

How to start having COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

Bridge divides, don't win arguments

No one likes to feel like they've got it wrong; it can make people defensive and resistant to change. Instead, make connections, show empathy and try to understand the other person's perspective. This helps to build trust, crucial for any meaningful exchange of ideas.

Speak from the heart

When we speak from the heart about something we're passionate about, people will listen. Why are you passionate about these topics? Our personal stories belong to us and so are hard to argue with.

Change the story

Facts alone don't change minds. When we repeat what we are trying to discredit, we further reinforce it, so instead we need to change the story totally. Calmly redirect and reclaim the conversation using bridging. "I hear what you're saying... I suppose I see things differently..."

Find common ground

Our sense of self is malleable, so when we can find common ground with the person we are talking to, the person we are speaking with is less likely to focus on any differences we might have.

Lead with shared values

Assume that people share the same values as you, this way you will make your values seem like the norm. By recognising the values you both share you immediately begin to start breaking down division.

Actively listen

When talking to people whose opinions differ from our own, don't dismiss their concerns. Meet them where they are rather than where you want them to be. Listen and try to understand where they are coming from. Ask people open and non-judgmental questions: have they ever met someone from the affected community; have they ever experienced anything similar?

Who is at fault?

Point out where our shared values are not being reflected in policies that make up the asylum system.

Look after yourself

You're not going to win everyone over. Trust your gut. If someone feels very set in their ways, save your energy and leave them to it.

Magic formula:

- A** - Affirm (This shows you're actively listening and helps to build trust)
- B** - Bridge (Calmly redirect and reclaim the conversation)
- C** - Connect (Time to tell your story)