

FINDING A BETTER WAY

Conversations with Gender
& Sexual Minority Youth

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Setting the Table

Pause the video at the end of Section #1 (14:15) to begin discussion.

Bill C-4 = a federal bill that amends Canada's Criminal Code by creating new criminal offences related to intentional practices, treatment or services related to conversion therapy. It would not criminalize conversations in which a person expresses an opinion on sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, unless that conversation forms part of a formalized intervention designed to make a person heterosexual or cisgender.

(Content taken from https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/pl/charter-charte/c4_1.html#:~:text=Bill%20C%2D4%20would%20amend,person's%20gender%20expression%20so%20that)

1. Bill C-4 is an attempt to protect a highly vulnerable population but it doesn't speak specifically to youth ministry. Read the short description of the Bill above or on the handout provided, and notice words and concepts that may provide some understanding of the Bill's intent as well as practical guidance for us in our work.
2. What are some questions and concern that rumble inside of you as we think about having "faith-filled conversations" with gender and sexual minority youth? What are questions and concerns you hear from others?

(note to leader: you are not meant to answer these questions. This is simply a time to gather and hear.)

God welcomes our questions knowing that for now our vision is incomplete. Have someone from your group put your questions into the hands of God in prayer, to hold for you all.

In the next clip watch for... reminders of God's true heart.

Express Care

Pause the video at the end of this Section to begin discussion.

1. In your life, who makes space to listen to you? How do you know they are really listening? What difference does that make for you?
2. When you find yourself reluctant or hesitant to just listen, what is going on inside?
3. When we choose to listen - putting our own opinions or corrections to the side - what do we communicate to the other person? What difference could that message make in someone's journey toward the heart of God?

In the next clip watch for ... the value of "intentional conversations of discovery."

Invite Growth

Pause the video at the end of this Section to begin discussion.

1. The video reframes the idea of "challenging" as "inviting". Why might that change in focus be important as we make space for personal and spiritual growth to happen in youth?
2. Why is it so important to be aware of our tendency to "invite people into our vision of who they should be rather than God's vision of who they are?" How does this look and why do we do this? (*See handout point #1)
3. How does discovering our worth in God's eyes open the way for a growing awareness of who God is?

In the next clip watch for ... practical ideas for creating spaces of safety and belonging for all.

Provide Support

Pause the video at the end of this Section to begin discussion.

1. What is something in this section that has stirred a question, a concern, a thought or a challenge? What's your reaction to this section's content and why?
2. Often our aim is to not do harm to others, but the example of Jesus takes things a step further. In the story of the woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11) Jesus stepped into harm's way to stand between the woman and those who were accusing her. How might it look to put ourselves in "harm's way" for LGBTQ+ youth in the context in which we live?
3. The video offered us a few practical ideas for making your programs and relationships safe spaces for vulnerable sexual and gender minority youth. Is there an idea might you put into practice in your context?

In the next clip watch for ... the danger of using the relational power we have in the life of a youth to accomplish our goals for them.

Share Power

Pause the video at the end of this Section to begin discussion.

1. What are the places in your context that you have power in the life of another. What do you need to do in these relationships to guard against unintentional disrespect?
2. Share one way you can intentionally share power in a relationship with a natural power imbalance (i.e. parent/child, older/younger, experienced/unexperienced, initiative taker/reserved...)
3. What would change if we invited young people - including those identifying as LGBTQ+ - to bring what they have to offer to our relationship and programs?

In the next clip watch for ... ways that you can act as a bridge.

Expand Possibilities

Pause the video at the end of this Section to begin discussion.

1. What challenges and possibilities have you seen in connecting gender and sexual minority young people to the body of Christ? What needs to happen next?
2. As we close this training time, how has this video and discussion expanded possibilities for you?