

LEAN IN



CIRCLES DISCUSSION GUIDE

Navigating Work and Life During the Coronavirus Crisis

Overview

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

As the COVID-19 pandemic spreads, many of us are doing everything we can to stay inside so we can help slow the spread of the disease. However, we at LeanIn.Org are encouraging our Circles community to keep meeting virtually, because we all need support –and for life to feel as normal as possible–right now.

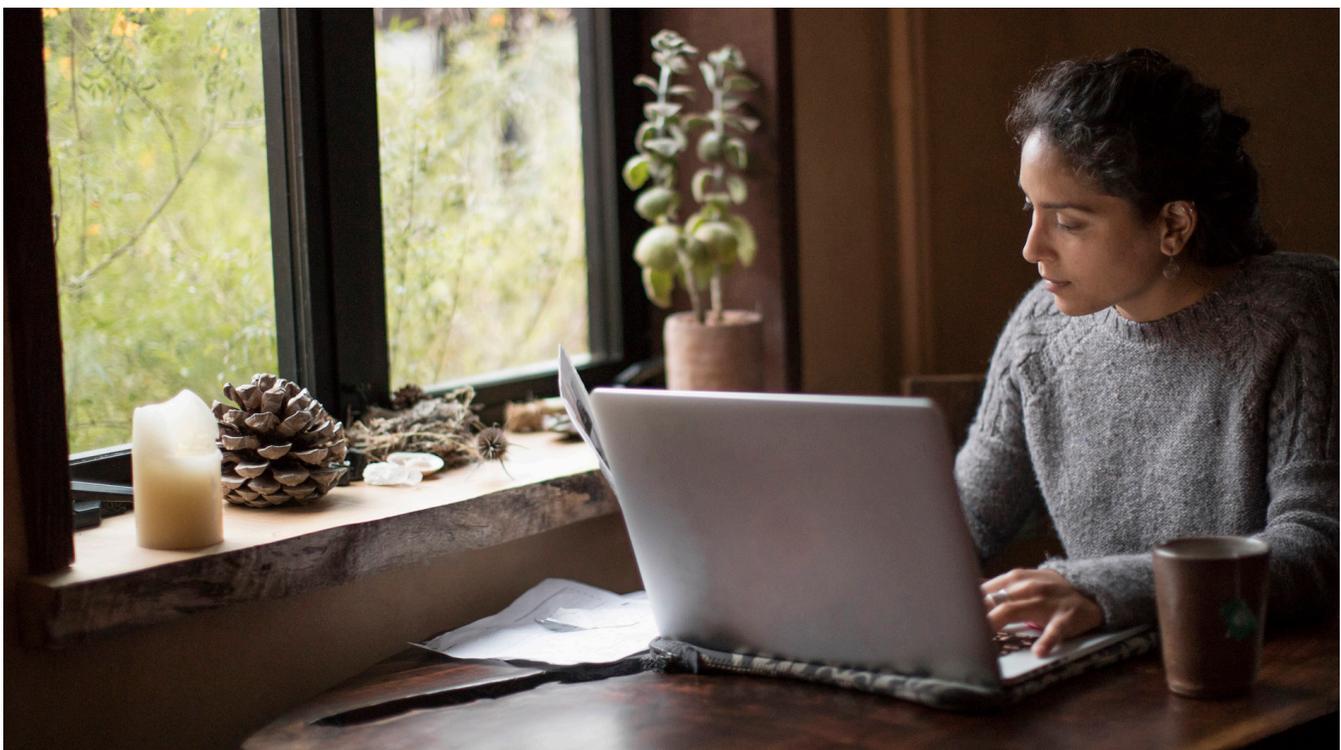
Usually, the challenges we take on together with our Circle members have to do with work and careers. Now the world is facing a public health crisis unlike any we've seen before. With that in mind, here are some questions and resources that might feel relevant to discuss with your Circle this month. Just as always, we can continue to be here for each other.

This discussion guide was created in collaboration with our colleagues at Option B.

[OptionB.Org](#) helps people build resilience and find meaning in the face of adversity.

INSTRUCTIONS

This discussion guide includes a series of questions and related resources to support your Circle members through these challenging times. Pick 2-3 of the topics below to discuss with your Circle per meeting. You can ask members to review the related resources in advance of your meeting, or review them together.



Meeting Guide

1 Check-In

Warm up, catch up, and get going

🕒 Approx. 15 minutes

STEP 1: ICEBREAKER

👥 Group activity

🕒 5 minutes or less

An icebreaker is a powerful tool to help us become present with one another and ourselves. Use this icebreaker to see how your Circle members currently feel.

Go around your Circle and share an update on how you're feeling using the traffic light colors:

- Green (mostly good)
- Yellow (mixed feelings, unsure, or just OK)
- Red (mostly not doing great)

You can also briefly share why you're feeling that way, if you'd like.

STEP 2: MEMBER UPDATES

👥 Group activity

🕒 1 minute or less per member

Once you're warmed up, go around your Circle and share personal updates. As a general rule, personal updates should be brief and focus on any changes (big or small) and important decisions or realizations in your life. (It's OK not to have one every month!)

