

Conflict, Harm and Feedback

“You want to fight in the parking lot?”

Conflict and Feedback Training

Song

[I like Fight - The Bar](#)

Overview for this space

This work is in progress. It is imperfect, I am often wrong, and this work sits on the shoulders of Black women and other Women of Color such as Mariame Kaba & Shira Hassan, and Women such as Sarah Schulman. Also of note is Dean Spade, who is a liberation powerhouse, and Spring Up. This is the work of my own personal learnings and research and practice through Sunrise’s National Community, Healing and Accountability Team. Most importantly, this work is our collective responsibility, for our communities, for our ancestors, for those who will come after us.

- Trigger warning:
 - Some of this content might be charged for you
 - This work is radical and therefore will be uncomfortable

Overview

Conflict is hard - Whether with friends, or family, or within our organizations, we’ve all had moments of conflict and disagreement. This guide aims to help folks figure out Conflict, harm and boundaries, and help build skills necessary in resilient, liberation movements.

Conflict

What is Conflict

A definition that “We Will Not Cancel Us” by Adrienne Marie Brown reads:

- *“Disagreement, difference, or argument between two or more people. Can be personal, political, structural. There may be power differences, and there will most likely be dynamics of privilege and oppression at play. Conflicts can be direct and named, or indirect and felt. Conflicts rooted in genuine difference are rarely resolved quickly and easily. Conflicts can be held in relationship and/or group through naming both the difference and the impact of the differences, facing the roots of the issues, and honest conversation, especially supported conversation such as mediation.”*

BUT SHIT, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN

It means that in this work and our lives, we're going to be working with people coming from many different directions who may or may not agree with us. There's going to be differences coming from a lot of directions, and sometimes it's gonna be hard to navigate. Sometimes it's gonna take more time than we like, and it's gonna be hard, emotionally taxing and frustrating. It's also liberating to fight with someone and have everyone come out stronger. For our movements to work, we have to embrace conflict in the work and use it to build stronger movements.

Practices/Norms

Check out [CHAT Conflict Continuum](#) for a step by step process to help guide you through conflict and feedback!

- **Lean into conflict-** If you're feeling tense or uncomfortable about something, pay attention to that! If someone brings a conflict to you, take seriously the work that it took to bring forward and the opportunity it could present for your own growth or for the relationship. Relationships are part of our work, and conflict is an inevitable, necessary and sometimes generative part of maintaining healthy, authentic relationships! Take the time needed to build connections with each other and heal from hurt/harm when it happens.
- **Schedule** regular feedback sessions - into your teams, into your work, into your life. Ask for feedback regularly!
- **Stick with it!** Remember to follow through with all the steps. **Naming conflict isn't enough.**
- **Give yourself grace and time** - Changing behavior and processing conflict takes work, and it doesn't happen overnight, or in a linear way.
- **Build real relationships with your teammates, plan for feedback, take care of self so that you can be attentive to changes you/your group may need to make?**
- **Take some time to define if/why you may be feeling uncomfortable and/or unsafe.** Try to distinguish between dynamics of disagreement (we don't agree on something), conflict (we don't agree and are very much opposed in views/values/ this situation makes me uncomfortable) and harm (This makes me/feels unsafe).
- Check in with teammates and other organizers about how they're feeling and if they want to talk/continue talking or take some time away to this and come back
 - Don't do this without dropping a concrete time to come back to it.
- **Good conflict happens consensually.** Are we agreeing to talk and try to resolve this? Are we feeling like we could both walk away if we wanted to? Are we in agreement about how we talk/resolve this conflict?
 - Example - If I'm frustrated with someone/a situation, and I want to resolve this conflict, I need to ask in a way that doesn't make someone feel unsafe. While I would love to yell in a parking lot for a bit, I know that not everyone would feel the same way, so I have to find a time/place method that I know will let the other person feel safe to express their thoughts/feelings and get us in a mood to resolve, rather than escalate.
- Focus on "I" statements (i.e. "I felt upset/uncomfortable/stressed when... because...") - explain where you're coming from to help elaborate on the situation without attacking the other person!
- **Listen to the other person! Talk with them about it!**
 - **Check in** - How are they feeling? What's coming up for them?

