

Funding the Future

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Earlier this year, I was approached by a major publisher - a division of Penguin Random House - and asked to consider writing a book for them.

I wrote a quite extensive proposal which described what I called the politics of care, about which I have already written this morning in the context of Donald Trump's acknowledgement that much of his behaviour is driven by hate.

When working on that idea, I became interested in the possibility of care not just being a word, but also a mnemonic potentially representing a whole range of ideas, using the letters CARE to explore how such thinking could be used to examine just what the term 'care' might mean.

In the end, I came up with seven mnemonics for care, although I never determined which one should be used above all else.

I'm interested in what readers here might think, and I will be asking using four polls, which are at the bottom of this post, and I am genuinely interested in the answers if you are willing to participate in this.

My thinking suggested the C might stand for:

- * **Cooperation:** politics grounded in working together rather than in competition
- * **Care:** recognising human and ecological needs as central
- * **Community:** valuing collective belonging over individual goals
- * **Connection:** recognising interdependence among people and with nature
- * **Common good:** prioritising what benefits all rather than the few
- * **Compassion:** treating all with dignity and kindness
- * **Creativity:** imagining new solutions beyond existing orthodoxies

Similarly, I came up with this list using the letter A (which was the hardest to do):

- * **Accountability:** power must be answerable to people and communities
- * **Action:** turning principles into practice
- * **Access:** ensuring everyone has the essentials of life
- * **Agency:** enabling people to shape their own futures
- * **Aspiration:** creating hope and vision for better futures
- * **Authenticity:** acting with honesty and integrity in politics
- * **Autonomy:** protecting freedom of thought and action

Then I compiled the following possible meanings suggested by the letter R:

- * **Renewal:** institutions and society should be continually refreshed to meet real needs
- * **Restoration:** repairing what exploitation and neglect have damaged
- * **Resilience:** building strength to withstand social and ecological shocks
- * **Redistribution:** sharing resources fairly to tackle inequality
- * **Responsibility:** taking collective duty for one another seriously
- * **Reciprocity:** mutual respect and obligation in social life
- * **Regeneration:** renewing society and nature for future generations

Finally, I came up with this list of ideas that the letter E could represent:

- * **Equity:** fair outcomes across income, gender, race, and generation
- * **Empathy:** grounding decisions in understanding and compassion
- * **Ecology:** placing planetary health at the heart of policy
- * **Empowerment:** giving voice and capacity to those excluded
- * **Earth:** keeping the planet central to every choice
- * **Engagement:** encouraging participation and shared decision-making
- * **Enjoyment:** valuing joy, culture, and fulfilment as political goals

I reckoned that by the time I had got this far, I had pushed the idea sufficiently to think that, amongst these options, the most useful might be found.

That said, I did realise that putting these together in different ways might result in different spins being put on the various combinations that might make up the mnemonic CARE. Although I gave this a bit of thought, I will not pursue that further, here and now. Instead, might I ask that you think about which of these terms you prefer? In each of the four polls, you can use a maximum of three votes. I am looking forward to seeing the answers.

Poll 1 - What might the C in CARE stand for? You have three votes.

[poll id="205"]

Poll 2 - What might the A in CARE stand for? You have three votes.

[poll id="206"]

Poll 3 - What might the R in CARE stand for? You have three votes.

[poll id="207"]

Poll 4 - What might the E in CARE stand for? You have three votes.

[poll id="208"]

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