



## Text, Talk, Revive Civility & Respect

### Text Messaging Script

Audience: Adults

Goal: To build skills that enhance civil discourse, listening skills and tolerance of other points of view in college students and adults.

Objectives:

After participating in this activity, participants will be able to:

- Define civility
- Identify an “unlikely friendship” they can explore in their life
- Brainstorm safe, civil and respectful ways to respond to hateful speech or behavior
- Listen to another person's perspective on an issue and reflect back
- Explain why being able to listen for the purpose of understanding can help them better interact with other's who think differently than they do
- Engage in a respectful exchange regarding why they disagree with another person on a given issue

SCRIPT

Form small groups of 4-5 people with one cell phone. Text: CIVILITY to 89800

### **1. Welcome to Text Talk Revive Civility & Respect!**

Grab a couple friends, and when ready, reply LETSGO to this message.

2. Are you in middle or high school? If so, reply by texting HIGHSCHOOL. We have a special conversation just for you! Otherwise, reply by texting ADULT.

3. Today we'll talk about civility and how to hold civil conversations with people who think differently than you.

Text P1 to continue



4. This conversation will take about an hour. Your group will receive a series of text messages that will guide you through the conversation.

Text P2 to continue

5. It's important for you, the person holding the cell phone, to read each text message to the group, give the group enough time to discuss each question, and to summarize some of the group's responses.

Text: P3

#### **6. Talk Ground Rules:**

- Listen w/respect
- It's OK to disagree
- Don't make it personal
- What's said here, stays here
- You can say "pass"

TEXT: GO to agree & cont

7. Before we talk about civility, let's define it!

Civility is showing mutual respect toward one another.

Text: P4

8. Discuss (5 min): In discussing something you care deeply about, is it hard to talk to people with different points of view? Why or why not?

Text: P5

9. Watch this video on active listening and how to be a great listener:

<http://bit.ly/ReallyListen>

Then come back here and text: P6

10. Here are some tips for engaging in a civil conversation with someone who thinks differently than you:

Listen for understanding

Repeat back what they said before sharing your perspective

Ask questions



Say things like, "I respectfully disagree because..."

You can agree to disagree

Text: P7

11. Let's put these listening skills into practice. Review the following topics and pick two people in your group that disagree on a topic (do a show of hands for pro/con):

Climate change

Immigration

Health care

Same sex marriage

Abortion

Campaign finance reform

Text: P8

12. Discuss (10 min): Have one person discuss their point of view and underlying values on the topic. The other person listens for understanding. When done, the listener repeats back what their partner just shared. Change roles and repeat. The rest of the group will listen to the discussion.

Text: P9

13. 10 min: Now that they've listened to each other for understanding, have the two people take turns explaining any points they respectfully disagree with. Why do they feel differently than the other person?

Text: P10

14. Discuss (10 min) as a group: How did the convo go? What was civil? What could have been more civil and how? What could have been said differently?

Text: P11

15. Go around your group: Next time someone disagrees with you, how will you respond?

Text P12 followed by your group's answers (e.g. P12 ask questions etc.)

16. Watch this short video:



[www.bit.ly/unlikelyfriend](http://www.bit.ly/unlikelyfriend)

Then come back & text P13 to continue

17. In the video, Bob and Donna make an “unlikely friendship.” They disagree about an issue, but get to know each other on a more personal level.

Text: P14

18. Take 5 mins to discuss as a group:

If you were going to look for an “unlikely friendship” in your life, what would the issue be, whom would you talk to and how would you start the conversation?

Text: P15

19. We don’t have to change our values and beliefs to act civilly and respectfully toward others. But by listening to others, we can enhance our understanding of that person’s values, allowing us to feel more tolerance and empathy towards others.

Text P16

20. What are some ways we can help revive civility in our community? Go to <https://goo.gl/jyEkFZ> to share your ideas. Your input will be used to develop next steps in reviving civility!

Text P17

21. Civility challenge! In the next two weeks, reach out to the unlikely friend you identified earlier. Invite them for coffee or tea. Sit down with them with the goal to get to know them better, and to listen to better understand their perspective on the issue you feel differently about.

Text P18

22. Are you each willing to commit to doing the civility challenge in the next two weeks?

Yes, most of us

Yes, half of us

No, none of us

Text: P19 followed by your group’s answer (e.g. P19 Yes most of us)



23. Almost done! Have your group members write down this link of civility resources to check out later: <http://bit.ly/civilityresource>

Text P20

24. Thank you for participating in Text, Talk, Revive Civility & Respect!

Please help make this conversation even better by completing this short, 5 minute survey:

[https://dickinson.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_dprMgl0EFbdw0QZ](https://dickinson.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dprMgl0EFbdw0QZ)