



QUESTION BANK — CONVERSATION CAFE

Questions for our First Conversation Week in 2002, addressing 9/11, from the original Conversation Café team:

How is 9/11 changing your life? (thinking)

Where do you see reason for hope? (feeling)

What are you now called to do? (doing)

Other questions generated by the first 9/11 Conversation Café hosts:

What is our common good?

What do I really care about?

What am I here to do?

What do you do when you don't know what to do?

What beliefs and values do we hold most dear in this time of uncertainty and change?

What do we really mean by "security"?

In the context of current events, how do we create community for the common good?

In the midst of this catastrophe, what illusions about myself and my world am I starting to see through?

What realities am I starting to touch, whether of a painful or hopeful sort?

What is missing for our world to no longer be a breeding ground for anger and terrorism?

What would be the essential elements for creating a world that is thriving, sustainable and just for all?

What is the larger possibility of the *Global Coalition Against Terrorism*? How can we make that possibility a reality?

What is the deeper meaning of the events of September 11 and this period in our common history?

What stories of hope and possibility can I see at this critical moment in our human community?

What can I do personally in my own world (family, organization, community) to make a difference and to promote a life affirming future?

What deeper opportunities might this time make possible? What can we each do personally to contribute to a life affirming future for ourselves and for others around us?

Questions from Subsequent Conversation Weeks:

During Conversation Week March 9-15th 2003, participating Cafés discussed the following set of questions:

Most people struggling with their everyday lives seem to have little time or energy to really participate in democracy. If we find a way to slow down a little, what changes in the world seem possible?

Has a conversation ever changed the way you feel about the world?

Has a conversation ever changed the way you live or caused you to do something new?

During Conversation Week 2007, participating Cafés discussed the following set of questions:

What do you think is the most important question in the world now?

What's the highest leverage action you or anyone could take towards a just, peaceful, and sustainable world by 2025?

How are we making life better for our children – and what else can we be doing?

What do you think we can do now to make life better here?

What do you believe freedom is for?

What does it mean to you to be a human?

How can we heal the wounds of violence and war?

What is one of the most important things you have learned in your life so far?

How much is enough? For you? For others?

When do you feel most alive?

During Conversation Week 2008 participants discussed the following set of questions:

How can we best prepare our children for the future?

What does sustainability look like to you? How do we get there? (How can humanity both continue to provide lives of dignity for its billions while concurrently living within the resource-means of the planet?)

How do humans need to adapt to survive the changes predicted for this century?

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How do we shift from “Me” to “We” on both the local and global levels?

How can you, as Gandhi said, be the change that you want to see in the world?

What kind of economic structures can best support a shift to sustainable living?

How should we re-invent the political process so that people feel that they have a voice?

What kind of leadership does the world need now?

How can we balance our personal needs with the most pressing needs of our community and the larger world?

What can we do to reduce or eliminate violence in the world?

For more question banks and to learn more about past and future Conversation Week, visit www.ConversationCafe.org. You will find:

A report on Conversation Week 2007

Topics from Long-time Conversation Café Hosts, such as:

- Two and a half years of questions from long-time host Larry Gaffin’s Conversation Cafés at the Blue Willow Tea House, the Café Chazen, and Starbucks– Madison Park.
- Two years of topics at the Pegasus, by Kat Gjovik.
- Three years of topics from Jim Rough’s Conversation Cafes in Port Townsend.
- Questions for All Comers from John Hartmann in Louisville, Kentucky.
- Questions and topics from other hosts everywhere!