

Group Agreements

We intend for every Thought Kitchen space—whether online, in-person, synchronous, or asynchronous—to be a brave space of reciprocity, respect, and personal responsibility. To that end, please review and abide by the following Group Agreements while participating in any group on the Thought Kitchen website.

1. We will hold stories and personal material with confidentiality. We will ask permission before we share a story or idea that is not our own outside of this group.
2. We will listen to each other with compassion and curiosity. To the best of our ability, we will hold space for each other without offering unsolicited advice, trying to fix each other, or judging each other. To the best of our abilities, we will create a space free of shame and blame.
3. We will ask for what we need and offer what we can. This is a space of reciprocity, respect, and personal responsibility, so we will look after our own needs while supporting others in having their needs met as much as we are able.
4. We will honor each person's autonomy and dignity and will work together to make this a consent-based environment. We will support full participation by all who are present, but nobody will be coerced or manipulated into doing or sharing something they're not comfortable with. "No" is a complete answer.
5. We commit to making this a "brave space" where we will be patient and gracious with ourselves and others while daring to sit with our own discomfort when it arises.
6. We will treat this space as sacred and will take shared responsibility for what happens in the space.
7. During the group, our facilitators will watch our need, timing, and energy. We agree to pause at a signal (a bell), and to call for that signal when we feel the need to pause.
8. We will honor creators, writers, makers, etc. by crediting whosever's ideas/stories/art/etc. we share (unless they prefer to remain anonymous, or we can't find the source).
9. We will be willing to "try on" new ideas or ways of doing things that are different than our experience.
10. We will practice self-focus by attending to and speaking about our own experiences. We will do this by using "I statements" and will not speak for a whole group or express assumptions about the experience of others.
11. We will practice acknowledging when our intent and impact do not align and will do our best to repair ruptures caused by misalignment.
12. We will practice using and considering "both/and" and will ask for support in holding paradox as it arises.
13. We will practice mindful listening by fully listening to others speak rather than planning what we'll say when others are speaking. It's ok to pause, reflect, and respond rather than react.

These agreements are informed by and adapted from the work of the Centre for Holding Space and VISIONS, Inc.

