

## Experifaith Dialogue Guidelines

So, you've read *Experifaith* and are ready to start using the model to facilitate a dialogue. Whether you plan to discuss the model with your family, your friends, your faith community or in an interfaith setting, the following guidelines will help you get started (note that some of these guidelines are also in the book).

The ideal duration for *Experifaith* discussions is 120 minutes. You will need twenty minutes to explain the model (which should be no problem, since you've already read the book), twenty minutes for everyone to fill in their *Experifaith* portrait (use a separate download document), ten minutes to split everyone into pairs/groups (you decide whether the discussion takes place one-on-one or in groups), sixty minutes for the actual dialogue, and ten minutes to summarize and share.

### Before you begin

Get the group to agree to the following:

- ✓ We are willing to share and listen, not preach or be preached to.
- ✓ We are willing to converse deeply on an experiential level.
- ✓ We are committed to being cordial in our interactions.
- ✓ We will work in harmony towards a better understanding.

To orient the group you can also read this passage from Mahatma Gandhi:

*"I offer you peace. I offer you love. I offer you friendship. I see your beauty. I hear your need. I feel your feelings. My wisdom flows from the Highest Source. I salute that source within you. Let us work together for unity and love."*

### The Dialogue Process

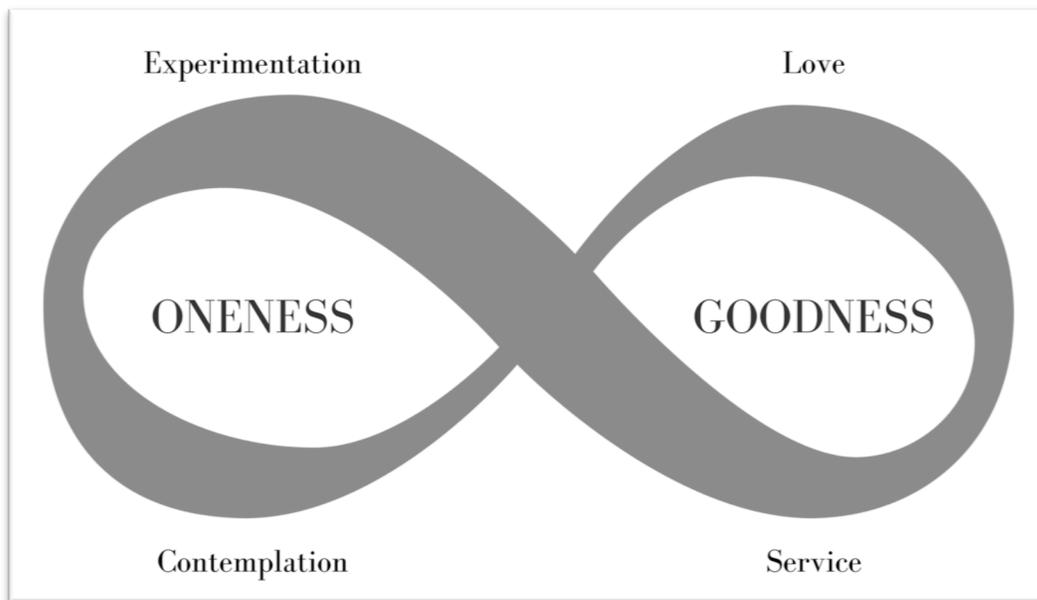
Once everyone has an *Experifaith* portrait and has been split into groups, either one-on-one or a roundtable format, explain the following tenets:

- Please limit discussion to how spiritual experiences have influenced your feelings, thoughts and/or actions. For example: "When I [do this] I feel [fill in the blank], I think [fill in the blank] and I do [fill in the blank]."
- Please refrain from talking about the contents of your belief system, i.e. history, dogma, orthodoxy. Focus on your personal experiences.
- Explore both similarities and differences unveiled in the *Experifaith* portrait.

- Another person's experience cannot be wrong, just different. Even if you find nothing in common with another person, the mere act of trying to understand will reap benefits.
- Signal each other by raising your hand if the discussion starts to revolve around theology rather than experiences.

To facilitate, you can use a talking stick or stone, making sure that the person holding that object will get full attention when he or she is talking. Ideally, everyone should get at least five minutes to express themselves in the beginning. Remember to rotate and have people change partners every ten minutes if you chose a one-on-one format.

At the end of the discussion, allow for time where people can share their experiences with the entire group.



*Experifaith Model*

*p.s. If, for some reason, you are not comfortable with facilitating a discussion, you can always contact us through [www.experifaith.org](http://www.experifaith.org). We can provide you with a facilitator for a low price or donations.*