



A Call to Redesign Care.

It's time to bring Care back
into our Society.

by [The Care Lab](#)
5 minutes read

Care is made up of compassionate actions.

A mother waking up at night, fighting sleep to warm up milk for a crying child. A man helping an old couple with their shopping bags. A teacher writing a congratulation letter to a student who has tried their best. A doctor giving his personal number to a patient's distraught family. A local councillor joining the neighbours working to clean up their streets after a flood.

These are all everyday acts of kindness. We provide them without even being aware of it.

But when we deliver Care, we do so as we manufacture Cars.

Today, our population is ageing rapidly and living for longer and with more chronic diseases. Families are becoming smaller, more fragmented and living further apart. Loneliness is on the rise even though we're more connected than ever. Cities are expanding incessantly without time for adequate planning. Technology is shaping the way we prepare our kids for life, whether we like it or not. And now, our climate faces an emergency.

In this context, the Systems of Care that were originally created to offer us the basics to survive are fragile and no longer fit to address the challenges we now face as a Society. Our world is constantly changing and with it, our needs and expectations.

Care has been outsourced and left abandoned in confusing, industrialised and profit-driven processes that now run in our hospitals, schools and homes.

It's not surprising then that we often feel like cars in a factory line, bumped from one institution to another; without the tools, the support or the necessary skills to face these situations with any sense of control, or the chance to be heard or to feel cared for.

The result?

By manufacturing Care, we have lost the nurturing, unconditional and protective human qualities that instinctively define it. As well as losing from our Systems the comfort, trust and solidarity that lie behind the very act of Caring for one another.

No wonder we feel so vulnerable, afraid and frustrated.



We need to fix our broken Systems of Care.

We see Care as an equitable, proactive and compassionate experience that must be accessible for all. An essential quality of our everyday life, from birth to death.

We also consider teachers as Care Professionals alongside doctors, nurses, social workers or counsellors... and students as people to Care for, as well as patients, fragile families or our elders.

Therefore we think, as Citizens we are entitled to be heard and empowered to act when we need Care throughout our life stages; as Care Professionals we own the right to have the support, time and means to deliver Care with true empathy and without undue stress; as Decision-makers, we deserve to be appraised for the societal impact we achieve rather than only the cost-efficiency of our plans; and, as Caregivers, it's time to claim the support and visibility we never had.

So, the challenge is... How might we create resilient Systems of Care that deliver the kind of Care we would naturally give to those we love?

Design can play a vital role in reimagining Care.

After two decades working as Designers in the health and social care sectors, we have been 'comfortable outsiders'. Our work involved unpacking the complexity from a human perspective, empathising with people from all walks of life and ultimately helping to identify key blind spots and weaknesses in the System.

As a result, we believe that Design can help to reframe and reshape Care in several ways: by facilitating caring conversations that succeed in connecting all the different people involved around shared value, creating safe spaces for shared decision-making and co-creation, building consensus between siloed institutions, redefining new community-based models of care or even confronting the fundamental societal taboos that restrain real change.

As the heirs of today's broken Systems of Care we have decided that we can no longer stand by and tell our children that we didn't do anything to fix this situation.

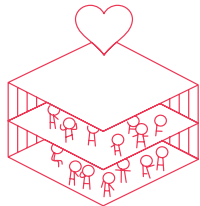
It's time for bold and collective action to Redesign Care and in doing so, create a more humane, robust and hope-filled future for us all.



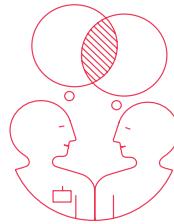
7 ways to kickstart a Care revolution.

We believe there are 7 key interventions that can transform the experience of people, organisations and communities in the world of Care - from the systemic to the individual level.

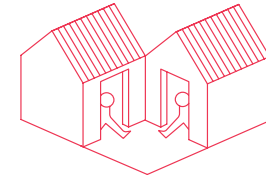
Each intervention comes with a question, intentionally designed to trigger us to reimagine Care, together:



How can we Nurture Caring organisations and ecosystems to achieve the kind of Care everyone would feel proud to deliver?



How can we break communication barriers to Normalise conversations around Care and start to build true Caring relationships?



How can we create social environments and foster relationships and synergies between people to naturally Fit Care into our Communities?



How can we encourage participation and collaboration to Co-design a vision of Care in which we all see value?



How can we Break the societal taboos around Care, such as exist with topics of death or mental health, and transform them into opportunities for personal growth?



How can we Empower a new breed of Care Professionals to promote empathy, creativity and collaboration?



