



FRONT PAGE DIALOGUE: **Post-Election Engagement**

On November 8, 2016, Donald Trump was elected as the 45th President of the United States following one of the most vitriolic campaigns in American history. While many support the President-elect, there are also widespread concerns in the United States and abroad about his divisive statements and campaign declarations that appear to undermine American constitutional protections and fundamental civil and human rights principles. Hundreds of thousands of people have marched in cities across the country, and women's rights and anti-discrimination organizations, like the American Civil Liberties Union, have seen massive spikes in donations, some citing increases as high as 7,000% over November-December 2015 giving.

Sites of Conscience have an important role to play in facilitating constructive conversations and creating spaces where their visitors, particularly those who may not always agree, listen to each other in new ways. Below is one model for engaging visitors in dialogue in the wake of the 2016 Presidential Election. We encourage you to adapt and ground the dialogue in the unique history that your Site of Conscience works to preserve and share.

How to use Front Page Dialogues

Rather than using all the model questions suggested under each phase, facilitators may select questions that reflect the evolving conversation of the group they are guiding in dialogue. We also anticipate that you will develop new questions ahead of time or during the dialogue to draw on the strengths of your site or respond to the needs of participants. If you are not familiar with the Arc of Dialogue model, you can contact Sarah Pharaon (spharaon@sitesofconscience.org) or Braden Paynter (bpaynter@sitesofconscience.org) for support and more information.

Guidelines

What are the group agreements or guidelines for the dialogue that help us establish the "container" that the dialogue occurs within? Here are some sample agreements:

1. Use "I" statements. Speak only for yourself.
2. Share the air: leave room for everyone to speak.
3. Own your intentions and your impacts.
4. Controversy with civility.

Preparation

Two of the Phase I questions use a technique called *indexed thoughts*. Have large sticky notes or 8.5 x 11 paper and plenty of markers available. Ask participants your question, asking them to write their answers as largely as possible, filling the paper. Also, advise the group that they will be sharing their answers with other participants and that their responses will be identified with them. Give people two silent minutes to think through and write their answers. When people are done, have everyone hold theirs up at the same time and give the group time to read everyone's responses.



PHASE I - COMMUNITY BUILDING

Questions in Phase 1 help build the "learning community" by allowing participants to share information about themselves.

Write three words that describe your feelings about the election.

Speak with someone who wrote a similar word; share why you chose yours.

Speak with someone who wrote a substantially different word; share why you chose yours.

What have you learned about America since the election?

Write three words that describe the America you want to live in.

Speak with someone who wrote a similar word; share why you chose yours. How do you feel about that word today?

Speak with someone who wrote a substantially different word; share why you chose yours. How do you feel about that word today?

PHASE II - SHARING OUR OWN EXPERIENCES

Questions in Phase 2 help participants recognize how their experiences are alike and different and why.

What are you doing differently since the election?

Which voices do you seek out to better understand our country and each other?

Are you engaging with opposite view points?

What have you experienced/seen since the election?

How are your friends and loved ones responding to the election? What are you doing for them?

In the wake of the election, how have you been misunderstood? How have you misunderstood others?

Do you feel safe? What needs to happen to make you feel safer?

Where is America living up to your hopes? Where is it falling short?

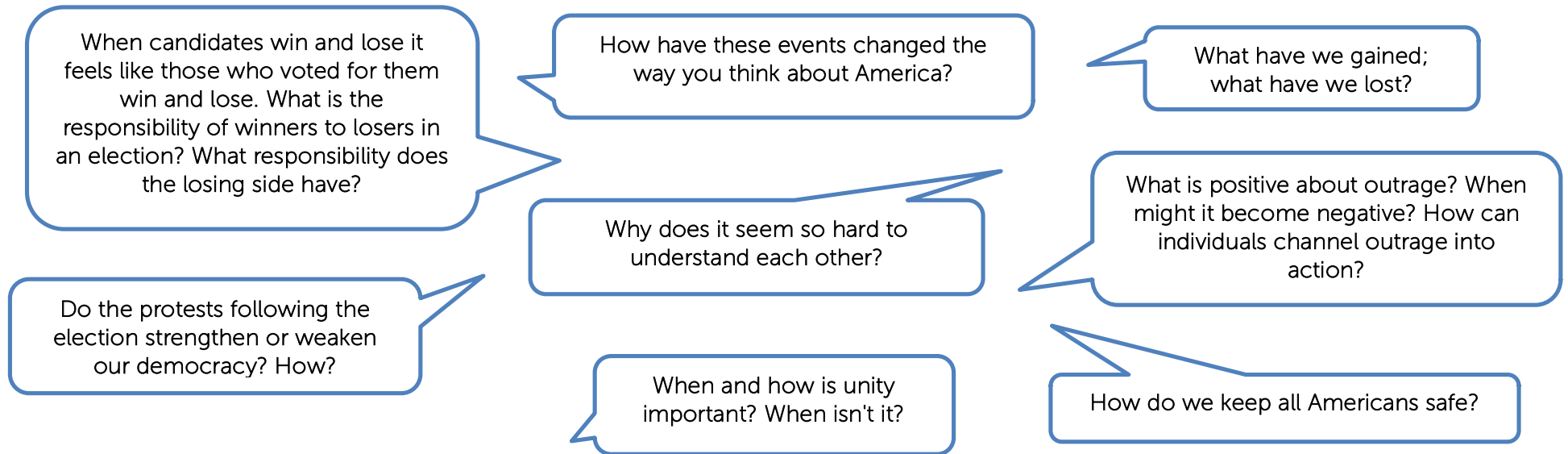
What have you learned about yourself since the election?

Share a story about what living in your America is like.



PHASE III - EXPLORING BEYOND OURSELVES

Questions in Phase 3 help participants engage in inquiry and exploration about the dialogue topic in an effort to learn with and from one another.



PHASE IV - SYNTHESIZING THE EXPERIENCE

Questions in Phase 4 help the group to reflect on the dialogue and what they learned.

