



Talking Hearts Conversation Guide

A Travel Guide for Talking Hearts is a blueprint to begin to process our collective experiences from the pandemic – giving us room to explore the grief, the isolation, as well as the rituals, relationships, and rhythms that got us through.

Motivation:

This conversation guide is a series of questions to help us get in touch with our emotional journeys over the last year and a half. This guide encourages us to build and strengthen relationships by connecting with, and caring for the people around us. This guide can be used as a tool alone, in pairs, and for group conversations.

The artists, who co-created this guide with Wolverine Wellness, hope these conversations can serve as an archive of the pandemic.

Responses may come in whatever form feels best – written text, audio, video, or face-to-face. Responses can also be shared through the Talking Hearts Portal: artsinitiative.umich.edu/talking-hearts/.

Consent:

Conversations using this guide, whether written or recorded, may be used for future artworks. Credit will be given to those featured. Please contact artsinitiative@umich.edu for more information.

Intro Questions:

Please share your name and pronouns. If you are comfortable, please also share any of the following: your age, academic year, and current location.

Icebreakers:

- What was your favorite song during the pandemic?
- What was your favorite food during the pandemic?
- What was your favorite tv show during the pandemic?
- What was your favorite book or article during the pandemic?

Guiding note:

Did any of these bring you comfort?
Did you share any of these with others?

Reflection Questions:

- What is your earliest memory of the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What have been some of the most difficult moments of the past 18 months?
The most rewarding?
- How did you reconcile what you thought the last 18 months would like with how they've played out?
 - What are the most important lessons you've learned in the past 18 months?
 - What are you most proud of from the past 18 months?

Guiding note:

The following questions may be difficult to answer. While many of the questions mention COVID-19, remember that the past 18 months also included many other challenges as well. Take a moment to consider how deep you want to go today.

These questions were inspired by StoryCorps – an independently-funded nonprofit organization with the mission to preserve and share humanity's stories in order to build connections between people, and to create a more just and compassionate world.

Heartmap Prompts (Choose 3):

- What has been your soundtrack this past year? birds, animals, nature etc.
- What might we remember about this past year?
- What might we forget?
- What do you know now about yourself that you did not know one year ago?
- What are you longing for?
- What have you found / discovered this past year?
- What is one thing you'd want someone to know about your experience as a student at U-M Ann Arbor / U-M Dearborn / U-M Flint over the past year and a half?
- What is something you did to help you navigate life changes over the past year?
- How have your ideas of home changed over the past 18 months?
- Who has supported you during these past 18 months?
- What does joy sound / look / feel like?

Final Gift:

Leave a message for yourself one year from now.

Guiding note:

If possible, write this down on a piece of paper or as a note in your phone to look at one year from now.

De-Brief:

We hope you feel lighter than you did when you began, and that this is just the beginning of your reflective journey. The past 18 months have been extraordinarily difficult, and it's ok to ask for help. Below is a list of resources available to members of the U-M community, Washtenaw County, and beyond.

Campus Resources:

- **CAPS:** 1-734-764-8312 (After Hours, Press 0) - For free on campus mental health support; Help is available 24/7
- **Wolverine Wellness:** 1-734-763-1320 | contactuhs@umich.edu – For wellness coaching and connection to the Collegiate Recovery Program - <https://uhs.umich.edu/wolverine-wellness>
- **MHealthy:** Mental & emotional well-being for staff and faculty – <https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/health-well-being/mhealthy/faculty-staff-well-being/mental-emotional-well-being>
- **Well-Being:** For self-guided well being and connection to additional on campus resources – <https://wellbeing.studentlife.umich.edu/>

Community Resources:

- **Washtenaw County Community Mental Health:** 1-734-544-3050 – For local mental health resources; Help is available 24/7 – <https://www.washtenaw.org/839/Community-Mental-Health>

National Resources:

- **National Suicide Prevention Hotline:** 1-800-273-8255 - Help is available 24/7
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Hotline:** 1-800-662-4357 – For information and referrals; Help is available 24/7
- **The Trevor Project:** 1-866-488-7386 - In support of LGBTQIA+ youth; Help is available 24/7
- **National Eating Disorder Association:** 1-800-931-2237 - Help is available Monday - Thursday 9am-9pm & Friday 9am-5pm (EST)
- **Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network:** 1-800-656-4673 - Help is available 24/7
- **Love is Respect:** 1-866-331-9474 - For help with dating abuse; Help is available 24/7

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