



CONVERSATION CAFÉ

Agreements for Great Conversations

- suspend judgment as best you can
- listen... with respect
- seek to understand rather than persuade
- invite and honor diversity of opinion
- speak what has personal heart and meaning
- go for honesty and depth ... without going on and on

Basic Process

- The simple agreements set the stage for the shift from small talk to big talk.
- Hosts welcome everyone, state the theme for the café, read the agreements, set an ending time and call for a moment of silence to relax, reflect and become open.
- Go around the circle once, inviting each person to say their name and speak to what is in their heart and mind regarding the theme (pass if you like). Remarks should be succinct to allow time for everyone to speak. Pass the talking object, if in use. No feedback or response.
- Go around the circle again, giving each person another chance to speak without feedback or response.
 - To allow more time for conversation, keep remarks brief, possibly just naming the theme or subjects you want to delve into more deeply.
 - If someone wants to respond to another's comments, they can do so in their own turn or when the circle is opened for conversation. Use the talking object.
- Open up the conversation. Keep in mind the agreements.
- To close, go around the circle again, people may briefly say what they are taking away from conversation.