

Hearing Isn't the Same  
As Listening:  
What's a Talking Stick?  
How Does it Work and Effect Listening?

The Talking Stick is not a new idea. In fact, the Talking Stick has been used for centuries as a way to promote peaceful, fair and focused heart listening with others.



This is an example of a talking stick, but a "stick" can be of any design.

Here's how it works: Those participating in the conversation use a decorated stick (a talking stick) to resolve a conflict or discuss an issue.

The talking stick serves as a visual reminder of: 1) who is speaking and 2) who is listening. When the speaker is finished, he/she passes the stick to the next person who will speak. That person, in turn, takes time to share and passes the stick again to the next person until everyone is finished speaking. It is simple. It is profound. And it is a proven technique that promotes authentic communication.

Participant Reviews



The Talking Stick is a unique method to get people talking, sharing and laughing.

*I am happy to recommend the Talking Stick program as an ongoing project. In our session, Marilyn made the youth feel very comfortable about opening up and talking about themselves, and her sense of humor allowed them to laugh at themselves and each other as they came to terms with their skills and imperfections, that is, their humanity. I think that an ongoing project would be valuable in making the realizations gained in each session "stick" (no pun intended!).*

Laura Wenzel

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*The workshop gave me an opportunity to communicate and to learn how to be a voice. I am normally very quiet and the talking stick gave me an opportunity to feel empowered!*

Rayshauna, teen participant  
Girls Club of Raleigh, NC

*This workshop is outstanding! It is an opportunity for youth to learn to communicate EFFECTIVELY!*

Nikki Graves, Director  
Girls Club of Raleigh, NC

The Talking Stick  
Workshop Overview

- ◆ Participants will first learn about the "Art of Listening" and will begin their listening practice.
- ◆ Participants will learn about the history and origins of the talking stick.
- ◆ Participants will design and decorate their group's talking stick.
- ◆ Participants will create a safe group environment by using the talking stick to listen to and respond to each other. They will address problems, issues and share stories from each other's lives.
- ◆ Participants will immediately process and talk about their experiences using the talking stick as well as share their plans for how they will listen differently as a result of this workshop.
- ◆ When appropriate, the group will be asked to: 1) document their results from their ongoing listening practice and 2) share their results from using the talking stick over time.



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## Listen: Educate. Inspire. Empower.

When you take the time to listen—deeply and openly listen—you can more quickly reach the “a-ha” moments, the emotion, the gist, the next-best idea, the connection you need to reach the next step. You spend less time reconfiguring, re-inventing, spinning your wheels.

Time spent listening well is  
time well spent.

## Your Workshop Guide

Marilyn Shannon is a wife and mother of 5. She is a licensed NC Superior Court mediator, trainer and the founder of Dialogue Inc., [www.powerofdialogue.com](http://www.powerofdialogue.com), her private coaching/mediation practice and ReEnchant Planet Earth, [www.reenchantplanetearth.com](http://www.reenchantplanetearth.com), a global initiative focusing on connecting the world for social change, social action and social education. Marilyn loves working with adults, teens, and children on stress management, emotional development and creativity training. For students grades 3- college Marilyn has programs focusing on test anxiety, focus and concentration. She has given workshops throughout the country focusing on leadership, communication and listening.

ReEnchant Planet Earth:

- ◆ Provides abundant opportunities for people to connect through their thoughts, ideas and experiences;
- ◆ Publishes an e-newsletter, *The Talking Stick*, which features inspirational stories;
- ◆ Provides its web guests with a unique shopping experience; and
- ◆ Promotes learning through its Global Learning Institute.



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ReEnchant Planet Earth

# Facilitated Listening Workshops

*Introducing a Powerful Way to:  
Build Character  
Build Relationships  
Build Bonds  
One Conversation at a Time*

