

**The Magazine Association of BC and the Association of Book Publishers of BC  
Richer, Deeper, Better: Greater Inclusivity,  
Accountability and Respect in Publishing Workshops**

## **Creating a Brave Space**

A Brave Space is one that commits to courageous dialogue that is deep yet still inclusive. As we gather for a day of important and timely work on inclusivity in publishing, we want to make sure that we hold space in a way that feels nurturing, encourages vulnerability and fosters rich and respectful conversations.

### **Before the workshop**

- 1. Come ready to engage**
- 2. Consider what you need to feel supported; let the organizers know if you have accessibility needs**
- 3. Practice self care - these topics can get heavy**
- 4. Self-educate on inclusion concepts that may confuse you (see resources below)**
- 5. Familiarize yourself with the guidelines (below)**

### **During the workshop**

- 1. Check in with yourself**

*Come to the conversation ready to engage - do what you need to do to feel present. Honour your own needs and set gentle boundaries.*

- 2. Make space, take space**

*Be aware of how much space you take up in a conversation. If you're someone who is more extroverted, talks a lot, or find yourself occasionally interrupting others, think about slowing down and letting others speak. If you're someone who holds back, feels shy or doesn't speak up, consider stepping into your growth zone this time.*

### **3. Assume positive intent and address negative impact**

*We're all at different points on our learning journeys. Assume that when people make mistakes, their intentions were good. However, that doesn't change the impact - respect people's right to feel angry, offended or upset... and apologize.*

### **4. Practice active listening**

*Listen as though nothing in the world matters as much as what that person is saying. Instead of thinking 'I know what I'll say next', think 'I wonder what they'll say next.'*

### **5. Honour confidentiality**

*What's said here, stays here; what's learned here, leaves here. Don't share others' stories without explicit permission.*

### **6. Accept and expect non-closure**

*We wish we could solve all the problems in one session. Unfortunately we have to accept non-closure and instead use these conversations as foundational and inspirational.*

### **7. Bodies will be bodies**

*Need to pee? Go for it! Need to stretch or snack? Go for it! Prefer to sit on the floor or stand at the back? Go for it! This is not school and we don't need to police one another for our bodies' needs.*

### **8. Uncomfortable ≠ unsafe**

*Sometimes when we're having vulnerable and challenging conversations, our brains trick us into thinking we're in danger. Usually we're just feeling a bit awkward.... But if you do feel unsafe, let an organizer know!*

### **9. Respect everyone's true selves**

*Respect everyone's identities and needs including, but not limited to, their pronouns, names, titles, physical boundaries (e.g. hugging or handshakes) + accessibility needs.*

## 10. Challenge assumptions with curiosity

*We all have biases and make judgements - challenge your own and one another's with respectful curiosity. Try framing a thought as a question.*

### **Non-negotiables**

In this space, we will not tolerate;

- Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, ableism, audism\*, anti-Blackness, anti-Semitism, anti-Indigeneity, ageism, classism, Islamophobia, fatphobia or any other form of discrimination that may show up in the form of...
- Hate speech, exclusion, microaggressions\*\*, threats, physical violence, stereotyping, online or written harassment
- Unwanted touching, non-consensual advances, sending inappropriate photos, lewd jokes or sexual harassment of any kind

Those in violation of the non-negotiables will be asked to leave.

### **Tips for being present in a Brave Space**

- **Compassionate call-ins are better than shameful call-outs**
  - If someone says something offensive, find ways to compassionately and courageously invite them into a meaningful conversation, instead of shaming and blaming.
- **Use effective questioning**
  - Ask questions that are open-ended, positive or neutral, evocative, specific and invitational, and that challenge assessments.
- **Practice mindfulness**
  - Mindfulness is sometimes the key to inclusion. When we are in a hurry, stressed, overwhelmed or distracted, we rely most heavily on our unconscious biases which can lead to prejudice and discrimination.
- **Acknowledge your privilege**
  - Privilege dictates how we show up in a space and how we interact with others. Privilege socializes us to take up more space, interrupt others and ask others for emotional labour.

## **Resources**

Respecting pronouns and gender neutral language

<https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/GLSEN%20Pronouns%20Resource.pdf>

Scent reduction and fragrance sensitivity

<https://fragrancesensitivityawareness.weebly.com/>

How to have Courageous Conversations

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/pdfs/TipSheetConversation.pdf>

Toxicity prevention

<https://festival.roommagazine.com/toxicity-prevention/>

\*What is audism?

<http://cad.ca/issues-positions/audism/>

\*\*What are microaggressions?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDd3bzA7450>

BC Human Rights Clinic on discrimination and harassment

<https://www.bchrc.net/>

Check your privilege

<https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/07/what-checking-privilege-means/>