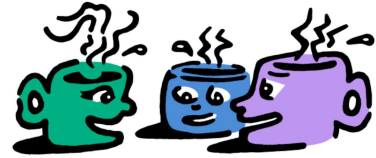


Conversation Café: Promoting Your Cafe



Promoting Your Cafe

Your enthusiasm and direct invitation will attract people. People are curious – they want to hear what others think, as long as it isn't a harangue. They will feel honored when you tell them you want to hear what is on their mind. People blossom when others listen with respect. As a Conversation Cafe host, you are giving your guests a BIG GIFT.

You can invite people yourself – your friends, neighbors, church or club members, colleagues at work. When you call people directly, it lets them know you want them in particular to come. Sending a personalized letter or email also increases the possibility that people will attend. We all like to get a special invitation. To increase your reach and the possibility of a broad range of attendees, you can send an email invitation and ask others to forward it to others. You can send out press releases to local papers to announce your conversation (check out our samples). You can put up flyers on community bulletin boards or at your location if it's a public place.

Promotion tips from long-time hosts

Here are some suggestions, many of which were provided by Kat Gjovik, host of a weekly CC on Bainbridge Island.

- Send emails. Attach a request for the recipients to forward to all your friends and associates.
- Post flyers. Post them at places like markets, libraries, and cafés.
- Get on local calendars (email, newsletters, newspapers).
- Make phone calls.
- Create an email Listserv. Use it to provide announcements, notices and information regarding your Conversation Café. Post a weekly notice about the up-coming CC, which includes basic logistics, topic for the week, and the CC Process and Agreements.
- Advertise at the coffee shop. Many coffee shops have a space for announcements. You can create a notice that announces the topic for the week and post it at the café, or make quarter-page CC hand-outs and place them on the counter by the cash register
- Ask CC participants to spread the word. Also, after you've been established for a while, you could also invite each participant to bring a friend for a special event, your CC anniversary.
- Send press releases to your local papers.
- Get in touch with local organizations. These organizations can be faith-based, Senior Center, Arts & Humanities Council, etc. Offer to make a presentation, convene a special CC for their "members," and/or provide information about our CC they can post in their newsletters, on their bulletin boards, etc.