- Reflect back what you hear the other person saying. This can be one way to show them that you're listening and help them feel heard. You can also ask them to do the same for you! (i.e. "It sounds like your need for support and affirmation wasn't met when I responded in that way. Is that right?")
- **Sometimes, you don't need to solve the problem now, and it's okay to not have all the solutions.** It's okay to sit with the problem and acknowledge and validate the hurt: "Sometimes all I need in a conversation is to be heard, there might not even be a next step". If it gets you to a solution that resolves the conflict, lean into it!
- Check in with the other person to see how they're doing after your talk, and thank them for the willingness to lean into conflict (if that feels right)
- Practice conflict with your friends! Argue and agree to argue! Use a tip jar (small question to talk and work through)
 - EX - Get some friends together and ask them - Netflix or Hulu. After they answer, ask them why they feel the way they do, and talk about why you may agree/disagree
- Reflect on the process:
 - Where were there tensions?
 - What could have made these conversations easier to have or resolve? What can I take away from this conversation into later conflicts?
 - (Did these steps work for you?)
- Recognize that this may come up again, and check in with the other person occasionally
 - Example - if Kai and Anthony are regularly beefing because we are both stubborn, we should check in after tense moments to ask if either overstepped or caused a repeat of the original tension/conflict

When Folks don't want to talk

It's tough to be in conflict with folks who don't want to talk about it. Conflict avoidance is taught to us, whether it's not arguing with our parents, avoiding someone in power who has potential to harm you, or not wanting to rock the boat. We're socialized to "not fight and get along". With organizing, our goal is to build a world that we want to live in. Because we all come from different lived experiences, communities, and spaces, oftentimes we have beliefs and experiences that are hard to talk about, because it's either very personal, very strongly held or we're not used to being heard. This means that for us to work as better organizers, we have to practice listening to each other. But sometimes when we're in conflict and disagree, we can't get past our own blocks, so we avoid the conflict, avoid the other person/community/org that we're in conflict with.

To get over this is to recognize that:

- I can only control when I want to talk/listen
- I need consent from the other party to have a discussion with them
- I need an understanding of my own boundaries, beliefs and experiences.
- I need an understanding of what my needs are in this conversation and conflict.

Because good conflict is rooted in consent, **we can't coerce another person to listen to us**, or even resolve conflict with us. If someone doesn't want to talk, we may have to turn to other avenues.

This can include:

- Talking with someone else about the conflict to get their perspective, cool off, and find a way forward
- Asking the other person to talk, and letting them know that the door is open if/when they're ready to talk
- Asking for help from a third party that all folks involved have relationships with.

Again, because **conflict is rooted in consent**, we may need/want other folks to get involved. But at the same time, we have to make sure that we're not forcing the other person into a discussion with us. After all, it sucks for us to feel like there's no way out of a conversation, and when we're forced into it, we can feel attacked or pressured. When in doubt, check in with the other person/group you're in conflict with, and ask if they want to talk. If they're not ready, ask to circle back in a few days. Reach out to someone who you know and trust (AND HAS CAPACITY), and ask to talk about the situation and get some more perspective and validation in the meantime. Ask the folks who don't want to engage right now to do the same!

Questions

- Is this a person who I want to grow a friendship/relationship with?
- Do I have the capacity to engage?
- Is our conflict mirroring/perpetuating systemic oppression? If so, what kind? Have we named that and/or its effects in the conflict?
- **What are some times that I disagreed with someone? How did I resolve it?**
- What are some times I've disagreed with someone and it didn't work out? How did you feel after?
- Do I trust the person I am in conflict with or believe that they are doing their best?
- Is it the right time to bring this up?
 - For me?
 - For the other person?
 - For the team?
- Where does this situation remind you of past hurts/conflict? Other times you have felt/been treated this way?
- If I am feeling uncomfortable, is it because a belief is being challenged in a way that could be generative, and/or because something was said or done that contributed to a dynamic of oppression?
- **What do I want out of this conversation?**
 - Do I just want to be heard?
 - Am I trying to heal?
 - Am I trying to restore a working relationship with this person?
- Am I listening to the other folks in this conflict and understand where/why they're coming from?
 - What's a way to restate where they're coming from
- What do we need for this conflict to not happen in the future? What do we need to walk away from this conflict satisfied?
- After the conversation(s), do I feel heard/ understood and has the conflict been addressed?

