



CORE PRINCIPLES FOR CONVERSATION CAFE

Conversation Cafes were designed as a gift to the world. The hope was that this method and conversations using the CC method would spread “with integrity and fidelity” – stay both true to form yet give hosts the maximum freedom to adapt it to their situation. In 2003 Conversation Café hosts in Seattle worked for 6 months with Keith McCandless, a host and also a professional consultant, to establish the essential core principles of the Conversation Cafes.

During ongoing Conversation Cafés and special events, we use the Conversation Café Agreements & Process to assure:

- **Inclusivity:** Create an inviting climate in which everyone is inspired to speak and listen, and where diverse perspectives may emerge.
- **One host at least – everyone able to host at best:** Ensure that at least one host is present at each Conversation Café gathering – ideally every table has a host.
- **Open access:** Anyone may participate who follows the “rules” (Process, Agreements and Principles). Conversation Cafés are open to all, without charge.

During Conversation Cafés (between the opening and closing rounds) and when working with others to support and grow the initiative, we commit to:

- **What is said cannot be owned by anyone:** Clarify that what is said in the Conversation Café must be considered to be in the public domain. No one at the table nor outside the conversation can claim exclusive ownership of the ideas that emerge.
- **Commercial-free [and agenda-free] zones:** No one may attend primarily to promote or impose a particular agenda, point of view, outcome, solution or cause – or market a product, service or event.
- **No committees:** There will be no political networking, committee formation or action groups.
- **Continuing to push our edges:** Encourage people to become hosts in a wide variety of settings.
- **Empowering hosts:** Provide clear information to all hosts and participants about the mechanics of hosting a Conversation Cafés and the open, inquisitive spirit of hosting.
- **Maintaining integrity and fidelity:** Any event calling itself a Conversation Café must abide by the Conversation Café “Process and Agreements” and principles. Borrowing from or altering these is encouraged, but such adaptations should not be called Conversation Cafés.

Over six months and multiple conversations with hosts spread across North America, the Advisory Board developed this Charter to guide progress and growth. To read about that process and the development of the Conversation Café method, download the 2003 Annual Report on the Conversation Café website.

For more information and hosting resources, visit: www.conversationcafe.org.