

Short-form Discussion Guide

PURPOSE

Small group and individual listening sessions, in person or online

TIMING

20 - 40 minutes

AUDIENCE

1-30 people

TEAM

1 interviewer
1 note taker (*optional*)

NOTE FROM THE 1 MILLION CARE CONVERSATIONS TEAM

We want to extend a warm and deep thank you for supporting this work. The 1 Million Care Conversations project runs on a simple belief: the only way to build a care system that works for everyone is to actually listen to people with connections to care - past, present and future. It takes people like you who are willing to show up and make space for honest conversations. Thank you, from the entire 1 Million Care Conversations team. This guide has everything you need to be prepared to host a listening session, where to ask for help, and how to submit your responses.

Below, you'll find a comprehensive guide on how to host your listening session, how to collect the responses needed, where to get help, and how to submit what you've gathered.

Do you have more time? Check out our "[Long-form Discussion Guide](#)" for an extended version of this conversation.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- **Accessibility. Make sure your space is accessible to everyone attending.** If you have specific needs or questions, let our team know. [See the FAQ section for more info](#)
- **Recording and note-taking.** We audio recordings to collect conversation responses – make sure to fully charge any devices you'll be recording with before your event. If your group prefers not to be recorded, plan for 1 note taker per 5 participants. Check out the [FAQ below](#) for tips on getting good audio quality.
- **Consent form.** Before you begin recording, make sure every participant has completed a [consent form](#). If you prefer to print out consent forms for signing check out this [printable version](#).
- **Room setup.** For smaller groups (less than 10 people), arrange chairs so participants are close to one another and close to the microphone. The goal is real conversation.
- **Pacing.** After each question, pause longer than feels natural. People need time to think. If your room isn't very chatty, that's okay. There are prompts after each question to help get things moving.

- **Emotional Care.** There are no wrong answers to these questions. Everyone’s experience matters, and remember that talking about these issues can bring up lots of emotions. Take care of yourself and your participants in this process.
- Check out the [FAQ at the bottom](#) if there are any questions.

SESSION GUIDE AND QUESTIONS

Feel free to use this script or use your own words to open the space:

Most of us give or receive care at some point in our lives – for a child, a parent, a neighbor, or ourselves. This discussion is your chance to share what care looks like now for you and people you know and to have your say about what the future of care should look like.

1 Million Care Conversations aims to engage families at scale to shape a shared, people-centered vision and policy agenda for care in America – while growing a broader, more powerful movement to win it.

This conversation ensures that people from every community are reflected in the solutions we are fighting for and the changes families are counting on to imagine and deliver on a future where care works better for all of us.

A few notes before we begin:

- There are no right or wrong answers
- Everyone’s experience matters; we’ll try to hear from everyone
- Feel free to build on what others say
- If something feels too personal, you can skip it
- Please fill out consent forms for recording for this session. The recording helps us document this conversation accurately, in your own words, while keeping your individual identity private.

1A. In the last year have you provided, received or needed care yourself, or do you know someone who is? This could be giving or receiving care for a kid, an aging family member or friend, or someone with disability at any age. Ask for raised hands, say the number out loud for notes.

Add:

- Raise your hand if you’re caring for an aging person, someone with a disability or a chronic health condition.
- Raise your hand if you’re receiving or have needed care for a disability, chronic condition, recovering after injury or hospital stay.
- Raise your hand if you’re not providing or receiving care right now, but you expect to in the next 5 years?
- Raise your hand if you previously cared for an aging family member or friend, kid, or someone with a disability.
- Raise your hand if you are a paid care provider - working with kids, older adults, and/or people with disabilities
- Raise your hand if you know someone who is giving or needs care.

1B. What does – or did – that care look like on a typical day? Who provides the care? Does anyone else, a person or a program, help out? If so, tell us a little more about how that works: *Ask everyone to go around to answer.*

1C. Where does day-to-day care take place? In your home, someone else's home, a center, school, a facility, somewhere else? *Ask everyone to go around to answer.*

2A. What or who has helped you or someone you know the most with care and how? Where have you/they found support for care and what has made the biggest difference? *Ask everyone to go around to answer.*

2B. When you or someone you know were giving or receiving care, what challenges, if any, did you experience in the past, or right now? If you're not giving or receiving care right now, what concerns you most when you think about the care you, a family member, or friend might need 5 years from now? *Ask everyone to go around to answer.*

3. What challenges, if any, have you or someone you know experienced in providing, finding, or receiving care? *Ask everyone to go around to answer. If examples are helpful, share things like cost, availability, location, right fit, time, lack of support, hard to figure out, barriers to access, no control, worker availability, affects job or career, or something else.*