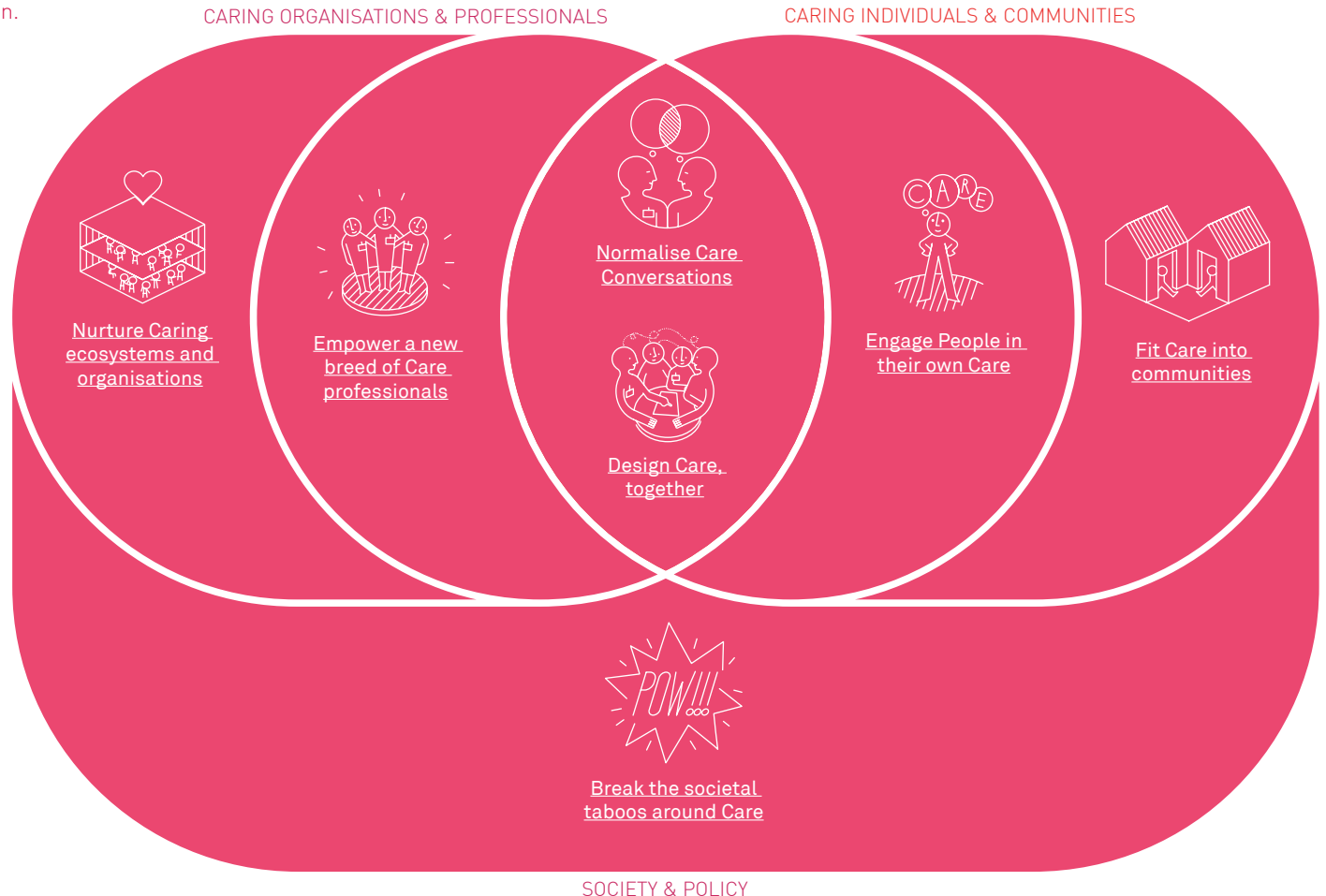
How can we Engage people in their own Care, to find it personally intriguing, enriching and, at times, even pleasurable?

Action Landscape.

Each intervention acts as a beacon that focuses our energies, projects and practices. But when connected, they define a common ground upon which to meet fellow Care Activists and provoke debate and action.

Click on the icons to explore each intervention, or visit:

www.thecarelab.org/7interventions



Do you Care to join us?

If you consider yourself a Care Activist as we do, if any of these questions or issues resonate with you, if you too believe that we need to transform our world of Care together, then we invite you to explore [our website](http://ourwebsite.org) or to reach out to us at hello@thecarelab.org

The more we are, the more diverse our stories, the bigger the impact will be.



An international network of activists initiating a movement to transform Care, driving change locally and globally through human-centered design practices in the health, social and education domains.

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Reading list

These are some of the books that inspire our vision on Care:

[The 100-year life](#)

[New Aging](#)

[Why We Revolt](#)

[Radical Help](#)

[Being Mortal](#)

[The Future of Medicine](#)

[Designing With-In Public Organisations](#)



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Uncle was one of the hospice patients we interviewed back in 2013 when we worked on our Hospitable Hospice project in Singapore.

And by the time we finished our project nine months later, he was the only patient still alive; the thirteen others with whom we had worked had since passed away.

This experience gave us a truly new perspective on death & dying; showing us how much compassion there is still left to give, even at the end of life.

This photo hangs in our studio in Barcelona, reminding us every day, that we are working for all of those who need to be Cared for, and to feel grateful that there are people who are willing to Care for others until their last breath.

