

OPENING DISCUSSIONS ON RECENT CLIMATE CHANGE REPORTS

(with people who have been paying attention, and others who have not)

Climate advocates may be encouraged that climate is making headlines with the recent IPCC, NCA4, WHO and Lancet reports, among other precursors to COP24. We can seize this opportunity to have meaningful conversations with our friends, neighbors, colleagues, and policymakers. However, we must remember that successful climate conversations are grounded in people, listening, and personal relevance. Our December Talking Points will help you start fruitful conversations with various people, whether they have heard of the reports, care about the findings, or are ready to act. After exchanging pleasantries, try the following. (Talking Points are green, instructions are grey)

1. **Have you been following the news on the recent climate change reports?**
 - a. If they answer “yes” → Move to point 2
 - b. If they answer “no” → Jump down to point 11 (page 2)
2. **I learned from the UN IPCC report and the 4th US National Climate Assessment that climate change is happening much more rapidly than we thought. What was predicted to happen in 2100 now is expected to happen in 2040. We can already see the impacts all around us.**
(expand with a personal observation, a local impact or two)
3. **I find the reports disturbing, and hear people are more concerned. What about you, are you concerned?**
 - a. If they answer “yes, I am concerned, too” → Move to point 4
 - b. If they answer “no, I don’t find it concerning” → Jump down to point 12 (page 2)
4. **So, the question is, what are we going to do about it? The solutions are out there — solar, wind, efficiency, energy storage... And they’re real, here, now. The European Union has just agreed to be carbon neutral by 2050, and to offset any emissions they can’t stop by then.**
5. **We need to move America rapidly forward on climate solutions, too. Climate change threatens our health, wealth, and wellbeing. Solutions enhance all three.**
6. **Government officials, business and faith leaders, and major health institutions are urging action, and it seems like we have the opportunity to make some real progress now, while there is a small window of time. We have just 12 years to do so.**
7. **As far as I can tell, we all want climate solutions. Evidently 90% of Americans want Republicans and Democrats to work together on them.**
8. **The good news is that we still have time. There really is so much we can do to make a difference once we set our minds to it. But, we have to do just that, set our minds to it.**
9. **You and I can conserve energy, make our homes efficient, recycle, buy wisely. And switching to clean energy is becoming easier. (say what you are doing/plan to do)**
10. **We also need to use our vote and voices to ask our leaders to scale up clean energy and other solutions. Cities are starting to ramp up, but they need our help. (cite a way you are/want to get involved). Will you join me in getting our leaders to prioritize climate solutions?**
 - a. If they answer “yes!” → *Fabulous! Let’s make a plan. ---END---*
 - b. If they answer “no!” → Ask them, “*Why not?*” Acknowledge their answer, ask them to reconsider. If they won’t engage directly, offer to keep them in the loop. ---END---

If they answer “no” to “Have you been following the news on climate change?”:

11. **The reports, the Fourth US National Climate Assessment and the UN IPCC report, have concerning information on how our climate is changing. They show that climate change is happening much more rapidly than we thought and we don’t have very much time to do something about it. What was predicted to happen in 2100 is now expected to happen in 2040. We can already see the impacts all around us.** (expand with a personal observation, a [local impact or two](#)), then jump back up to point 4 (page 1)

If they answer “no” to “What about you, are you concerned?”:

12. **Well, certainly some of us have not been as impacted as others just yet. And, there are varying perspectives on the issue that are being discussed.**
13. **What I think about, and hope you agree, is that we all care about some of the same things, like clean air, clean water, our health, and strong and vibrant communities in which our children and families can live their best lives.**
14. **Things we do to clean our air and water can also help our health and our property values, and make our communities stronger. Do you agree?**
 - a. If they answer “I agree,” “sounds reasonable,” or something that sounds like buy-in → Jump back up to point 4 (page 1)
 - b. If they answer “I am not sure,” or “I am worried about the cost,” or anything that sounds like ambivalence →
 - i. The solutions are out there — they’re real, here, now. All of us can conserve energy and be more energy efficient, and save money doing so. We can help ensure that the nature around us vibrant and healthy. And, solar and wind energy, and the storage needed to support it at scale, are all available and price competitive.*
 - ii. The question is, what do we ask our policymakers to do?*
 - iii. You and I don’t have to have the answers, but we can ask our leaders to bring forward solutions that protect our health, wealth, and wellbeing. The European Union has just agreed to be carbon neutral by 2050, and to offset any emissions they can’t stop by then. America should lead, not follow. So, we need to move America forward, too. → Jump back up to point 6 (page 1)*
 - c. If they answer in any way that sounds like strong doubt or outright climate denial → thank them for having the conversation, then disengage, because unfortunately you’re not going to sway this person ---END---