- If not, how can I be better heard/understood? What did I learn from this conflict?
- If I have, what worked in the conversation that got the issues addressed? What can I bring to the next conflict?

What is Harm

Harm can be a part of conflict, a reason for conflict, and/or a result of conflict, though not always.

- Conflict “Is when the actions of a person (or people) or system(s) has a negative impact on a person (or people) that creates unmet needs and obligations. This is often an abuse of power. **(Keep in mind there are always power differences, it is about negotiating them equitably and consensually)** *i.e. you can't sit with us today because on Wednesdays we wear pink.*”

Harm in the context of having conflict is when someone feels unsafe or needs something that the people in conflict can't or won't provide. Harm is unfortunately going to happen. And when it does happen, it's on us to be accountable to the folks we cause harm to, our communities to create spaces to navigate harm and on ourselves to heal and take care of ourselves.

Sometimes harm might look like being unable to hold space for someone feeling unsafe, or being able to understand the harm being caused. Sometimes harm feels really easy to see, and sometimes it's hidden.

Example - If I am in a meeting and someone calls me by my wrong pronouns, and they don't own it/apologize, it tells me that this space might not be equipped to serve my needs as a trans person, or even that it's openly hostile to me. In this case, it's harmful because it both upholds transphobia and trans violence. It makes me feel like the person who has misgendered doesn't see the whole person that I am, only a surface level judgment.

Is this harmful? Yeah, because it signals and tells me that this space might not be the safest for me, but if it happens more than once, and it's not fixed when I bring it up, it becomes a pattern of harm, because at this point it's clear that it's being done to harm me/this person is so willfully ignorant that this fucking eggplant can't learn how to use a pronoun. Over time, maybe this happens so much that I begin to avoid the group/person who caused harm, and the space loses me and my bullshit.

How big is the harm? Very big, if this person is someone I know well or respect, and smaller if it's folks I don't know/don't know me well. People I know well should know better.

What will it take to make me feel better? If it's someone I know well or respect, having them not do it again, or apologize to me. If it's someone I don't know, informing them so they don't do it again.

Harm vs Trauma

Harm happens a few times, whereas trauma is harm or hurt that continues to affect us even after the hurt has gone away/been healed. Trauma can happen in many different ways, from repeated, similar harmful small events that build up over time, to a singular, life altering event whose effects can be felt even today. Trauma brings us back to the time where we experienced hurt or harm, and the feelings in our body that we felt at the time.

At the same time, trauma and the work around it means that we need to be trauma-informed. This means (from Fumbling Towards Repair)

- Acknowledgement that trauma is pervasive
- Safety - Ensuring that when we work to have and hold conflict, that all participants are safe in the process.
- Trust - We have to continuously work to build trust in each other

- Choice/Consent - When engaging in conflict/harm/trauma with folks, we have to make sure that the work is voluntary and real choices given in how to proceed.
- Control - We both have control over the conflict and working through it.
- Compassion - We should engage in this work when our compassion is high
- Collaboration - We must work through the conflict with input from all of us.
- Strengths-Based - We use this work to build on our strengths and shore up our weaknesses.

Examples of Harm/Potential Harm/Trauma

Some of these are bigger than others, and not all of them

- Microaggressions
 - Example: misgendering.
- Deadnaming
- Ad-hominem attacks - “you’re a fucking idiot”
- Slurs
- Harassment - either verbal/physical or otherwise.
- Assault
- Acting without consent
- Speaking over someone.
- Ignoring folks
- Shunning
- Bullying
- Gaslighting
- physical/emotional/sexual abuse.

Helpful things to do when harmed

The most important things to do when harmed/hurt are stepping back from the situation, assessing yourself and how you’re feeling, in your body and mind, and creating space and a container to heal.

- Take a deep breath and a step back.
- What caused you harm/made you feel harmed?
- How are you feeling? Can you name what you’re feeling right now? What are some words that come up?
- Have you named that you’re feeling hurt or harmed, how and why?
- Are you uncomfortable, or unsafe? Asking yourself and taking stock of how you are feeling can be very important and help navigate this range of emotions.
- Is there anyone you can check in with to talk about this with and figure out solutions/vent?
- What’s in your toolkit to step back and take care of yourself and get to a space to navigate the harm? What’s in your orgs toolkit/resources?

