

CONVERSATION CAFÉ FOR YOUTH — Convener's Directions



The Conversation Café model lends itself well to engaging youth in dialogue. The following modifications were inspired by Leslie Schneider and further developed by Jacquelyn Pogue and Sarah Jayne.

DIRECTIONS:

The teacher or group leader serves as the **Convener**. He or she sets the date, start/end time, and topic for the conversation. Invites the participants.

Preparation for the Event:

- a. Familiarize yourself with the *Conversation Café* method.
- b. Choose a topic or question for the conversation.
- c. Make copies for each participant of *Role Descriptions* and *Process & Agreements*.
- d. Ideal group size is six to eight. For each group, label six index cards each with one role: *Welcomer, Explainer, Inviter, Reminder, Focuser, Opposer*.
- e. Provide a talking object and timepiece for each group.
- f. Set out refreshments (optional).
- g. Arrange chairs in a circle (may also use a round table) for each group. Adjust temperature and lighting.

Bring to Event: handouts, labeled index cards, talking objects, timepieces, refreshments (optional)

The Event:

- a. Introduce self and welcome the participants. Have them sit in their small groups.
- b. Pass out the handouts to participants and a set of labeled index cards for each group.
- c. Describe the roles (refer to **Roles** handout). Have participants within each group volunteer to take a role. If necessary, ask, *"Who is willing to take the roles that are left over?"* The **Convener** can also take a role. Some people may take two roles. Each person takes their index card.
- d. Announce the topic or question and have participants write it on #6 of the **Process & Agreements** handout.
- e. Tell the **Focuser(s)** the time that the 3-minute signal should be announced. *(The 3-minute signal should take place about 10 minutes prior to the time the event is scheduled to end. This allows for approximately 3 minutes for finishing the Conversation, 4 minutes for the Final Round, and 3 minutes for feedback from the participants.)*
- f. **Welcomer(s)** begin the Conversation following the instructions in their handouts.

Ending the Event:

- a. Ask for feedback on the topic and/or their experience of the conversation.
- b. Thank the participants.

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