

# Resource: **Ways of Being**

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- **PRESERVE CONFIDENTIALITY** — What is said in the context of our work together will remain private. It is important for people to feel safe speaking about personal experiences and this can only happen without the fear of unintended listeners. This trust is sacred.
- **USE 'I' STATEMENTS** — It is important that we take responsibility for what we say and own our own issues. This also helps cut down on broad generalizations and stereotyping by encouraging ownership of one's own ideas and opinions.
- **HONOR SILENCE** — Silence serves many purposes. It enables us to center and to sort our thoughts. It also allows us a chance to retreat inside ourselves to listen to what our heart and mind are saying to us.
- **ALLOW YOURSELF TO MAKE MISTAKES** — Especially around issues of language. It is important we make every effort not to censor one another. At the same time, we should be open to hearing how our language, actions and behaviors affect others.
- **LISTEN TO WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING & STAY CURIOUS ABOUT ONE ANOTHER**— Listening is an art. Listening means to be fully present in hearing a speaker and making every effort not to spend time formulating your comments while others are talking. Otherwise it creates opportunities for misunderstandings and may cause you to miss something very important.
- **KEEP AN OPEN MIND & RESPECT EACH OTHER AS EQUALS** — Be honest with your opinions and reactions to the discussions, but work to withhold judgment. Allow others the freedom to express opinions that you may not share.
- **CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO THINK FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES** — Make every effort to put yourself in someone else's shoes. Think about how and why they feel the way that they do. Remember that every individual has a unique life story that deserves your respect.
- **BE COURTEOUS** — Don't interrupt others while they are speaking; don't carry on side conversations; be brief and to the point when speaking; and understand that everyone should have a chance to speak.
- **EXPECT IT TO BE MESSY AT TIMES & HAVE FUN!!**
- **SPEAK HONESTLY, BE BRIEF & LISTEN FROM THE HEART**