Overstating and Understating Harm

Sometimes when we do harm, or have harm done to us, we may name it to be an amount that is more or less than what may have actually occurred. Oftentimes when I have been hurt, I have overstated the harm, and made it seem bigger than it is, and later on reduced it. The only metric of harm that matters is your own, and it’s our job to make sure that we can accurately name how

much harm has been done to us. Sometimes, this might mean taking a step back before taking action and checking in with someone, or taking care of ourselves before taking action.

Overstating happens when a harm is smaller later down the road, after we've taken time to step away/process the situation, often in the company of others. For instance, if someone provokes me, and I'm having a bad day, I may see that harm added with the stress that I am already under. And I am a small bean under heavy stress. When this happens, I may kick back harder at someone or respond with more force than I normally would. If I instead take a deep breath and step away from the situation and come back to it in a calmer state of mind, I might recognize that the harm wasn't as bad as I thought. In the systems we live under, perceived harm can mix in with systemic violence to produce greater harm than what was done to us, and our own perceptions of another person can mix with these systems to produce sometimes violent results.

EX: When I'm misgendered in a call with someone, I could call for this person to be removed from the organization. But if it happens once, does it make sense to do so? If the person owns their behavior and makes a sincere attempt to do better, I may have been harmed, but it doesn't make sense to shun or exclude them when I know they're trying their best. By acting in good faith, I can say that I have been harmed, the other party can acknowledge their own impact and make amends, and we can take away lessons that grow and nourish our relationship.

On the other side of the world, understating harm can allow someone who has caused or done harm to perpetuate it again. If someone has a pattern of harming others in the same way that they did to me, they may do so to someone who is more vulnerable than myself. My dismissal of someone's behavior, or thinking that it's personal, may cause someone else to be hurt the same or worse!

EX: When I am misgendered by my partner's parents, I may not state how it makes me feel and process it with my partner later. But what's happening here is that by not taking the harm done to me seriously, it opens a route to them doing this again and again to other people, including my partner. If I tell my partner's parents that they misgendered me, I have done my minimum due diligence, and in doing so, asked them to take accountability and work to change their behavior. For me, that feels right for myself, and takes into account what my boundaries are.

Questions

- What's one time that I felt/was harmed in a space that I thought was safe? What happened? Did folks take accountability?
- How have the times that I've been harmed/done harm affect how I interact with other people in this space? How does it affect how we interact?
- What's one time that I caused harm in a space/to a person. How did I feel about doing that? What did I learn - How do I avoid not doing it again? How have I repaired/healed the harm?
- How might my identities and socialization play a role in how I'm seeing the harm caused to me/others? How might my identities and socialization play a role in how I see the harm that I've caused to others?
- If I am harmed, do the consequences to the person who caused harm get me to a place of healing and safety? Am I using harmful or oppressive systems to punish someone for their actions?

Defining Uncomfortable And Unsafe

Discomfort, like harm, is natural to feel. Sometimes the work and feedback that we're in is so unlike what we're used to. We live in a world that is conflict averse, where we're unused to seeing each others humanity and speaking to each other. So sometimes we will feel uncomfortable when in conflict and feedback. It's normal, and even healthy to acknowledge that we may be unused to working through conflict and harm.

That said, it's the job of each and everyone of us to ensure that nobody feels unsafe. While discomfort often lives with and hangs out with a lack of safety, prioritizing each others safety over comfort is important. We can organize when we're uncomfortable, but when we feel unsafe around our friends and family it can be much harder to show up in authentic and truthful ways. It's everyone's job to make sure that a space stays safe and open for everyone*

Feeling unsafe or uncomfortable can happen when someone has had harm done to them before, as a response to trauma, and navigating unfamiliar situations. It is important to take care of our needs, by recognizing our own boundaries, naming them (if possible) and recognizing each other's autonomy to navigate spaces and emotions.

