

COMMON GROUND

SUNDAY. JUNE 24. 2018



Common Ground is a day of community conversation. On June 24, residents, neighbors, families, and organizations across the region will host mealtime conversations about the future of our shared home. United by a common question, all Common Ground conversations have the same goal: to create spaces where meaningful connections are made and purposeful actions begin.

INTRODUCTION

Common Ground is June 24, when community conversations will occur across Cuyahoga, Lake and Geauga counties. United by a common question, all Common Ground conversations have the same goal: **to create spaces where meaningful connections are made and purposeful actions begin.**

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a facilitator at this year's Common Ground. As a facilitator, your role is to make sure all voices are welcomed, heard, and respected. Let's get started.

The best facilitators talk little but keep the group focused on one conversation, where everyone listens. Like a skilled boat captain, those aboard barely notice that someone is guiding the way, steering clear of hazards and courageously moving through difficult waters.

2018 CONVERSATION QUESTION

WHY DOES PLACE MATTER?

Stories about Northeast Ohio are often about our grit and glory— our economic challenges and our regional revival— but is this what it is like on your block? In your classroom? At your kitchen table?

This summer, community members are coming together to have a conversation about place because it matters to our health, our security, and our future. We invite you to connect over a meal and conversation. It's not about what others should do, but about the possibilities created when we come together. This is the way we find common ground to build a stronger, safer, and more dynamic place.

This year's theme is meant to stir conversations about what goes into our collective identity and sense of belonging. What defines our sense of place?

- » Physical assets, such as Lake Erie, a major landmark, or a small pocket park near your home
- » People who live in a place, their relationships and stories
- » Social characteristics, like our racial and economic diversity

We know that the beauty of place and our sense of belonging is the result of intentional caretaking.

This conversation is part of the work of cultivating a great place.



CIVILITY RULES!

Common Ground occurs when diverse people come together to engage in a shared commitment to civility.

We ask everyone to consider and commit to this pledge when entering a Common Ground conversation.

CIVILITY RULES PLEDGE:

We are here to explore ideas.

We are here to learn from others.

We are here to connect, not to conflict.

Common Ground conversations are meant to be a dialogue, not a debate. In debate, people listen to others in order to counter their point and win an argument. In dialogue, mutual understanding is the goal.

By participating in Common Ground, I pledge to participate in a forward-looking conversation with these values in mind:

Value all voices: Make sure there is room for the quietest among us to be heard in conversation.

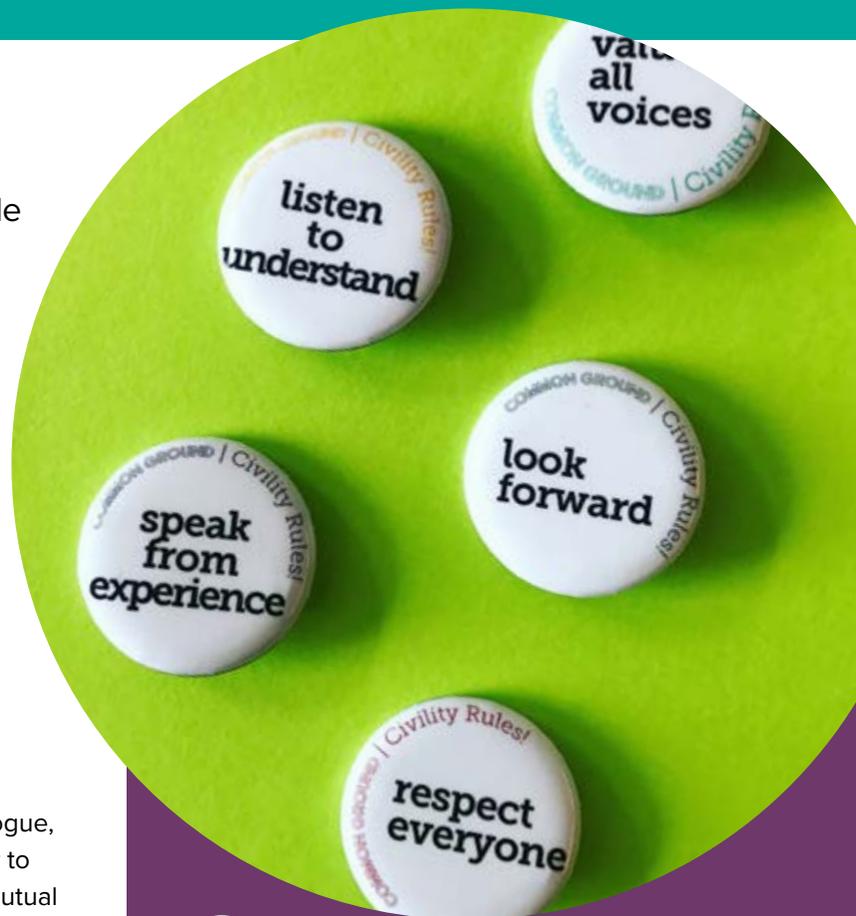
Listen to understand: Strive to understand each other, even across differing points of view.

