroom to build effective working relationships at the intersection of complex issues and relationships.

Examples of the topics covered include:

- Understanding responsibility and relationships
- Recognizing power and values
- Turning differences into assets
- Creating clear expectations as a foundation for effective working relationships
- Developing capacity to anticipate issues
- Implement proactive processes to prevent and respond to conflict

- Recognizing and valuing relationships as assets
- How and when to use participant driven collaboration effectively within organizations and with external interests.
- Creating sustainable outcomes through sustainable relationships

The expectation is that participants will develop additional lenses to look at relationships inside and external to each group or organization. Participating in this program may seem like learning a new language, or a new way of looking at relationships for some – but for everyone it will hopefully come to resonate as finding new ways of applying old skills.

This program is delivered in a dialogue format. The program leaders will employ a variety of techniques and approaches in leading discussions around concepts, tools, and skills. Their approach is based on sharing and debriefing “hands on” experience and “real life” learning of the participants and the instructors.

A mix of techniques will be employed in applying the concepts, with a “what worked, what didn’t work” analysis. Role Plays will be used to deepen the learning experience building from shorter to longer role-play situations dealing with increasingly complex fact patterns. The role-play experiences - while realistic and relevant - are most effective if they are related to but do not specifically mirror substantive issues currently being faced by the participants.

Participants will be provided with tools specifically designed to encourage and assist them in translating this experience into practical application "on the job" and “in the community’. These will be included in the Workbook and will be useful reminders well after the course is completed.

Key Strategic Lenses

Some of the strategic lenses that will be opened in this program include:

1. Relationships As An Asset

Investing in developing a relationship, and in the continuing attention necessary to preserve and enhance it is to build an asset, and manage risk.

2. Clarity of Expectations

Clear expectations as to the purpose and way we engage, make decisions and of the roles and responsibilities we have as participants, are the platform for productive exchanges and trusting relationships with others, within organizations and beyond organizations.

3. Managing At The Edges

Identifying and engaging external organizations and groups which influence the organization's choices and possible outcomes, and developing the internal competencies to do so effectively, will be critical to success.

4. Process For The Purpose, and The Players

Engaging participants in designing and building a process to fit the players and the purpose – whether a problem or an opportunity – as opposed to force-fitting the purpose into a process is critical to the effectiveness of realizing sustainable outcomes and relationships.

5. Safe Places For Difficult Conversations

Whether building and enhancing relationships or restoring those in difficulty, empowering individuals and empowering an organization by empowering individuals requires creating comfortable places for uncomfortable conversations.

6. Strength Through Diversity

What you see depends on where you stand, and the depth of the individual or organizational vision and the commitment to fulfill it will be stronger and more creative if molded within a diversity of values and experience, perspectives and histories.

7. The Power (and Limits) of Consensus

Reaching outcomes that “everyone can live with” - building consensus starts with the right to say no. This requires us to understand each partner's interests within the context of our own interests and to reach mutually acceptable outcomes where preferable to any other alternative. When consensus cannot be achieved, the basis for pursuing other alternatives is clear.

8. Sustainable Outcomes Through Sustainable Relationships

Predictable responses, timely actions, and being given the “benefit of the doubt”, are elements of a sustainable relationship; the outcome of a relationship not well managed are uncertain reactions, potential resistance, and “assume the worst” presumptions.

9. Conflict is Opportunity

Conflicts generate energy, often-enormous energy. This energy can be destructive or constructive. The process used to deal with conflict enormously influences how the energy within conflict can be constructively engaged in ways that provide an invaluable opportunity to forge innovative solutions and improve relationships.

10. “A Good Way to a Good Place”

The “way “ we choose to work together and resolve differences which may be standing like rocks on the road in front of a decision is a critical factor in whether we are able to reach a “place” where we all agree we want to be.