

Group Communication Guidelines

Directions: Communication Guidelines not only keep groups on purpose, they also create a sense of safety and trust within the group. These Guidelines have been developed and refined over many years in countless groups at the [Institute for the Advancement of Service](#). For this reason, it is recommended you use them as written rather than adapt them.

The Guidelines are provided here to support you in evolving a group that is productive and nurturing for all group members—including the leader.

1. I speak from my own experience, from the “Responsible I.” I can only speak for myself. I cannot speak for what is true for someone else.
2. I help to create a safe space by supporting the other members of the group to speak their truth; I do not impose my interpretation on another’s sharing.
3. I honor the confidentiality of all sharing by not discussing anyone’s sharing outside the group.
4. I am emotionally present with the group and do not interrupt or offer unasked-for advice. This includes not bridging off another person’s sharing.
5. I honor using economy of speech as I share, speaking succinctly and allowing time for those to share who have not shared.
6. I value and respect communication, healthy boundaries, and timeliness and apply this understanding in the group.
7. I note whether a group member has completed their expression, verbally and emotionally. I wait for the speaker to indicate or say “**I am complete**” before beginning to speak.
8. As a listener, I observe my inner thoughts. Am I really listening? Am I in the present moment? Am I aware of and honoring the person’s timing and pacing?