

Discussion Questions - Eboo Patel

#1 While Eboo Patel was visiting his grandmother, he discovered a woman stranger in the house. He asked his grandmother why she would take in a stranger, especially when she could be putting herself in danger. Eboo's grandmother responded, "Because I'm a Muslim, and this is what Muslims do." For her, Islam was, at least in part, defined by a tradition of hospitality.

- What practices or actions define your faith community?
- What could someone ask about and have you reply, "I do this because I am Jewish/Christian/Muslim, and this is what we do."?
- How does hospitality play out in your faith tradition? What narratives of hospitality exist in your tradition? What practices of hospitality exist in your community?
- If you are comfortable doing so, share a meaningful experience of hospitality, either as a recipient or a giver of hospitality.
- Conversely, are there areas where your tradition or community is not hospitable? Are there people who are not acceptable in your tradition or community? Do you think this should change? If so, how might you go about changing it?

#2 Patel is clear that he learned a great deal from people of mature faith, such as Brother Wayne, the Dalai Lama, and his grandmother.

- How have you learned from the elders of your tradition or community?
- How do you go about teaching those younger than yourself?
- Is there something you have learned from a mature person from a faith tradition other than your own?

#3 Patel, Hirsch, and Chakoian spend some time in conversation about mercy, judgment, and blessing.

- How does your faith tradition talk about these three concepts?
- What stories in your faith tradition illustrate one or more of these three concepts?
- What do you know about how other faith traditions talk about these concepts?

#4 Patel says, "There is a theology of justice in each of our different traditions. There is a theology of service. There is a theology of cooperation."

- Do the young people in your church or synagogue or mosque know the theology of cooperation?
- If you were to say to your young people, 'What in your religion inspires you to cooperate with those who are different', would they be able to cite chapter and verse?"
- Where are these three traditions in your faith?
- What in your religion inspires you to cooperate with those who are different?