

Shared Values Dialogue

Time for this module is approximately 60 minutes, depending on how the session is facilitated.

✓ PREPARATION

- ▶ Select the Shared Values texts you would like to use for this activity: [Service](#) or [Hospitality](#).
- ▶ Print a copy for each participant.
- ▶ Cue video 4.4 [The Interfaith Triangle](#).

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- ▶ Increase awareness around the converging and diverging worldview perspectives in the group
- ▶ Diversify understanding of the various religious/worldview identities that exist and how they can be expressed
- ▶ Explain shared values that exist across worldview identities

➔ INTRODUCTION AND INTERFAITH TRIANGLE (10 minutes)

Tell participants: Now that we've done some personal reflection and explored the challenges of religious diversity, we're going to practice interfaith engagement with the purpose of building relationships. I will be asking you to speak about your worldview during this activity so I want to acknowledge that this could be awkward or difficult for some of you. I encourage you to be brave and to support one another as we explore worldview engagement.

One of the things that is essential in opening the space for students to develop healthy ways of conversing about worldview difference is to model it for them. This exercise is a way to get comfortable doing that ourselves.

The ultimate goal of worldview engagement is to foster religious pluralism, which is defined (in short) as the proactive engagement of diversity to a positive end. Diversity is a fact; pluralism is an achievement.¹ A way to build pluralism is through the building of appreciative knowledge, healthy relationships, and positive attitudes toward people of other worldviews. Let's take a minute to explore why relationships are so essential.

[Play video, Lesson 4. Module 4.4: The Interfaith Triangle]

Ask participants, pausing for conversation between questions: What insights did you gain from this video? What does it tell you about "what works" when it comes to interfaith engagement?

¹ Eck, Diana. *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2001.

SHARED VALUES DIALOGUE (30 minutes)

Frame the Conversation

Invite participants to gather in a circle or, depending on the size of your group, in small circles for conversation.

Tell participants: This activity provides us an opportunity to both build our knowledge of different traditions while engaging in relationship-building conversation with one another. It's a great example of a simple way to start interfaith conversations. We'll be reflecting both on texts from a variety of worldviews as well as your own understanding and synthesis of those texts. While every tradition and worldview is unique, we can nevertheless find shared values between them.

This workshop offers texts on the Shared Values of Service and Hospitality and you should select one set prior to the workshop.² Before distributing the worksheets, ask participants to reflect together on the selected topic. Here are some questions to guide your conversation (we'll use Hospitality as an example; you'll need to adjust these questions if you choose a different set of texts):

- ▶ How do you personally define/understand hospitality?
- ▶ What does it mean to be hospitable to others, especially those who are different from us?
- ▶ Is there a story you can share from your life that illustrates the power of hospitality?

Texts on Shared Values

Distribute the Shared Values worksheet to each participant. Ask your group to go around the circle and read the texts aloud. Make it clear that no one has to read if they feel uncomfortable doing so. This is a textual exploration so you will probably encounter terms or words you're unfamiliar with, own that and do the best you can!

Ask the group to reflect on what they've read:

- ▶ Did any of these – either from your own tradition or not – particularly resonate with you?
- ▶ Did you hear anything that you found challenging?
- ▶ Did you hear anything that helped you to think about this particular value in a new way?
- ▶ What are some of the distinctions and differences you noticed between the texts?
- ▶ How did listening to these texts help you learn something new about the worldviews represented?
- ▶ Are there traditions you don't see included on the worksheet? If so what writing around this value would you recommend to the group?

Explain that these words offer us a chance to think about how we interact with people who are different from us in light of our shared values, and provides points of commonality to return to in time of disagreement.

SHARED VALUES DIALOGUE DEBRIEF (15 minutes)

Tell participants: Thanks for your active participation in that activity. Let's step out of the conversation now and reflect on what we just did together.

Walk through the reflection questions below one by one, pausing between each for conversation and synthesis:

- ▶ How did you personally experience that conversation? What were your thoughts and feelings throughout?
- ▶ What surprised you about that experience? Did anything feel uncomfortable or enjoyable?
- ▶ What did you think was effective about that conversation in terms of your learning? Was anything ineffective?

² IFYC's library of online resources has a longer version of this activity with difference foci available at www.ifyc.org/resources.

- ▶ How did your experience in that conversation connect to what we learned about the interfaith triangle?
- ▶ What do those connections tell you about how to engage in effective interfaith work?
- ▶ How does this experience make you think about bringing this kind of experience to the students and professionals you work with?

If you are ending the entire session here...

Tell participants: Thank you so much for your participation today! I will be sending a follow-up email that includes a link to a survey so you can provide feedback about your experience and how this workshop could be strengthened in the future. We really appreciate your input, so thank you for your time in advance. I'll also include some follow-up resources. Lastly, please don't hesitate to be in touch and consider me a thought partner for incorporating worldview into your daily work. Thanks again!