



# #SOS2025

# A Conversation Guide

Created as a free community resource by:



# #SOS2025

Summer of Solidarity is a people-powered movement built around a simple idea: When democracy is in danger, we respond together. This summer, we are showing up loudly, boldly, and creatively to say: We will not be divided. Learn more at [OrganizingIndiana.org](https://OrganizingIndiana.org).



## The Value of Conversation

Movements are built one conversation at a time. The seeds we plant today shape the future we harvest together tomorrow. Use this guide to check in with where you are on the continuum and to find ideas for connecting with others in meaningful ways.



# Best Practices for Effective Conversation



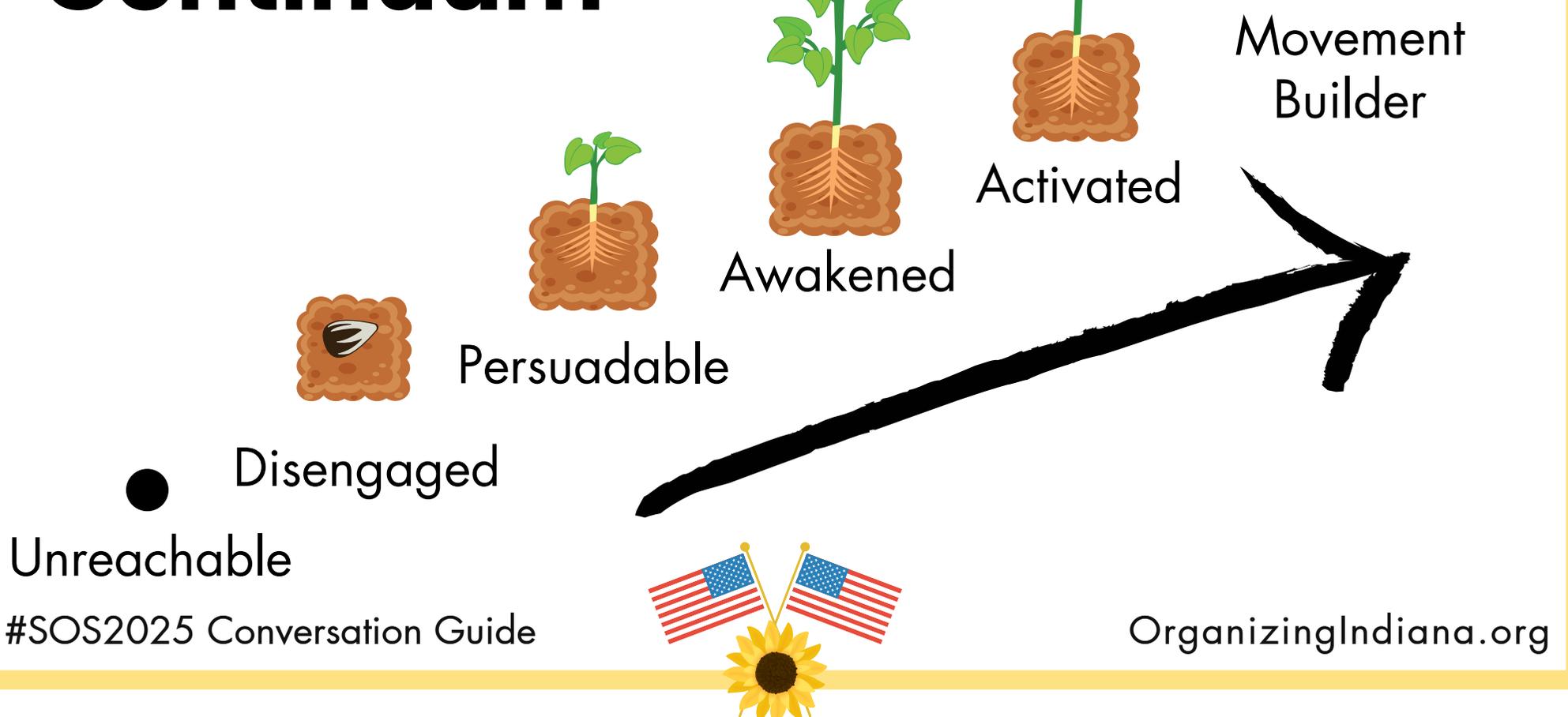
## Do

- Ask questions.
- Be curious.
- Listen to understand (not to agree or disagree).
- Affirm their feelings.
- Connect on shared values.

## Don't

- Never force a conversation.
- Don't lead with facts and figures.
- Don't rebuke or deny their perspective.
- Don't overwhelm with too much information.

