

# Collaborative Stewardship Starter & Builder Kit

## ***Example: Proposed Group Guidelines & Agreements***

Group guidelines or agreements are intended to help a group set intentions on how to interact and work together when creating a collaborative space. They can provide “ground rules” or expectations and can often help set the tone and focus for a work session. Below are guidelines/agreements that Sharon has used as a starting point for other partner-based meetings. Participants can identify which agreements resonate and that they would like to adopt, plus share others in their introductions.

- **Together we know a lot.** *Honor that we as a group have wisdom, and most of the answers are in the room. Everyone brings forward experience; to elicit this, we should be curious and respectful with each other; offer encouraging questions instead of assumptions and enable anyone in the room to lead.*
- **Take space, make space; listen to learn and understand; and speak from our own perspective.** *Make room for both people who think out loud, and for people who prefer to think quietly. Listen first and acknowledge what we hear – even if we don’t agree with it – before expressing our own point of view. Experiences in our lives help shape who we are, how we think, and what we value. Use “I” statements and avoid generalizing about other people or other groups of people. Monitor your level of participation (neither dominate nor withhold)*
- **Take responsibility for helping the group achieve a positive outcome.** *Engage with, build on, respond to the ideas of others. Be creative in proposing solutions to barriers “Yes....and” rather than “either/or” thinking.*
- **Lean into discomfort.** *We’re only growing when we are on the edge of our learning. Sometimes it’s hard!*
- **Do our best.** *Mistakes are okay! Make room to say” ouch, oops, move on.” It’s okay to try and learn and do-over. There are no right or wrong answers.*
- **Assume good intent, until proven otherwise.** *Take responsibility for accidental hurt. To make a workplace where we can learn together, grow together, and trust one*

Modified from Drawing Change, the California. Landscape Stewardship Network’s & Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy’s Agreements

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*another, we take responsibility if we say or do something that accidentally hurts our colleagues, even if we didn't mean to hurt them.*

- **Focus on the here and now.** *Be fully present. Be aware of the purpose, stay on topic. Avoid side conversations when we are conducting business in the group. Be conscious of time, help stick to it, or clearly articulate the need for more. Remove distractions - mobile phones off.*
- **Take care of your needs.** *If you need to leave to use the restroom or tend to self-care, please do.*
- **Uphold confidentiality.** *We don't want people to share someone else's personal stories, information, or attribute things to people without their permission – but we want people to share the knowledge beyond the room.*

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