

# Properties of Good Philosophical Questions for Discussion

Good philosophical questions for discussion should have four properties:

1. Central
2. Contestable
3. Controversial
4. Answerable

(They should usually  
—but not always—  
be “on topic” too)

# CENTRAL

They should matter a great deal to those in the discussion (and likely *all* people) because they challenge or investigate who or what we are or other fundamental issues related to our existence and experience.

# **CONTESTABLE**

There must be more than one possible answer that those in the discussion see as being reasonable.

# CONTROVERSIAL

Those participating in the discussion need to *care* about which of the reasonable answers is the right one.

## **ANSWERABLE**

The answer to the question must be a “what is most reasonable to believe” style answer.