



SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

Standing with American Muslims. Advancing American Ideals.

UNITED STATES OF

LOVE
OVER
HATE



Ramadan Road Trip 2019
Video Series
Discussion Guide Booklet

To watch the Ramadan Road Trip Video Series visit:
ShouldertoShouldercampaign.org/RamadanResources

Seven Days
Five Cities

RAMADAN
ROAD
TRIP

One United States of LOVE. OVER HATE

Our Goals

In May 2019, we took our annual nationwide Ramadan engagement to the next level by hitting the road to feature stories of multifaith Iftars in cities throughout the Southeast United States.

Through this initiative we worked to:

- Catalyze interaction between “unlikely companions” in the specific locations of the events
- Counter anti-Muslim messaging by uplifting stories of American Muslims through the lens of Ramadan, and spark the collective imagination on the many shades of multifaith engagement across the country
- Challenge the traditional interfaith model and help people see how they can enter interfaith experiences in ways that go beyond the “standard” way of doing things

Special Thanks



We are grateful for our partnership with the InterReligious Institute at Chicago Theological Seminary's Story Project led by Kim Schultz and Seattle-based freelance video producer, Alex Montalvo for bringing these stories together. Special thanks to local leaders and organizations for hosting us at their interfaith Iftars and all those who attended and shared their stories.

To watch the Ramadan Road Trip Video Series visit:
ShouldertoShouldercampaign.org/RamadanResources

The Route

RAMADAN
ROAD
TRIP

1st
STOP

RALEIGH, NC | MAY 13, 2019

The Light House Project in Raleigh, is a community space that was galvanized after the murder of 3 Muslims in 2015. This interfaith Iftar created space to meet neighbors, share a meal, share stories, and build bridges for cross-community solidarity. It was sponsored by Muslim Women For, Triangle Interfaith Advocates for Refugees and Immigrants, Beth Meyer Synagogue, Neighborly Faith, Church World Service, and Shoulder to Shoulder's Ramadan Road Trip.

2nd
STOP

LOUISVILLE, KY | MAY 14, 2019

Interfaith Paths to Peace and Muslim Americans for Compassion hosts an annual regional Iftar that attracts over 600 participants pursuing greater interfaith civic engagement. Many consider this an integral component of helping Louisville become a model Compassionate City. The 2019 Iftar was held at Second Presbyterian Church.

FINAL
STOP

WASHINGTON, DC | MAY 20, 2019

Shoulder to Shoulder hosted our annual Iftar at Foundry United Methodist Church, partnering with Make Space, for an evening of delicious Uyghur cuisine, bean pies, and a performance of the critically acclaimed one-woman play, entitled Unveiled, written and performed by Rohina Malik.

3rd
STOP

NASHVILLE, TN | MAY 15, 2019

The annual Faith and Culture Center Nashville Music City Iftar is centered around intentional table conversations, to bridge understanding and deepen relationships.

4th
STOP

ATLANTA, GA | MAY 16, 2019

This Iftar highlighted how young people of faith are working together across the city within a United States of Love Over Hate. It was led by young adult, interfaith, and faith-based organizations, spearheaded by The Muslim Mix, the Faith Alliance of Metro Atlanta, the Roswell Community Masjid, IMAN Atlanta, American Jewish Committee, Atlanta Masjid of Al-Islam, Georgia Muslim Voter Project, International Museum of Muslim Cultures, Islamic Speakers Bureau, Muslim Women Professional Network, and Emory University Office of Spiritual and Religious Life.

To watch the Ramadan Road Trip Video Series visit:

ShouldertoShouldercampaign.org/RamadanResources



The Videos



RAMADAN ROAD TRIP 2019 MINI-DOC

WHAT RAMADAN MEANS TO ME

FOODS OF RAMADAN

BEING A BETTER ALLY

**BUILDING COMMUNITY ACROSS
DIFFERENCES**

BEING MUSLIM IN AMERICA

DEEPENING INTERFAITH ENGAGEMENT

To watch the Ramadan Road Trip Video Series visit:
ShouldertoShouldercampaign.org/RamadanResources
Or our [YouTube Channel](#)



Mini - Doc Discussion Guide

RAMADAN
ROAD
TRIP

This guide is meant to connect the Ramadan Road Trip video series with faith communities and people of goodwill who are interested in building communities across difference and diversity.

