

Agreement of Engagement

1. Stay engaged

To stay engaged is a refusal to let your heart and mind “check out” of the conversation, while leaving your body in place. It is a personal commitment each person makes, regardless of the engagement of others. It means remaining morally, emotionally, intellectually, and socially involved in the dialogue. If you feel discomfort, do not check out. Instead ask yourself if that discomfort is due to your privilege being challenged or because you are feeling triggered. If you are triggered please feel free to leave the conversation and do what is needed for selfcare.”

2. Expect and accept non-closure and discomfort

The work we are doing is both difficult, create discomfort, and necessary. The discomfort we feel at some point during these conversations can be productive. It is not the expectation or responsibility of this group to provide closure or comfort during this important work dealing with hundreds of years of systemic discrimination.

3. Respect confidentiality

To support each other in our risk-taking, we agree to respect the privacy of each individual’s identity and life experiences, but we reserve the right to share ideas and content publicly.

4. Be rooted in reality

We understand that the work we do in this group must be rooted in praxis, and as such, it must be practical. As we reach towards a better and more ideal world, we must be mindful of what we can and cannot accomplish in this context. An acknowledgement of reality is not giving up or giving in.

5. Consider power dynamics at play

We must recognize how we are situated from a wide variety of perspectives, both formal and informal. This principle does not advocate low participation for those with power; rather, it encourages an awareness of the weight of your words and how they may be understood.

6. Don’t Confuse Intent vs Impact

We must all be willing to hear that our impact may not be same as our intent. We will enter this space with the assumption that all participants have good intentions, but we must also be willing to listen and learn from our colleagues who tell us that our impact has strayed from our intent. This space was created for learning; speak your truth but with mindfulness and compassion.

7. Extend Grace and Courtesy

If the purpose of this space is to learn and to build, then we must be willing to extend each other the grace and courtesy to both make mistakes and learn from them. and we will agree to offer courtesy to make mistakes and experience discomfort. We recognize that all of us will stumble during the process of speaking our truth. But it is from that space of discomfort that we both learn and unlearn the behaviors and beliefs that will aid us in our shared cause.