

Conversation Café: Enjoying Great Conversations



Ron Gross hosts Socratic Conversations at Columbia University. Here is his recent invitation to participate in a Socratic conversation about enhancing one's conversations.

The importance of talking together as a prime way to learn and grow has been championed by thinkers ranging from Socrates, Goethe and Benjamin Franklin to Martin Buber, Robert McClintock and Kwame Appiah. Enhance your life by enjoying great conversations!

You spend from six to twelve hours a day talking with other people. So, one of the most effective ways to enhance your pleasure in life is to make that process more enjoyable and rewarding. Let's discover how to do that by pooling our experiences, knowledge and skills!

- What do you value most in the best conversations you have (e.g. mutual support, humor, rapport, discovery)?
- Do you ever find yourself so uplifted by conversations that they become “everyday spirituality”?
- What conversational skills have you used or observed and admired (e.g. active listening, creativity and wit, robust curiosity, subtle empathy)?
- Who's the best conversationalist you know, and what makes them so good?
- What can we learn from the best conversations in the media—and from the worst?
- How does your online communications (texting, email, social media) relate to your face-to-face conversation?