



In Government We Trust?

Originally Discussed: August 2026

Description: In an era when nearly every issue feels political, what does it take to restore trust between citizens and government? This discussion invites participants to reflect on the impact of polarization, the meaning of transparency, and the shared responsibility of rebuilding civic trust and participation.

Estimated time: 60 minutes

(1) Getting acquainted and comfortable

5 - 10 min.

Welcome

- Thank you for coming...
- We are a part of The Great Reset, which was born out of a shift we're seeing in our country. We have been in a place where we don't tend to speak 'beyond our bubbles' and across perspectives. The Great Reset has been opening up a grey space for such conversations since 2018. You are now part of keeping the conversation going and we thank you.

The Pillars of The Great Reset

- To share our own thoughts and perspectives with humility
- To learn from others and listen with respect

Ground Rules

- Every comment is valid and deserving of respect
- We show respect by speaking one at a time, putting our phones on silent and staying engaged, even when we are not speaking
- In the interest of time, I may cut in to ask you to 'top-line' something if we need to move on. This means simply offer up a synopsis of your thoughts and speak in bullets, not paragraphs

Confidentiality

I would like a verbal from everyone that you are here of your own volition and out of respect for one another I would ask you to keep what others say in this room unless they give you permission otherwise. (go around and get verbal agreement). Further, you agree to adhere to the principles outlined already: to deliver your perspectives bound to the principles of respect, to **listen with humility and offer grace to others who are sharing this space**. Just a reminder that we are recording this and will use comments, without images or names but if we choose to add video clips to any shares we will ask for permission, first.



Personal Introductions

Please share your name, where you live, and one way you engage with your community — it could be voting, volunteering, attending local events, or even just keeping up with local news.

(2) Setting the Stage

5 min.

- When you think about *government* — local, state, or national — what words or feelings come to mind?

(3) Trust and Perception

20 - 25 min.

- How much trust do people have in government today — and what shapes that trust?
- Have recent years made you feel more or less connected to how government decisions are made?
- What does transparency look like to you?

(4) Politicization

20 - 25 min.

- Have you seen government decisions shaped more by partisanship than by public need? What impact did that have on your trust or engagement?
- Follow-ups:
 - Are there areas of government that *should* remain nonpartisan?
 - Who benefits when issues become political — and who gets left out?

(5) Moving Forward

5 - 10 min.

- As we close, thinking about everything we've discussed today (polarization, transparency, and civic engagement) what does 'trust in government' look like to you in practice? What actions, collaborations, or community efforts give you hope that trust can be strengthened?

Survey link: <https://forms.gle/HwE1HsqjL1tNq6Uw7>