LET'S TALK TURKEY:
CONVERSATION GUIDE FOR THE HOLIDAYS
HELLO, IT’S ME

2016 has been a tough year, especially since Donald Trump was elected President. For us—a diverse group of young liberals—the past few months have been exhausting, devastating, and scary. Thinking about seeing family for the holidays has us feeling like Ben Affleck:

We’d like nothing more than to hide from our relatives, too. But now more than ever is the time to step into the awkward and taboo conversations about politics and identity we all should be having with our loved ones. We are challenging ourselves—and now challenge you—to combat the dangerous, divisive political climate and resist normalizing violent white nationalism.

We are asking you to “talk turkey.”

Source: Instagram
YES, YOU!

All of us, whether as allies or as members of communities feeling the direct impact of what’s happening around us, have a civic duty to challenge the normalization of white supremacy; counter the divisive forces that led to Trump’s rise; and stand up for those that feel threatened by a new Administration fueled by racism, sexism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and Islamophobia.

• You have friends or relatives who voted for Trump, support Trump, or abstained from voting this year (for whatever reason);

• You have friends or relatives (or yourself) who identify as people of color, LGBTQ, or Muslim; are undocumented immigrants; or otherwise feel scared or threatened after the election;

• You or your relatives identify as White and/or “working-class”;

• Or you have relatives who immigrated to the U.S. and may not fully follow current political dynamics.

SO WE ARE TALKING TO YOU IF:

WHAT DO WE ASK OF YOU?

We are asking you to reach out and try to have honest and civil conversations with your loved ones while staying grounded in your values. Most importantly, we ask that you intentionally and actively listen to your loved ones to understand why they voted for Trump (if that’s the case), how they feel now, and what steps they’re willing to take to respond to the new Administration and help protect all of us. Ultimately, we hope that these conversations will help turn political tide and usher in a new American society truly anchored in inclusive community.

We are hoping to begin conversations that are not only timely, but overdue. We want you to listen, engage, and empathize at a time when having difficult conversations is extremely important.

We also want you to report back and share with us what you learned: what worked? What didn’t? Send us your photos and your stories to help us refine this guide and motivate others to join in as well.
HERE’S THE PLAN

This guide is split into two sections.

In the first section, we provide some general tips for engaging in difficult conversations around politics and identity that you can use to engage your loved ones.

The second section outlines Trump’s policy proposals, providing substance for your conversations. We focus on issue areas that could most directly harm our communities. For each area, we lay out Trump’s campaign promises and explain what they mean, then list action items: opportunities for you and your loved ones to get further educated and involved in opposing these damaging proposals.

READY? LET’S GO!
HOW TO TALK TURKEY

You’re about to begin a conversation with a relative who, perhaps, stands for everything you despise (in the extreme case). How do you talk to them? More importantly, how do you come to common understanding, then change their mind? This section provides some ideas to try first.
1. BEGIN WITH SOME NEUTRAL CONVERSATION STARTERS

Start with a question. Use plain language. This first question is a temperature check. It may help gauge set the stage for how you approach some of the deeper questions that follow. [CL]

"HAVE YOU SEEN THIS VIDEO...?"
- SNL: Kate McKinnon as HRC singing ‘Hallelujah’
- Funny or Die: Mark Cuban sells Trump-induced coma
- The Late Show With Stephen Colbert: Canadian wall
- Michael Moore in TrumpLand: The Last President of the United States

"DID YOU SEE THIS ARTICLE...?"
- Brilliant maps: if “did not vote” were a candidate
- The Canadian immigration website crashed the night of the U.S. election
- Have you heard about the exit polls from the election?
- Have you heard about the jump in hate crimes?

"NO FILTER"
- “So! How are you feeling about the election results?”
- “Did you vote this year?”
- “Who did you vote for and why?”
- If you’re asked how you’re doing: “I’m feeling really [sad/scared/upset] after this election”

If and when you need a moment, take time to observe and recap:

DO SAY: “I hear you say...”
### 2. Frame the Intention of the Conversation

We want to facilitate loving and honest conversations about the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election with friends or family with opposing viewpoints. Once you've captured their attention with a simple conversation starter, it's important to frame the conversation as an exercise in mutual learning and empathy—your intent is not to barrage your loved one, but rather to understand each other (and in particular, bring them to understand YOU).

