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cata Conversations Across The Aisle

Beyond Resolutions: Staying in Conversation

January 2026

From the Founder

And the New Year Begins...

What if this year isn't about checking boxes—but about reaching further? Dr. Bill Woodson reflects on why authentic, ongoing conversation may be the most meaningful aspiration of all.

Read Our Founder's Reflection







Breaking Barriers When It Matters Most

In a time of rising political violence and deepening mistrust, meaningful dialogue feels both fragile and essential. While many retreat into ideological corners, CATA believes the path forward begins when people come together, face to face, to listen with curiosity and speak with respect.

Hear from CATA's Members

Listening & Learning

"A Tailor" Reveals the Unexpected Power of Deep Listening

A simple suit fitting becomes an unexpected lesson in empathy, listening, and human connection. Board Chair Dr. Bill Woodson shares how a night at the theater offers powerful insights for civic dialogue.



Read the Reflection

Partnership

The African American-Jewish Civil Rights Alliance: Shared Legacies

February 5, 2026 | 7 PM

CATA is delighted to spotlight an upcoming Boxser Diversity Initiative (BDI) event with **Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.** and **Rabbi Dr. Judy Schindler**. Enjoy a powerful film screening and conversation about the Black–Jewish partnership that shaped the Civil Rights Movement—and discover lessons for fostering understanding in today's divided world.

🎟️ **Free & open to all (registration required | few seats left)**

Save your seat: **BoxserDiversityInitiative.org**

Save Your Seat



CATA in the News

What Does it Mean to Derate the Hate?

Derate The Hate is a podcast by Wilk Wilkenson. Wilk created the podcast, which uses an interview-style format, and features a different guest each week, as a vehicle to help listeners navigate a culture that uses fear, outrage, and grievance —what Wilk calls "FOG," to keep us divided and triggered.

To quote Wilk, **"It really is about bettering the world, one attitude at a time. We did not create the hate, but together we can *derate the hate*."**
It's a great show, and I recommend adding it to your podcast feed. I had the privilege of being interviewed for Wilk's show recently. Our conversation may be available online by the time you're reading this.

Derate The Hate, a podcast hosted by Wilk Wilkinson.

WUSF: Holiday hunger, sea cow survival, bipartisan dinner tables and a December to remember



WUSF: From family feuds to friendly feasts: Learn the art of talking politics at the holiday table



Growing the Conversation

2026 will be a year of growth for CATA. We're expanding our workshops to youth groups, faith communities, new partners, and communities beyond Sarasota—growth made possible by the encouragement of past participants like you.

Every CATA Workshop includes a shared meal, which we see as essential to building trust and open dialogue. We've never charged a fee to attend, keeping our programs accessible to all.

Your donation helps make this possible. If you haven't yet given, please consider making your first contribution today. And if you have, thank you for helping CATA continue fostering meaningful conversation in 2026 and beyond.

DONATE TODAY

About CATA

Conversations Across the Aisle (CATA) is a non-partisan initiative dedicated to strengthening our nation—one community at a time.

By creating safe, structured spaces for informed conversations we foster understanding, build appreciation for different points of view, and strengthen Members' skill and confidence in navigating differences of opinion. We utilize a tested, replicable model that prioritizes respect, highlights the value of learning from peers, even when we disagree, and values authentic curiosity. This model enables us to bring neighbors together across political, racial, and cultural divides; bridge ideological division; and discover our common interests.

Contact Us!

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