

National Week of Conversation Bridging the Political Divide

Suggestions for Setting Up a Small Group Conversation

Step 1: Make a commitment to participate in National Week of Conversation

- Sign up at <https://www.revivecivility.org/national-week-conversation>
- Encourage others you know to join you and take part in National Week of Conversation

Step 2: Decide what type of small group conversation you want to have

- Your goal is to have a civil and respectful conversation with a small group (4-6 people) who have a variety of different views on the major issues facing our country.
- You can either invite a few people you know or others you have not met but think they might be interested in this opportunity.
- There are basically a few different ways to get a small group together:
 - Have 2-3 people from one group get together with 2-3 people from another group that is more liberal or conservative.
 - Gather a group of neighbors, friends or colleagues who have different views for a conversation.
 - Arrange for a larger group that meets frequently (civic club, community organization, church, class, etc.) to participate by dividing into small groups during a regular meeting.

Step 3: Decide who you want to invite

- The easiest thing may be to invite people who have something in common, but have different political views. Some examples are:
 - **Faith Based** - If you are affiliated with a church, synagogue or mosque, you may want to invite a couple of people from your congregation to meet with 2-3 people from a different denomination that is generally more liberal or conservative than yours (i.e. Presbyterians could meet with Southern Baptists).
 - **School/Universities** - If you are at a university you could arrange a meeting between students who represent different campus organizations (i.e. members of conservative or liberal political groups).
 - **Political Groups** - One other easy way to find participants in a small group conversation in the community or on a campus is to invite people who are directly affiliated with a different political party. For example, ask the officers or others active with the local Democrat and Republican parties in the community (or the campus) to meet together.

- If you have a diverse group of friends or colleagues, make a list of several to invite
- Think of personal contacts you have with leaders of groups that meet regularly and have people of different views in them—like civic clubs, professional associations and college classes. Reach out to someone you think may be interested and ask if they would like to have their group participate in National Week of Conversation.

Step 4: Issue an invitation to your potential conversation partners

- Decide whether you want to issue invitations via email, over the phone or in a personal conversation.
- Depending on the type of small group you are organizing, you may be able to arrange it by just reaching out to one or two people who will bring others with them. In other situations where you are inviting people from your personal network, you will want to issue invitations to each person.
- Whichever invitation method you use, share the purpose of getting together and make it clear that you are part of a national effort involving many people.
 - You may want to say something like this in your invitation: "A number of national groups are organizing a [National Week of Conversation](#) to encourage people of different political views to get together, listen across differences to each other and share ideas about how to promote civility and respect in the 2018 elections. I want to participate in this week of conversations and would like you to join me in a small group conversation. Would you be willing to be part of a group discussion that will last about an hour to talk about what how we can help bridge divides and revive civility in our country?"
- If you send an email, you may also want to connect through a follow up call to explain National Week of Conversation more fully and how easy it is to participate
- You may also wish to share the [Five Questions for Americans Worksheet](#) with your potential conversation partners so they can see that the questions are non-partisan and not politically charged.
- Of course, if those you invite don't accept, go back to step two and start over again from there! Many people are eager to see a more united country and it starts with us listening to each other.

Step 5: Agree on a time and place to meet

- Small group conversations will generally be about an hour long so meet in a place where you can be relaxed and talk easily. Set a time that is convenient for everyone and that will enable you to have enough time to talk together without being rushed.
- Some locations that might work are a coffee shop, an office, a room in your house, a community center, or a library meeting room.

- If at all possible meet during April 20-28, which is when people nationwide will participate in the National Week of Conversation. However, if your schedules conflict that week then schedule the conversation for as close to the week as you can.

Step 6: Download and share the One on One Conversation Guide and the Five Questions Worksheet

- Make copies for yourself of both the [Small Group Conversation Guide](#) and the Five Questions for Americans Worksheet.
- Share the [Small Group Conversation Guide](#) and/or a copy of the [Five Questions for Americans Worksheet](#) with others who are going to participate
- Read through the five questions and, if you want, make notes on the answers that come to mind for you.

Step 7: Meet with your small group and discuss the Five Questions

- Make sure you or someone else in your small group takes responsibility to ask the questions and guide the conversation as described in the conversation guide. If you want, more than one person can use the conversation guide and take turns leading the conversation.
- Make notes on your [Five Questions for Americans Worksheet](#) about responses to the questions and ideas you and others generate in the conversation.
- Share information about how to report the results of your conversation and determine who from your group will report on the conversation.

Step 8: Take five minutes to share some feedback about your conversation

- Ideas are being gathered from around the country to share with other citizens, media and policy makers. Thus, your responses can be part of something that helps us influence the tone of politics in 2018.
- Go online and answer the brief questions about your conversation here <https://www.revivecivility.org/NWOC-Form>.
- Sharing your conversation on social media can also help change the tone of our conversations (take a photo, or short video with an idea you had). Make sure you use the #ListenFirst, #NWOC, and #ReviveCivility hashtag so we can follow your journey.