Speak from experience: We build understanding by replacing generalizations with personal observations about ourselves and our own lives.

Respect everyone: We all want what's best for our community and, even if we disagree, we aren't disagreeable.

Look forward: Focus on possibility, on how to start and who can help.

Question kindly: Each unknown is an opportunity to grow. If you disagree, try to learn. Ask questions. Be kind.



A NOTE ABOUT CIVILITY RULES! BUTTONS:

As a part of each event host kit, Civility Rules! buttons will be provided for all participants.

When beginning your conversation, ensure that all people at your table have chosen a button prior to the conversation start. Encourage your table to share which button they chose and why!

WHAT IS MY ROLE AS A FACILITATOR?

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS



Arrive early

Smile and enjoy getting to know new people

You will work with the host to create an inviting space. Develop a plan ahead of time with your host for how you will welcome people. It also helps to set your intention for the day: what do you want participants to go away feeling? Be the champion of that feeling throughout the day.

2.

CHECK-IN OR ICE-BREAKER



Have fun; invite people to open up

Ice breakers will ideally focus on place, such as name, where you are from, and the best thing about your community. Another might be what is one new thing in your life or community?



HOLDING THE CONVERSATION

3.

Use a structured format or informal approach

Your primary role is to guide the conversation around the 2018 Conversation Question, “Why does place matter?” or your host’s chosen theme.

You are encouraged to use the sample agenda for the day but you are also free to adjust. To ensure everyone gets time to engage in meaningful conversation, we suggest tables (or circles) of 8-10 people. If you have a large gathering, find ways to break the group into these smaller conversations. You can bring everyone back together for the last 15 minutes to share across tables.

If you want to take an informal approach, you can place sample questions on the table for people to follow or create self-guided conversation prompts at tables for people to draw from as they like. We recommend having a closing reflection to share what people gained from the experience. This closing could take any form—verbal, written, drawn, etc.



CLOSING THE CONVERSATION

Help the group consider any next steps

Celebrate what happened. Outcomes include new connections, agreeing to meet again, changing your story/narrative, and taking action.

If people decide they want to do more, they can go to a NeighborUp Action Clinic, where organizers will help you define a project or action.

If they know something they want to do together, they can apply for a small grant from Neighborhood Connections. Outside of Cleveland/East Cleveland, they can do crowdfunding through ioby.

4.

All hosts will have resource cards outlining these opportunities in more detail. Share the resource card with participants and encourage them to attend one of the available events.

ENDING YOUR TIME TOGETHER

5.

Encourage everyone to complete the post-event survey

Ask for feedback and close out on a high note



SHARE YOUR SUCCESS STORIES, CHALLENGES, AND IDEAS WITH US:



6. Through social media using **#CommonGroundCLE** and **#CG2018**

Leave a message with us at 216-615-7253.

Email CommonGround@clevelandfdn.org or send us a note at:

Cleveland Foundation - Common Ground
1422 Euclid Ave., Suite 1300
Cleveland, OH 44115

