



Good Practices for Building Community Across Difference *Video Discussion Guide*



This guide is meant to connect the Ramadan Road Trip video series with faith communities and people of goodwill who are interested in building communities across difference and diversity.

In this video, we explored ideas and practices that build resilient and diverse communities. These include: knowing your own values, building personal relationships across lines of difference, community mapping, strong public statements and actions and sharing stories.

Know Thyself

Having knowledge of what your and your community's deeply held values around caring for your neighbor are, is foundational to building relationships.

1. What are your personal and community values, either from scripture, tradition, or culture, that relate to building community?
2. Are they rooted in hospitality, welcoming the stranger, or caring for your neighbor? Are they rooted in love, compassion, or justice?
3. What do each of those words mean? Do you know of other meanings?
4. How do these values manifest in your everyday life?

Build Relationships

Relationships are foundational to responding to any crisis or to any long-term social change.

1. Can you remember or tell a story of someone who stood with you or helped you in a hard time? This could be a friend, neighbor, family member, or stranger.
2. What did they do or say that helped you?



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Build Networks

Beyond individual relationships, building networks across groups, organizations and communities in your own city or town- and across the country- helps bolster the infrastructure we can all draw from in responding to a crisis or building stronger communities.

ACTIVITY: Map your community by brainstorming a list of people and organizations who are building community.

1. How many of those listed do you actually know?
2. Who's missing?
3. Are any of them working together?
4. How can you deepen your own involvement in your immediate community and in some of these others listed?
5. Are there opportunities for collaboration or supporting each other?

Show Courageous Leadership

While taking into account the needs and desires of directly impacted communities, find ways to center the voices of those most affected by bigotry and hate.

1. When did I ignore injustice because of fear? What can I do better next time?

Share Solidarity (or Unity or Public) Statements

These symbols of solidarity matter in showing support for those impacted, as well as putting forward a message of love, justice, and unity to the broader community. It's critical that the messages of love are bold and strong to outweigh those of hate.

ACTIVITY: Draft a message that you can be ready to adapt and share at the appropriate time.



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Show Up

Physically showing up for interfaith events, vigils, and solidarity actions really do matter. They help breakdown the isolation we can feel when communities are under attack. They show people are not alone and that more people support creating communities that are safe, and free of bullying and harassment.

1. What events are happening in my own community that I should join in solidarity?

Storytelling

We remember stories and experiences better than facts and data. When someone is afraid, angry, or sharing misinformation about Muslims, acknowledge the emotion, and then follow up with a story. For example, you might respond: "I'm afraid too. I'm afraid that our community won't be safe for my Muslim friends and their families. Their kids are experiencing extremely high amounts of bullying and their houses of worship have often been targets of attack...."

ACTIVITY: Write a story with the following prompts. Choose 1.

- The last time I was truly afraid was when I was...
- I remember witnessing or experiencing bigotry or hate when I was...
- The reason I worship the way I do is because..... orwhen I was young, I learned that God...
- Here's a story about my Muslim friend...

ACTIVITY: Check out the "I Am From" poem prompt from the Mini-doc discussion guide.



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Visit other communities & houses of worship, to learn and connect

ACTIVITY: Schedule a visit with a house of worship in your community that's different from your own. Or watch for special festival days open to the wider community, they often have lots of learning activities, good food, and music.

Use your own social media platforms

Share stories of hope, of friendships and solidarity in moments of crisis like a hate crime. These do matter.

ACTIVITY: You can visit Shoulder to Shoulder's Facebook page to explore some shareable stories:

<https://www.facebook.com/shouldertoshouldercampaign/>

ACTIVITY: Draft a social media message of hope, friendship, and solidarity that you can adapt and share at the appropriate time.

Continue the Conversation

Whether verbally or through other opportunities for interaction and connection, it's important to realize that change takes time and patience.

1. What's one next step that I can take?

Who are the one or two people in your circle of family, friends, or neighbors that you can share this video with and invite into the conversation?

To watch the full series and access additional discussion guides visit:

ShouldertoShouldercampaign.org/RamadanResources