# Guidelines for Dialogue

* Use “I” language at all times.
* Use “Oops!” when you’ve said something that could be

misinterpreted or hurtful.

* Use “Ouch!” when you feel hurt or offended.
* Use “Wow!” when something someone said is awesome,

insightful, deeply honest, et cetera.

* Always ask curious questions.
* Remember that “I don’t know” can be a great answer.

# Asking Curious Questions

45 Minute Activity Guide

Curriculum Goals

10. Participants create and maintain a **safe learning environment**.

14. Participants learn and use an array of methods for **processing** their experiences.

Preparation

There is no specific preparation needed for this activity.

Required Materials

* Pens/pencils
* Pads/sheets of paper
* Poster paper
* Markers

Introduction (15 minutes)

1. Reinforce that this is a safe space for learning, enjoying and honoring each other’s experience and knowledge. It is a space where participants agree to respect the opinions and beliefs of others in the group.
2. Explain to the group that the focus of this activity is learning to ask good, curious questions.
   1. Emphasize that to be an interfaith leader, you do not need to know all the answers. What you do need to know is **when and how to ask good questions.**
   2. A good interfaith question is genuine, honest, curious, and nonjudgmental. It is a sign of the respect held between the people involved.
3. With the group, brainstorm to create a quick list of characteristics of curious questions, followed by a list of characteristics of judgmental questions.
   1. Ask for examples of a curious question, e.g. “Can you help me understand what the cross symbolizes for you?”
   2. Ask for examples of a judgmental question, e.g. “Why do Christians feel the need to shove their religion in my face by wearing crosses around their neck?”
4. Create small groups of 3-4 people, representing at least two different religious traditions.
5. Distribute paper and pens to each small group.

Small Group Activity (20 minutes)

1. Ask members of each small group to introduce themselves by sharing a question about a religious tradition that they didn’t know who to ask or were afraid of asking. Record the questions and continue to create a list of interfaith questions. Resist the urge to answer the questions!
2. After 10 minutes, ask each small group to trade papers with another group. Review their questions and mark any questions that you think are particularly “curious” with a “C” and particularly “judgmental” questions with a “J”. The receiving group also may suggest edits to questions which would make them be more curious and add any additional questions they would want to ask.
3. Return to one large group and pass the papers back to the original group who created them.

Debriefing (10 minutes)

1. Ask each small group to choose one representative to share a few of their curious questions created with the larger group.
2. Select two of the questions to pose to the group for general discussion.
3. Encourage the whole group to experiment with asking curious questions throughout the rest of today's session as well as during the whole interfaith journey.