interfaith is broadened to mean anything religious encountering anything differently religious. Professionals tend to broaden dialogue so that it encompasses a much wider (and more appealing) range of encounters, and they narrow interfaith as a frame for specific types of interreligious engagements. Hopefully, some of this nuancing will be elucidated by the different authors of this book, as they share their own viewpoints about what they consider to be an interfaith dialogue. In the spirit of good dialogue, we don’t assume a singular point of view on the issue.

Christians, who still make up more than three-fourths of the U.S. population, are more inclined to talk about “ecumenical” activity or dialogue than members of other groups. The word ecumenical comes from the Greek oikoumene, which literally means “God's whole created order.” This causes some confusion, for though the word’s root meaning is broadly inclusive, most people—and that includes those of us in the interfaith movement—construe it in the sense in which it has mostly been used historically, to mean “when Christians talk with other Christians.” A little “definition settling” is called for, and this is as good a place as any to make sure that we understand other key terms to mean the same things. In fact, successful dialogue is dependent on it.

**Key Terms**

- **Dialogue** is when persons of different viewpoints come together and interact. Their “coming together” could be in the form of conversation, sharing a meal, sharing in an experience such as creating art or participating in a religious observance, or some other form of engagement. As you will see more clearly in the models described throughout this book, our image of dialogue is not and should not be limited to “head talk.” This is a key point. You’ll learn more about the motivations, goals, attitudes, and ground rules for dialogue in the chapters ahead.

- **Ecumenism** is when Christians from different sects or movements within Christianity come together. It is a particularized form of intrafaith activity.

- **Intrafaith dialogue** is when persons within a tradition come together with other persons of that faith tradition. Christianity