**Here are a few neutral sample questions to frame the conversation:**

- “I've really been looking forward to getting your take on the election. I know that’s a really big discussion—is it ok if we take a few minutes to talk about it?”
- “I'm really hoping to get your help. Can we talk?”
- “I'm really interested in hearing more about what brought you to your decision. Is it ok if I pick your brain?”
- “I know we've had tough conversations before, and that's what I love about you. I want your honest view, and I want to share my honest view, too. Can we do that?”

If and when you need a moment, take time to observe and recap:

**Do say:** “I hear you say...”
Let’s Talk Turkey

3. UNDERSTAND THEIR STORY

Once you’ve grounded the conversation in empathy and mutual trust, draw your partner in by opening yourself to their story. Active listening at this stage will help deepen trust, build intimacy, and allow you to understand how to speak in their language.

Once you’ve grounded the conversation in empathy and mutual trust, draw your partner in by opening yourself to their story. Active listening at this stage will help deepen trust, build intimacy, and allow you to understand how to speak in their language. Try:

• “Did Donald Trump’s slogan appeal to you?”

• “What does “Make America Great Again” mean to you on a personal level?”

• “What drew you to [support/vote for] Trump?”

Show you understand their words by paraphrasing or resonating back to them:

• “I hear you say... [repeat in their own words]...”

• “I resonated with you when you talked about...”
A BRIEF NOTE ON RACE

At some point, your conversations may broach the difficult subject of race. Your conversation partner may say something like, “We need a Muslim ban because Muslims are terrorists,” or, “But it’s true: Mexicans are criminals!”

Your initial response will probably be to attack them for being racist. Don’t.

Instead, here are a few tips for productively talking about race:

• Understand the spectrum of personal responsibility (we made this phrase up): at an individual level, racism takes many forms, from intentional malice to unconscious bias — and everywhere in between. First, ask yourself: is your partner purposely spewing hate, or are they simply reflecting something they deeply believe to be true?

• Remember: racism is a political tool. Your partner’s feelings on race or ethnic groups is in many ways the product of hundreds of years of strategic, constructed rhetoric and policy. [TN] And if racism was intentionally created, then it can be intentionally dismantled.

• If they say they aren’t racist, believe them. What your partner considers “racism” may not be what you consider “racism.” Accusing them of bigotry will only shut down the conversation.

• Instead, tell your story. If your conversation partner’s views directly implicate you or someone you or they know, share that story. A proven way to diminish bias is have your partner emotionally resonate with a direct example that will counter their prejudice.

• Explore their bias. Ask: “why do you feel that way? What are you most scared of?” It’s likely their prejudice is founded upon a fear that will not come to pass, or upon a deeper, real concern. In either case...

• Gently wash away the prejudice. Once your partner understands the true nature of their prejudice, you can empathetically help them overcome it.

Remember: prejudice is learned and constructed. Bias may be deeply ingrained — after all, our political and entertainment culture are riddled with prejudicial booby traps — but if actively addressed, it can be unlearned.

A final note: this discussion doesn’t pertain only to race. Prejudice around sexuality, gender, religion, nationality, and other aspects of identity can also be addressed with similar approaches.
4. ILLUSTRATE YOUR FEARS

Now that you understand your partner’s perspective, help them understand yours: what do you fear? Why are you worried?

Guide them into your concerns with questions such as:

• What do you think Trump is actually going to do?"

• How will some of the policies he’s proposing impact you? Do you know anyone that this could impact directly? What has it been like talking to them these last couple of weeks? [We’re Heading Into Dark Times...]