Feeling/being unsafe can feel/be like:

- I can't be in this space because consistent harm or trauma can happen/has happened.
- I can't show up as who I am, or I have to minimize myself/parts of me in a space.
- People don't care about me, my lived experience or where I'm coming from.
- I might be attacked before, during or after meetings
- The people in my space perpetuate/mirror systemic oppression.
- I might be harassed for voicing my opinions
- I can't talk about when something harms me for fear of being shunned/ignored.
- I don't want to talk to this person because they harmed me in the past and haven't taken accountability
- I am ignored consistently.
- I am talked over when voicing my views.

*When using the phrase everyone, it's important to scope/specify who everyone is. For instance, in MYCJ all of us must prioritize building a safe space for youth, especially those of us who are Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color, disabled folks, Neurodiverse folks, LGBTQIA2S+ youth, working class youth, and other folks on the frontlines fighting the climate crisis. The great thing is when we build spaces that prioritize the safety of people from all walks of life, we can begin and continue to build an organization equipped to collectively fight back against the systemic oppression that we live under.

Naming your feelings

In the work, I've had many different feelings when I've received feedback. A couple folks in CHAT (The Community, Healing, and Accountability Team) took the time to name what we've felt when we've received feedback, to help name some feelings that may come up!

- **Defensive**
 - Why? It felt like I was being attacked, and I had to take a step back and evaluate why I was feeling defensive and attacked, when the feedback was to make sure the group felt good and could move smoothly and together. Why was I the bad

guy in this scenario? And thinking that when it wasn't the case of being good or bad, just feedback.

- How did I deal with it? - Understanding that it wasn't about me, but the work, and that it's being done for the better of the group, the kasamas (comrade/friends/family) we've pledged ourselves to.
- **Anxiety**
 - When a group of folks come in and tell you they need to give you feedback, it can be anxiety inducing. Again, feeling attacked and feeling like folks are ganging up on you can come up.
 - How did I deal with it? Asking for folks to give me time to speak aloud and process what was going on. Mentioning how I was feeling in the context of the situation, and how I needed space to handle and manage my emotions.
- **Ashamed**
 - When I feel like I've done something wrong and I'm not good enough to be part of the group I'm in, I feel shame. I personally feel this in the pit of my stomach and feel flushed/hot.
 - How did I deal with it? Ask for folks to remind me of why I'm here/ belong here in the first place. Take some deep breaths and remind myself that making mistakes doesn't make me a bad person.
- **Angry**
 - Another feeling that might pop up is feelings of anger. It can feel personally infuriating to receive feedback. Anger can be valid! Sometimes it feels like folks don't get where you're coming from.
 - How did I deal with it? Take a breath, step back for a second. Ask for the meeting to be cut short if it feels like it's really getting in the way of listening and processing feedback. Let the folks know what you're feeling and why!
- **Sad**
 - I've felt sad before because I've reconciled getting feedback with letting the group down. I also felt bad because I wasn't good enough to the work
 - How did I deal with it? Took a second to reconcile my feelings with what was being said. Asked myself why were we doing feedback? What I learned was we were doing feedback because we wanted the group to function better and have all of us involved in the work.
- **Happy**
 - I felt happy because my community came together to offer me this gift. Like the feedback wasn't given because they didn't like me, but because we wanted to come together and make our group stronger, and sometimes that means working on our own personal stuff, and our relationships in the group!

Best Practices

- Check in with folks and build in regular check-ins/checkups
 - This can look like having 2-3 people that you 1:1 regularly, ask how they're feeling in spaces, what their needs are, what you can do to help.
- **Identify support:**
 - **Who would you contact / turn to:**
 - - help you process or deal with challenging emotions?
 - - ground, care for yourself and your body?

- - have fun and get your mind off things?
- - help you explain gender or sexuality to important people in your life?
- - hold you accountable and support you if you harmed someone?
- - provide physical security or intervention in case of a physical conflict?
- - in case of an emergency or crisis involving the state (police, immigration, hospital, etc)? Is this person or are these people labeled "in case of emergency" in your phone?
- - if you are considering self harm or having suicidal thoughts?
- Do these people know they are your contact / support for these types of situations?
 - What space in your home or where you are staying do you feel most comfortable and/or safe?
 - What friend or family members homes do you feel most comfortable and/or safe in?
 - What space in or near where you work do you feel most comfortable / safe?
 - What bathroom?
- What public space in your neighborhood or city do you feel most comfortable and/or safe? What public bathroom?
- What medical facility or treatment center do you feel most comfortable or safe going to? Are there any items you want to have on you whenever you go out?
- What is one thing that is extremely important to you and worth living for?
- What in general excites you and motivates your life?
- What are three things you like about yourself or think you are good at?
- What are three affirmations you can say to yourself?

