

“#ENOUGHISENOUGH: EXPRESSION SESSION” | GROUND RULES

-  **Listen with an open mind. Listen not to respond but listen to understand.**
Instead of planning how to respond or thinking about what to say next, think about what was said before formulating a response. Try not to interrupt or have side conversations. We all want and need to be heard, but we must also be willing to listen and be in the moment for our fellow human being.
-  **Don't just jump in when the water's warm.**
Challenge yourself to share your reaction to **varied** perspectives, even when you disagree or don't relate.
-  **Share airtime.**
No dominating the conversation.
-  **We are all here with the best intentions.**
Participants agree that they all genuinely want to engage in order to improve their community, not to hurt each other or make each other feel small. If something happens, assume the best intentions.
-  **We are all experts on our own personal experience.**
Acknowledge the validity of others' experiences.
-  **Avoid “two-valued” thoughts and statements.**
Nothing is ever simply good or bad.
-  **Address the statement, not the person.**
Participants may express opinions or make statements that will offend or oppose the beliefs of others. The group should agree that in these situations, they should react by addressing **what** was said, not **who** said it.
-  **Participants represent only themselves and are not representatives of social groups.**
Though they may reflect views in their communities, in dialogue, group members are not expected to represent organizations or groups.
-  **Use “I” statements.**
Beginning statements with “I believe,” “I think,” or “I feel” not only avoids generalizations and confusion, but also makes participants own their statements and not hide behind the safety of numbers.
Note: Saying “I feel like” or “I feel that” dilutes this. That lets you state something as a fact, rather than a personal perception. Consider the difference: “I feel like you were aggressive” vs. “I felt scared.”
-  **Don't substitute “all” for “some” or “some” for “one”.**
Our experiences don't expose us to everything there is about a topic, even when we feel like experts.
-  **Challenge yourself to say what you really mean.**
Reflecting on your statements so as to communicate directly and honestly helps the dialogue. Avoid being PC in favor of being genuine. Avoid using sarcasm in favor of being honest.
-  **Honor confidentiality.**
What happens in the session stays in the session. Take learning out of the room, and leave the names in.
-  **Practice empathy.**
Put yourself in the other person's shoes.
-  **Try to acknowledge, not correct, the generalizations and stereotypes in your own contributions.**
Be comfortable if others challenge them or ask you to be more specific about them.
-  **Listen harder when you disagree.**
If you find yourself wanting to revise what someone else is saying and how they're saying it, try to listen, and ask, for what experiences might be behind the difference in framing.