

# Why Dialogue?

## Part I: Topics and Occasions that Call for Dialogue

### Exploring a Concept, Theory, or Method

Is there a particular idea, school of thought, skill, or methodology that you would like to introduce to others, understand better yourself, and/or practice?

EXAMPLES: Black feminism. Crip time. Democracy. Inclusive freedom. Hostile architecture. Anti-racist pedagogy. Descriptive grammar. Creationism. Deep listening. Universal design. (etc)

### Unpacking a Social Issue or Movement

Is there a social issue of pressing concern to you that you would like to think through, whether intellectually, personally, or politically? (Scale can be local, national, global.)

EXAMPLES: Gun violence. LGBTQIA+ rights. Climate change. White nationalism. Cancel culture. Income inequality. Indigenous sovereignty. #MeToo. Gerrymandering. Doping. (etc)

### Processing a Media or Cultural Event

Has a specific event happened recently that you feel needs to be addressed, or is there a holiday or event going on that you'd like to create conversation around?

EXAMPLES: The Buffalo shooting. Dobbs v. Jackson. The 20th anniversary of 9/11. Floods in Pakistan. Elections in Chile. UC Townhomes protest. AAPI History Month. Juneteenth. Pride. (etc)

### Engaging with a Work or Person of Interest

Is there an artist, scholar, activist, professional, politician, or community member OR a text, artwork, monument, or archival artifact that you'd like to dialogue with or about?

EXAMPLES: Loretta Ross. *Borderlands/La Frontera* by Gloria Anzaldúa. The U.S. Constitution. The short stories of Jhumpa Lahiri. The Dead Sea Scrolls. Jeff Bezos. The music of Blackpink. (etc)

### Connecting to Self, Other, Place, or the Past

Would you like to create space for people to engage with self-reflection; intergroup exchange; place-based features/resources; or family/community/cultural histories?

EXAMPLES: A "Where I'm From" poetry workshop. An interfaith dialogue. A critique of campus mental health resources. A nature retreat. A circle of community elders. A family colloquium. (etc)

# Why Dialogue?

Part II: Defining Purpose. What do you want people to **feel**, **think**, **know**, or **do** as a result of your dialogue process?

## FEEL

Healing or comfort  
Hope or joy  
Love or empathy  
Inspiration  
Belonging or solidarity  
Responsibility  
Urgency or motivation  
Indignation or outrage

## Sample statements of purpose for different occasions

**Concept:** Find **solidarity** in recognizing own experience or values reflected in [new theoretical framework]  
**Social Issue:** Feel **hopeful** regarding the possibility of progress related to [social movement]  
**Event:** Experience **healing** in the wake of [horrific event]  
**Person/Work:** Develop new **empathy** for a specific experience via engagement with [work of art]  
**Connections:** Feel **joy** in the process of reflecting on [aspect of personal history]

## THINK or KNOW

Self-awareness  
Other-awareness  
Issue-awareness  
Understand a perspective  
Understand a history  
Understand a theory  
Change their mind  
Formulate a truth

## Sample statements of purpose for different occasions

**Concept:** Understand **key terms and major ideas** of [given theory]  
**Social Issue:** Develop initial awareness of how [longstanding social issue] **manifests in present day**  
**Event:** Understand the various different **reactions** to [event]  
**Person/Work:** Become convinced of the importance of [particular person]'s **influence**  
**Connections:** Grow a sense of awareness of one's own **positionality** within [particular community]

## DO

Access a resource  
Forge a relationship  
Make a personal plan  
Change a habit  
Take political action  
Join a specific group  
Spread a message  
Create something new

## Sample statements of purpose for different occasions

**Concept:** **Apply** [new methodology] in practice in professional or academic context (= spread the message)  
**Social Issue:** **Make a plan** for how each one will address [issue] personally, professionally, or politically  
**Event:** **Seek out** additional information about [specific event] (= access a resource)  
**Person/Work:** **Join a book club** dedicated to similar works  
**Connections:** **Do more journaling** to continue [particular kind of self-reflection] (= change a habit)