1. What in this Mini-Doc stood out for you about Ramadan, the American Muslim community, and coming together across difference?
2. What from your religious community, texts, traditions, or teachers encourage knowing your neighbor? And why is this important to you?
3. Who are the people or leaders in your community that inspire you to build friendships with Muslims and people of other faith and/or cultural backgrounds?
4. What gives you hope?
5. What beauty have you seen or experienced in your encounters with people of different religions or cultural traditions?
6. While meeting people of other faiths, what has surprised you? What have you learned?
7. What have you learned about your own values, religious texts, or traditions as you have met people of other traditions?
8. At the Nashville iftar the community asked, "Is there a time when you were an ally or wished you had been?" Can you describe an experience? What did you learn?
9. When you think about your own community and interfaith relations, what breaks your heart? Or what is something you struggle with the most?
10. If you've been to multiple interfaith or multi-faith events, why do you keep coming back? If this is your first event, why did you come?
11. What is your dream for your community?
12. What can you and your community do to continue to step outside your bubble?
13. Who are the one or two people in your circle of family, friends, or neighbors that you can share this video with and invite into the conversation?



Mini-Doc Activity Guide



1. Brainstorm as a group and list ideas of actions and events that build stronger communities across lines of difference.
2. Facilitate a small group in the "I am from..." exercise below.

I am from... Instructions

One of the exercises you see featured at the Raleigh iftar is an activity called I Am From- This poem template is adapted from and inspired by George Ella Lyon's poem, "Where I'm From." *Shoulder to Shoulder* first encountered this on the Ramadan Road Trip when organizational leaders from *Muslim Women For* led iftar guests in the following exercise at their Building Bridges Iftar.

Directions: Take 5-10 minutes to write down words or phrases that come to mind in the categories below. Then, if you choose to share, read your poem aloud by starting each categorial section with "I am from..." (Example: *I am from the coy fish pond in the backyard that my father built. I am from chicken curry and beef cutlets...*)

Sights, sounds and smells from your home or neighborhood growing up

- I am from...

Foods, especially those associated with family gatherings or special occasions

- I am from...

Sayings heard repeatedly as you were growing up

- I am from...

People: family members, friends, ancestors, important people from your past

- I am from...

Experiences that have challenged or shaped your identity

- I am from...

Moments from history that have informed your life and work

- I am from...

Faith, traditions, values that speak to the issues you care about

- I am from...

Who are the one or two people in your circle of family, friends, or neighbors that you can share this video with and invite into the conversation?



What Ramadan Means to Me

Video Discussion Guide

RAMADAN ROAD TRIP

For many American Muslims, Ramadan is a month that holds religious, family, cultural, and deeply personal meaning, each informing how they share, reflect, and celebrate together. This video shows just a small sample of those meanings from the people we encountered on our Ramadan Road Trip in 2019.

This guide is meant to connect the Ramadan Road Trip video series with faith communities and people of goodwill who are interested in building communities across difference and diversity.

1. What is one thing you learned listening to these interviews?
2. Was there something surprising?
3. Did you connect with someone or some story that reminded you of your own traditions around any holidays? What is that tradition?
4. Do you see connections between Ramadan and another season, celebration or holiday in your community? Can you describe it?
5. Prayer and fasting is a practice shared in many religious and cultural communities around the world. What does your community, texts and traditions say about prayer and fasting?
6. What practices or beliefs bring you closer to God or to the divine?
7. What practices or beliefs bring you closer to your family, friends, and neighbors?
8. Who are the one or two people in your circle of family, friends, or neighbors that you can share this video with and invite into the conversation?



Foods of Ramadan *Video Discussion Guide*

RAMADAN
ROAD
TRIP

The simple yet profound act of coming together to share a meal is a tradition that crosses all cultures, faiths, and communities. This video features some American Muslims we met on our Ramadan Road Trip in 2019, sharing their favorite foods of Ramadan, including lamb stew, dates, bean pie, sambosa, and IHOP.

This guide is meant to connect the Ramadan Road Trip video series with faith communities and people of goodwill who are interested in building communities across difference and diversity.

1. Share a story of your favorite holiday food. Why is this food important for you? Is it a family recipe? Is there a story with the recipe?
2. Do any of the foods mentioned in the video also appear at your holiday table?
3. Have you been to a meal that gathered people of different faiths and cultures? Did you have a favorite new food you tried?
4. What's a food from your community you like to share at these kinds of events?
5. Oftentimes fasting and prayer is also a time of recommitment to share abundance with those who are hungry. What in your religious tradition or texts guide your actions towards addressing hunger?
6. How does your faith particular community address hunger?
7. Is there a food bank or soup kitchen in your area? What can you learn about addressing hunger in your community?
8. Who are the one or two people in your circle of family, friends, or neighbors that you can share this video with and invite into the conversation?



Being a Better Ally Video Discussion Guide

RAMADAN
ROAD
TRIP

Building relationships and trust takes time, humility, and intentional effort. We hear the word allyship discussed a lot. This video explores what it means and how it can manifest in the world from people in need of good allies.

This guide is meant to connect the Ramadan Road Trip video series with faith communities and people of goodwill who are interested in building communities across difference and diversity.

Social change moves at the speed of relationships.