• Does it bother you that Stephen Bannon’s appointment has been endorsed by the KKK? What do you think about Stephen Bannon’s appointment as his chief strategist? [Steve Bannon and the alt-right: a primer (VIDEO)]

• How do you feel about Donald Trump, and some of his Cabinet picks being endorsed by the KKK? [KKK, American Nazi Party praise Trump’s hiring of Bannon]

• What do you think about the nomination of Senator Sessions (AL) to be the next Attorney General, given his background and history? [Will Jeff Sessions Roll Back Civil Rights Protections?]

• Do you think your decision was influenced by the news you read before the election? Where did you learn the most about the President-elect’s policies and plans?

Here is where the issues discussed in the next section come in handy. Here, you can lift up examples of promises Trump has made on the campaign trail that have created concern within specific communities.

5. FIND COMMON GROUND

You’re almost there. With both your stories on the table, can you reason back and forth to find resonances and issues on which you can move forward together?

6. COMMIT THEM TO ACTION

Last step! Hopefully, you’ve reached a stage where your conversation partner is ready to act to protect our communities. In the next section, you’ll find links to active campaigns that aim to combat Trump’s policies in important issue areas. If you have additional suggestions for ways to get involved, we’d love to hear them!

TAKE A DEEP BREATH.

YOU DID IT.
TRY THE STUFFING: TRUMP’S POLICY PROPOSALS

How exactly does Trump’s Administration threaten our friends and families? In this section we cover some of Trump’s dangerous policy proposals, then list campaigns you and your loved ones can join to help oppose them.
NATIONAL SECURITY AS RACIAL PROFILING

WHAT THE PRESIDENT-ELECT HAS PROMISED:
The President-elect’s first 100 days plan calls for “all federal funding to Sanctuary Cities” to be canceled, the institution of “extreme vetting,” and deportation of “more than 2 million criminal illegal immigrants”; “Increased presence of law enforcement” in communities of color; revival and expansion of an unconstitutional, and racially biased stop-and-frisk program; a member of the President-elect’s transition team, Kris Kobach, has proposed a “Muslim registry” which finds its roots in Japanese internment camps in the U.S.

WHAT IT MEANS:
Where do we even begin...the vague promises of implementing a “law and order” state from the administration will have a devastating impact on so many different communities. Here are some of the focal points we’ve seen highlighted since the elections.

IMMIGRATION
If deportation patterns of the current Administration hold, the deportation of so-called “criminal” illegal immigrants will certainly include people with no criminal conviction whatsoever.

If funding is pulled from Sanctuary Cities, people who are suspected to be undocumented immigrants could expect raids at work, at school, or in their homes. The result would mean a likely increase in use-of-force, an increase in misconduct within detention facilities, and little oversight or accountability at the federal level.

In addition to the 100 days-plan commitment, the President-elect wants to reverse all of President Obama’s executive orders, including DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). That puts, roughly, 750,000 people who were issued temporary protected status and work authorization at-risk.

MUSLIM “REGISTRY”
Kris Kobach, a member of Trump’s transition team and Kansas secretary of state, has recommended a “Muslim registry.” (Kobach’s SB 1070 made it possible to stop any person on suspicion that the individual is in the country illegally, and made it legal to “ask for papers” at an officer’s own discretion.) A surrogate for Trump defended the constitutionality of the measure by citing Japanese internment camps in the U.S. during World War II as precedent. The Trump campaign has denied that the registry would be based on religion.

STOP-AND-FRISK
In his “new deal with Black America,” the President-elect called for greater police presence in communities of color. The President-elect has also called for the revival of stop-and-frisk—a failed practice that supporters claim reduces crime, but instead, has led to racist enforcement.
NATIONAL SECURITY AS RACIAL PROFILING

**ACTIONS TO RECOMMEND:**

ACLU: http://aclu.org


MPower Change: grassroots movement rooted in diverse Muslim communities

Movimiento Cosecha: currently leading the #SanctuaryCampus Movement

United We Dream: youth organization in DC at the forefront of protecting all immigrants

CAIR Urges Trump to Reject Proposal for ‘Registry’ of Muslims, Talk of ‘Internment’

**RESOURCES TO SHARE:**

#WithDACA: undocumented workers speak out amid fears for Obama program

Owner Was Target, but Restaurant Workers Are Swept Up in Immigration Raids

Cities Defend Immigration Sanctuary Policies Under Fire by Donald Trump

Young ‘Dreamers’ See Peril as Trump Plans for Deportation

Watch This Irish Lawmaker’s Passionate Call to Stand Up to ‘Fascist’ Donald Trump

Who is ICE Deporting?

