



# **The Coronado Democratic Club**

**General Meeting Program**

**Saturday, January 13, 2024**

**How to Talk Politics**

**with People With Whom You Disagree**

**Presented by Marc Meyer, Director of Operations**

**National Conflict Resolution Center**



# **How To Talk Politics With People With Whom You Disagree**

**Marc Meyer,  
Director of Operations  
National Conflict  
Resolution Center**



**NATIONAL  
CONFLICT  
RESOLUTION  
CENTER.**

**CURIOSITY AND RESPECT FOR  
SOMEONE ELSE'S VIEWS ARE THE  
FOUNDATION FOR BRIDGING THE  
POLITICAL DIVIDE.**

**- TANIA ISRAEL, PhD  
UC Santa Barbara, Beyond Your Bubble**



# AMERICA'S HIDDEN POLITICAL DIVISIONS

## The Spectrum of Political Beliefs in the U.S.

**LIBERAL  
MINDSET**

**THE EXHAUSTED MAJORITY  
67% OF THE U.S. POPULATION**

**CONSERVATIVE  
MINDSET**

**Progressive  
Activists**

8%

**Traditional &  
Passive Liberals**

26%

**Politically  
Disengaged**

26%

**Politically  
Moderate**

15%

**Traditional & Devoted  
Conservatives**

25%

# TYPES OF COGNITIVE BIASES THAT BLOCK OUR ABILITY TO DISCUSS HOT TOPICS

## In-group Bias

~ favoring one's own group particularly over other groups  
(Dictionary of Psychology)



## Polarization Bias

~ overestimating the level of disagreement between oneself and members of opposing political groups

~ overestimating the prevalence of extreme beliefs within other groups. (Research by Dawn Chow and Jeffrey Lees)



# **Controversial Topic Round One**

**All homeless  
people should be  
forcibly removed  
from their  
encampments on  
the streets.**



# THE ARTFUL CONVERSATION



**A**CTIVE AWARENESS

**R**ESPOND RESPECTFULLY

**T**ROUBLESHOOT TOGETHER





**Identify Underlying Needs**

**Check Your Bias and Your Ego**

**Recognize Style Differences**





**Actively Listen**

**Ask open-ended questions**

**Acknowledge without agreeing**



**Tell your perspective in a  
nonconfrontational way**

**Look for mutually beneficial solutions**

**End on a positive note**



# **Controversial Topic Round Two**

**All homeless  
people should be  
forcibly removed  
from their  
encampments on  
the streets.**

## ACTIVE AWARENESS

- Identify underlying needs
- Check your bias and your ego
- Recognize style differences

## RESPOND RESPECTFULLY

- Active Listening
- Ask open ended questions
- Acknowledge without agreeing

## TROUBLESHOOT TOGETHER

- Tell your perspective in a non-confrontational way
- Look for mutually beneficial solutions
- End on a positive note





# TIPS FOR DIALOGUE

Let go of believing that you own the only truth about the situation.

Work on trying to be thoughtful instead of trying to prove you are right.

Ask yourself: How can I say what I want to tell them in a way that they can hear it?

Do what you can to really listen to the other person. As much as possible, show genuine curiosity about what led them to their opinion of the situation.

Take time to ground yourself before talking to the person.

# **10 TIPS FOR DIALOGUE**

## **from NCRC handout card**

**1**

Work on trying to be thoughtful instead of trying to prove that you are right.

**2** Acknowledge that you have a right to your feelings and that it is okay for you to be upset. By doing so, you will be able to move through your own emotions better. Then, you will be able to accept the other person's reactions.

# **10 TIPS FOR DIALOGUE**

## **from NCRC handout card**

**3**

**Let go of believing that you own the only truth about the situation.**

**4**

**Recognize that ignoring or attacking the other person rarely gets you what you really need.**

# **10 TIPS FOR DIALOGUE**

## **from NCRC handout card**

**5**

Do what you can to really listen to the other person. As much as possible, show genuine curiosity about what led them to their opinion of the situation.

**6**

Ask yourself: How can I say what I want to tell them in a way that they can hear it?



# **10 TIPS FOR DIALOGUE**

## **from NCRC handout card**

**7**

**Know this: Almost all conflicts have their basis in an underlying need not being met (respect, acknowledgment, acceptance, fairness, etc.) The more you can communicate your needs, instead of your complaints, the better off you will be.**

**8**

**Take time before you talk. It is hard to think clearly when one is angry.**

# **10 TIPS FOR DIALOGUE**

## **from NCRC handout card**

**9**

**Don't be afraid to acknowledge responsibility for any mistakes you might have made.**

**Also acknowledge what the other person is right about.**

**These gestures go a long way to build momentum in moving forward.**

**10**

**No matter what you are doing to de-escalate the situation and no matter what the other person may be doing that might escalate it, always come from a place of respect, understanding and humility.**

## **MORE INFORMATION?**

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