

### How to Host a Salon

**The most important skills for facilitators are the ability to lead a group discussion and a willingness to encourage and accept divergent opinions and beliefs.** You don't have to be an expert on the issue. In fact, it's better if you are not. The whole point is to encourage, not stifle, conversation. Facilitators should not dominate the salon or seize it as an opportunity to express opinions to the exclusion of differing beliefs. It's your job to manage the overall experience, making sure every voice is heard and all opinions are respected.

### Print Copies

The Chocolate Moses Facilitator's Guide and Participant's Guide are indispensable to your salon. Make sure you have printed a copy for each of your guests.

### Have Some Chocolate on Hand

As an icebreaker, a Chocolate Moses Salon begins with participants tasting chocolate and then reflecting on the experience. Facilitators will ask guiding questions to shape the experience. **Important: DO NOT provide participants with Fair Trade chocolate. Chocolate should be ordinary chocolate coming from an unknown source.**

### Who Should I Invite?

As the host/facilitator, it is your job to invite a great mix of the brightest people you know. The right combination of people from different backgrounds and points of view can make for a great salon. **Go for chemistry.**

### How Many Should I Invite?

A smaller number is ideal for salons. If you invite too many people, it becomes hard to keep the group together in a single conversation. Invite too few, and it could be hard to keep the conversation going. **For this salon, try to get between eight and ten people together, depending on the size of your space.** It is important that there be enough seating for everyone sit inside a single circle.

Invite your guests at least three weeks in advance, and remind them the week before and one more time the night before to ensure maximum participation.

### How Long is a Salon?

Depending on how many guests attend the salon, **plan on the conversation lasting 90 minutes.** With some time for shmoozing before and after, people can expect

about a two-hour experience. Your guests will appreciate this information, especially in advance!

### Salon Etiquette

- There are no leaders. The facilitator is not the leader. It's his/her job to help everyone shine and to be a part of the gathering.
- Allow for silence. Address the silence.
- No cross-talk (No interrupting. Let people speak.)
- No giving advice.
- Use "I" statements only.

It is true that some of these guidelines don't make for ideal conversation. They're not written in stone. They're just suggestions meant to help people to feel respected and heard, not to stifle anyone's voice. A healthy group can support real dialogue.

### A Few Questions to Ask Yourself

Answer these questions as you prepare for the salon. They will help create a more enjoyable evening and make for a better outcome.

- How will you invite and then remind your guests?
- Does your conversation space (living room or otherwise) feel comfortable and inviting?
- Will there be privacy to ensure confidentiality?
- What is the lighting and temperature in the room?
- Is there room for all participants to be in a single circle?
- Will you provide food or drink or ask guests to bring something?
- Is the salon time on a day and time conducive to success?
- How long will your salon be?
- Will you be able to accommodate people with special needs?
- Will there be a follow up?

### How to Ask a Good Question

A good question invites participation, can be answered by everyone at the salon, and always welcomes personal experience. **You know you've asked a good salon question when it supports "both/and" responses.**

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