

HAVING EFFECTIVE EVANGELISTIC DIALOGUE

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Summary: *A key to putting on a great Faith & Chai event is preparing the leaders to dialogue well. Genuine interfaith dialogue takes practice and humility. We hope this training helps prepare you to share faith confidently while building trust with South Asian students from other faith backgrounds.*

FOR MORE RESOURCES, VISIT
www.mem.intervarsity.org/resources

WHAT IS DIALOGUE?

Read the “What is Dialogue?” handout together.

- What is one thing that stood out to you from the reading?
- Dialogue is a way of **more accurately** sharing our beliefs/thoughts with someone else.
- Dialogue doesn’t mean compromise!

TALKING ABOUT JESUS AND THE GOSPEL

- **SHARE:** How has the grace of God personally influenced/changed your life?
 - Our stories are powerful tools to explain the Gospel in interfaith discussions, so it’s important to practice articulating your testimony.
- When talking about Jesus and the Gospel focus on what is unique:
 - **Human condition** – No one is perfect. Can’t seem to “work” out of it
 - Christianity answers not just the question of what to do but what to do when you can’t do it all
 - **GRACE** – God accepts us not because of our moral efforts/works but because of the efforts and sacrifice of Jesus.
 - Motivates us to obey God out of love instead of out of fear/duty
 - We are so sinful that God had to die for us but so loved that God chose to die for us.
 - Jesus was **self-centered** in His teaching – Believe IN Jesus and what HE did Vs. believe your math teacher NOT in your math teacher
 - **Divinity** of Jesus – Claimed to be more than a prophet, man, guru or good teacher
 - **Spirit of Jesus** – I could never write like Shakespeare unless somehow the spirit of Shakespeare came inside me. I could never live like Jesus unless the Spirit of Jesus empowered me to. Jesus gives us His Spirit so we can live like Him.

PRACTICING DIALOGUE

Role-play a spiritual discussion using the questions below

- What do you believe is the purpose/meaning of life?
- What do you believe happens when a person dies?
- How do you believe God/Supreme being communicates with people?
- Do you believe a person can have a relationship with God/Supreme Being?

*The goal isn’t to answer the questions perfectly but to share honestly and bring up Jesus and His gospel.

Reflect and Debrief:

- What was it like to answer these questions? What came naturally or where did you find yourself stuck?
- How well were you able to continue a conversation or invite responses?
- Did you find opportunities to weave in your personal experiences or story? Where were opportunities where you could have shared some of that?

Our goal should not be just to share our own perspective, but listen well to others. Asking questions and engaging well with others' beliefs will build trust and foster better conversations.

Ideas for how to respond to peoples' comments:

"I see what you're saying. Let me just clarify what I'm hearing. "

"I think it's like this....for this reason...."

"What do you think about that?"

What are some other ways to respond to someone's thoughts or comments?

TIPS FOR CONVERSATION IN GROUPS

- Discuss one question/topic at a time.
- Give everyone a chance to share. Be a good listener
- Try to get everyone in the group involved /prevent side conversations
- Share your personal spiritual journey
- Try to avoid discussing at length issues that aren't central or that would lead to a better understanding of the Gospel. (arranged/love marriages, dress code, dietary restrictions, etc.)
- This is an art not a science. You learn how to do it the more you engage in it.
- Have fun, laugh and make jokes