

Small Group Exercise: Conversation Scenarios

Brief Encounters

- A. Grocery Store Check out line: After work, you are waiting in line to check out. The woman in front of you has struggled with her SNAP benefit card, while needing to pay for some of her purchases with cash. The line is not moving quickly. After she leaves, the grocery store employee says, "I can't believe how many of those people come here, they just buy anything they want! I wish the government would pay for my groceries!" How do you respond?
- B. Hospital waiting room: You have a family member having a "Same Day" procedure. While in the waiting room, a man and his wife sit down beside you. The man comments loudly to wife about the very nicely dressed women whom he saw check-in using with a Medicaid card. He remarks that his medical insurance is very expensive, how is it that "some" people get help and others (like himself) have to earn it. How do you respond?

One-on-Ones

- C. Soccer field: Your daughter plays soccer on a local team. You are at another one of her games, half watching the game and half talking with other parents. One of the other parents says, "Hey, I heard that the school board is going to vote on serving breakfasts to all kids in the district tonight at the meeting. My kids eat a good breakfast at home, why should the school spend the time and money to do this? It's a waste." How do you respond?
- D. Hair Dresser: You seem to run into the same people when you get your hair cut (you must be on the same schedule). While waiting for your turn, you pick up the Time magazine; the cover picture is of immigrant children being held in detention. The person sitting next to you glances at the picture and says, "those kids should just go back to wherever they came, they are sick and destitute, a real burden. We don't need any more of those types". How do you respond?

Thanksgiving Talk

- E. Uncle Fred at holiday meal: While enjoying another holiday meal you end up sitting next to Uncle Fred. He has strong opinions about what the Government should and should not be doing. This year he is all fired up about all the costs that businesses in NJ are having to absorb with the increase in minimum wage and the affordable care act. He can't believe that the state is now considering yet another burden on business, Earned Sick Leave! How do you respond?
- F. Neighborhood party: Your neighbors get together for parties throughout the year. This fall around a keg of Oktoberfest, some neighbors were talking about the Planning Board's decision to allow 25 units of mixed use housing to be built across town. They were outraged! You didn't say much at the event, but in a couple of weeks you will be attending a holiday gathering with the same people. The conversation from the fall still bothers you, what might you say when the topic comes up again? Should you bring it up?

Small Group Exercise: Processing

Scenario #: _____

What worked well? Describe if/how you were you able to:

- Identify shared values / motivation _____

- Join the conversation partner in any positions _____

- Reframe or get them to think about the value at stake _____

What might you have done differently? _____

What would a by-stander have heard? _____

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