



Community Tool Kit



Importance of Being a Caring and Engaged Community Member

Why is journalism of care important to me? I'm not a journalist.

Journalism of care describes the way that journalists and communities interact. When acting with care, journalists provide communities with information in a way that resonates with them, and inspires them to use their emotions to act for the betterment of the community. This is important, because you--yes, YOU--are a part of the community, both locally and globally. The way that you interact with journalism affects you and other members of your community. You have the agency to make a difference in your communities depending on the way you care when confronted with issues in your community.

Caring About vs. Caring For

Caring is much more complex than just having an emotional response to situations you witness or read about in the media, and the difference between *caring about* a situation and *caring for* a situation is one that distinguishes members of the community, passive members of society who are upset by the occurrences around them, and active members who are upset, but use their anger as fuel to elicit change or start a critical discourse about the issues at hand.

Below is a chart with a few examples that depict key differences between the actions associated with *caring about* and *caring for*.

Event	Care About reaction	Care For reaction
You see a news report with shockingly high statistics of child abuse in the foster care system.	You feel terrible. You search more statistics on Google. You donate \$20 to Foster America. You feel like you've helped.	You feel terrible, but you use those terrible feelings to research your local foster care legislature/regulations. You contact your local legislature to push for foster care reform to prioritize the safety of the children placed in foster homes.
You read a report ranking each state's public education system in your country and find that your state has one of the lowest ranked systems across the country.	You are shocked. You spread the word to other parents, then transfer your children to private or charter schools.	You attend a town hall meeting to express your concerns to your local government and ask that they prioritize education, then propose extensive education reform.

Key Ways to Develop Care with Subjects

A

Be a responsible news consumer
-Be critical of the information you consume before taking action

B

Empathize with needs rationally
-Practice empathy in daily life and consider how it fits into reality

C

Consider the big picture when taking action
-Gestures like donations can be helpful for the short term, but long-term needs may require other efforts.

D

Be respectful
-Respect all sides and viewpoints of the story. Understand that everyone has the right to express his or her own needs.

E

Be conscience of your personal biases
Everyone has implicit biases. It helps to be aware of yours.

F

Be tolerant
Use an open mind when you're researching an issue or event.

G

Be informed
Make sure to do you homework on the issue. Check multiple outlets and research the issue before you act.



How Do I Care?" Inventory

Use the How Do I Care? quiz below to gauge how you care!

How Do I Care?

Below are hypothetical situations with two options of responses you may have as a citizen. These scenarios will help you get a sense of how you care in your community. Select either option 0 or 1. When you finish, calculate your total score, then refer to the scoring guide to check your results.

1. **You learn of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) being repealed.** ____
0: I call my DACAmented/undocumented friends and ask them how they're feeling.
1: I call, email, and write letters to my state senators/ representative encouraging them to advocate for new legislation that supports immigrants' education and a bridge to citizenship.
2. **You read a report in the news with statistics that show an increase of police brutality against people of color in your city.** ____
0: Share the link to my Facebook page with a long, angry paragraph expressing how appalled I am.
1: Talk to like-minded people in my community who share the same sentiments of frustration, then reach out to the local Police Chief for racial bias, cultural competency, and de-escalation training.
3. **You meet a colleague from Mexico who shares multiple stories about government corruption and how it is negatively impacting Mexican citizens.** ____
0: Tell your colleague that you're shocked that other countries have those issues because yours doesn't, then ask if there is any organization you can donate to that could help.
1: Reach out to Mexican anti-corruption activists via email and express your concern, ask them if there are ways to support their fight from your country.
4. **A hurricane just devastated part of your country, but it happened nowhere near where you or your family lives.** ____
0: Tweet with the #HELPCityname hashtag, and let all of your followers know that you care.
1: Sign-up to volunteer for RedCross and help in relief efforts either on the ground at the site of the disaster or remotely from your hometown.
5. **You are driving home from the grocery store and you witness a three-car accident.** ____
0: Drive slowly past the accident to see if anyone is hurt; if not, keep driving home.
1: Pull over to see if anyone is hurt. Call first responders for medical help.

Total: _____

Scoring Guide:

0-1 – You tend to ***care about*** other people and issues presented to you. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but also not necessarily the most impactful either.

2-3 – You are right in the middle of the spectrum **between *caring for* and *caring about*** other people and issues presented to you.

4-5 – You tend to ***care for*** other people and issues presented to you. This type of caring is action-oriented, and more likely to elicit change.