



---

# Guided Conversations On Race And Racism

# Proposed Conversation Format

- I. Objectives
- II. Framing the Conversation
- III. Having the Conversation
  1. Icebreaker Questions
  2. Discursive Questions
  3. Scenarios
- IV. Call for action
- V. Conclusion

**NOTE: This conversation session is designed for small groups for optimal sharing and conversation, however is flexible enough to be used in a variety of settings.**

**TIME: The full conversation session takes 2 hours (including 15 minutes break to be taken when convenient).**

**For those that have less time available then please feel free to select a fewer number of the questions to discuss ensuring that you do not dilute the quality and nature of the conversation.**

**FUTHER SUPPORT: To receive further support in using this resource please email: [diversity.inclusion@salvationarmy.org.au](mailto:diversity.inclusion@salvationarmy.org.au)**

## **I. OBJECTIVES**

This interactive session aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Lead participants to reflect on matters affecting people of colour and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities
- Lead participants to reflect on the negative impacts of racism
- Raise awareness on unconscious biases, stereotypes and generalisations that Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples and people of colour are often subject to
- Provide participants with a safe environment to talk about race and racism

The facilitator needs to ensure they understand the meaning of the following words or terms: Race, Racism, white privilege, prejudice, discrimination, generalisation, stereotype, bias, people of colour, Black Lives Matter campaign and Reconciliation Action Plan.

The Salvation Army's statement on Black Lives Matter and Racism can be found on <https://salvosau.sharepoint.com/SitePages/Black-Lives-Matter.aspx>

The Salvation Army's International Positional statement on Racism can be found on <https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/subscribe/sites/masic/files/IPS/Racism%2BIPS.pdf>

## **II. FRAMING THE CONVERSATION**

### **A. Housekeeping (2 min)**

The facilitator to set guiding rules for the section. These could relate to the use of mobile phone, expected behaviour especially when disagreements arise, understanding for people's personal experience and many others.

### **B. Prayer (3 min)**

If prayer is included, the facilitator may choose to read Revelation 7:9 and pray along the lines of unity, reconciliation, forgiveness and the fulfilment of God's purpose for all humanity.

The following scriptures can be used for further reference if needed in this section or throughout the session: Rev. 7:9-17; Col 3:11-17; Gal 3:26-29; Gen 1:26-27

### **C. Setting the Scene (10 min)**

The facilitator is encouraged to set the scene for the conversation by showing this 8min clip from Pastor Jada Edwards which addresses many of the topics that often arise in these conversations on Race and Privilege. This video can be accessed via <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gLc0kNkH20> (8min 31sec)

Following the video, participants are encouraged to reflect on its content throughout the session and refer to it as needed.

### III. HAVING THE CONVERSATION

This section engages participants in guided conversations. Although it is subdivided into 3 sections, there is no obligation in necessarily following this format. The facilitator may use one of the sections or different portions from all the sections to lead the conversation, according to the needs of their participants.

The icebreaker questions will be warm up to the conversations- setting everyone into a reflective mind for the beginning of the session. In relation to this section, the facilitator may either encourage participants to keep their answers personal or ask them to share with the group and justify their reasoning.

This section will help participants to engage in in-depth conversation in the 'Discursive questions section'. Please note that the adjective discursive here needs to be understood as a method leading participants to a conclusion through reasoning and argumentation.

The scenarios are meant to share real life stories and experiences to lead the conversation.

The facilitator can ask the following questions, one after another and with follow up questions as they judge necessary. Questions can be asked in any preferred order.

Bearing in mind that the aim is not to rush through and cover all the questions, the facilitator needs to ensure that participants have enough time to discuss the questions and share their opinions.

The questions can be projected on the screen if feasible.

