



Introducing yourself

A conversation is a meeting between people with different ideas, habits, experiences, memories. When they truly meet, they do not only exchange descriptions of events. On the contrary, they transform the facts, reinterpret experiences and reconstruct meanings in a new framework. 'In a conversation we do not only mix the existing cards, we also create new ones', Theodore Zeldin says. Zeldin is a British historian who organized 'conversation dinners', from small (two people in a restaurant) to big (200 people at the World Economic Forum).

Introducing yourself only works if at the same time you get to know other people. It is a two way process. But where to start? And how far can one go in its curiosity? This practical guide tells you how to introduce yourself and get to know others by asking each other intriguing questions. It has been derived from Zeldin's conversation dinners. On the table a 'menu' lies with a number of questions about a wide variety of topics. We have prepared our own list of questions that involve personality and we tell you what the steps are in the conversation, but, anyway, feel free and let the conversation flow. A conversation is not an prepared interview. Even if you know each other already, it will be surprising how much you find out about each other that you did not yet know.

Approach

1. Choose one or two partners for conversation.
2. Select a question you want to discuss.
3. Include concrete examples and experiences in your answer.
4. Choose a second and third question. Or let everybody ask each other a different question, one that he or she finds intriguing.
5. Reflect upon the answers, 'What is typical, and what is common? What do you share?'

Questions

1. What do you make of your life?
2. Which people do you find exciting?
3. About what are you most curious?
4. What did you oppose most when you were young?
5. With whom would you like to reconcile?
6. How important is recognition by others for you?
7. Which thoughts or people do you avoid?





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8. Have your fears changed throughout the years?
9. Why do you have the friends you have and not others?
10. What have been the most difficult conversations for you?
11. What have you found out so far about the different shapes that love can take?
12. In which sense do you want to become more tolerant?
13. Who are your heroes?
14. What is it you truly believe in?
15. What kind of humour do you prefer?
16. Are table manners important for you?
17. Are there illusions that you cherish?
18. What does console you?
19. In what sense do you want to become more courageous?
20. What was the best moment you had with your parents? What the worst one?
21. How important is work for you?
22. Is a happy life more important for you than an adventurous one?
23. Which dream have you had and not fulfilled yet?





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