Relationships move at the speed of trust.

- Rev. Jennifer Bailey

1. What in your religious tradition or texts inspires you to meet, know and love your neighbor or the stranger?
2. Who are the important leaders or events in your community (historic or present) that guide or inspire you to build relationships and stand shoulder to shoulder with your neighbors?
3. Can you think of a time when you personally were an ally? Or a time when you wished you were?
4. What is one take-away that you learned and want to incorporate as an action?
5. Who are the one or two people in your circle of family, friends, or neighbors that you can share this video with and invite into the conversation?



Good Practices for Building Community Across Difference *Video Discussion Guide*

**RAMADAN
ROAD
TRIP**

This guide is meant to connect the Ramadan Road Trip video series with faith communities and people of goodwill who are interested in building communities across difference and diversity.

In this video, we explored ideas and practices that build resilient and diverse communities. These include: knowing your own values, building personal relationships across lines of difference, community mapping, strong public statements and actions and sharing stories.

Know Thyself

Having knowledge of what your and your community's deeply held values around caring for your neighbor are, is foundational to building relationships.

1. What are your personal and community values, either from scripture, tradition, or culture, that relate to building community?
2. Are they rooted in hospitality, welcoming the stranger, or caring for your neighbor? Are they rooted in love, compassion, or justice?
3. What do each of those words mean? Do you know of other meanings?
4. How do these values manifest in your everyday life?

Build Relationships

Relationships are foundational to responding to any crisis or to any long-term social change.

1. Can you remember or tell a story of someone who stood with you or helped you in a hard time? This could be a friend, neighbor, family member, or stranger.
2. What did they do or say that helped you?



Good Practices for Building Community Across Difference *Video Discussion Guide*

RAMADAN
ROAD
TRIP

Build Networks

Beyond individual relationships, building networks across groups, organizations and communities in your own city or town- and across the country- helps bolster the infrastructure we can all draw from in responding to a crisis or building stronger communities.

ACTIVITY: Map your community by brainstorming a list of people and organizations who are building community.

1. How many of those listed do you actually know?
2. Who's missing?
3. Are any of them working together?
4. How can you deepen your own involvement in your immediate community and in some of these others listed?
5. Are there opportunities for collaboration or supporting each other?

Show Courageous Leadership

While taking into account the needs and desires of directly impacted communities, find ways to center the voices of those most affected by bigotry and hate.

1. When did I ignore injustice because of fear? What can I do better next time?

Share Solidarity (or Unity or Public) Statements

These symbols of solidarity matter in showing support for those impacted, as well as putting forward a message of love, justice, and unity to the broader community. It's critical that the messages of love are bold and strong to outweigh those of hate.

ACTIVITY: Draft a message that you can be ready to adapt and share at the appropriate time.



Good Practices for Building Community Across Difference *Video Discussion Guide*

RAMADAN
ROAD
TRIP

Show Up

Physically showing up for interfaith events, vigils, and solidarity actions really do matter. They help breakdown the isolation we can feel when communities are under attack. They show people are not alone and that more people support creating communities that are safe, and free of bullying and harassment.

1. What events are happening in my own community that I should join in solidarity?

Storytelling

We remember stories and experiences better than facts and data. When someone is afraid, angry, or sharing misinformation about Muslims, acknowledge the emotion, and then follow up with a story. For example, you might respond: "I'm afraid too. I'm afraid that our community won't be safe for my Muslim friends and their families. Their kids are experiencing extremely high amounts of bullying and their houses of worship have often been targets of attack...."

ACTIVITY: Write a story with the following prompts. Choose 1.

- The last time I was truly afraid was when I was...
- I remember witnessing or experiencing bigotry or hate when I was...
- The reason I worship the way I do is because..... orwhen I was young, I learned that God...
- Here's a story about my Muslim friend...

ACTIVITY: Check out the "I Am From" poem prompt from the Mini-doc discussion guide.



Good Practices for Building Community Across Difference *Video Discussion Guide*

**RAMADAN
ROAD
TRIP**

Visit other communities & houses of worship, to learn and connect

ACTIVITY: Schedule a visit with a house of worship in your community that's different from your own. Or watch for special festival days open to the wider community, they often have lots of learning activities, good food, and music.

Use your own social media platforms

Share stories of hope, of friendships and solidarity in moments of crisis like a hate crime. These do matter.

ACTIVITY: You can visit Shoulder to Shoulder's Facebook page to explore some shareable stories:

<https://www.facebook.com/shouldertoshouldercampaign/>

ACTIVITY: Draft a social media message of hope, friendship, and solidarity that you can adapt and share at the appropriate time.

Continue the Conversation

Whether verbally or through other opportunities for interaction and connection, it's important to realize that change takes time and patience.

