



Overview

Pivot conversations focus on the kinds of questions that matter in our world today. They are a space to explore the big questions without fear: Who am I, what matters, and what is my place in the world?

In these conversations, how you have the conversation is more important than the outcome, and honesty is more important than being correct. Everybody is welcome. This is a crossroads where people discuss their lives, hopes, and challenges.

The conversations will be challenging because these are questions that are deeply personal and people won't agree. Despite that, this should be a place where people feel loved and cared for no matter who they are. Easier said than done! But the impetus to create these resources is a Christian understanding that Jesus has called Christians to create spaces just like these in the world.

The Conversation

Preparation

- **Place & Time:** Find a place where you can have a rich conversation. Assume the conversations will take about 1.5 to 2 hours. Food and drinks are always a bonus!
- **Size:** The best size groups are approximately 6 people. If groups are larger than this, break them into sub-groups.
- **Topic:** Choose a Pivot Conversation. Email it out to everybody in advance, if possible. Check Pivotnw.org for companion Podcasts for each guide to better grasp them.

The Conversation

- **Choose a Facilitator:** Choose a facilitator who will watch the time and make sure everyone is heard. They should not dominate the conversation but instead ensure space is created for everybody else. They should not be contributing any more than 10% of the conversation.
- **Introductions:** Everybody should introduce themselves.
- **Courageous Conversations:** Briefly review the ground rules on the next page so the group can hold each other accountable.
- **Getting Started:** Skim/read the three page guide if they haven't done so already. As a group, choose one of the Getting Started questions as an ice breaker. [Choose more if you want!]
- **Going Deeper:** As a group, choose one of the Going Deeper questions to explore the topic in more depth. [Choose more if you want!]
- **The Journey Ahead:** Discuss what, if anything, people might want to do in the coming week to live out what has been discussed, either individually or as a group.

For Next Time

- **Checking In:** As a group, assess "How did we do?" against the ground rules - strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Next Meeting:** Figure out the time, place, and topic for the next meeting.



How to Have Courageous Conversations

The following guidelines can help these groups thrive. They are a contract that the group should make to hold themselves and each other accountable.

1. Love first, challenge second. How the conversation happens is more important than the conclusion. In writing to one of the earliest church communities, the Apostle Paul writes, "...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law." When the conversation ends, are these the words that the other group members will use to describe you?

2. Ask, "Whose voice is missing?" During the discussion ask, "Whose voice is missing?" Invite everyone into the conversation and they have the choice to not participate. Check yourself to make sure you aren't the one dominating the conversation!

3. Be curious. When you find yourself shocked, confused, or horrified by someone else's opinion (which you surely will at some point), say to yourself, "how interesting" and try to discover that the person's experiences and how they came to that view.

"People won't remember what you say or what you do, but they will remember how you made them feel."

Maya Angelo

4. Discuss the real questions. When questions in the guide don't resonate with you, feel free to talk through why they don't or what other questions they bring up for you. Remember that the conversation matters more than the questions.

5. Be honest. Honesty is the goal. Create a space where people can challenge and support one another. Maintain this honesty by respecting the confidentiality of what each person shares.

6. Grow. Remember that everybody is still figuring life out. You will be a different person in a year. Not knowing is okay, changing your opinion is okay. Ask tough questions that you don't know the answers to and create a space where other people can do the same.

7. Have fun! These groups should bring life and joy to everyone who participates.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

Galatians 5:22-23