

# Consultation

Universal non-adversarial process understood as a **collective search for truth**

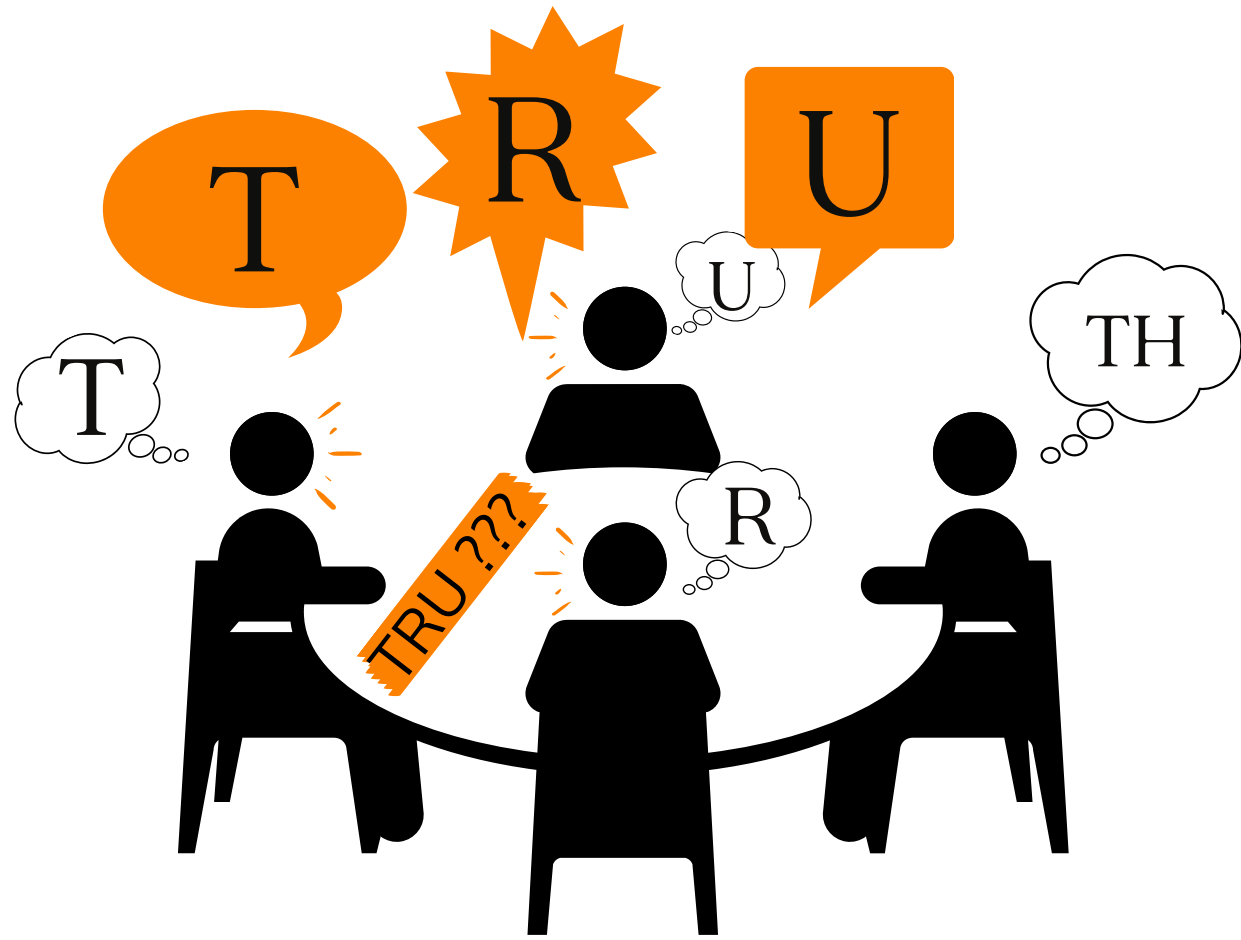
Consultation is a collective verbal exchange of thoughts, experiences, and wisdom to make decisions and advise our direction.

Consultation should involve:

- People that have information about the topic
- People that will implement the decisions
- People that will be impacted by the decisions

Elements of Effective Consultation:

- Group owns the decision-making authority – as a group.
- Group has access to the same information.
- Mindfulness of power dynamics and efforts to mitigate inequalities.
- Equal participation in the discussions jointly assessing the problem and the solution is critical.
- Ideas are offered for the benefit of the group.
- Deliberations are confidential and without attribution.
- The group collectively makes and owns the final decision.
- Ideally all agree; but, if a group vote is necessary, the majority rules.
- Once a decision is made, the group unites behind it.



## Ineffective Qualities



Ego



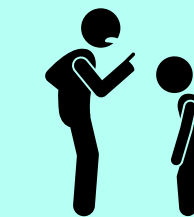
Negative body language

Competition

Stubbornness



Not engaging/  
withholding



Belittling

Impatience

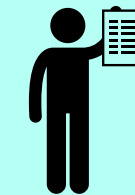
Quick assumptions

Suspicion



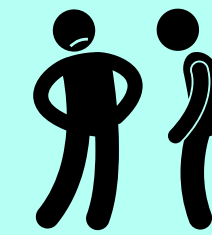
Backbiting/gossip after meeting

Using coded language



Under/over-use of power

Focusing on the person, rather than the idea



Denying others' experiences/their truth

Prioritizing nice over addressing hard issues  
(avoidance of conflict)

## Effective Qualities

Love



Respect



Posture of inquiry

Truth-Seeking



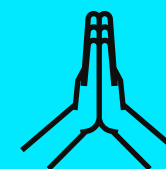
Kindness

Humility



Seeing  
Commonalities

Detachment from  
ego and opinions



Patience

Creativity

Honoring each  
others dignity

Honesty



Careful  
Listening

Seeing  
Commonalities

Forgiveness

Authentic  
Emotion



Believing/honoring each other's lived experience

Naming difficult issues; talking through conflict



Consultation is a Baha'i decision-making process used by Organic Oneness. Adapted from Materials Courtesy of the Tahirih Justice Center. Used by permission.