



Sacred Rules for Peaceful Dialogue

Everyone wants to be heard, but a conversation cannot be had if everyone is talking over one another. Use the tips below to help navigate difficult conversations:

<h2 style="margin: 0;">DIALOGUE</h2> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: 0.9em;">the mutual understanding of each other's points of view</p>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">DEBATE</h2> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: 0.9em;">the argument of my position over that of another</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I listen to learn. I take seriously someone else's point of view. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I listen to counter. I am closed to someone else's ideas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I listen for strengths, so that I may affirm and learn someone's point of view. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I listen for weakness, so that I may discount and devalue someone's point of view.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I speak for myself. I use my own experiences and point of view. I try to examine my own assumptions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I speak for others. I assert my assumptions about others' experiences and motives in an effort to vindicate my point of view.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I ask questions to clarify and increase my understanding of someone else's point of view. (I try to suspend judgment and give my conversation partner a fair hearing.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I ask questions to control the conversation, or to confuse my conversation partner. I look for ways to affirm my point of view. My goal is to win the debate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I allow my conversation partner to complete a thought. I wait until s/he is finished to respond. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I interrupt my conversation partner or change the subject.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I concentrate on others' words, feelings, body language, and other modes of communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I concentrate on my response or my next point.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I respect others' experiences as true and valid for them. I desire to learn from these experiences to come to new understandings of my own. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I interpret others' experiences as naïve, incorrect, or distorted (while championing my own). I desire to bring my conversation partner to my point of view.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I respect others' feelings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I distrust feelings as manipulative.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I honor silence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I use silence to my advantage.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I look for ways to extend the conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I look for ways to end the conversation.

Adapted from resources developed by [Scarboro Missions](#)

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