COMMON GROUND SAMPLE AGENDA

Welcoming Participants		
5-10 minutes	Setting the Table	<p>Introduce Common Ground and acknowledge your host.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have a large group, find a way to mix up people so each table is diverse. • Share Civility Rules! and state your intention for this to be a safe/brave space where people feel respected as they share.
10-15 minutes	Check-in/Ice Breaker	<p>Check-ins are an opportunity for people to get to know one another and to model everyone having a voice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it short—start with one person and go around the table/circle. If a large group, do this simultaneously at each table. Ask each person to state their name, where they are from, and one sentence to answer the check-in question. • Sample check-in questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name one thing that is new and good in your community. • What is your favorite “small place” near your home that makes you happy or proud? • What is your favorite place in Cleveland/Northeast Ohio?
The Meal		
45-60 minutes	The Conversation	<p>Introduce three rounds of questions as the heart of today’s conversation. Use your table stickers to display the questions on each table. You can use the following questions or choose your own. Each question should take about 15 minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you think of today’s theme, what place comes to mind for you that matters? Why? • A sense of place is created by physical and social aspects. Let’s spend a few minutes describing the physical qualities that make this place special. • Now let’s talk about the social characteristics that create a sense of place. These can be the stories, traditions, relationships, cultures, and practices.
15-30 minutes	Capturing the Conversation	<p>Final open conversation—this can be done at tables or as a whole group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What emerges as the most meaningful takeaway from today’s conversation? • How are you inspired to be and act differently as a result of this conversation? • Are there any steps this group would like to take? This includes new connections, agreeing to meet again, changing your story/narrative, and actions you would like to take. • Point participants towards the resource guide to help with your next steps, including action clinics, fundraising workshops, and funding from Neighborhood Connections or Ioby.
10 minutes	Closing	<p>Check-out: Go around the circle and answer one of the sample questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is one bright spot for you in today’s gathering? • What is a hope you have for our city/region as a result of today? • What will you keep thinking about from this conversation after you leave?
<p>Before leaving, invite everyone to complete the post-event survey and share their experience.</p>		



TIPS FOR QUALITY CONVERSATIONS

HOW SHOULD I FORMAT THE CONVERSATION?

We've provided a sample agenda for you to use as a resource in formatting your conversation. You can use the sample agenda as is, or build from the format and add your own flare. During the facilitator trainings, facilitators will be given a blank worksheet to create their agenda and conversation guide.

WHAT IF A SMALLER GROUP SHOWS UP?

When groups are smaller, conversations can be deeper and more intimate. If a smaller group than you anticipate shows up, take this opportunity to ask people to tell their stories about why this place matters to them, and create space for people to ask questions and connect to one another.

HOW CAN I MAKE SURE EACH TABLE IS DIVERSE?

When people arrive, you can have table numbers on each name tag and then randomly give name tags to each person to mix it up. Or, you can ask people to sit with someone they don't know. If people are already seated in groups, after the introduction, you can ask people to switch tables and sit with people they don't know.

HOW DO I HELP MAKE SURE EACH TABLE/CIRCLE IS ON TRACK?

If your conversation has many groups at tables or in circles, rotate from group to group throughout the conversation. Sit down with each group and listen to their conversation. If people are talking about a different topic, ask a question that connects their topic to the theme of Why Place Matters.

WHAT IF PEOPLE WANT TO TALK ABOUT SOMETHING OTHER THAN THE CONVERSATION TOPIC?

The topic of place is broad and for many people means many different things. If it seems like people are off topic, ask a targeted question that connects the topic they are on to the theme. If people continue to talk about a different topic, take the temperature of the group's desired direction by asking if people are comfortable moving to the topic of place. If everyone seems engaged in a meaningful conversation, that might be just the right topic for them.

WHAT IF A PARTICIPANT ISN'T ENGAGING IN THE CONVERSATION?

Try to draw out quiet participants, but don't put them on the spot. Make eye contact. It reminds them that you'd like to hear from them. Look for non-verbal cues to see if they want to speak. You can also go around the circle (in order) with a question so that no one has to decide when to speak (allow people to pass if you do this).

WHAT IF I SENSE A LACK OF INTEREST OR EXCITEMENT FROM THE GROUP?

Lack of interest/excitement can happen when the facilitator talks too much or does not give participants enough time to respond after posing the questions. It may help to pose a question and go around the circle so that everyone has a chance to respond. Also, when groups are in agreement, sometimes the room gets quiet. If you suspect this is the case, ask if the group is in agreement and wants to move onto discussing the next question.

WHAT IF ONE PERSON IS DOMINATING THE CONVERSATION?

As the facilitator, it is important to create space for everyone in the conversation. If someone is telling a powerful story, it is worth taking the extra time to let them finish. If one or two people are consistently dominating, change the dynamic by saying – I want to take a moment for everyone to consider 'Step Forward, Step Back'. If you haven't had the chance to talk, please, step forward. If you've had a lot of airtime, step back so others can share their story.

