

Lilith

Starting Your Salon

Why a Lilith salon? The Power of Conversation! To give Lilith readers a chance to meet one another in person, a forum for discussing ideas and to create connections, and a meeting ground for interesting women in your community.

Who comes? The Lilith salons are open to all Lilith subscribers. People can subscribe online (at www.Lilith.org), or by mail or phone. For help subscribing, email info@lilith.org.

How to create one? We recommend that you schedule your Lilith salon for an issue of the magazine everyone in your group has already received. Please feel free to consult Lilith staff for timing recommendation! Additionally, if you let us know about your salon with a least three weeks' notice, we can send you trigger questions, for the specific issue of Lilith, just to help kick off and maintain conversation.

Invitations (email invitations work well) should include the obvious—time, date and salon location (with directions if needed)—plus a brief description of what to expect (which may include a copy or link to Lilith's website of the article you plan to focus on), who is hosting, an RSVP/for more info or questions contact info, and a link to the Lilith website. The invitation can be as simple as a brief personal email, message or phone call to your friends, or you can use art from the current issue from our website. You can also suggest that participants "bring a friend." Here's how Eve Coulson, a board member who hosts a Lilith salon in Princeton, New Jersey, concludes her email invitations: "Everyone is welcome to join us. Please come even if you haven't read this issue, been involved with Lilith, or joined us before. Feel free to bring a friend—my list is somewhat random, and therefore undoubtedly (and unintentionally) incomplete. Looking forward to seeing you soon!"

If you're inviting people three weeks in advance, consider sending out an email reminder within a week of the event.

The Salon Itself. Eve reports: "We meet on a weeknight, gather starting at 6:45 to eat and schmooze, then begin the conversation at 7:30. The host or someone she designates can welcome the group and act as a facilitator, getting the conversation started with one of the chosen articles. In the first meeting, and as needed in subsequent meetings, be sure to begin with some words about Lilith Magazine, about respecting confidentiality should the conversation become personal, any other housekeeping remarks, and have everyone introduce herself."

If you're going to be rotating households for your salon, the host may want to prepare food. Or, your salon can be potluck (bear in mind vegetarians and those who keep kosher). We cannot imagine a salon without food! But coffee, tea and cookies (the basic food groups) are all that's really necessary.

Your discussions may stick to the opening questions and the specific articles, or may be far-ranging and only loosely pegged to the written material at hand. "Trust the process," Eve says. "Part of the excitement is just letting the conversation follow its own course."

Follow-Up

You may want to set the date for your next salon that very evening, or follow up by email a few days later. And remember that it's a great idea, if you have space, to invite each woman in the first group to invite a friend next time.