

Conversation Quadrants

How to Talk to Friends or Acquaintances Who Aren't Disciples of Jesus

A Powerful Relational Tool

The key is intentionality. We have to figure out two things:

- Where are conversations are going?
- How do we get there?

Where are our conversations going? The ultimate goal we should have with someone who is not actively following Jesus is to invite them into a Discovery Bible Study. A DBS is an environment where they are reading Bible stories with us and discovering who Jesus is for themselves.

How do we get there? We develop relationships with them by having four levels of conversation. The conversations go deeper and deeper into spiritual things and into the Bible.

Level 1 – Casual Conversations

These are the get-to-know-you kinds of conversations and might start like this...

- Where did you grow up? How long have you lived here?
- Are you doing anything special this weekend?
- What do you think about this weather?
- Did you watch/play any sports this week?
- Do you have a pet?

Level 2 – Meaningful Conversations

These conversations are more significant and vulnerable and might start like this...

- What is something you are hoping for/dreaming about this year?
- What life lesson did you learn the hard way?
- What would you do differently if you knew nobody would judge you?
- What made you smile in the last two weeks?
- What lifts your spirits when life gets you down?

Level 3 – Spiritual Conversations

These conversations move you into talking about God and what he is doing in your life. They might start like this...

- This week I was reminded about how good God is. I _____.
- I have been praying for months and I finally got a breakthrough. God _____.
- Thank you for your excellent service. My wife and I like praying for the people who serve us. Is there anything we can be praying about for you or your family?
- If God could do a miracle in your life right now, what would you ask Him for?

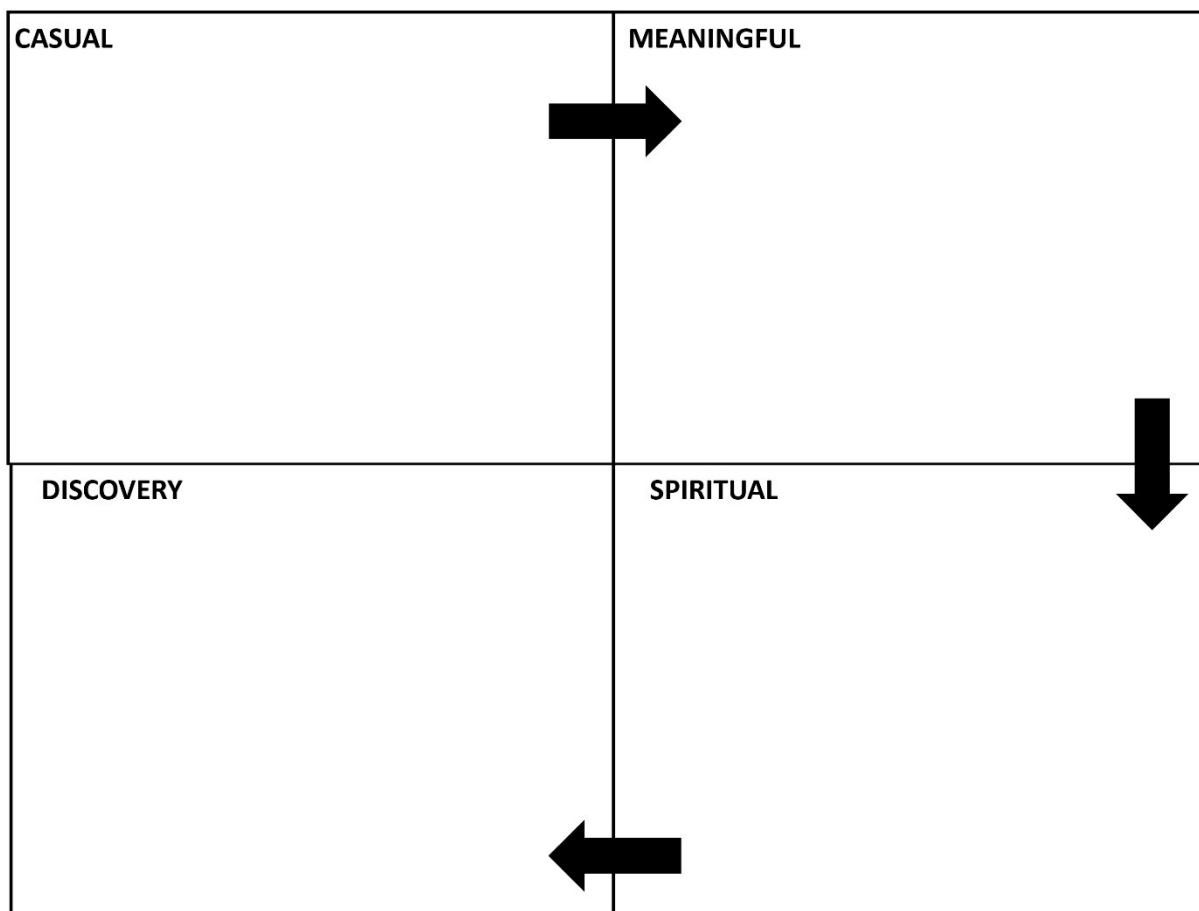
Level 4 – Discovery Conversations

These happen when we retell a story or passage from the Bible that connects God's story with theirs. For example...

- If you ask someone: "If God could do a miracle in your life, what would it be?" Before you intercede on their behalf, briefly share the story of the 10 lepers (Luke 17:11-18), and ask: If God provides this miracle, will you be like the one who remembered to thank Him?
- Maybe your friend reveals a physical problem or condition they are facing. The story in Luke 8:40-48 of the woman who had been bleeding for 12 years and touched the hem of Jesus garment and received healing could be an encouragement to them.
- Maybe your friend is facing an impossible situation. Share the story of the rich young ruler (Matt. 19:16-26) that ends by saying "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."
- My neighbor shared about a conversation with someone who was highly prejudiced. I told him the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14) and how the Pharisee looked down on everyone but the tax collector humbly asked God for mercy.

The more you know the stories of the Bible the more you'll be able to match a story with a situation a person is facing. After several discovery conversations you can invite them to a DBS. For example... We've had some great conversations about God, would you like to get together sometime and read more Bible stories together and see what it says for yourself?

Keeping a conversation quadrant where you track where you are with people is a good way to remind yourself of where you have been in conversation with your friends and where you are hoping to go to. You set it up like this...



Record people's names in the quadrant that you start in and move their name to the other quadrants as you deepen the conversations. Using pencil makes this easier! Remember: As you move through the quadrants, you will revisit previous quadrants with them. Maybe you get them to the spiritual quadrant but the next time you have a casual conversation and back and forth as the Spirit leads. Don't forget the goal is to ultimately engage them in a Discovery Bible Study. Enjoy the adventure!