WHAT IF A CONFLICT ARISES?

Conflict and tension are perfectly normal dynamics in group discussions. As the facilitator, you can remind the group of this if any conflict comes up. You should also refer the group to the Civility Rules, and state it is important to question kindly, and not attack people if you disagree. Acknowledge differences and ask people to create space to understand each other without trying to convince or persuade one another.

WHAT IF SOMEONE SAYS SOMETHING OFFENSIVE?

First, remember that they may not know that what they have said is offensive. Use the practice of calling people in, not out. Ask that person to share a little bit more about why they said what they did. You can also invite the person who feels offended to explain how the comment made them feel and to try to better understand where the other person is coming from.

HOW DO I HANDLE CLEAR DISAGREEMENTS OR VARYING PERSPECTIVES?

Name the different perspectives, and state that it is healthy for groups to deepen understanding about one another's differences in perceptions. You can take a more active facilitator role by asking one person to explain their perspective briefly, then asking the other person to explain their perspective briefly. After both perspectives have been voiced, ask the group where they see common ground and to name the differences in the perspectives, being sure to keep the group's focus on the subject matter instead of the person who holds a particular perspective. If more divergences emerge, create space for others to voice their perspective.

Thank you for finding common ground with us – we're excited that you chose to be part of this important conversation.



QUESTIONS? Email us at CommonGround@clevelandfdn.org or call 216-615-7253.

Day-Of Host Kit Checklist

Your host kit will be delivered the week of June 11-15th. Please contact us if you have special delivery instructions.

HOST KIT MATERIALS FOR HOSTS + FACILITATORS

Use to prepare your space and differentiate your facilitators.

- Location Signage
- Facilitator Guide
- T-Shirts for hosts and facilitators
- Question Stickers for Tables (removable)

HOST KIT MATERIALS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Share when participants arrive or placed at table setting.

- Civility Rules Guides & Buttons
- Notebooks
- Name Tags

HOST KIT MATERIALS FOR NEXT STEPS

Share at the end of conversation and encourage further involvement.

- NeighborUp + ioby Next Steps Calendar
- Post-event Survey

Follow + Share Common Ground:

TWITTER + INSTAGRAM: @CleveFoundation

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/ClevelandFoundation

YOUTUBE: www.youtube.com/ClevelandFoundation

www.clevelandfoundation.org/commonground

#CommonGroundCLE
#CGCLE2018

TAG US!

Conversation Resources Developed in Partnership With:

Community Innovation Network



JACK, JOSEPH AND MORTON MANDEL
SCHOOL OF APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES
CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

The Community Innovation Network, a program of the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University, is cultivating a new culture of deeply collaborative community change through building capacity, strengthening communities and connecting people. The Network's practices build a strong foundation between the everyday lives of individuals and the complex systems we live in. Network members include individuals and organizations who work to create thriving communities through understanding and social change. Learn more at msass.case.edu/communityinnovation.



ioby is the premier crowd-sourcing platform for people doing good nationwide. It is more than just crowdfunding. It is community-led positive change. ioby gives leaders the ability to organize all kinds of capital—cash, social networks, in-kind donations, volunteers, advocacy— to build real, lasting change from the ground up. Learn more at ioby.com.



Neighbor Up is a network of visionaries who believe that, together, we have the power to create an extraordinary world right where we live. At our high-energy, interactive gatherings, everyone is welcome and we work together to tackle the chronic issues that plague our communities. Neighbor Up is based on the emerging social science of community network building and is supported by **Neighborhood Connections**, the country's largest grassroots grant maker. Since 2003, Neighborhood Connections has invested \$8 million in more than 2,400 resident-led projects in Cleveland and East Cleveland. Find out more at neighborhoodgrants.org or call us at **216-361-0042**.



About the Cleveland Foundation

Established in 1914, the Cleveland Foundation is the world's first community foundation and one of the largest today, with assets of \$2.45 billion and 2017 grants of more than \$101 million. Through the generosity of donors, the foundation improves the lives of residents of Cuyahoga, Lake and Geauga counties by building community endowment, addressing needs through grantmaking and providing leadership on vital issues. The foundation tackles the community's priority areas – education and youth development, neighborhoods, health and human services, arts and culture, and economic development – and responds to the community's needs.