- **Map and set Boundaries**

- Often it only takes a small push from the outside and we do most of the coercion and pressuring ourselves. Internal boundaries include self discipline, time management, impulses and compulsions, negative self talk, doing things you don't have or want to do, overdoing and not getting rest / recreation / food. Working on internal boundaries makes it much easier to assert your boundaries with someone else. **What are internal scripts / things you tell yourself that cause you to violate your own boundaries or do things you don't want to do when it comes to:**
 - - Work or income?
 - - family of origin needs?
 - - chosen family needs?
 - - friend's needs?
- Material Boundaries: what material objects in your possession are or aren't you willing to lend or give out?
 - Example: I won't lend you my switch because I need it for Mario Kart and it is a prized gift from my partner. I would kill if anything happened to it.
- Physical Boundaries: What is your personal space, and what of yours is private? What of your space are you willing to share, with whom and under what circumstances?
 - Example: Don't touch me without asking.
- Mental Boundaries: What are your immovable values and beliefs? What information about you is personal, private, or public? Which opinions, ideologies, attitudes, or beliefs are you unwilling to entertain or listen to?
 - Example: Don't try to convince me nazis are actually good people. Don't talk about Zionism with me unless you're also jewish or someone I really trust.
- Emotional Boundaries: Healthy emotional boundaries prevent you from projecting, blaming others, accepting blame that is not your own, and burn out. What types of emotional support are you and aren't you willing to provide? Are there situations you are

not willing to respond to?

- Example: I can't hold everyone's emotional space, so I tend to prioritize my own and will tell you when I don't have capacity, and send you to someone who does.
- Sexual Boundaries: Which types of touch and sexual activity are you and aren't you willing to try and with whom? Think of what, where, when, and under what conditions.
 - Example: I don't generally want to talk about sex unless I'm talking about it with a person whom I am dating/having sex with. It makes me uncomfortable to talk about my own sex life because I have some hangups and trauma around it.
- Gender Expression Boundaries: How do you feel most comfortable expressing your gender? What do you want to build your comfort in around your expression? What are you unwilling to do or wear at this point in your gender journey? How might you be willing to present yourself depending on the context / situation?
 - Example: I am fine with being misgendered occasionally by folks who I don't know (most of the time), but it really hurts me when folks I organize with do so, because I want them to see me in my fullest.
- Identity Boundaries: Which parts of your identity do you share with whom? Which people or communities do you want to know about your invisible identity? Which people or communities would you not?
 - Example: I like to read the room before stating I'm trans. I used to not need my employer to know that I am trans, but now I want them to so I may show up as my best person. I want people to know that I am mixed and jewish. I do not need cops/fash to know that I'm trans.
- Spiritual Boundaries: depending on your spiritual practices- up to you to discern how to fill out this section.
 - Example: I'm fine talking about being jewish but I don't want to be the only resource/person in the area that you talk to about judaism/faith.
- Communicate Boundaries! It can be hard to navigate what is chill to talk about and feedback. See above about mapping boundaries
 - Example: I like fighting and I'm fine with a little edge to the conversation as long as its not hurtful, but I know that not everyone is like that. So when someone names that they don't want that sort of gruff language I will make more of an effort to not do so*

*One of the weapons used against folks fighting and surviving oppression is [respectability and civility politics](#). Questions that may arise around this are - who gets to define civility and respectable behavior in our society? Whose needs and wants are centered when we ask for civility and respect in our society? Who weaponizes civility and respect as a tool to oppress?

Questions

- What are my boundaries?
- Who do I have to support me if I am in conflict or uncomfortable? Who do I have to support me if I feel/am unsafe?
- Who have I 1:1'd in the past week, 2 weeks, month?

Feedback

What is Feedback

Feedback - in good faith - is a gift. It means that folks love you so much that they want you to continue to thrive and be a part of the community.