1. What's one next step that I can take?

Who are the one or two people in your circle of family, friends, or neighbors that you can share this video with and invite into the conversation?



Being Muslim in America

Video Discussion Guide

RAMADAN ROAD TRIP

This video and some of the stories and experiences shared can be very heavy. Take a moment to breathe deeply, and if you wish, say a prayer, and then return to this guide.

This guide is meant to connect the Ramadan Road Trip video series with faith communities and people of goodwill who are interested in building communities across difference and diversity.

1. What feelings or reactions did you have to the speakers and stories? Did any stand out for you? Why?
2. Have you heard any similar stories from Muslim friends, family or neighbors?
3. Have you heard any similar stories from other marginalized groups or minorities?
4. Have you ever felt excluded or marginalized just for being you? Have you ever been bullied, mocked, or made to feel like you don't belong? What happened? What did that feel like? What would have helped you feel supported?
5. Can you think about a time someone blamed you for something because of a shared identity, that you weren't personally responsible for? What did that feel like? What did you wish people knew about you in that moment?
6. What in your values, faith, religious tradition or sacred texts inspires you to meet, know and love your neighbor or someone who doesn't look or think like you? What does that look like or what could that look like in your life today?
7. Our country has a history of exclusion and discrimination AND we have a history of welcome and inclusion. What in our country and your community history are lessons for you on how to respond to anti-Muslim discrimination and violence today?
8. Several of the speakers share what gives them strength and hope. What gives you hope? What keeps you showing up to interfaith events?

Who are the one or two people in your circle of family, friends, or neighbors that you can share this video with and invite into the conversation?



Deepening Interfaith Work *Video Discussion Guide*

**RAMADAN
ROAD
TRIP**

Interfaith engagement is not a new phenomenon, and neither is our ability to deepen meaningful dialogue, relationships, and collaboration. If we practice listening, learning how to agree and disagree, and learning how to engage new individuals or communities, we will build empathy for each other. If that empathy, deeper knowledge, compassion, and courage are there, we can strengthen the foundations of trust as we support each other in times of crisis and in times of joy. These are the ingredients for deeper interfaith engagement.

This guide is meant to connect the Ramadan Road Trip video series with faith communities and people of goodwill who are interested in building communities across difference and diversity.

1. How do you celebrate important family holidays? What are your family traditions?
2. Is someone in your family or close circle of friends of a different faith, religious or non-religious background? How would you describe those relationships in your own experience?
3. What in your values, faith, religious tradition or sacred texts teach you about facing the new or unknown? About disagreement or differences?
4. What are the tools, or practices, you use in interfaith contexts to identify commonalities while also acknowledging and respecting differences?
5. What are some ways you can witness, engage in, or learn from another tradition or religious practice?
6. While recognizing that no one person or even local community can represent an entire religion, what questions do you have about your neighbor's faith or tradition?
7. What background work or reading would you need to do in order to approach a conversation with mutuality, rather than asking someone to teach you everything about a religion or faith community?
8. How might you ask questions about your neighbor's faith or tradition with humility, curiosity and openness, without asking someone to speak for an entire community or tradition?



Deepening Interfaith Work Video Discussion Guide

RAMADAN
ROAD
TRIP

9. How might you ask questions about your neighbor's faith or tradition with humility, curiosity and openness, without asking someone to speak for an entire community or tradition?
10. What challenges do you experience in your own community or experience when it comes to interfaith engagement?
11. Have you ever thought, or heard others say, that being involved in interfaith engagement will somehow jeopardize or weaken your own faith? How do you respond to others in your faith communities with this concern? Is there something in this video or in your experience that speaks to that concern?
12. What are some ways that you have seen people do interfaith engagement "better," however you might define that?
13. What does "going beyond interfaith dialogue" mean to you and your community?

ACTIVITY: Take a few minutes to identify some steps, whether small or large, to start or deepen your intentional interfaith engagement.

1. Is there an important holy day or civic celebration coming up where you can build new relationships, learn, or support communities of another faith?
2. Is there an important issue in your city or area that affects many people, an issue where many different religious, faith and non faith groups can work together? For example: poverty, access to health care, the environment, racism, education, bullying, etc.. Are there local groups working on these issues?
3. Are there books, movies, articles you can read to deepen your knowledge on your chosen topic?
4. Given your answers to the above questions: What steps can you take to build relationships with people in your city of different faith or religious backgrounds? These can include both personal and communal, but they should be steps with a specific focus and timeline.

Who are the one or two people in your circle of family, friends, or neighbors that you can share this video with and invite into the conversation?

To watch the full series and access additional discussion guides visit:

ShouldertoShouldercampaign.org/RamadanResources



SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

Standing with American Muslims. Advancing American Ideals.

UNITED STATES OF

LOVE
OVER
HATE



Thanks to our 2019 Partners:

