

Community Conversations Guide

Greenpeace International

“The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any.” - Alice Walker

Together, we resist

This campaign is about pushing back against corporate power that silences voices, pollutes our planet, and weakens our democracy. From legal intimidation to media manipulation, they’re betting we’ll back down.

But we’re betting on each other.

By choosing to speak up and engage in conversation, individuals can reclaim their power to challenge the status quo and contribute to a more just world.

It’s #TimeToResist.

Why Conversations Matter

Now, more than ever, as free speech and the right to protest are being threatened by corporate giants and billionaire bullies, we need real, open, and honest conversations. By sharing our stories and listening to each other, we build understanding, trust, and community.

Talking about difficult topics like free speech, right to protest, or feeling silenced can be a powerful act of resistance. When we speak up, we break the silence that allows injustice to grow.

Stories connect us. They help us make sense of the world, feel less alone, and inspire action. Not everyone will join a protest - but anyone can start a conversation. And that’s often where real change begins.

Getting Connected

Community conversations can happen *anywhere* — at a kitchen table, in a garden, or around a pot of tea & biscuits. The key is bringing people together to share stories, reflect on personal experiences, express their fears and hopes, and explore how they can *resist* together. It’s quite likely that you’ll soon realise that you’re not the only one thinking about these topics.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Host a community dinner, lunch, or afternoon tea
- Gather some of your colleagues during lunchtime
- Chat with people at your allotment or local garden
- Invite your parents' group, neighbours, or friends over for coffee
- Connect through your local volunteer group, church groups, choirs, book clubs, pottery classes, knitting circles, etc.
- Organise a potluck picnic or walk-and-talk in your local park

Most likely, you already have a community around you — your sports club, creative group, or local network. Think about where conversations already happen in your life and who you are connected to.

Intentional Conversations

These are moments where you consciously choose to gather people around a theme — in this case, free speech and resistance. You could:

- Host a one-off gathering at your home
- Organise a monthly or quarterly “world café / conversation café”
- Invite people for a meal with guiding questions to spark discussion

Think about your comfort level — maybe you prefer one-on-one conversations, a group of like-minded people, or maybe it is your intention to talk with people who hold different perspectives.

Informal Conversations

Not every conversation needs an agenda. Some of the most powerful exchanges could happen spontaneously. What matters is that you are respecting your conversation partner and listening deeply without interruption. Resistance starts with connection.

Tips to create Community Conversations with Care

Talking about freedom, protest, and being silenced can bring up strong emotions. These topics can be deeply personal and sometimes painful — which is why it's so important to create a space that feels safe, respectful, and compassionate.

Start the conversations with respect.

Here are some tips to help hold the conversation with care:

- ★ **Create a safe space** – Choose a welcoming, calm setting where people feel comfortable to share and be vulnerable
- ★ **Pick the right place & time** – Avoid rushed or noisy environments; aim for a moment where people can be present.
- ★ **Respect boundaries & confidentiality** – Ask if there are any topics others would prefer not to talk about or whether there is discomfort around a subject.

- ★ **Ask for permission** – Before diving deeper, check in: “Is it okay if we explore this topic together?”
- ★ **Co-create ground rules** – Agree on how you want to show up together and be present. Examples: listen fully, speak from the heart, no interruptions, put your phone away.
- ★ **Step back and create space** - make sure there is space for all views, not just your own.
- ★ **Practice active listening** – Be present. Listen with an open mind and reflect back what you hear. It is important that you don’t interrupt.
- ★ **Take turns & be mindful of time** – Let everyone have their moment to speak without being rushed or interrupted. Once the participant has ended, then another person may speak. Also keep an eye on your speaking time and how much space you are taking up.
- ★ **Pause when needed** – If emotions run high, take a deep breath or a short break. That’s okay.
- ★ **Diffuse disagreements** - if people disagree, acknowledge that different views and opinions are natural and should be respected. You’re here to share and listen, you don’t have to all agree
- ★ **Silence** - Know that silence may arise and that’s okay. It doesn’t need to be filled.
- ★ **Inactive participants** - There may be participants who are interested in your conversation but don’t have the courage to speak up. Allow for reflection time in writing or ask participants who haven’t spoken yet if they would like the opportunity to do so.
- ★ **Optional: Use a talking object or raise hands** – You may want to pass a small item around to signal whose turn it is to speak.

At the end of the conversation, it may be nice to thank the other person for their time and sharing. You may want to let the other person know what you appreciate about the conversation, what insights you gained or perhaps how you could adjust the conversation next time. Start the conversation with respect and end with gratitude.

Conversation Starters

It’s important to acknowledge if your conversation partner wants to speak about the same topic as you do. If not, that’s okay too and you’ll need to respect that. Perhaps another time. Maybe you’d like to ask: *Would it be alright if we talked about freedom of speech, it’s a topic I’m really interested in at the moment and I would love to hear your opinion too.*

- Should everyone have the right to freedom of speech? Why, or why not?
- What does the right to protest mean to you personally?
- Can you think of a time when protest made a difference - in history or in your own life?

- Do you feel free to speak your mind about political or social issues? Why or why not? Are there any repercussions to speaking your mind?
- What do you think are the biggest threats to free speech today? What needs to change?
- Have you noticed ways that corporations or powerful people try to silence dissent?
- Why do you think free speech and protest are under attack right now?
- How do you feel when you see people being silenced or punished for speaking out? Is it fair?
- Do you ever hold back from speaking your truth? What stops you?
- What would it take for more people to feel safe and empowered to speak up or protest?
- What could we do - as individuals or a group - to protect these rights?

What's next?

Conversations are a powerful start - but they don't have to end there. Here are a few ways you can take your reflections and turn them into action, either collectively with your conversation partners or on your own:

- Keep the conversation going. Start a regular "conversation circle" in your community and ask someone new to join next time
- Write a short blog, social post, or message about what came up for you (please include **#TimetoResist** and tag **@Greenpeace** on social media)
- Team up with others to plan something bigger - a community project, art action, or petition
- Write to your MP or local representative about an issue that matters to you
- Join a local protest or demonstration if available
- Visit [the Resistance Hub](#) to find a range of other actions, including writing a letter to your local newspaper, creating some resistance themed arts and crafts, street art and stickering in your local neighbourhood, or putting a poster in your window.

Tell us how it went

If you're happy to, we would love to hear how you got on. It's important to keep what was discussed confidential, as some sensitive or very personal things may have been shared. But you can tell us things like how many people you talked with, was it something you organised or was it spontaneous, was it a positive experience for you and others, and are you likely to do it again? If you got permission from the people you spoke with, you could share a group photo from your community conversation. Or you could simply share a quote or reflection.

If you have something you'd like to share with us, contact us directly via the Resistance Hub at act.gp/stories-of-resistance