

# TAKING ACTION IN YOUR COMMUNITY

## How we treat each other

We are all here for different reasons, but we are all campaigning for the same objective – equality. So it's important that we treat each other with respect and that we all take care of each other.

Our campaign is about allowing people who love each other to get married. So it goes without saying that racism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, biphobia and all other hatreds have no place in this campaign.

## Our campaign values

**A positive tone:** Our campaign will win the hearts and minds of 'yes' voters if we are positive, engaging and understanding. The 'no' side is portraying a 'no' vote as a vote for freedom of speech. This is a tactic that has been used before and we know the best way to counter it is to always stay focused on being positive and respectful.

**Real people:** Always remember that this campaign is about real people – us, our family, friends, neighbours, community – as opposed to abstract concepts like rights, laws or processes. The more we stay focused on talking about people, the more likely it is that someone will feel inspired to put their 'yes' ballot in the mail.

**It's a simple question:** The central question to be answered is 'should two people in a loving and committed relationship be allowed to get married?' We should never get distracted into talking about all the other things the 'no' side wants us to be talking about because when we do that, we've stopped talking about people, love, fairness and equality. The polling tells us that when we stay focused on that simple message, the overwhelming majority of the community is with us.

**Conversation, not a debate:** The 'no' side want to make this look like a 'debate' with two sides shouting at each other. That is the reason they wanted a plebiscite. Don't buy into this.

**Open to questions:** We need to allow people space to voice questions. There are people who are 95% supportive of marriage equality but who still have questions. We need to encourage conversation so they can ask those questions. That doesn't mean you should spend time answering questions from 'no' voters – they have made up their minds and no matter how many questions you answer, they are as likely to change their minds as you are to change yours. Rather, focus on people who have genuine questions that show they are still open to the idea of voting 'yes' but just want to clarify things.

**This campaign is about everyone:** If someone supports marriage equality, encourage them to talk to their own family, friends, workplaces. The best way to counter arguments about what this campaign is about is to show that it's about all of us.

**Ignore negative provocation:** This can be hard. There are some awful materials from the 'no' side going around. And it can feel like we need to defend ourselves. But no matter what happens, be respectful, agree to disagree and walk away. Remember: every minute you spend arguing with a 'no' voter is time you are not spending talking to a potential 'yes' voter.

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## Self care

Along the way, you are going to have some amazing conversations. You will be surprised and uplifted by the people who take the time to tell you their story.

You will also come across people who either tell you they can't be bothered voting or that they are voting 'no'. Most of the time that will be fine. Sometimes it might not be.

If you feel yourself getting distressed or angry or overwhelmed, stop what you are doing. Take time away – go for a walk, clear your head, pat your dog, talk to a friend or family member about how you are feeling.

If that's not enough, contact one of the various support services listed here that offer counselling.

When it comes to your physical safety, always take care and never put yourself in a situation where you may be unsafe. Never go out and do campaign activities alone - always have a friend or three along with you. Not only is there safety in numbers, it's more fun that way.

Trust your instincts - **if you ever find yourself feeling unsafe, remove yourself from the situation as quickly as you can and if you need help, ring 000** – the police will assist you.

## support services

### QLife/Switchboard

(counselling and referral service for LGBTI people)  
call 1800 184 527

### beyondblue

(for anyone feeling depressed or anxious)  
call 1300 22 4636

### headspace

(mental health service for ages 12-25)  
call 1800 650 890

### Lifeline

(support for anyone having a personal crisis)  
call 13 11 14

### Suicide Call Back Service

(for anyone thinking about suicide)  
call 1300 659 467