4A. What care support would make a difference for you or people around you? *Ask everyone to go around to answer. If examples are needed, share: affordable, high-quality care for an aging adult, a child, someone with a disability, or myself; financial support for care expenses; help finding, understanding, and accessing available care options; more control over my schedule at work; paid time off for care.*

4B. What or who helped you the most with care? *Ask everyone to go around and answer.*

5A. Take a minute to think about what help and support you would want for you and your family, neighbors, or community. This is a chance for you to imagine what care could look like for your family, if you were to start from scratch and with logistics or costs not being a concern at all. What would ideal care support and services look like for you? *Ask everyone to go around and answer.*

5B. What could become possible if everyone had this support? How would it help you, your family, or your neighbors? *Ask everyone to go around and answer.*

6. Finally, we'll go around the room and have each of you describe the care support that you imagined as if you were **telling a good friend why it would be helpful to you.**

Once you've asked the final question and taken the recording of the session, you're done! Thank the room for offering their insight, and let them know our website, CareConversations.com, will have more information on the next steps of the program.

SESSION WRAP-UP

Final steps...

- 1) [When your session is complete, upload your audio or note document here](#)

- 2) Let our team know if you have any questions after your session, or if something came up that was tough to follow.

Make sure you take note of the following data. For virtual events, ask folks to drop responses in chat.

- **Event Location:** Zip code, City/Town, State
- **Targeted Outreach of Participants:** Zip codes, Cities/Town, State
- **Number of people in attendance.**

FAQ:

I've never done anything like this before! Help!

Thanks for taking on this project and we're so excited this is your first time facilitating a space like this. If you're nervous in groups, remember, all the questions are clearly written out, and everyone who's here wants to be. This is just a conversation across a group and thankfully, the process is pretty straight forward! If you need some help, or want to chat with someone, shoot us an email at:

careconversations@caringacross.org

Why do we have to record? I'm uneasy about that!

We totally understand. For starters, we will not use personally identifying information from these conversations. The only data, other than your conversation, we collect is zip code, state/town, and how many people participate in the conversation. This helps us understand the needs of the specific areas you're living in to help inform our future policy platform. While we do need consent forms filled out with your name and signature, at no point will that consent form be connected to your voice or your comments. In order for us to get the most accurate data from the session, recording helps us hear your comments without the summary from a note taker. Ultimately, it's up to your group. If you decide recording doesn't work, that's fine, we just need notes that are not summarized and a transcript.

How do I make sure the session is accessible?

If you know the group you're convening, you should make sure to ask if anyone has accessibility needs prior to the session. Some examples of access needs are: ensuring there's a ramp to enter the building, hiring an ASL interpreter, asking for masking at the event for immunocompromised folks, spacing the room so a wheelchair is able to access the space. Our team is happy to help you figure out the best options to support your group.

How do I record on my phone/computer? I've never done that before!

Fabulous question! [Here is a one pager on how to do this.](#) Whether you have an iPhone or an Android. If it's easier, there's also info on how to record on a laptop as well.

Okay, I did it! The conversation went on long/short/fast/quiet, we didn't get to all of the questions, is that okay?

Yup! Do the best that you can! Our goal is to have all participants answer the questions in the form we shared, but if for whatever reason, you couldn't get to all of them, just upload what you have. We'd love to hear folks' thoughts on any of the questions.

Can we do this a few times?

While that'd be fun, we do want to make sure to hear from different voices. If folks are eager to keep talking about care, please do it! There are lots of different ways to continue these conversations including having former participants help lead a future session.

What now?!

Well, after you've uploaded your audio or notes, our team will then send this data to our research partner, Urban Institute. They'll spend the next several months analyzing and finding the common ground from all the conversations across the country. From there, we will be creating a bold new policy platform and launch it in Summer of 2027. If you're excited for updates, our website is: careconversations.com

Any advice for getting a room to chat?

Yes! If your room is particularly quiet, or it's hard to get a full answer or response from them, try offering how you would respond. For example, if you ask question 2A, and the room is completely silent... after you've waited a bit for folks to think, you can try to say something like "I know for me, having people in my life who are also navigating these issues, has been the most helpful"... or "The biggest help lately is having our care worker, Jamie, come to the house 3 days a week". Sometimes an example helps people think more clearly about what works and doesn't for them.

Any advice for participants who are talking way too much?

While we LOVE enthusiastic participants, we do want to make sure there's room for everyone to share. One way we can help redirect a room is by asking for hands so you have some control over who you call on (if this is a big problem). Another suggestion is if there's a natural break in someone speaking for a long time, thank them and remind folks who have been quiet you want to hear from them. Try saying "Thank you so much Nicole, I've appreciated all the things that you've said so far. We haven't heard much from the other side of the table today, do folks from that side have any thoughts on this?"