

Example of Group Norms and Rules of Engagement

Group Norms

Borrowed from JHU Office of Diversity and Inclusion (July 2024)

- Use “I” statements.
- Remain open to new solutions.
- Participate and stay present.
- Share your thoughts and experiences.

Rules of Engagement

Borrowed from <https://ariajourney.org/guidelines/rules/> (2021)

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I enter into this space presuming it to be safe and doing my part to preserve it as such. I understand that if I cannot uphold and honor these rules, my participation will be revoked.

1. **Confidentiality:** I will contribute to the safety of this space and acknowledge that what is said here stays here, but what is learned here should leave here.
2. **Active Listening:** I will listen intently to understand rather than respond, striving to achieve a balance between listening and processing, speaking (without interrupting) and reflecting.
3. **Presence:** I will be 100% present and set aside the usual distractions of things undone from yesterday and things to do tomorrow. I will actively participate and expect to be called upon because my contributions are valuable and necessary to the collective learning experience.
4. **Choice:** I will always be in control of how much I share about myself and my lived experiences.
5. **Authenticity:** I will speak from my own perspectives, using “I” statements and never generalizing. I will trust that my voice will be heard and my contribution respected.
6. **Open Mindedness:** I will experiment with new ideas and challenge my already established assumptions. When I do not agree or accept ideas, I will ask clarifying questions to seek understanding.
7. **Learners, Not Teachers:** I am here to discover my own truths along my inner journey. It is not my place to persuade, correct, or debate others.
8. **No Judgement:** I will refrain from reacting with judgement; no one among us is an expert and we all have room to learn and grow.
9. **Discomfort:** I will turn to wonder when I find myself lost in difficult emotions. “I wonder what my reaction teaches me?” “I wonder how (s)he/they are feeling right now?”

Partially adapted from <http://www.couragerenewal.org/touchstones/>.