

## Agreements - VWC

We go over the agreements in orientations both to establish them for this space and to introduce new members to this set of agreements and a bit of organizational culture.

### Step I: Explain Why we use Agreements

- Agreements help us be intentional about how we are to each other in our meetings, workshops, etc.
- They help us model the kind of world we are working for.
- By being explicit about our agreements we avoid making assumptions about each other and our expectations.
- We are all human and all need reminding sometimes! Agreements help us do that.

### Step II: Go over the Agreements

We only have 5 minutes for this section, so it is probably a good idea to just go over the agreements yourself or ask someone ahead of time to go over them if you have leaders in the orientation or helping out.

Agreements:

Be Aware of Time	We have a lot on the agenda. We want to be respectful of people's time by keeping on schedule and ending on time.
Step Up, Step Up: Step up your participation, step up your listening	This is a more affirmative way of saying "step up, step back." If you are shy about speaking in groups, this is the perfect opportunity to step up your participation. If you feel comfortable speaking in groups, this is the perfect opportunity to step up your listening.
Oppression Exists	The existence of racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, etc. is not up for debate. They exist in society and they exist here in this space. We make an agreement with each other to be conscious of their functioning and to confront oppressive behavior.
Ouch/Oops/Whoa	These are our "permission to interrupt" agreements. <u>Ouch</u> : If something is sensitive, please use the "ouch" to interrupt. The person using the "ouch" is not obligated to explain the issue. <u>Oops</u> : Use "oops" if you want to acknowledge that you said

	<p>something that you realized was inappropriate or that you regret saying. It happens to all of us, and this is a way to acknowledge it rather than sitting with it uncomfortably.</p> <p><u>Whoa:</u> If you hear something you don't understand (like an acronym), use the "whoa" to interrupt and get an explanation. This is for everyone's good: if one person didn't understand, it's likely other people didn't either.</p>
<p>We all have something to teach, we all have something to learn.</p>	<p>We agree to recognize that all of us have knowledge and experience to share and</p> <p>all of us also have things we don't know or understand.</p>
<p>Unity→ Struggle→ Unity</p>	<p>We agree that we all came to this space for the same reasons. Sometimes our conversations or work together will get hard, but we agree to struggle through that together. Another way of saying this is hard does not always equal bad.</p>
<p>Cell Phones</p>	<p>We generally prefer to ask folks to turn off cell phones, but we also know that some people have kids, emergency or other situations and need their phones. Those folks should turn phones to vibrate and should agree to take only critically important calls. Everyone else turn phones off. In general be respectful.</p>