Private Prison Stocks Are Surging After Trump

George Takei: They interned my family. Don't let them do it to Muslims.

(VIDEO) This Was Life for Japanese-Americans During WWII

A Brief Introduction to Stop and Frisk and Related Investigative Stops

What Donald Trump Means When He Talks About Stop-and-Frisk

TDS: Hasan Minhaj doesn't know what to tell his mom who's out of the country

Sanctuary: Students call for campuses to provide sanctuary for undocumented workers

CLIMATE & ENERGY

WHAT THE PRESIDENT-ELECT HAS PROMISED:
The incoming president has vowed to renew projects like the Keystone XL pipeline; cancel any U.S. contribution to global climate change programs; roll back climate and environmental regulations to benefit fossil fuel companies; cut EPA spending (in March 2016, he said he’d eliminate the EPA altogether); and elevate deniers of climate science to leadership positions.

WHAT IT MEANS:

**DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE**
Energy experts fully expect the Dakota Access Pipeline to be greenlit under a President Trump despite the risks a leak would pose to the river providing critical drinking water and cultural heritage of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe.

**KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE**
Restarting the Keystone XL Pipeline project renews major concerns shared by farmers, ranchers, and environmentalists along the length of the project about the threat the pipeline poses to drinking water and land taken through eminent domain.

**FLINT WATER CRISIS**
Congress already has standing commitments to repair Flint’s water infrastructure as well as other communities facing significant lead contamination. However, any cuts to EPA funding could potentially put programs in Flint at risk, including “bulked-up health services for pregnant women and children” and “take-home food packages to reduce lead absorption in kids.”

**PARIS AGREEMENT**
Trump is seeking ways to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, which could dampen global efforts to address climate change and harm U.S. relations with other countries. Slowing down climate action puts millions of lives at risk from rising sea levels, increased drought, more extreme storms, and more frequent heat waves.
**CLIMATE & ENERGY**

**Actions to Recommend:**
- #noDAPL Solidarity, [https://nodapsolidarity.org/](https://nodapsolidarity.org/)
- Help For Flint, [http://www.helpforflint.com/action](http://www.helpforflint.com/action)
- 350.org: grassroots-led, climate-focused campaigns and actions
- Sacred Stone Camp needs supplies - you can find their list [here](https://nodapsolidarity.org/)

**Resources to Share:**
- Understanding the Controversy Behind the Dakota Access Pipeline
- Lead-Laced Water In Flint: A Step-By-Step Look At the Makings Of A Crisis
- Michigan fights court order to deliver bottled water to Flint residents
- Exxon oil spill cleanup ongoing in Arkansas, pipeline shut
- Pipelines Explained: How Safe are America’s 2.5 Million Miles of Pipelines?
- What is the Keystone XL Pipeline and Why Is It So Controversial?
- Nebraskan Farmer Voices Opposition to Keystone XL Pipeline
WHAT THE PRESIDENT-ELECT HAS PROMISED:

In his 100 days’ plan, the incoming President has committed to “selecting a replacement for Justice (Antonin) Scalia from one of the 20 judges on (his) list.” (Never mind the fact that Congress has blocked the sitting President’s nomination for the open Supreme Court seat for over 250 days…) The most common themes among the judges Trump has named is hostility toward reproductive freedom, including but not limited to abortion and contraception. In his most recent interview with “60 Minutes,’ the President-elect explicitly stated that abortion “would go back to the states” if Roe v. Wade were overturned. When pushed about the uneven implications this would have for people across the country, he replied “they’ll have to go to another state.”

