

Dialogue Guide

Life in the Time of Coronavirus

[Living Room Conversations](#) offers a simple, sociable, and structured way to practice communicating across differences while building understanding and relationships. Rather than debating or convincing others, we take turns talking to share and learn. [Well Being in the Nation \(WIN\) Network](#) is a strategic action and learning collaborative to advance intergenerational well-being by expanding the vital conditions we all need to thrive. WIN Network members engage in conversation and dialogue to create shared meaning, deepen relationships, and move toward collective action.

This guide, developed by Living Room Conversations and adapted by the WIN Network, offers a starting point for reflecting on the personal and community impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Please modify the questions and instructions below to meet the needs of your group.

There is no preparation needed to participate in a conversation. The experiences of coronavirus are impacting our families, organizations, and communities in profound and destabilizing ways—and in ways that expose legacies of trauma and exclusion. These conversations will be inspiring, uplifting, difficult, emotional, and everything in between. If you need support, please explore the mental health resources available through [Well Being Trust](#).

Anyone can host using these italicized instructions. Hosts also participate. Some hosts may offer a Q & A after Closing. Typically, 4-7 people meet by video call for about 60 - 90 minutes to listen to and be heard by others.

I. Introductions: Why We're Here (~10 minutes)

Each participant has one minute to introduce themselves.

Share your name, where you live, what drew you here, and if this is your first conversation.

II. Agreements: How We'll Engage (~5 minutes)

These agreements will set the tone of our conversation. Invite a participant to read the text below.

Dialogue strengthens our sense of belonging and connection by building relationships. When we listen, share, and discover, we are able to create meaning together.

No matter the topic, dialogue partners need to enter the conversation with intention by:

- Listening for what's true for others
- Sharing what's true for you
- Discovering what we share in common

Explore [additional conversation agreements](#) from Living Room Conversations.

III. Question Rounds: What We'll Talk About

Optional: a participant can keep track of time and gently let people know when their time has elapsed.

► Round One: Personal Impact of Coronavirus (~10 min)

Each participant can take 1-2 minutes to answer one of these questions:

- What is the most significant way coronavirus has impacted your family relationships or working life?
- What are some creative ways you are building connections during this time of physical distancing?

► Round Two: Community Impact of Coronavirus (~40 min)

One participant can volunteer to read this paragraph.

The rapidly-spreading virus is touching all aspects of our personal and community life. Our health, civic, social, work, academic, faith and financial systems are struggling to cope with uncertainty and the need for rapid readjustment. We are physically distancing ourselves from each other to prevent being infected or spreading the infection. As we move forward in this changing environment, it can be helpful to share our experiences and to consider the potential outcomes from our shared national challenge.

Take ~2 minutes each to answer one of the questions below without interruption or crosstalk. After everyone has answered, the group may take a few minutes for clarifying or follow up questions/responses. Continue exploring additional questions as time allows.

- What has the coronavirus revealed about your community or neighborhood (e.g., strengths or challenges)?
 - Who in your community is most vulnerable to isolation or who has limited access to vital conditions (e.g., food, housing, employment, sense of belonging)?
- What have you had to sacrifice because of coronavirus and how is it affecting you?
 - How does sacrifice impact community members differently?
 - Have there been other times in your life that you/your community had to sacrifice (and what did you learn from it)?
- What is coronavirus teaching us about social connection and belonging?
- What about the coronavirus crisis gives you hope?
 - What positive changes do you hope will come out of the pandemic?

► Round Three: Reflecting on the Conversation (~15 min)

Take 2 minutes to answer one of the following questions:

- What was most meaningful / valuable to you in this dialogue?
- Is there a next step you would like to take based upon the conversation you just had?