If you have a One Action Update, share that with your Circle at the same time. (A One Action is one concrete action you committed to take at your last meeting. The goal of a One Action is to step outside your comfort zone, practice a new skill, or try something new.)

For example, a member update might go like this: *"Since I started working from home, I realized I haven't been moving around as much as I usually do when I'm in the office [personal update]. For my One Action, I scheduled time in my work calendar to get up, go outside, and move around at least twice per day. I feel so much more focused after each break! [One Action Update]"*

2 Activity

Pick 2–3 topics to discuss with your Circle

🕒 Approx. 40 minutes (20-minutes per question)

Topic 1: How are you managing changes to your work routine since the Coronavirus outbreak began?

🕒 Approx. 20 minutes

- What have been the biggest challenges in how your working life has changed?
- Are there any things that are working well for you in managing these challenges?
- What accommodations has your employer made and are they helping?
- Are there any additional accommodations that you would like to ask for?
- Resources:
 - [Tips to make working from home work for you](#) (NPR)
 - [Working well from home under coronavirus](#) (Leapers)
 - [How working parents can prepare for coronavirus closures](#) (HBR)
 - [Staying safe from the Coronavirus when you work in other people's homes](#) (UC Health)

Topic 2: What are you most anxious about right now?

🕒 Approx. 20 minutes

- Are there any practices or techniques that are helping you manage your anxiety?
- How are you managing news consumption to stay informed without feeling overwhelmed?
- Resources:
 - [Coronavirus: How to protect your mental health](#) (BBC News)
 - [Five ways to view coverage of the coronavirus](#) (American Psychological Association)
 - [Coronavirus: Why Exercise is Key For Boosting Immunity](#) (Thrive Global)
 - [How to stay sane while social distancing](#) (Columbia University)

Topic 3: How are you staying connected with friends and family?

🕒 Approx. 20 minutes

- What's been hardest about not being able to see each other in person?
- How are you staying connected to people? Have you developed any new ways to connect?
- Resources:
 - [How to stay connected despite social distancing](#) (CBS News)
 - [Staying connected at a distance](#) (University of Washington)

Topic 4: How are you feeling about the impact on your kids or other children in your life?

🕒 Approx. 20 minutes

- How are you talking to kids about what's going on?
- Are there any activities or guidelines that have helped you establish a new routine?
- Resources:
 - [How to talk to your kids about coronavirus](#) (PBS Kids)
 - [Parenting in the time of Covid-19](#) (WHO)
 - [Creating an effective family routine when homebound for coronavirus](#) (CNN)
 - [How to homeschool during coronavirus](#) (with sample schedules for kids from preschool through 5th grade) (NYT)
 - [I refuse to run a Coronavirus homeschool](#) (NYT)

Topic 5: What are you looking forward to doing today/this week?

🕒 Approx. 20 minutes

- What are some fun things you're still able to do with your free time, e.g., finishing a book, watching a movie, starting an art project?
- Resources:
 - [Social distancing doesn't have to doom your weekends](#) (CNN)
 - [Getting Bored? Here's A List Of Free Things That Weren't Free Before Coronavirus](#) (NPR)
 - [Avoid Cabin Fever With These 125 Ideas to Keep Kids Entertained During the Coronavirus Crisis](#) (Parade)
 - [Tips on Dating While Social Distancing](#) (NPR)

3 One Action

The little push you need to go for it

🕒 Approx. 10 minutes

We recommend you close every meeting by committing to a “One Action”—one concrete thing you’re going to do before your next Circle meeting to step outside your comfort zone, practice a new skill, or try something new.

Next time you meet, update your Circle on your One Action (what you did and how it went).

Take a few minutes and ask everyone to write down their One Action.

SHARE YOUR ONE ACTION WITH YOUR CIRCLE

One by one, go around your Circle and share your One Action. Move quickly from member to member, and consider cheering one another on as you go.

4 Wrap-Up

What's next and a few final words

🕒 Approx. 10 minutes

STEP 1: FINALIZE LOGISTICS OF YOUR NEXT MEETING

👥 Group activity

🕒 Approx. 5 minutes

Before you break, make sure you have the basics covered for your next meeting, including day and time. Decide what you're going to do when you are going to meet next and who is going to send out ideas. You may also want to talk through what worked—and what didn't—in today's meeting so you can brainstorm improvements going forward.

STEP 2: CLOSE ON AN ENERGETIC AND INSPIRATIONAL NOTE

👥 Group activity

🕒 Approx. 5 minutes

Think of one small moment of joy you can plan for this week. Go around your Circle one by one and share what you'll do. Alternatively, take a few minutes to write down something you're grateful for—and share it with the group, if you'd like to.

CONGRATULATIONS ON A GREAT MEETING.

Stay connected

There are over 46,000 Lean In Circles in 174 countries worldwide that you can stay connected with via our [Lean In Circle Leaders Facebook group](#). Please don't hesitate to reach out to this community with questions or to share ideas.

You can also join an Option B Facebook group for ongoing support. Find a group to join [here](#).

And take care of yourself and your loved ones. We're all in this together.