WHAT’S AT STAKE FOR REAL PEOPLE:

Since 2011, without overturning Roe v. Wade 320 abortion restrictions have passed at the state level. These laws, also known as “TRAP laws” (Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers), have already had a seriously damaging impact on women’s health, leaving five states with one abortion provider to service the entire state population. TRAP laws have created the greatest burden for poor women, limiting their right to family planning resources and worsening their health outcomes. What’s more, while the number of pregnancy-related deaths is falling in other developed nations across the globe, the U.S. has seen a 27% climb since 2000. In Texas, maternal mortality rates have actually doubled, with a sharp increase between 2010 and 2012. On the campaign trail, the President-elect advocated “punishment” for abortion. On Vice President-elect Mike Pence’s watch, Indiana’s TRAP laws saw to a possible 20-year prison sentence for Purvi Patel on charges of “feticide.”
REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

**ACTIONS TO RECOMMEND:**

Donate to local abortion funds

Donate to Planned Parenthood (w/ letter addressed to Mike Pence!)

Support grassroots, national organizations like:

- National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
- Forward Together/Strong Families
- National Network of Abortion Funds
- All* Above All

**RESOURCES TO SHARE:**

6 Women On How The TRAP Laws Changed Their Lives

Maternal deaths fall across globe but rise in US, doubling in Texas

Donald Trump advocates punishment for abortion (VIDEO)

Donald Trump Can’t Overturn Roe v. Wade Overnight – But He Can Severely Limit Your Reproductive Rights

Women Rush To Get Long-Acting Birth Control After Trump Wins

Purvi Patel Could Be Just The Beginning

The dangerous state laws that are punishing pregnant women

Mike Pence would not be a better candidate for women than Donald Trump
MORE
HELPFUL
TIPS
FAKE NEWS & ITS IMPACT

What does it mean: Not everything we read these days is accurate and true; we often fall prey to sources like the Onion that we didn’t realize were satire.

**ACTIONS TO RECOMMEND:**

a. Read an entire article before you share and check to make sure the source is coming from a credible source, regardless of whether they are considered a “liberal” or “conservative” source.

b. Know the article back and front, make sure you understand its context, opinion, bias, etc.

c. If you see fake news from a “reliable” source, address it. — reach out to the author

**RESOURCES TO SHARE:**

- Why it’s hard to report “the truth”
- False, Misleading, Clickbait-y, and/or Satirical “News” Sources
- (VIDEO) Why Facebook Needs to Take Responsibility for Fake News
- Google & Facebook Take Aim at Fake News Sites
- Evaluating the credibility of a news source
- New York Times tutors staffers on security, safety
- It’s time to get rid of the Facebook “news feed,” because it’s not news
REMEMBER, YOU’RE NOT ALONE

My Family Voted for Trump. This Is How I Responded

To My Friends and Family Who Voted for Trump

My scary, awkward, hopeful conversation with my dad about why he voted for Trump

[VIDEO] TrumpLand: We’re all Americans

Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) has helpful guidance on how to engage with loved ones, based on their responses and stances HERE - it's a really great guide if you want to prepare for various scenarios!

AND DON’T FORGET TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

WHAT IS SELF-CARE?: you may hear many folks talk about self-care when it comes to social justice work and activism, and you might be wondering what this means. The conversations you will need to have within your networks are grounded in complicated and emotional topics. For many of us, they are incredibly personal and can be draining. Self-care is a practice that reminds those of us doing this work to take a moment to center, feel grounded, and ensure that you are also taking care of yourself while you try to bring on lasting, effective change.

Finding best practices that work for you are really important and everyone’s approach to self-care is slightly unique, but we've included a few guides to help you get a bit more familiar.

RESOURCES TO SHARE:

Self-Care for People of Color after Emotional and Psychological Trauma

A Handy Self-Care Guide for When Politics Come Up at the Holidays

5 Ways to Practice Self-Care During the Holidays

Self-Care Starter Kit (via University of Buffalo)
ACTIONABLE STEPS TO SHOW YOUR ALLYSHIP

TALK TO FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS WHO VOTED FOR TRUMP-PENCE

because of a variety of reasons but still claim it “had nothing to do with race/racism/bias”

• Explain how this affects you and use empathy to connect with them

• Use I statements not You statements to avoid an accusatory tone

• Check your body language: sit if they sit. Stand if they stand. Make sure to be on level ground, never above, never below. Avoid showing signs of closing off (i.e. arms crossed, rolling eyes, etc.) demonstrate openness.

