The U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group: Make Agent Orange History
Track Two diplomacy and the case of the U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group

Skills Exercise 3: The Island - 40 min.

◆ **Skills practiced:** Active listening (open ended questions, paraphrasing, reframing), decision-making

◆ **Purpose:** Students practice, observe and critique active listening and practice reaching consensus.

◆ **Situation:** Far to the South of Hawai‘i in an unchartered part of the Pacific there is a remote, uninhabited island. Seven people are stranded on the island after a plane crash. A rescue plane found the island but can only seat one person. The chances of a second trip are remote because the island is uncharted. The people left on the island will not starve, but their existence for the next several weeks will be meager and difficult. **Which one person should be allowed to make the plane trip home?**

◆ **The People:**
  - Sheila Jones—a pregnant woman, close to due date; has a history of difficult childbirths
  - Rodney McLaren—an internationally famous surgeon who is needed in Chicago to perform an emergency liver transplant
  - Suzie Smith—a teenage girl who was orphaned several years ago. This experience has been terribly difficult and she is hysterical and close to a psychotic break.
  - William Bundy—Vice President, United States. The President is critically ill in Washington and is not expected to live
  - Sol Riley—an 87 year-old seafood salesman. Sol was injured in the crash and has a possible broken back.
  - Sandra Yokoyama—a nuclear scientist who is needed in Japan to help diffuse a potential reactor problem
  - Kazu Yokoyama—Sandra's three year old daughter

◆ **Instructions:** The class splits into groups and doubles up on roles if necessary. The first person presents their argument for whom should get the empty seat on the rescue plane. The second person summarizes what they said (using good reframing or paraphrasing skills) reflecting the ideas and feelings of the previous speaker accurately and to that person's satisfaction. Once the listener has satisfactorily summarized, they then get to talk and present their argument for whom should get the seat on the rescue plane. Everyone in the circle should summarize and present their argument (round robin) before the discussion opens to anybody. Instructor should give examples before the activity begins. Group has 20 minutes to come to consensus on who should get the empty seat on the plane. Then the class discusses the exercise.
  - What was challenging in the way communication was conducted in the group?
  - How does using restating techniques change communication?
- Did you use other elements of active listening?