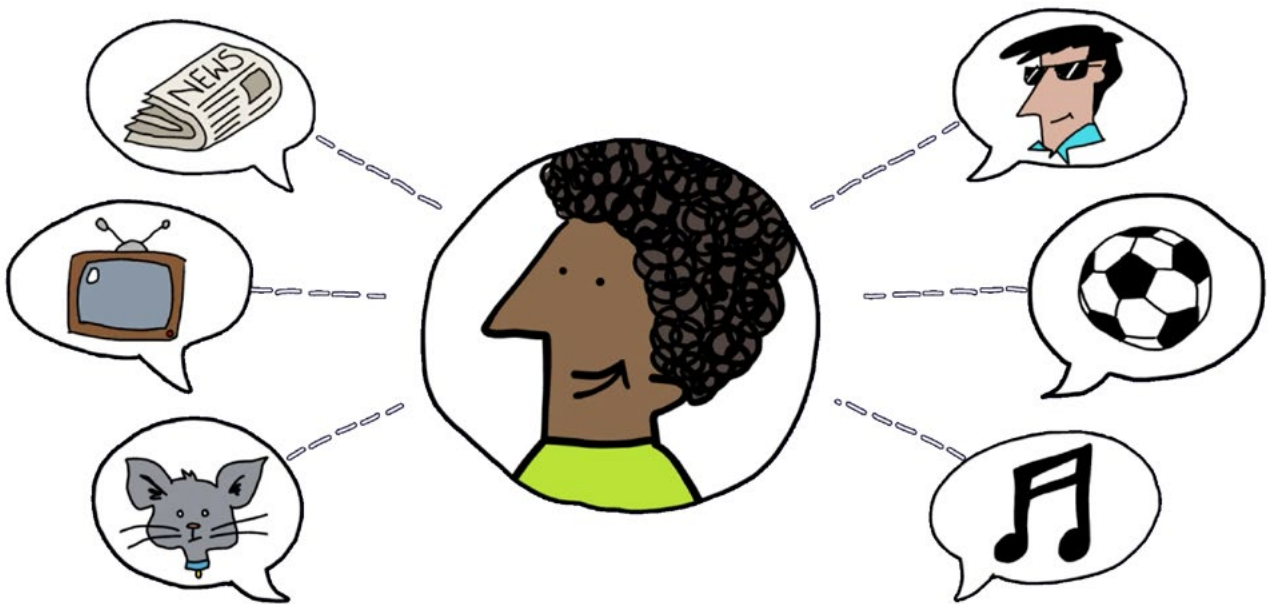


# DISCUSSING

**YOUR GROUP'S NOT READY TO DISCUSS JESUS?  
HERE'S A FIRST STEP**



**Why not invite people to explore spirituality? *Bible Talk* (see *Discovering*) could be a good way in. But if that is too big a step, encourage ‘conversations with a difference.’**

As part of an outreach activity or alongside it, invite people to choose a topic and discuss it. Then, as the animation suggests, ask the question that makes a difference. ‘If God exists, or if a great spiritual teacher dropped in, what would they say?’

## **SO EASY!**

One youth worker exclaimed, ‘This is so easy! My young people can sit round a table with the label *Love Island* (a popular British TV programme), or another with the name of a celebrity. After a few minutes I can introduce the question.’

During Covid-19, a dog-walking group was forced to meet by Zoom. People showed off their dogs to each other, discussed pet care, and

then in one session the convenor asked, 'What breed of dog would God choose?' It was a humorous way to connect spirituality to life.

A group of men met to clear graffiti and improve the environment. Afterwards, they socialised over a drink. The main employer in the town was Toyota, whose mantra was 'constant improvement.'

So they themed part of their conversation round 'constant improvement.' How could they keep improving in their environmental task, as fathers and partners, in their friendships, and at work?

If they had included, 'How can we keep improving in finding meaning and purpose to life?' they would have added an explicitly spiritual dimension.

One group gathered to keep fit. They expanded their conversations to include 'How can we keep spiritually fit?'

A litter-clearing group might meet afterwards over a drink and discuss, 'How can we clean up life - at home, work, in our friendships, on social media, in politics, in sport...?' The list is almost endless!

For fun ways to begin conversations about the important things of life, take a look at this page: [Table Talk](#)

You could use some of their resources, and then add the question 'If God exists, or if a great spiritual teacher dropped in, what would they think about the topic?'

## **BE TRANSPARENT**

If you plan to introduce conversations with a difference, be transparent in your publicity and the invitation. Explain who you are - for example:

'We are a group of Christians/a group from the local church. We are starting a film club with a difference for parents of the school. Each month, we'll watch a film on one Friday and then have a meal two weeks later to discuss it.

'To make it a club with a difference, toward the end of the conversation we'll ask, "If God exists or a spiritual guru dropped in, what would they think about the film?"'

If you want to introduce these conversations into an existing group, make sure you do so with people's permission.

Beware of having too many Christians in the group! Their language and Christian assumptions may put other people off. It is best if the Christians are

in a small minority. After all, the whole idea of sharing Jesus is to help you offer a fuller life to people outside the church!

## **AND REMEMBER...**

Though you may hope that 'conversations with a difference' will encourage people to explore Jesus, don't let that be your main motivation.

Start these conversations because they are worthwhile in themselves: they're fun, they enrich the group, they lift people's horizons, and they create opportunities for the Holy Spirit. It's the Spirit's responsibility to take the conversations further.

So don't use these conversations as a means to an end. See them as an end in themselves - and invite the Holy Spirit to take it from there.

