

# QUESTIONS & TOPICS FROM CONVERSATION CAFES EVERYWHERE



*This collection of questions and topics comes from Conversations Cafes hosted in various places.*

## **Conversation Café Host, Elizabeth Davidson, Cottage Bakery and Café, Tucson's Eastside USA**

Restarting Your Life

What Is Your Most Important Moment?

Mindfulness

## **Walt Hillman**

The Human Condition

The Ethics of Belief

The Nature of the Mind

Psychological Suffering

Acceptance and Tolerance

## **Conversation Café Host Joseph Losi, 5 Spot Café, Seattle, Washington, USA**

War in Iraq: My Patriotism, What Does Being Patriotic Mean to Me? What are Patriotic Acts? Who are your Patriotic Heroes? Past? Current? Is Patriotism Confined by National Borders?

## **Conversation Café Host & Co-Founder, Vicki Robin, host, Nana's Soup House, Seattle, Washington, USA**

### *Questions About Limits:*

What are the limits in your life? Which did you choose, which were imposed?

When have you been restrained against your will - be it due shyness, fear, laws, customs, or illness?

How do limits help you and how do they hinder you?

When have you gone too far?

When have you resigned yourself to a limit?

Are some rules made to be broken, and others not?

Who or what makes the rules?

What do we really have no control over? What are natural laws and limits?

### *Questions About Freedom:*

By what do you measure your freedom?

Have you chosen freedom at the expense of another? What happened?

# QUESTIONS & TOPICS FROM CONVERSATION CAFES EVERYWHERE



Do other cultures think about freedom as we do?

What do you need to be free?

When have you felt the most free?

Are only humans free?

Whose freedoms would you limit in order to feel safe? How would you limit them?

What do you think of when you hear the terms: Free play, Free time, No such thing as a free lunch, Free trade, America is a free country?

## *Questions About Identity:*

Do 'I' change when my social role changes - married, divorced, have a child, empty nest, retirement?

What doesn't change as I go through a series of identities?

Are guilt and embarrassment indicators that I am doing something I don't think is 'me'?

Is saying, "I'm just this way!" an excuse or self-knowledge or...?

Has there been a time when you tried on a different identity - what was that like?

Was there a time when a challenging life circumstance thrust you into a new identity? How did that feel?

Does America have an identity in the world?

Does the identity of America match your identity? Does your identity match what you think an American is?

## **Conversation Café Host, Trish Rosas, Rincon Market, Tucson, Arizona, USA**

What Am I Here For? What Is My Purpose?

What fictional or historical character would you like to bring to the Conversation Café, and why? (Trish credits Sue and Jack for this idea!)

Values

Your Ideal Community

Reinvigorating Conversation in our daily lives

Does the News Match Your Views?

## **Conversation Café Host, Wil Savage, W. Seattle, Washington, USA**

How do songs, dances, and stories affect your lives?

# QUESTIONS & TOPICS FROM CONVERSATION CAFES EVERYWHERE



## Conversation Café Host, Myra Beals, Fort Bragg, California, USA

TOPIC: "Tis the Season" for.....Listing, shopping, buying, wrapping, giving, wishing, receiving, trimming, cleaning, baking, entertaining, singing, fasting, eating, visiting, traveling....perhaps some fairly typical activities for Americans during December? With Winter Solstice, Hanukah, Ramadan, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and the New Year approaching, what is most meaningful about "the season?" What traditions are treasured? What traditions might be started? How have perspectives regarding "the season" changed over the years? What would be a favorite seasonal greeting card - to send and to receive?

TOPIC: After the Election - What's Next? Some questions to consider: What, if anything, puzzles or frustrates you about the 2004 election process? In this campaign season, what do you think we can be proud of? What lessons might we learn from this election experience that could help us in what we do next? What impact do you think this election's outcome will have on long term social change and transformation? If you were able to mobilize millions of people, what would you want them to realize and do? Given what is happening, what changes are you, personally, eager to play a role in?

TOPIC: Presidential Election - What do you hope will change or stay the same as a result of the presidential election? What are the likely long term consequences and what needs to happen during the next four years to bring about a world that you want to live in? What specific strategies will you pursue during the next four years?

TOPIC: Marriage Equality

TOPIC: Are we facing a resources crisis in this country/in the world and what can we do about it? Some questions to consider include: What is our responsibility to the Earth, to all living things? How do we as humans in the late 20th century harness our collective intelligence to stabilize the depletion of Earth's resources? How far are we willing to go to "Protect Our Home?" Is our Earth in a run-away economic system, incapable of being balanced, which will cause the eco-structure to fail?

TOPIC: Power and politics - can we do it better? Winners take all. Polarization replaces reasoned debate. Stalemate in so many areas. Voting is down. What changes - personal and/or in the current system - need to happen to create a more participatory democracy? What might a politics of understanding look like where everyone has a piece of the truth? How much effort should be put into understanding another side to any given issue? Is "propaganda" ever justified, and if so when, and why? What changes - in ourselves or in our system - would need to happen for us to feel like we are citizens participating in a democracy?