



## **Mindfulness - Communication Agreements**

### **Practice Mindful Listening:**

Try to avoid planning what you'll say as you listen to others. Be willing to be surprised, to learn something new. Listen with your whole self. Bringing awareness to your body and pausing before speaking can be helpful.

### **Practice Self Focus:**

Attend to and speak about your own direct experiences and responses. Speaking truthfully from your own experience will be more supportive of our learning environment than expressing an opinion, giving advice or expressing assumptions about the experience of others.

### **Acknowledge We All Have Biases:**

We can assume that we are all going to say things that reveal our biases. Change cannot happen unless we acknowledge this. When we notice biases, we can name them plainly, pause, and allow ourselves to feel the impact. Everyone is responsible for taking care of their own feelings.

### **Understand the Difference Between Intent & Impact:**

Try to understand and acknowledge impact. Denying the impact of something said by focusing on intent is often more destructive than the initial interaction.

### **Move Up / Move Back:**

Encourage full participation by all present. Take note of who is speaking and who is not. If you tend to speak often, consider "moving back" and vice versa.

### **Notice Judgment:**

Judgments of yourself, your practice, and of others will naturally arise on their own no matter how much we practice. You can simply let these thoughts pass without getting caught up in them, and bring compassion to yourself instead.

### **Confidentiality:**

Take home learnings, but don't identify anyone other than yourself, now or later. If you want to follow up with anyone regarding something they said during a session, ask first and respect their wishes.

Adapted from: Agreements for Multicultural Interactions at EBMC (East Bay Meditation Center)