• Describe ways they can support you going forward.

TALK TO FAMILY MEMBERS WHO DID NOT VOTE FOR TRUMP BUT DON’T KNOW WHAT TO DO

• Point to organizations to donate to

• Try to push them to take further action

• Ask them to stand with you in 2018 elections

• Maybe we should even be trying to register people who were in the apathetic 49 percent who did not vote

REPORT HATE CRIMES

This election has empowered hate. Part of knowing what to do is tracking what is happening. The Southern Poverty Law Center’s (SPLC) Intelligence Project is tracking threats of violence, bullying, slurs, and other hate incidents whether those are fueled by race, ethnicity, gender, immigration status, LGBTQ status, or any other metric of vulnerability. Please consider reporting hate incidents here: https://www.splcenter.org/report hate and sharing this link.

ACTION LIST: HERE’S HOW TO TAKE ACTION!

Here are a few more actions that you can take and share with your loved ones:

Sign this pledge from Democracy in Color

Donate and support national movement-building organizations:

• Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice
• Black Youth Project 100
• Black Lives Matter
• Cosecha
• Color of Change
• 350.org
• MPower Change
• National Domestic Workers Alliance
• National Network of Abortion Funds
• Native Organizers Alliance
• United We Dream

Boycott Trump: #GrabYourWallet

• List of of Companies to Refuse to Support
• The Official #GrabYourWallet Boycott List

Start bugging your congressman (in order of effectiveness):

• CALL. YOUR. CONGRESSMAN.
• Call scripts
• Writing emails
• Writing handwritten letters
• Signing petitions and actions
SHARE THIS
SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE & BRANDING

WATERMARKING & PROFILE PICTURE FILTERS

Sample Twibbons

HASHTAGS TO USE:

Follow the conversation and let us know how it goes by using these hashtags:

#TalknTurkey
#LetsTalkTurkey

Follow the Now We Rise collective with:

#NowWeRise
#ThePeopleRise

SAMPLE SOCIAL LANGUAGE: FACEBOOK

So—you know it’s going to come up, right? Here’s how to have a productive, loving and compassionate holiday dinner without falling into despair. #TalknTurkey [LINK]

#TalknTurkey means getting to the meat of the conversation. This holiday, that’s exactly what we need you to do. #TalknTurkey [LINK]

This holiday season, start talking. We really need you to. #TalknTurkey [LINK]

In the short term, we resist. In the long term, we resist. Part of that resistance includes building bridges. Here’s how to get started with friends and family around the dinner table this holiday. #TalknTurkey [LINK]

You’re invited!*

*To have a, likely, painful but absolutely necessary hard conversation with the people you love most. Why? Precisely because they’re the people you love most. #TalknTurkey [LINK]
#TalknTurkey means getting to the meat of the matter. This week, that’s exactly what we need you to do. #TalknTurkey [LINK]

Hard talk can happen with sincerity, love, and compassion. Is your family up to the challenge? #TalknTurkey [LINK]

We—literally, the whole country—need you to have some real talk at dinner this week. You in? #TalknTurkey [LINK]

For the next 48-72 hours, we’ve got your back at the dinner table. Do you feel the good juju flowing? #TalknTurkey [LINK]

You could legit dismantle racism, sexism, Islamophobia, homophobia...all of it. The power is yours. #TalknTurkey [LINK]

Show your family that you care. With compassion and love, start the tough conversation. #TalknTurkey [LINK]

This holiday season, start talking. #TalknTurkey [LINK]

Have you committed to talk turkey this holiday? Tell us why and let us know how it’s going using #LetsTalkTurkey!

Here are some sample graphics you can share as well!

Download Instagram images here
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