



DEEPERDIALOGUES

THEOLOGICAL HORIZONS



ABOUT

Deeper Dialogues at UVA is a series of carefully structured and facilitated small-group conversations around essential qualities of human flourishing for members of the UVA and broader community.

It is hosted by Theological Horizons in partnership with the Boston-based civic consulting group, Essential Partners, thanks to funding from Upper House, a grantee of the John Templeton Foundation, and from UVA Parents Fund.

TOPICS

Virtual

RESILIENCE

Flourishing Amidst Uncertainty

Matt Weber, Sr. Asst. to the President

INSPIRATION

Following People of Courage

Carolyn Mitchell Dillard, University-Community Liaison, DEI Office

In Person

HOPE

Forging the Future Together

Shaka Sydnor, Asst. Dean of Students

FORGIVENESS

Finding Grace Beyond Harm

Dr. Amrisha Vaish, Associate Professor of Psychology

HEALTH

Framing Wellness in New Ways

Dean Ian Solomon, Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy

FORMAT

Each set of dialogues follows the Reflective Structured Dialogue (RSD) model developed by Essential Partners, which is designed to foster listening and genuine curiosity amongst participants. Features of this distinctive model include:

- A 15-minute introductory reflection by a senior member of the university community sharing personal experience and/or relevant research related to the theme of the dialogue;
- Small groups of 6-8 people and a trained facilitator. These groups include a mix of students, faculty, administration, staff and members of the larger community, offering a unique forum for individuals across different experiences to convene;
- A trained facilitator from the UVA community who guides members through a series of questions, reflective/note-taking periods;
- Responses that are given in a “go-round” fashion with everyone sharing for an equal amount of time and questioning with an attitude of open inquiry;
- Multiple 6-8 member dialogue groups that are convened at once to accommodate as many community members who want to participate;
- Dialogues that are closely timed to last no more than 75 minutes for a total event time of 90 minutes.





PROGRAM GOALS

The Deeper Dialogues initiative has three primary goals:

- Convene a variety of stakeholders from across the university community (at least 30% faculty and administrators) to improve understanding and connection around common challenges and goals;
- Leverage the unique resources of the university context to facilitate honest exchange and promote greater collaboration between and among various members of the university community;
- Give community members an experience of Reflective-Structured Dialogue (RSD) to foster a university culture of greater compassion and care and introduce dialogic communication tools for transferability to other spaces.

OUTCOMES

As Deeper Dialogues continues to be refined and developed, Theological Horizons is eager to expand the model to:

- Identify and develop best practices for building community and cultivating a sense of belonging across lines of difference or challenge;
- Create opportunities to develop and empower student leaders who can model confidence and care, and;
- Share our findings with other campus ministries that are seeking to find more meaningful ways to engage their communities in conversation around complex contemporary challenges including questions of research and faith.

ABOUT THEOLOGICAL HORIZONS

Theological Horizons supports Christians and seekers by providing a welcoming community for engaging faith, thought and life. It is centered at the Bonhoeffer House on the UVA grounds in Charlottesville, VA.

ABOUT ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

Essential Partners is a Boston-based consultancy that joins with communities and organizations around the globe, equipping them to navigate the values, beliefs, and identities that are essential to them.

TESTIMONIALS



85% OF DEEPER DIALOGUES PARTICIPANTS RATED THE EXPERIENCE "4 OUT OF 4"

"It was an incredibly moving and meaningful experience, from the phenomenal speaker to the intimate and powerful small group discussion.

I'm very grateful to have attended.

-UVA FACULTY MEMBER

"I immediately felt such a sense of welcome and belonging. It brought me a profound peace and purpose to be in a conversation with others who were listening with care."

-UVA COMMUNITY MEMBER

"I appreciated people's openness and honesty. I was surprised how quickly people can bond together."

-UVA ADMINISTRATOR

"It was encouraging to hear from others more experienced and older than me who also struggle like I do to share and open up about fears in their life."

-UVA STUDENT