## The Conversation Continuum



# Unreachable



They likely exist inside a **closed echo chamber of propaganda**. Their political affiliation has become part of their **identity**. They may be reachable at some point in the future, but not today.

## Decide whether to engage:

- Do you want to keep the relationship intact?
- Give yourself time to decide how you want to engage.
- Some relationships are toxic, and you may choose not to engage as a way of protecting yourself.

## Leave an opening:

- Acknowledge your differences, but seek anywhere you can find common ground.
- Offer yourself as a safe person if they do change their mind or start to wake up to what's happening.



# Disengaged



They may feel **left out** by political and other systems. They may feel **hopeless** and that their actions won't make a difference. They are likely in **survival mode** and may not want to engage in a "political" conversation. They are likely **low information voters** if they vote at all and may be fairly checked out from or even **misinformed** about current events.

## Offer empathy:

- "I have felt that way at times too. It's hard to move beyond that place."
- "I can understand why you would feel that way."

## Plant seeds:

- "This movement is about people not party affiliation."
- "A lot of people aren't happy with the way things are working currently and are fighting for change. It's a broad and diverse group."



# Persuadable



They may sense that something is “off” or “wrong” but **don’t know where to start**. They may get information from multiple sources but may not be able to distinguish what’s true. They may disagree with you on many or most policy issues, but are **open to new ideas** and information.

## Build the foundation:

- Ask what they are noticing, what feels different than before.
- Ask what issues are most important to them.
- Find shared values.

## Moving beyond:

- Share information and resources that are accessible and won’t overwhelm.
- Encourage small actions that bring joy and build community.
- Remember: Joy is resistance!



# Awakened



They understand that authoritarianism is creeping into our country and our state. Awakening to “what’s happening” **can be overwhelming**. There can be a lot to process, a lot to learn (and also unlearn). They may be looking for **ways to get involved**.

## Deepen their understanding:

- Share high-quality sources of information such as historian Heather Cox Richardson’s “Letters from an American” daily newsletter.
- Share videos

## Build Community:

- Join or host a book club.
- Host a documentary screening.
- Host a themed craft night.
- Volunteer at a local organization helping people in your community



# Activated



These people are aware, continuing to educate themselves, and **have started to act**. They may be organizing, leading, or participating in groups in their area to **build community** and **move others toward action**.

## Support independent journalism:

- Recommend Substack as a place for independent journalism.
- Share your favorites with them or explore the site together.
- Explore Indiana's independent media together.

## Organize in your community:

- Become a precinct chair with your local party. Then get to know your neighbors.
- Start or join a group of like-minded citizens.
- Register your group with [OrganizingIndiana.org](https://OrganizingIndiana.org)



# Movement Builders

A vibrant illustration of a field of sunflowers with green leaves and stems. Several red ladybugs with black spots are scattered throughout the scene, some on the flowers and some in flight. The background is a soft, light blue sky.

Our collective task is to engage **3.5% of the population** into resistance against the authoritarianism creeping into our state and federal governments. As authoritarians seek to weaponize us against each other, we must **stand alongside and protect** one another across race, class, religion, gender, and any other status used to divide. We must ensure this joy-filled, cultural resistance is **sustained, organized, and visible** through acts of **nonviolence**. We must find one another and build this movement together.

## Cross-pollinate across groups:

- Many orgs are working to amplify each other's work, collaborate, and build power.
- Learn about these organizations at [OrganizingIndiana.org](https://OrganizingIndiana.org)

## Build momentum through effective messaging:

- Implement unified and consistent messaging.
- Check out the messaging guides from [Anat Shenker-Osario](#).



# Recommended Substacks

Hoosiers for Democracy

Letters from an American (Heather Cox Richardson)

Lucid (Ruth Ben-Ghiat)

Thinking about... (Timothy Snyder)

Pepperspectives (David Pepper)

The Ink (Anand Giridharadas)

Sherrilyn's Newsletter (Sherrilyn Ifill)

Find more recommendations at [OrganizingIndiana.org](https://organizingindiana.org)

## Relational Organizing

### Indivisible: Empower - Fight Back with Friends

Indivisible is offering free resources to help you connect with people you already know so you can help them take meaningful action. Download the Empower app (a “relational organizing” tool), access free scripts and messages, and sign up for free training from Indivisible.

### Red Wine & Blue: Rally Your Squad - Conversation Guide & Rally Set-up Guide

Red Wine & Blue is offering free resources to help you have meaningful conversations with people in your network. Download the Rally app (a “relational organizing” tool), access toolkits, and sign up for Trouble Nation for additional resources.

