

# HOW TO HAVE COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

“ People who are skilled at dialogue do their best to make it safe for everyone to add their meaning to the shared pool - even ideas that at first glance appear controversial, wrong, or at odds with their own beliefs. Now, obviously they don't agree with every idea; they simply do their best to ensure that all ideas find their way into the open.

Kerry Patterson / Crucial Conversations

## HOW TO CREATE SPACE

- **LEADING** with vulnerability and being willing to share your experience
- **LISTEN** and encourage the group to listen to one another as well
- **ALLOW** people time and space to share their thoughts without interruption
- **ASK** follow-up questions for clarity if necessary
- **SHARE** what is valuable about someone's question or comment
- **ACKNOWLEDGE** that it is okay not to have all the answers
- **INVITE** people into the conversation who have not spoken
- **BRAINSTORM** ways to participate as part of the solution
- **THANK** the group for participating

## START THE CONVERSATION

- How are you feeling about everything that's going on in our culture right now?
- Where are you struggling?
- What do you think I need to know?

We have reached a clear inflection point in our country's history of racism. The video-recorded murder of George Floyd catalyzed a movement that demands a social justice reckoning the likes of which we have not seen before. Humans of all stripes are taking to the streets, speaking out on social media, and pushing the status quo to the breaking point.

Conversations about racial justice and equity are difficult but they are also critical, and they can be transformative. We must create respectful spaces and opportunities for people in our communities to engage on these issues. We must examine our own biases and do our own work before we can openly listen to others, especially when they say things we may not understand or agree with.

## RESOURCES

### READ...

“Crucial Conversations: Tools For Talking When Stakes Are High,” Kerry Patterson

### LISTEN...

11 Vox podcast episodes give more context to protests happening across America  
<https://www.vox.com/2020/6/18/21294263/anti-racism-police-violence-protests-vox-podcasts>