

Last updated: March 16, 2021

Mayflower Guidelines for Healthy Communication

The guidelines are intended to ensure respectful and productive communication within and among the Mayflower community and its partners both when in person and online. The spirit of the guidelines is meant to facilitate conversations not to discourage participation.

1. We give the voices of historically marginalized people more authority on the issues that hinder their flourishing. For example, people of color are to be listened to more closely on racism.
2. We take care to ensure that no member of a historically marginalized community is asked to speak on behalf of or represent their community as a whole and is not asked to carry the burden of educating those who have not yet recognized the oppression they experience.
3. We encourage attentive listening and thoughtful consideration from everyone involved. Our goal is learning and expanding our understanding. Careful listening and reading are how we reach that goal.
4. Everyone's input is important. Each of us is an expert on our own experience. We all have valuable information to share.
5. We encourage people to tell their own stories and speak of their own experiences. We should not represent the stories of others, e.g., refrain from saying, "I've heard other people say..." This will alleviate triangulation. Share other's experiences only with their consent.
6. We ask that everyone participates and that no one dominates. Active participants should monitor the frequency and length of their contributions. All of us must create an atmosphere of trust so that everyone has the opportunity to share.
7. We encourage collaborative dialogue. We try not to outdo one another in showing how much we know about the topic we are discussing. We don't engage with the motive of proving others wrong. Instead, we strive to listen to the views of others so that we might enlarge our understanding of different perspectives.
8. We endeavor to not spread misinformation. We stick to the facts and are clear when sharing an opinion. We are as direct as possible.
9. When we provide feedback, we discern the appropriate time and medium, and consider the circumstances before communicating. We describe behavior and try to use "I"

statements. We avoid adding evaluative comments that may overstep boundaries. We discourage judgmental language such as “should” and “ought.” We also consider whether a public forum is the appropriate venue for a particular comment, subject, etc..

10. We talk directly and respectfully with the person with whom we have a concern. We limit communication about conflicts to the concerned parties and resist the temptation to include others; anonymous messages are never appropriate. We try not to use indirect methods such as email, chat, texts, or social media postings. Interpersonal conflicts should not be shared via group email or on social media.
11. We respect and honor the confidentiality of all private information. While we encourage people to own their feedback by voicing it directly and respectfully to the appropriate party, we recognize that in the context of our communications, sensitive or confidential information may be shared. When this occurs, before sharing that information, we will ask permission.