

Ten ways to start a conversation about marriage

The most effective way to build support for marriage equality is to have conversations with the people we know – but often it's hard to get the conversation started. Here you'll find some ways to start a conversation about marriage with friends, family and neighbors.

1. Think about it—what if you were told that you couldn't marry the person you loved? How would that make you feel, or change your relationship, your future plans and your life? Worse yet, what if you got married, and someone tried to take it away?
2. Two people in a committed, trusting and loving relationship deserve the dignity and support that come with marriage.
3. People can have different beliefs and still treat everyone fairly. That's why our constitution exists to protect everyone equally.
4. It is a joy to see my son/daughter and his/her partner together and a part of our family. I wish everyone could understand how much excluding them from marriage hurts our family.
5. Discrimination is wrong no matter who it affects. We must work together to fight against discrimination, wherever it appears. Excluding gay and lesbian Oregonians from marriage is a form of discrimination that hurts real people.
6. Tradition is important in our family. That's why we've invited our son/daughter's partner to be a part of our family traditions and celebrations.
7. It is not for me to judge other people. Just because I disapprove of something does not mean that people's rights should be taken away.
8. Many couples stay together for years and not only face discrimination, but many other challenges. In spite of these challenges, these couples remain courageous in the face of opposition and deeply committed to building happy lives together.
9. When gay and lesbian couples get married, they may finally be recognized as being part of the extended family—they are added to the family tree. I know how happy our family will be when all of us have the freedom to marry the person we love.
10. Protecting your family is important. But domestic partnerships don't provide the same security as marriage. They exclude people from marriage and create an unfair system that often does not work in emergency situations when people need it most. Gay and lesbian couples deserve the dignity, respect and legal certainty that come with marriage—and especially the ability to protect the people you love.