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July 2023 Articles

Lemon Grove Advancing Healthy Communities



IPS sponsors communication training for community members starting Aug. 5

By [David R. Shorey](#), East County Program Manager, Institute for Public Strategies

July 14, 2023 (Lemon Grove) -- The late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg once said, “You can disagree without being disagreeable.” For many, conversations around drugs and alcohol, homelessness, community redevelopment, law enforcement, and how tax dollars are spent, all elicit strong passions. Passions that sometimes take hold and overcome

our ability to engage with each other in a cordial, respectful, and civil manner.

I remember an incident that occurred to me when I was attending a City Council meeting regarding a request to sell alcohol at a market. During my presentation I was jeered and afterward, I was

confronted by a member of the audience about how I didn't know what I was talking about. I was able to disengage from the conversation. Still, my facts about alcohol outlet overconcentration, marketing, and the negative impact of some types of alcohol products seemed to be overcome by emotions. At one point a member of the audience had to be confronted by the Sheriff's lieutenant for not complying with the rules for speaking. It was a mess and an embarrassment to the city as a whole.

Lemon Grove residents now have an opportunity to receive training in communicating with each other and working through conflict. IPS East County is sponsoring this training to provide a framework for community members with



divergent perspectives to engage with each other in a civil, respectful and polite manner. The Culture Communication and Conflict Certificate Program for Community Leaders is offered by the National Conflict Resolution Center on four consecutive Saturdays in August at the Community Center. The eight-hour training is sponsored by the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency's Live Well Exchange Program. Lemon Grove residents will be given priority at registration. Participants must commit to attending each two-hour class on August 5, 12, 19 and 26 from 10 a.m. to noon. The training is open to the first 40 [registrants](#).



This training is awesome. I know firsthand

and. It helps focus on the conversation and not the personalities or the emotion of the issues. Participants will receive companion learning guides prior to each session with additional information, resources, and links to "burst learning videos. To receive the certificate, participants attend all four sessions. The four sessions are broken down into four topic areas.

The ARTful Conversation: Enhance skills in communicating in difficult situations - in ways that help to improve the relationship. Explore how others perceive and process conflict, and how to adapt your style to fit the situation.

The ART of Inclusive Communication: Explore your personal and cultural identities and how these relate to communication styles. Different styles can be at the root of communication breakdowns. By understanding types, you can recognize when a communication breakdown is happening.

The Bystander Challenge: What is a bystander's role when inappropriate behavior occurs? Empower yourself and others to have challenging conversations that demonstrate respect, inclusiveness, and dignity for everyone involved.

The Exchange: The Exchange is a structured process for resolving conflicts that empower participants to be fully engaged in problem-solving while valuing all interests.

It's becoming increasingly clear over the past few years that the country is becoming more divided. Community leaders are facing increasing challenges. This training will empower leaders with tools and techniques grounded in mediation theory and methodology. Community leaders will learn to revolutionize conflict management strategies, stand up to perceived microaggressions, and manage conversations in polarized environments.

You are urged to [sign up](#) and attend. I'll be there. We can learn how to engage in difficult topics related to alcohol and other drugs, substance use disorders, and public health. The link to these aligns with our efforts at IPS East County. We will help prepare Lemon Grove residents to address quality of life issues to improve public health and safety as the residents address our community challenges before elected leaders like the City Council. The training will also help with community-based groups and organizations that have a stake in the well-being of all residents in Lemon Grove. In today's polarized environment, this training is especially needed because it helps tamp down the hurtfulness that division causes and focuses on healthy communication and respectful conversation. I hope to see you there. When you register, tell us why you want to attend.



David R. Shorey is East County Program Manager for IPS. Courtesy photo.

IPS works alongside communities to build power, challenge systems of inequity, protect health and improve quality of life. IPS has a vision for safe, secure, vibrant and healthy communities where everyone can thrive. To learn more about IPS East County, follow us on our social media platforms: IPS East County [Facebook](#), IPS East County [Twitter](#), and East County Youth Coalition [Instagram](#). Our website is at IPSEast.org. Resources and services are available to assist with screening, treatment, and recovery for individuals with a substance use disorder. The Access & Crisis line is open year-round, 24/7 at [\(888\) 724-7240](tel:(888)724-7240).



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