



8 Tips for Your STORYCORPS ONE SMALL STEP App Conversation

1 Discuss Why You're Participating

What are you hoping to achieve in this conversation? Some people participate because they want to find common ground and shared experience, others because they want to practice having a civil discussion around politics. Decide together, and that will help keep you on track during the conversation.

2 Set Ground Rules

It's important to set ground rules for the conversations, so everyone involved can have the best experience. Some good ones include:

1. Try not to raise your voice
2. Remain respectful and do not use derogatory language
3. Do not try to persuade each other
4. Do not speak over or interrupt each other

3 Step Out of Your Comfort Zone

Coming together for a conversation on the basis of difference means there will be disagreements. Many moments in the conversation can be awkward, frustrating, and sometimes, very emotional. Remember, these conversations are meant to be a small step towards someone who thinks differently than you, not a space to resolve differences.

4 Share Personal Stories

We find that these conversations go the best when people come together ready to share personal stories and experiences about what has shaped your political views. Try to avoid getting into the weeds of policy, and stick to specific memories and reflections from your life.

5 Follow the Questions List

We have picked our best questions and loaded them into the App. While we encourage you to follow your curiosity, many participants have found these questions help deepen and enrich the conversation.

6 Plan Follow-up Questions

It's helpful to have some follow-up questions ready for when conversations start to feel more like debates. Some helpful questions for getting back to the personal are:

- "How has this (policy, belief, etc.) affected your life?"
- "Was there ever a time where you felt doubt in your political beliefs?"
- "Is there anything about the current political climate that you do not like?"

7 Share and Learn, Don't Debate

These conversations are meant to be a space to reflect on your own life and experiences and learn about those of another. Resist the temptation to debate! There are no winners or losers here. We are living in deeply divided times, and the goal of this conversation is to help us remember our shared humanity.

8 Be an Active Listener

An active listener seeks to understand a speaker's message, rather than passively hearing the words they say and waiting to reply. This helps build trust within the conversation, and allows open and honest communication.

Have more questions? Visit our Help Center at support.storycorps.me or email us at contactus@storycorps.org