

# on the table

Your voice matters.

*On the Table Resource Guide*

*Everything begins with a conversation*

*October 12, 2020 – January 31, 2021*

“Gatherings—the conscious bringing together of people for a reason—shapes the way we think, feel and make sense of our world.” – Priya Parker

The year 2020 has been an unprecedented convergence of crises – a global pandemic, an economic shutdown, massive unemployment, enduring protests demanding for racial justice, and a presidential election. In the midst of chaos and divisiveness, what remains is our hope.

*On the Table* is designed to bring people together around a common purpose, and it’s an opportunity for people to listen, to understand each other, and learn from one another’s experiences. This year, we launch *On the Table* as part of Healing Illinois - a racial healing initiative designed to spark individual understanding and action, personal and interpersonal change, and capacity building for organizations and institutions so that they may address racism, and begin to create the conditions for greater racial equity in Illinois.

Join the conversation from October 12, 2020 through January 31, 2021 and make your voice matter. This resource guide is designed to inform, spark conversation and support ways to take action.

**on the table**



THE CHICAGO  
COMMUNITY TRUST  
AND AFFILIATES

## About On the Table

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*On the Table* is an annual forum that invites Chicagoans from diverse backgrounds, neighborhoods and perspectives to gather over mealtime conversations to build personal connections and explore how we can work together to make our communities stronger.

### When?

From October 12, 2020 through January 31, 2021

### Where?

We recognize that many conversations will be held virtually. There are several platforms and ways for people to connect for these virtual conversations.

If you opt to convene in person, we encourage you to follow the guidelines set by the Illinois Department of Public Health. For more information visit <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance>.

### Who?

Everyone. We all have conversations every day, *but On the Table* and similar programs carve out a moment that is separate from everyday life.

### Why?

The Chicago Community Trust organizes *On the Table* to unite people from diverse backgrounds to explore how we can strengthen our communities to make people's lives better. When we come together—face-to-face—to find common ground and common cause on community issues and challenges that matter to people, powerful things can happen.

# Planning Your Conversation

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## The Day

Consider the following before committing to hosting an *On the Table* discussion:

- What is the purpose?
- Who are you inviting and why are you asking them to participate in this conversation?
- When is the right time for this conversation?

If an *On the Table* conversation is right for you and your community, please note that conversations can take place on any day between October 12, 2020 – January 31, 2021.

## The Guests

The invite list is up to you. Start with people you know – friends, family, colleagues and neighbors – or expand your circle.

Consider inviting people from your network that don't already know each other – you may partner with a local nonprofit or simply ask each of your guests to invite someone new to the group.

## The Numbers

Five to ten guests per virtual table is recommended. *On the Table* is about giving everyone a chance to speak and be heard.

If you host more than 10 people, consider virtual breakout rooms and allow time for each to discuss and report back to the larger group.

## Sample Conversation Prompts

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To help get your conversation started, we've compiled a list of sample conversation prompts. Here are a few examples to consider:

1. What does your community need at this time? What can we do individually or collectively to address those needs?
2. What are the opportunities to promote equity and prosperity in our community? How can we collectively and as individuals work together?

### Technical Resources

Virtual conversations are enhanced by technically savvy.

Practice before hosting. Consider your background, your attire, your camera and microphone. Think about enhancing your conversation by sharing your screen or using breakout rooms.

This is a non-exhaustive list of free, virtual meeting software you may be interested in using for your virtual *On the Table* conversation:

- Zoom
- House Party
- Duo
- What's App
- Google Hangouts
- Skype
- FaceTime

# Sample On the Table Conversation

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## Purpose of Conversation

*It is important to state the purpose of the meeting. Why are you convening people? Is it for networking purposes, to ideate solutions, to inform a project, or is it simply providing space for people to come together and connect?*

## Welcome

The host/facilitator welcomes everyone to the conversation and shares the purpose of the meeting and what guests should anticipate

## Introductions and Centering the Conversation

Ask your guests to center themselves in the present moment. They can do this by closing their eyes, taking three deep breaths, and being fully present in the conversation.

After this, provide an opportunity for guests to introduce each other. Consider providing a prompt in order to break the ice equalize everyone in the virtual table.

## Conversation Agreements

It is important to set conversation agreement. The host can provide them beforehand and ask for guest feedback or the group can develop the group agreements in real time.

## Open Conversation

Consider these prompts from YWCA's Until Justice Just Is Conversation Toolkit:

- Given the national protests, the pandemic, the divisive times we find ourselves in, how are you feeling?
- What does justice mean to you?
- What does healing mean to you?
- What would an equitable and just Illinois look like?

## Deepen the Conversation

Consider these prompts from YWCA's Until Justice Just Is Conversation Toolkit:

- How do we capture the power of this moment to build real and sustainable change?
- What do we need for healing to begin?
- What is your role in making this work a reality?