We are all trying to get better and do work that liberates us collectively. For this, we need to be mindful of others needs and wants for feedback. Because none of our work is perfect and always being refined, it's important to name and create space for processing, giving and receiving feedback.

Feedback is when folks get together to talk with each other, and reflect and process the work that we have been doing, how we navigate spaces and issues, and reaffirm our collective humanity and trust in one another. Feedback can sometimes be hard, and is especially hard when we don't know each other. This means that in addition to giving and receiving feedback, we build in processes of getting to know each other and work together.

When receiving feedback, it's important to name when, where and how we want to receive and give feedback,

Personal feedback should be scheduled in. Make time (1:1s, quick debriefs, etc.) to give positive and negative feedback (with consent!)

Group feedback should be built into structure, and time set aside to reflect on how we are doing as a group!

Practices/Norms

- **Proactively create relationships and trust so that we can give and receive feedback easily.**
- **Make sure that the person you are giving feedback to is consenting to receiving feedback. Ask them if they want feedback!**
- **When appropriate, give a feedback sandwich (strength, growth edge, strength)**
- **Make sure it's the right time/place:** Ask if it's okay to bring up whatever you feel needs attention. If not, make a plan to address this later.
- **Try to be gentle but clear, and assume good intentions:** Honestly share your feelings/thoughts, but trust that we care for each other and are doing what we think is best. **Trust intent, acknowledge impact.**
- **HAVE GOOD INTENTIONS** - Is your feedback here to build someone up and help them out, or are you using this as an ego teardown?
- Check in throughout a feedback process to both make sure you're hearing/are heard correctly, and give space for processing thoughts and feelings that might come up.
 - Though emotions shouldn't necessarily dictate whether the process continues or not, naming at minimum can help ensure that the space is working to accommodate it
 - Ex. After hearing your feedback, I felt _____ because _____
 - I felt _____ when you said _____ because _____
- If you're not ready or in a space to receive feedback, let folks know, and give a time to circle back around to it!
 - "I'm not ready because I'm mad at you. Can we check back in a week?" - or "I'm not ready because I don't have stable housing, I have no clue when I'll be in a good space"
 - "I can't talk today, can we talk about this tomorrow?"
- **When someone reaches out, you're allowed to say no. Feedback is based in consent. Especially if you don't trust someone.**
 - BUT, if you don't trust the person giving feedback, ask yourself why?
- circle back! Don't let things slide under the rug. Our relationships with each other are the FOUNDATION of our movement and a shaky foundation supports no one.

- **If helpful, ask for a list/documentation/summary beforehand.**
 - Take time to review and think on this. If needed, talk to someone for support.
- **Bring a friend or 5!** If you're giving feedback to a group, or receiving feedback from a group, bring some friends who can support you!
- Are you feeling uncomfortable or unsafe? There is a difference. One of the ways that white supremacy perpetuates itself is through fragility.
- **Time in feedback is about all of the feedback, not necessarily defending yourself.**
 - If you're feeling bad after/ have feelings, check in with a friend, name it during the feedback
 - Maybe this means calling a friend, journaling, or doing something good for yourself
- **Make a plan to make changes--** what did you agree to with the other person, and what do you need to make that happen?
 - Ask friends/peers for support and help in accountability
 - Write it down!
 - Schedule time to reflect on how well you're doing with your plan
- If needed, schedule another checkin or feedback session -
 - "How are you coming along with this?"
 - "What are some of the roadblocks you've been having"
- Ask if there's space for feedback to the feedback style.

Questions:

- How do I feel when I give feedback?
- How have I felt when I've received feedback?
- What resources are available to me to get better at feedback?
- Is feedback baked into my orgs systems?
- Do my meetings have regular feedback sessions incorporated in the work?
- What ways can I contact someone when I notice something that needs to be talked about?
- Who do I have good relationships with?
 - Who is someone in the org that I could comfortably give feedback to?
 - Who is someone I don't feel comfortable giving feedback to? Why is that?
 - Who is someone that I would want to build a better relationship with to give and receive better feedback?
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Resources

- [Tips on receiving feedback](#)
- [BLM chapter conflict guidelines](#)
- [NVC Instruction Guide](#)
- [Checklist for engaged feedback](#)
- [Conflict is Not Abuse](#)
- [Fumbling Towards Repair](#)
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