

R take responsibility for what you say and feel without blaming others

Don't blame others for feelings. Use "I" statements. Pay attention to personal feelings and own them.

E use empathetic listening skills

i.e., listen for more than just words...body language, sense of what's going on, intuition, and be aware that I am not you, and that I may need to find different ways to say something.

S be sensitive to different communication styles

Be aware that we need to listen to introverts and extroverts, to people who speak gently and to people who speak assertively. Listen carefully and look for those who have not yet spoken.

P Ponder what you hear and feel before you speak

Especially difficult for extroverts who are used to talking in order to think. Take a moment, pause, think it over before saying it, check out what is going on inside before putting it outside.

E Examine your own assumptions and perceptions

This is an attitude of humility towards what is going on ... "why" do I think the way I do? What is my history around this issue? What is being triggered by this discussion, memory, event?

C Keep discussions confidential.

This guideline is basic to our being able to go into depth with one another. It is key to feeling safe with other people as we examine ourselves and our beliefs. Keeping confidentiality is about building up the community through trust.

T Trust ambiguity.

Not everything has to be settled right now in exactly the right way. We are here to share our similarities and our differences in an atmosphere of mutual trust.