

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH LEADERS

Community Agreements for Learning & Practice

The IRL program is a learning community where Fellows gather to expand their leadership capacity and research practice. We do this work in collaboration with the larger IRL community including staff, partners, facilitators and advisors to create a Culture of Health. We invite Fellows to contribute to this dynamic learning environment by sharing their skills, knowledge, and lived experience at webinars and meetings, whether in person or virtual. We offer the following principles as a starting point to guide a shared way of being together - highlighting expectations and accountability to and for each other as we engage in this work.

- **BE PRESENT** – We acknowledge that the world and our inboxes continue outside of IRL spaces. We do our best to be physically and mentally present. We actively listen to each other and we are mindful of our communication style.
- **RESPECT & RESPONSIBILITY** - We own our thoughts, feelings, and actions by using “I” statements: “I think/I believe/I feel.” We honor each person’s lived experience and make space for people to tell their own stories. *For extroverts, it may be helpful to think of the acronym WAIT – Why Am I Talking? For introverts, it may be “Why Am I Not Talking?”*
- **SUPPORT & SELF CARE** - We acknowledge that learning and change happen by pushing beyond our comfort zones. We hold space for and respect our differences. We will collectively cultivate a brave space in which to have difficult conversations. We acknowledge and respect people’s choice to adjust their level of engagement in conversations that might be triggering, traumatizing, or re-traumatizing for them.
- **LITERACY MOMENT** – We acknowledge that we are intentionally and continuously co-creating an IRL learning community that values peer learning. We welcome clarifying questions and encourage brief clarifying explanations.
- **ASSUME GOOD INTENT; ACKNOWLEDGE IMPACT** – We acknowledge that people will likely have different opinions or interpretations of the issues we discuss. We commit to listening with an open mind and heart and to considering feedback to be a gift; an invitation to self-reflection. As listeners, we will start from the assumption that the speaker has positive intent. As speakers, we will take responsibility for the impact our words have on others.
- **SUPPORT A RESTORATIVE JUSTICE APPROACH** - We acknowledge that conflict and miscommunication are common, everyday occurrences and that they do not have to be destructive. Handled with care, conflict can be generative, relationships can grow richer, and safety restored. We embrace the 5 principles of Restorative Practice: Relationships, Respect, Responsibility, Repair and Reintegration.
- **EXPECT AND ACCEPT A LACK OF CLOSURE** - We acknowledge that there will not always be closure at the end of our conversations and that some topics will require us to do our homework and/or seek clarity outside of this space.
- **YOUR SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOME** - We acknowledge that each convening is different and that our time together is ever-evolving. We invite Fellows and facilitators to offer additional practices and suggestions at each convening to create the agreements we will hold for each other in our conversations.