

The image features two men in business attire standing against a textured, grey wall. The man on the left is wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie, holding a megaphone to his mouth with a shouting expression. The man on the right is wearing a light blue suit, white shirt, and dark tie, also holding a megaphone and shouting, with his left arm raised in a fist. The background is a plain, slightly mottled grey wall.

How to
disagree
productively
in an increasingly
polarised world.








Elevating
the conversation



To elevate the conversation is to change the conversation – **moving the starting point** of the conversation to the starting point of the conversation partner.


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1. What are some of the difficult conversations?
 2. How do these 'conversations' begin?
 3. What is something you have learnt from the perspective of others?



We miss out on soul searching dialogues when we fail to enter into an unnerving conversation.

It is possible to disagree and yet still peacefully listen, learn and dialogue so that something significant can happen for the Kingdom.





MATTER MANNER

Always err on the side of
meekness in spirit and conduct.

Downton Abbey

OFFICIAL TRAILER





1



thinking

together



We have been too wrapped up in planning the communication of our truth by cooking up contingency plans for potential rebuttals that we have forgotten to **think relationally**.



intently
listening



asking
questions

Across the gospels, Jesus is asked how many questions?

- A 25**
- B 96**
- C 183**
- D 264**



**Across the
gospels,
Jesus gives a
straight
answer to how
many of
these 183
questions?**

- A 3**
- B 8**
- C 56**
- D 183**



Across the gospels, how many questions does Jesus ask other people – both friends and foes?

- A 50**
- B 121**
- C 238**
- D 307**





Closed questions don't cultivate dialogue.

They discourage disclosure.


The asker has already answered the question for themselves and is only seeking to figure out where the other person fits within

their own preconceived metric

– either for or against.



What might be some questions to ask in response to:

- ◆ I don't see how any Christian could vote for the Green's party!
 - ◆ I tried going to church a few times but the place was full of hypocrites. I'm not going back.
 - ◆ I don't know why we're letting in so many refugees!? We don't need terrorists in our country.
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creating *space*

1 FINDING COMMON GROUND



2 SEPARATING IDEAS FROM IDENTITY



3 THE HUMILITY OF UNCERTAINTY



Create space for independent thought
and even disagreement:

“Do your best to present yourself
to God as one approved, a worker
who does not need to be ashamed
and who correctly handles the
word of truth.”


2 Tim 2:15





Ultimately biblical interpretation
informs cultural application on both
sides of any argument.

As “workers who do not need to be
ashamed” study the Scriptures for
your own ‘truth’ but do not use your
‘owned answer’ be the starting point
for a conversation.



GUIDELINES FOR DIALOGUE TRANSFORMING OUR ENCOUNTERS WITH OTHERS

Learning to explore faith in healthy ways is an important skill for life. These simple guidelines ensure a safe place for young people to talk faith, make friends and change lives.

**LISTEN TO
WHAT EVERYONE
HAS TO SAY**

**DO NOT TELL
OTHERS WHAT
THEY BELIEVE,
BUT LET THEM
TELL YOU**

**DO NOT FORCE
PEOPLE TO AGREE
WITH YOUR VIEWS**

**ACKNOWLEDGE SIMILARITIES AND
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OUR FAITHS**

**SPEAK POSITIVELY
OF YOUR FAITH,
RATHER THAN
NEGATIVELY
ABOUT OTHER
PEOPLE'S**

**MAKE EVERY
EFFORT TO
GET ALONG
WITH EVERYONE
REGARDLESS
OF THEIR
FAITH, GENDER,
ETHNICITY OR AGE**

*the
feast*

**DO NOT JUDGE
PEOPLE HERE
BY WHAT SOME
PEOPLE OF
THEIR FAITH OR
COMMUNITY DO**

**DO NOT TREAT
SOMEONE AS A
SPOKESPERSON
FOR THEIR FAITH
OR CULTURE**

**BE HONEST IN
WHAT YOU SAY**

**RESPECT OTHER
PEOPLE, EVEN IF
YOU DISAGREE
WITH THEIR VIEWS**

**AT ANY STAGE
YOU CAN ASK FOR
A DISCUSSION
TO BE STOPPED
IF YOU FEEL
UNCOMFORTABLE**

owning

responses

5

Owning is when I claim a belief as mine and present it for consideration.
Owned statements begin with phrases like

- I believe...
- I feel...
- I think...
- In my experience...
- It seems to me...





grounding

responses

6

Grounding is when I “Ground” the belief statement by attaching it to the group who holds it, or to its source.