## Close the Conversation

Thank everyone for joining your virtual conversation.

## Next Steps

If there are any next steps, make them clear to your guests.

## Resources

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We've compiled this list of resources to help you guide and inform your conversation. Based on the list of resources, consider the following conversation flow designed by the [National Day of Racial Healing](#).

### Indigenous People's Day

Launching *On the Table* on October 12, Indigenous People's Day, and as part of Healing Illinois, it is important to learn and acknowledge the native peoples of this land, Illinois. Part of the healing process is acknowledgement and reconciliation in order to move forward.

Start here, but don't stop - we encourage you to continue your quest of learning.

- **American Library Association**

Learn more about the Indigenous Tribes of Chicago:

<http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/diversity/chicago-indigenous>

- **American Indian Center**

Learn more about Chicago's Indigenous People's Day Ordinance, visit [www.aicchicago.org](http://www.aicchicago.org)

- **ILLUMINATIVE**

Learn more from this national Native-led organization and explore their Indigenous People's Day Toolkit.

Visit [www.illuminatives.org](http://www.illuminatives.org)

- **Trickster Cultural Center**

Learn more and explore contemporary Native American artwork and multicultural exhibits. Visit

[www.tricksterculturalcenter.org](http://www.tricksterculturalcenter.org)

- **U.S. Department of Arts and Culture**

Learn more about acknowledging and honoring native lands. Explore their toolkit:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B\\_CAYH4WUfQXTXo3MjZHRC00ajg/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_CAYH4WUfQXTXo3MjZHRC00ajg/view)

## Articles

- **WTTW: "We're Still Here": Chicago's Native American Community**

<https://interactive.wttw.com/playlist/2018/11/08/native-americans-chicago>

- **NPR: The Movement for Indigenous People's Day** <https://www.npr.org/2019/10/13/769923423/the-movement-for-indigenous-peoples-day>

- **NPR: Columbus Day's Meaning for Italian Americans**

<https://www.npr.org/2019/10/12/769688161/columbus-days-meaning-for-italian-americans>

## More Resources to Spark Conversation

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- **Anti-Defamation League**

The mission of ADL is to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.

- [Table Talk](#): Family Conversations about Current Events
- [Race Talk](#): Engaging Young People in Conversations about Race and Racism

- **Family Dinner Project** In 2017, The Chicago Community Trust partnered with [Family Dinner Project](#), to assist families in bringing a spirit of collaboration to their own dinner tables. Their conversation guides provide suggestions and resources to help through the three essential elements of a meaningful meal: food, fun and conversations about things that matter. To explore the guide click [here](#).

- **Illinois Holocaust Museum** In 2019, Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center received a 90% increase in inquiries from schools and individuals looking for support as they grappled with hate incidents. This toolkit is designed to share practical tools and resource that can be used immediately. To learn more, visit [Confronting Hate Toolkit](#).

- United States Holocaust Museum Learn more about the [Origins of Neo-Nazi and White Supremacist Terms and Symbols](#)

- **National Museum of African American History and Culture** The Smithsonian's African American History Museum launched an online portal, [Talking About Race](#), to help people, educators, communities and families discuss racism, racial identity and how these concepts share every aspect of our society from politics to the economy to the nation's culture. To learn more visit [nmaahc.si.edu](#).

- **PBS Kids: Talking to Young Children About Race and Racism** Children are never too young to learn about diversity. As young as 3 months old, they may look differently at people who look like or don't look like their primary caregivers. PBS KIDS Talk About: Race and Racism premiered October 9<sup>th</sup>. Series Daniel Tiger Neighborhood, Arthur, and Xavier Riddle and the Secret Museum will feature kids and their parents talking about race and racial justice-related topics in an age-appropriate way. To learn more visit [pbs.org](#).

- **Teaching Tolerance** A project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, Teaching Tolerance was founded in 1991 to prevent the growth of hate. To explore resources on race and ethnicity, and much more visit [tolerance.org](#).

- **Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation Greater Chicago** Launched in 2017, Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation (TRHT) Greater Chicago is a cross sector, community-driven process to plan for and bring about transformational and sustainable change and to address the historic and contemporary effects of racism. To learn more visit [transformchi.com](#). [National Day of Racial Healing](#) | [Conversation Guide](#).

- **YWCA USA | Until Justice Just Is** Until Justice Just Is, a campaign designed to bring awareness to the pervasiveness of systemic racism and the organization's commitment to end systemic and institutional racism.

- [Learning Library](#) | Educate yourself on systemic racism and its pervasive effects.
- [Anti-Racism Discussion Guide](#) | Engage in conversation with colleagues, friends and loved ones to support learning, understanding, healing and collaboration.
- [Workplace Trainings](#) | Create a more inclusive workplace through customized solutions and trainings.
- [Volunteer Opportunities](#) | Learn about your community's needs and get involved.