#### A. Icebreaker Questions (5 min)

*Reflecting on your personal experience and to the best of your knowledge, which one of the following statements is closest to the truth? Briefly explain why.*

1. *Race in Australia*
  - a. *Australia has a serious race problem*
  - b. *Australia has a race problem*
  - c. *There are occasional cases of racism, but nothing major*
  - d. *There is no racism in Australia.*
  
2. *Race and Me*
  - a. *I would rather not talk about race/racism.*
  - b. *I am very uncomfortable talking about race/racism.*
  - c. *I am usually uncomfortable talking about race/racism.*
  - d. *I am sometimes uncomfortable talking about race/racism.*
  - e. *I am usually comfortable talking about race/racism.*
  - f. *I am very comfortable talking about race/racism.*

## B. Discursive Questions (50 min)

1. What do the words 'racism' and 'privilege' mean to you? Share personal experiences of when you've been a victim, beneficiary or witness of each of them.
2. In a reflective way, complete the following sentence and explain your reasoning: 'Racism in Australia today is...'
3. From your understanding of race, why do you think some people engage in racist and discriminatory behaviour or acts?
4. How does racism occur in today's world, your environment or place of work?
5. We recently witnessed the 'Black Lives Matter' protests caused by the death of US citizen George Floyd. Australians joined in and raised the tragic reality of Aboriginal deaths in custody. Can you mention the name(s) of at least one of the most recent Aboriginal persons to die in police custody? If you can't, why do you think you haven't heard of him/her?
6. On 14 June 2020, Sky News host Peter Gleeson published an opinion piece in the *Sunday Telegraph* and wrote: "The reality in this country – and the US – is that the greatest danger to aboriginals and negroes is themselves". In line with Gleeson's comments as well as the negative or evading public discourse in matters of race and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander lives, what do you think is the role Australian public figures play in combatting or igniting racist behaviour in Australia?

## C. Scenarios (20 min)

The facilitator to play the following videos and guide conversations thereafter.

1. Impact of racism on mental health

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtirSnUYrmY> (2min 15sec)

Questions to participants:

- a. *Following three (3) consecutive football seasons of booing and racist slurs towards Sydney Swans player Adam Goodes, he ended his career saying: "[The field] actually became a place I hated to walk out onto". After sharing your thoughts about this video, discuss the impact of racism on people's ambitions and careers.*
- b. *Why do you think racism leads to poor mental health?*
- c. *What do you understand by Reconciliation and what it aims to achieve?*

## 2. Racism and microaggressions

<https://www.abc.net.au/life/where-are-you-really-from-how-to-better-ask-racequestion/10610346> (4min 35sec)

Questions to participants:

- a. *For people of colour or ethnic minorities in the room, please share a personal experience of when the question 'where are you from' crossed the line of curiosity and signaled exclusion.*
- b. *Can you share some of the common but subtle phrases or sayings used in your circles which underpin exclusion or differentiation of the 'other'?*

## 3. Bystanders' role in addressing racism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFTjZilAwhM> (30 sec) Question to participants:

- a. *Combatting racism requires everyone's efforts. What role can you play in combatting racism?*
- b. *Why do you think it is sometimes challenging for bystanders to play a role in calling out racist behaviour when they witness them?*

## IV. CALL FOR ACTION (10 min)

It is important that members of the group, at an individual or collective level, commit to at least one action. The level and degree of commitment can vary from more reflection on the topics to actively driving organizational change.

The facilitator may choose to ask participants to share one or two things they'll do differently following today's session.

If needed, the following questions can help participants in having clarity of follow-up actions.

1. *What does the Bible say about the treatment of and love for our neighbours? (Matt 22:37-40)*
2. *From the above scripture, what should my priorities be going forward?*
3. *What is one thing I would like to see change in my family, environment, team or corps in relation to race and racism?*
4. *What role can I play in bringing about that change?*

## V. CONCLUSION (5 min)

- The facilitator to ask participants of any final comments about today's session.
- The facilitator to summarise key take-home messages from today's session and pray with participants

## VI. FURTHER RESOURCES

Lets Talk Resource – A Salvation Army resource provided by IHQ with a focus on racism and comes with the endorsement of the General.

<https://we.tl/t-vBrTybpb1>