



How to Dialogue and Prosper as Friends Today

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What're the Contemporary Obstacles and Incentives to “Authentic Friendships” in a Society with an Absence of Mercy

The Crisis

“We talk more than ever — yet understand each other less. Many people avoid conversations entirely rather than risk conflict.”



When was the Last
time you had a friend
disagree with you?



Why Dialogue is Failing

- Social media incentives outrage, not understanding.
- Fear of being “canceled” or misunderstood.
- “Argument for the sake of arguing”



Aristotle & Authentic Friendship

Friendship based on: Virtue, Mutual goodwill, Desire for the other's good,

Friendship $\neq$ utility or pleasure., Requires time, trust, and moral growth.



Indigenous Wisdom: Dialogue as Relationship

Community over individualism.

Sacredness of time — don't rush
dialogue, Respect for ancestors and
continuity, Dialogue must be
relevant to lived experience, Bridge,
Indigenous cultures teach that
relationship comes before
argument.



Western Thinkers & Civil Discourse

Bellah: Politics and belief are always connected.

Dawson: Culture rests on moral and spiritual foundations.

John Courtney Murray: “Pluralism requires disagreement — but also shared agreement.”



How We Dialogue & Prosper Together (Action Steps)

- 5 concrete practices:
- Start with Friendship, Not Winning. Seek to understand before persuading.
- Practice Intellectual Humility. Admit what you don't know.
- Recover Shared Values.
- Dignity and Mercy
- Truth and responsibility.



Thank you

