

**TABLE 1.1**  
**Approaches to discursive engagement with and across differences**  
**(Nagda & Gurin, 2007)**

	Debate	Discussion	Intergroup Dialogue
Understanding Difference and Dominance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differences as diversity—differences seen as individual differences, the result of individual prejudices and stereotypes</li> <li>• Differences in the context of sociocultural and power relations—differences seen to represent/emerge from cultural differences and unequal power (dominant-subordinated) relationships; analyses of structural and institutional systems of oppression and privilege; and consideration of differential social identity development processes for participants</li> </ul>		
Goals of Discursive Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To clarify pros and cons of issues</li> <li>• To develop critical thinking skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To generate different perspectives on issues</li> <li>• To increase perspective taking and critical thinking skills</li> <li>• To weigh or make decisions among different options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To increase critical self- and societal awareness</li> <li>• To increase intergroup communication, understanding, and collaborative actions</li> </ul>
Modes of Discursive Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A back-and-forth of arguments</li> <li>• Perseverance and advocacy of perspective</li> <li>• One right answer, determined by force of argument, identifying flaws in others' logic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Openness to different perspectives</li> <li>• Disparate or connected knowing</li> <li>• Varies in personalization and contextualization</li> <li>• Cognitive inquiry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on connected knowing (discerning similarities and differences)</li> <li>• Personalization, affective expression and empathic relations</li> <li>• Contextualization in larger systems</li> <li>• Self- and other inquiry</li> </ul>
Role of Community and Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community not considered</li> <li>• Fight to convince other</li> <li>• Conflict defined by positions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community as group of individuals, emphasis on similarities</li> <li>• Recognition of conflict of ideas without critical exploration</li> <li>• Compromise ("agree to disagree")</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse community, acknowledges differences as well as similarities</li> <li>• Conflicts surfaced and normalized; treated as opportunities for learning</li> <li>• Search for collaborative possibilities and social justice</li> </ul>

Note: Nagda & Gurin, 2007, used with permission.

with the dimensions of participatory learning about and across differences and sets the stage for understanding intergroup dialogue facilitation within this model (see also Nagda & Gurin, 2007). We refer to our model of intergroup dialogue as a critical-dialogic approach to differentiate it from approaches that only build relationships among participants without an explicit recognition of differences, and models that focus on raising consciousness to lead to action but do not deal fully with the complexity of relationships among the participants.

The *dialogic* goals of intergroup dialogue are aimed at building affective self–other relationships through personal storytelling and sharing, empathic listening, and interpersonal inquiry (Kim & Kim, 2008; Young, 1997). Dialogue seeks understanding across differences through connected knowing rather than an imposition of a singular perspective (as in debate) or serial monologues (as in discussion) (see chapter 8 for further distinction between debate and deliberation). Dialogue, in a critical-dialogic approach, seeks not only an understanding of one's own and others' perspectives on issues, but also an appreciation of life experiences that inform those perspectives. Participants learn to listen to others, share their own perspectives and experiences, reflect on their learning, and ask questions to more fully explore differences and commonalities within and across social identity groups.

The *critical* goals of intergroup dialogue are centered on understanding how power, privilege, and group-based inequalities structure individual and group life as well as on fostering individual and collective responsibilities for redressing inequalities and promoting social justice (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000; Freire, 1970). Dialogues across differences do not happen in a vacuum; intergroup dialogue is centrally concerned with issues of power and privilege and their effects on personal and social identities. Intergroup dialogue takes a critical understanding of difference, one that conceptualizes difference in the context of dominant-subordinated relationships and not simply as diversity (McMahon, 2003). In the intergroup context with participants from privileged and less-advantaged groups (such as people of color and White people, or women and men), participants usually hold different understandings and experiences of identities and inequalities (Tatum, 1997). Thus, we extend the basis of dialogue to *intergroup* dialogue; that is, we bring a critical perspective to dialogue.

Jointly, the *critical-dialogic* goals seek to mobilize the power of cross-group relationships not only as a focal point of analysis of structural inequalities and the consequences on group and individual lives, but also as sites for relating in ways that advance individual and collective agency for transformative social change (Nagda, 2006; Saunders, 1999). Through sharing, listening, and