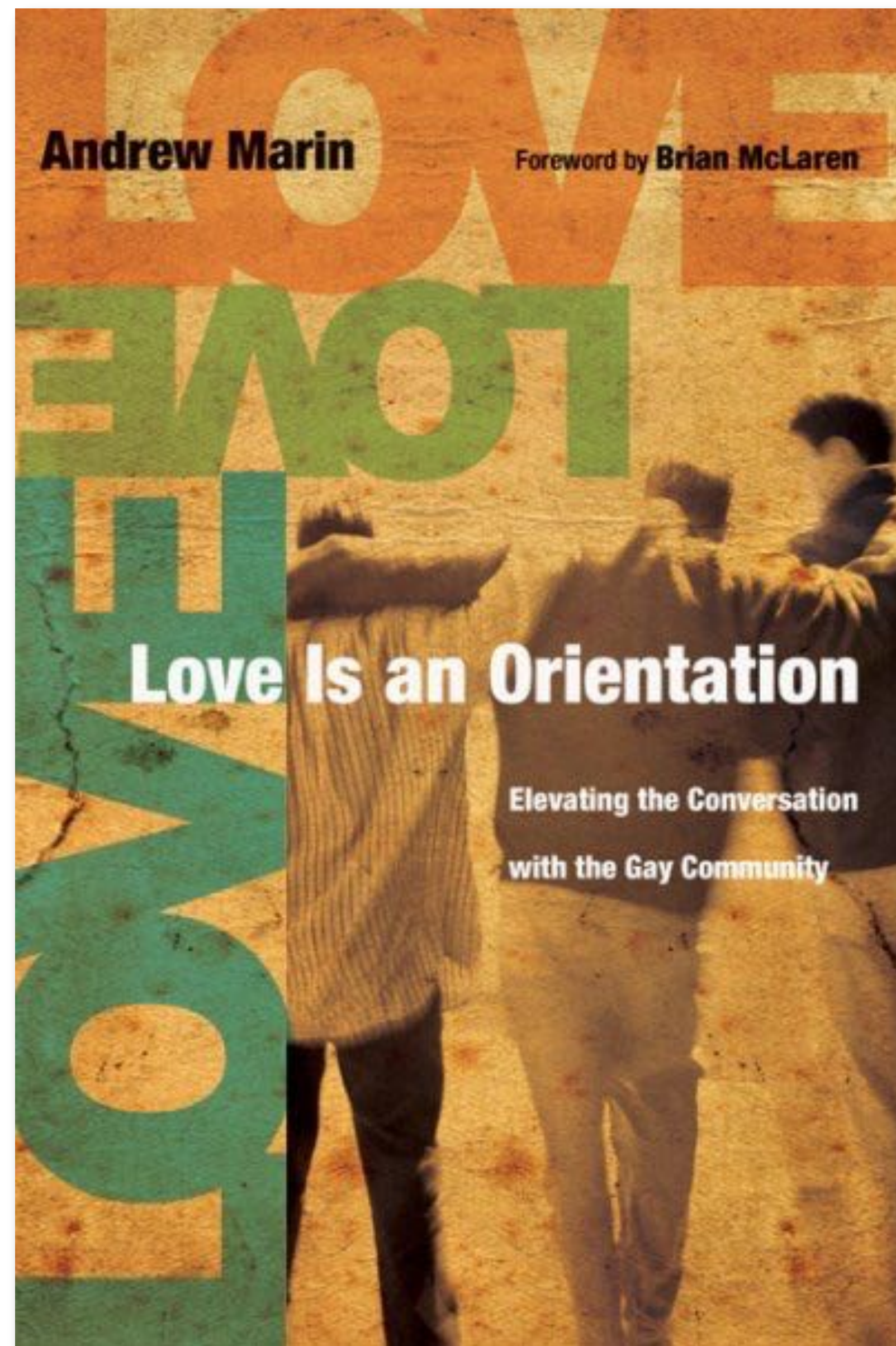
“Christians do believe a lot of different things about [insert topic here]...”

“That’s an interesting view. Another way to think about that issue would be...”

“I’m sure you’re not alone in having that view, but I’m not sure it would be a view that Christians would generally share...”

celebrating *relationship*







"It is the Holy Spirit's job to convict,
God's job to judge and
my job to love."



EMPATHY
RESPECT



'WORLDS APART'





TOOLS FOR ELEVATING A CONVERSATION

1. *Thinking* - together
 2. *Listening* - observing & discerning
 3. *Asking* - questions
 4. *Creating* - space for independent thought or for disagreement
 5. *Owning* - what you think or believe
 6. *Grounding* - ideas and beliefs in their source
 7. *Celebrating* - relationship & process
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